

**BED**  
by Sheila Callaghan

In the center of the stage: a bed. It glows eerily. Sound hums, throbs. Bed seems to float ominously.

A WOMAN age 30-35, dressed only in a slip, crawls towards the bed from very far away, perhaps from the street, from outside the theatre. Crawls on her forearms and elbows and belly and knees, slowly like a lizard. A blind animal. She knows the way by scent. Or habit. Or ritual. Maybe her knees are dirty, her elbows, her chin.

She crawls towards the bed. The light on the bed intensifies. As does the sound around it. Grows to a deafening roar. She crawls in the center of the bed. Slowly rises onto her knees. Pulls at her slip. Exposes her neck. Bares her claws, her fangs.

Suddenly, the lights snap to a soft evening ambience. The woman (HOLLY) giggles and throws the covers over her head.

CLIFF, also 30-35, enters. Sees her lump beneath the bed. Smiles. Waits a moment. Looks around the room. She giggles again. He still waits.

What are you waiting for

HOLLY

These paintings are great  
you do all of 'em?

CLIFF

Yes!  
Get over here!

HOLLY

He comes closer.

Stop!

HOLLY

He stops. She peeks out from beneath the covers.

HOLLY

I'm kinda drunk  
I might have whiskey dick

CLIFF

Girls get...?

HOLLY

It just might take me longer to come  
I'm usually pretty quick

CLIFF

Ok  
I don't really drink

HOLLY

I had three wines at the party then a vodka soda at the bar then two shots at the second bar

CLIFF

Impressive--

HOLLY

PANTS!

Cliff undoes his belt. Folds it carefully, lays it to the side.

HOLLY

Do people call you Cliffy?

CLIFF

Just Cliff.  
Like falling off a.

HOLLY

Like the friendly dog  
Like the big red dog.

CLIFF

Sure

Cliff slides off his pants. Beneath are tighty whities.

CLIFF

I have better underpants at home  
They go lower on the thigh  
I didn't expect this or I woulda

HOLLY

You have ostrich legs

CLIFF

My brother used to say that!  
He totally used to / say that

HOLLY

SHIRT!

He slides off his shirt.

HOLLY

God you're skinny  
You look like Jesus

CLIFF

Uh

HOLLY

It's cool  
I wanted to fuck Jesus when I was sixteen  
Underpants  
Please

Beat. Cliff slides off his underpants.

CLIFF

Holly  
I don't usually

HOLLY

Should we not?

CLIFF

No I want to  
I just, this isn't

HOLLY

I get it  
We can go slower  
We can snuggle  
We can talk

No it's ok

CLIFF

Let's talk a little  
soooooo  
How many languages do you speak

HOLLY

Four

CLIFF

Four?  
Fuck you

HOLLY

I'm only really fluent in French and English  
I have some Latin and some German

CLIFF

Why?  
Why do you have all those?

HOLLY

My mother is French so.  
My brother moved there  
Um German I learned because of my undergrad degree

CLIFF

In what?

HOLLY

German.  
And fiction.  
wanted to write novels like the Germanic modernists  
Like, you know.

CLIFF

Uh-huh

HOLLY

melancholy, apocalyptic, symbolist / whatever

CLIFF

Sure

HOLLY

Holly begins jerking him off beneath the covers.

Say some German stuff  
Some bad evil shit  
Some Nazi shit

HOLLY

Um  
Ok um

CLIFF

“Juden sind eine Geißel! Wir müssen sie zu beseitigen!”

that was terrifying  
What was it

HOLLY

Um

CLIFF

“Jews are a scourge, we must eliminate them!”

Stops jerking.

You're a fucking Anti-semiter?

HOLLY

What? No! You asked me to—

CLIFF

I'm kidding!

HOLLY

Continues jerking.

Oh  
Ok  
Oohh  
man

CLIFF

Yeah?

HOLLY

God you're  
Good at that  
What about you  
languages

CLIFF

HOLLY

Only one unfortch

CLIFF

Tell me other stuff  
About you

HOLLY

Nah

CLIFF

Simple stuff  
Your parents

HOLLY

My father is a cork board  
My mother is a lawnmower

CLIFF

*Real* stuff

HOLLY

I own a Bill Clinton ceramic ashtray  
I love popping zits on people's backs  
I'm a shitty driver  
I laugh when I get emotional  
My father jerked off on me when I was fifteen  
I hate pizza and people who dress their cats for Halloween NOW WOULD YOU  
PLEASE FUCK ME.

CLIFF

Can I go down on you first?

HOLLY

I'm expecting my period

CLIFF

I don't care

HOLLY

I'm not sure how clean I am

CLIFF

I don't / care

He puts his head beneath the sheets.  
She yanks him back up, flips him  
onto his back, straddles him, and  
rides him hard.

Whoa  
Easy

CLIFF

I  
Said  
No  
Fucker

HOLLY

She rides him until he climaxes,  
which is rather quickly. Then she  
flips over, grabs a tissue, and wipes  
herself beneath the sheets.

I'm sorry—

CLIFF

Ride-or-die baby  
I'll whack off in the morning

HOLLY

Okay

CLIFF

You can crash here if you need to  
My roommate doesn't give a shit  
She always has naked dudes walking in and out of the living room

HOLLY

Ok

CLIFF

You're all right, Cliffy  
I don't care what they say about ya

HOLLY

What who says

CLIFF

No one  
It's just something I say

HOLLY

wanna know what they say about you?

