

Transcript of “Thinking/Feeling/Being Sluggish,” Part One.

Transcribed by Charlotte Emerton-Rolfe.

Location: Minghella Studios, University of Reading (Whiteknights Campus).

Date of Performance: Tuesday 19th November 2024

Duration: Est. 5 minutes

Performers: Josephine Maxwell as Greg; Charlotte Emerton-Rolfe as Frank.

The room is dark except for a projected image and two spots of pink light. The image is of a cross section of dirt, with plant roots weaved in amongst the clumps and sticking out at the top and out of the side where the section faces us. One of the pink lights is in the centre of the stage and elongated in an oval shape, it stretches to upstage left. The other spot of light creates a large bokeh effect stage left of the projected image.



Offstage there are some bangs, grunts and heavy breathing. Two “slugs” enter from downstage right. One is called Greg, the other Frank. They are crawling, sliding across the stage with effort on their stomachs. They are having a conversation.

Greg: Every time, man. Fucks sake.

Frank: What’s wrong now?

Greg: Fucking William

Frank: What’s he done again?

Greg: He took our fucking spot!

Frank: UGH! He always does it and like I don’t understand LIKE HE KNOWS IT’S OUR SPOT--

Greg: Exactly!

Frank: We have this conversation *every single week...*

Greg: He knows how long it takes us to FRIGGIN’ GET HERE. Fuck sake. I GOT UP SO EARLY AS WELL... Oh, my back! —

Frank: I mean it’s in his name: he’s *literally* called *William* and what is William short for?

Greg: (sighs) Willy.

Frank: (with a sense of satisfaction) Yeah.

Frank: UGH!

Greg: UGH!

Frank: Ugh!

Greg: (dejectedly) So hungry.

Frank: yeah --

Greg: ugh

Frank: I could *kill* right now --

Greg: (laughs)

The pair groan and breathe heavy whilst moving about. Frank has overtaken Greg, heading to upstage left.

Greg: How's your family?

Greg changes direction to upstage right.



Frank: yeah... ya know... I don't really know how I feel about it

Greg: About what?

Frank: Having a family...

Greg: What do you call them? Neonuggets?

Frank: Um... not quite. Neonates --

Greg begins to change direction, circling to downstage right then to downstage left.

Greg: YEAH, yeah! The babies, neonuggets --

Frank begins to head downstage left, circling round to eventually face Greg.

Frank: I think neonuggets is quite cute though!

Greg: Yeah! Thank you!

Frank: I think... it's difficult because, ya know, they're so sweet in their eggs and they can poke their little heads out, and you know, see what the world's like.

Greg: Exactly! --

The two have met face to face again.

Frank: I find it quite funny when they go NOPE! (Laughing) and go back in --

Greg: They go back into the egg!

Frank: Yeah.

Greg: I know! It's great!

Greg: Ugh

Both “slugs” are continuing to breath heavy and groan every so often. Greg is heading upstage left, whilst Frank heads downstage right.

Frank: You know! How’s your... er... ya know?

Greg: Eh! It’s alright --

Frank: (laughs)

Greg: It’s fine. (Pause) You know what I was eating the other night?

Frank: What were you eating?

Greg: ugh. Playboy magazine... it was delicious!

Frank: Yeah? (Pause, then quieter) What was in this playboy magazine? --

Frank changes direction, heading for upstage right.

Greg: I think... Pamela (hesitating) Anderson?

Frank: (giggling) sounds like Parma Ham cheese! - -

Greg: No, no, no! Parmesan, parmesan! (Pause)

Frank: (giggles)

Greg: What is parmesan?

Frank: Er... it’s a type of cheese.

Frank begins to angle towards upstage left.

Greg: I've seen the word!

Frank looks at Greg across the short distance between them. Greg swivels to meet their gaze.

Frank: A worm?!

Greg: The word!

Frank: The word...

Greg: Yeah, the word.

Frank: How do you spell it?

Pause in movement and conversation, they both think. Greg is now heading for stage right.

Greg: (quietly) Fuck knows.

They both laugh.

Frank: You've seen the word but don't know how to spell it?

Greg: No, I can't read, I'm a slug!

They slide past each other, parallel to one another and the audience.

Frank: I mean... How do they make cheese?

Greg: What did you say?!

Frank turns their head to look back at Greg. Greg has stopped moving.

Frank: How do they make cheese?!

Greg: I don't know! I assume they, it comes out of the big thing with ears and the spots, and it goes moo!!

Frank: Oh...

Greg begins to move again, changing direction to follow Frank, who is now heading downstage left.

Greg: What do you think?

Frank: I heard that it came from humans.

Greg: Eugh!! I mean, wouldn't be surprised. Fucking weirdos, they've got like four legs!

Frank: (snickers)

Greg: I prefer *my foot*, far better.

Frank: It's nice to have one foot --

Greg: It is!

Frank: I feel like we have less of an impact --

Greg: Exactly!

Frank is sliding towards the stage right.

Frank: We tread, *caress* the la- earth, lightly.

Greg: (sighs) You know what I've been noticing recently though?

They (Greg and Frank) both stop. Frank looks over at Greg who has a downturned presence all of a sudden.



Frank: What?

Greg: I feel like the soil is warm... and acidic --

Frank: (sighs then quietly, as if to self) Yep...

Greg: Slurped some up the other night and God! It gave me heartburn. (Brief pause) I think it's what the humans are calling... climate change or something to do with the Anthropussy?

They both have begun moving again.

Frank: Do you mean the Anthropocene?

Greg: The Anthro— yeah, the Anthropussy! (Pause) Yeah, that's what I'm taking about.

The two slugs are have slowed down and even stopped where they are. There is a pause.

Greg: You know, I think we should go out for some food.

Frank is crawling, with effort, towards the top right of the stage.

Frank: (out of breath) ugh, yeah!

Greg: What do you think?

Greg swivels on the spot to face Frank. Greg continues in this direction (downstage left).

Frank: I'm not really sure, like — Oo! Is there anything in the slug network? Can you taste any trails?

Greg: You know what I'm... wait let me get my nose to the ground. Ugh, ah!

Greg lowers their upper and lower antennae to the floor. They pause. Frank pivots to upstage left from upstage right.

Greg: You know what?

Frank: Mmm (indicating yes)

Greg: I'm smelling a tasty treat.

Frank: Where's it coming from?

Greg: The art block... They've got wine! --

Frank: What can you smell in the art block?

Greg: (making eating noises) I think it's Moretti beer? And Strongbow! --

Frank: Oooo!

Greg: Let me get my... feeler on that! (Pause) Ok! Right! To the art block?

Frank: (exasperated) Ok!

Greg: Ok.

Frank: (breathlessly) Is it this way?

Greg: Ok --

Greg and Frank say the next two lines over one another, but each still hears what the other said. Greg whirls around to upstage left from centre stage left.

Greg: I think so?

Frank: I think I can taste the same trail!

Greg: I can smell it! I can smell it! I'm going! I'm going! I'm coming! --

Frank: (desperately) Quick as you can!

Greg: I'm coming!

Frank: You can go faster than that! I've seen you go faster than that when you're following that person's snail trail! --

Greg: Shut up!

Frank: (quietly but with attitude) Yeah?

Greg: I don't have a thing for snails!

Frank: Yeah, you do.

Greg: Woah, wah! Wo-ah! Wugh!

Greg and Frank stand up and began to shuffle along the wall. Their hands reach upwards.



Greg and Frank: (disjointedly, attempting unison) THE WALL, THE WALL, THE WALL, THE WALL, THE WALL, THE WALL, THE WALL, THE WALL, THE WALL...

They continue chanting “THE WALL” until they have exited the stage, disappearing behind black curtains. Greg exits upstage left, Frank upstage right. The projected image and pink lighting turns off, house lights up.

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Notes and Thank You's

This transcript details most of the content of the performance accurately minus any errors that occurred during the live event, such as technical difficulties, as well as omitting audience reactions. Therefore, this transcript, whilst capturing how the performance went, also details how certain elements should have gone. If you attended the performance and noted these differences, this transcript should be taken as the authoritative version.

Throughout the transcript the pronouns of they/them have been used to refer to the slugs on an individual basis. This is because some slugs are hermaphroditic.

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