CLIFF

Who? HOLLY

Julie  
She said you were a little crazy  
And a genius CLIFF

That's so condescending  
Everyone is a genius  
Dogs are geniuses  
Tables are geniuses HOLLY

Do you get called that a lot? CLIFF

Who doesn't HOLLY

Me, for one  
I mean maybe when I was a kid CLIFF

What else did she say HOLLY

That I was gonna fall in love with you CLIFF

What an idiot HOLLY

And that you're unhappy CLIFF

I have Chronic Loneliness  
It's a Very Serious Condition  
I could die from it HOLLY

Could you wait til I leave first? CLIFF

What if you never leave HOLLY

CLIFF



Then I guess you'll have to stay alive

Cliff begins to get her off with his hand  
beneath the sheets.

Oh  
Okay

HOLLY

Shhhh

CLIFF

Jesus  
Fuck

HOLLY

Your roommate's sleeping

CLIFF

You  
Mother  
Fucking

HOLLY

You're  
So  
beautiful

CLIFF

He puts his head beneath the sheets and goes  
down on her. She ramps up quickly.

YOU  
FUCKING  
ASSHOLE  
JESUS  
FUUUCK  
GOD  
FUCK  
YOOOOUUUUAAAHHH

HOLLY

She climaxes hard and immediately bursts  
into tears. Cliff comes up for air, terrified.

Jesus  
What'd I do?

CLIFF

Nothing  
You're great

HOLLY

Are you okay?

CLIFF

This happens sometimes  
With new people  
It's ok

HOLLY

She blows her nose.

Are you sure?

CLIFF

Yeah  
It's like  
I dunno vulnerability or something  
Sorry

HOLLY

It's okay

CLIFF

She hands him a tissue. He wipes his mouth.

Anyway I'm usually faster

HOLLY

That was

CLIFF

Hair trigger  
Tripwire harlot

HOLLY

Hot

CLIFF

There's a candy cane stuck to my ass

HOLLY

What

CLIFF

I'm always finding shit in this bed  
HOLLY

It's summer  
CLIFF

I never wash my sheets  
HOLLY

Small beat.

CLIFF

How many dudes have been here since the last time you washed

HOLLY

None of your fucking business

She unwraps the candy cane and sucks on it.

I'm still drunk

CLIFF

I like you

Holly passes out with the candy cane in her mouth.

She scratches herself with her hand.  
Scratches her body like a dog with fleas. He watches her.

Lights snap, or stutter, or blink, or something. He pushes on her. Hands her a Styrofoam container of noodles. She eats.

HOLLY

Shut up  
You've only had three girlfriends?

CLIFF

And one horrendous one night stand

HOLLY

Why horrendous

CLIFF

It was an internet hookup  
We negotiated sex before we met

HOLLY  
What about the others

CLIFF  
College girlfriend  
Then Renee the Ann Arbor grad student  
And then this social worker who had a bizarre obsession with baby camels

HOLLY  
If you've only nailed four chicks  
how come you're so good at fucking?

CLIFF  
I'm not  
I'm just good at fucking you.

HOLLY  
What else are you good at?

CLIFF  
Cooking.

HOLLY  
What!  
You cook and you're making us eat this shit?

CLIFF  
I have some dishes.  
Fish, stews  
I have a nice collection of Le Creuset

HOLLY  
Why don't I know this?

CLIFF  
I'm rationing my virtues

HOLLY  
I LOVE BEING FED  
Feed me!  
Tonight!

CLIFF  
Ah  
My brother is still at my place, so  
He's in town from Paris

Oh cool  
I'd love to meet him.

HOLLY

Small beat.

Um sure.

CLIFF

What

HOLLY

No I said sure

CLIFF

Is there something wrong with him?  
Is he like

HOLLY

No

CLIFF

Aspergersey, or

HOLLY

No no no  
I don't  
I don't  
bring people around very often

CLIFF

So?  
I'm mostly harmless

HOLLY

Well that's debatable  
I feel harmed by you, a little  
In a good way  
But.  
Um

CLIFF

Small beat.

You know actually it's totally fine

CLIFF

HOLLY

Forget it

CLIFF

No I want to  
It'll be good for me

HOLLY

“Good for you?” Okay.

CLIFF

No, that's not what I / meant

HOLLY

You're embarrassed of me--

CLIFF

No!  
It's just

HOLLY

Stop talking

CLIFF

Why? It's fine!  
I'll text him now--

HOLLY

Seriously  
Could you just  
maybe  
Go?

CLIFF

Why?

HOLLY

And take this shit with you

CLIFF

Holly

HOLLY

Go, Cliff  
Go  
Leave  
Not joking

CLIFF

What is this

She grabs her guitar and headphones. Begins playing as Cliff dresses himself.

Will I call you?

CLIFF (cont.)

She ignores him. Cliff grabs the food containers and exits.

Beat.

Lights snap, or stutter, or blink. Cliff returns and climbs on top of Holly, fucking her vigorously. They climax hard, at the same time.

Simultaneous, bitches!!

HOLLY

Had to conjure my old ethics professor in a sports bra for that one

CLIFF

They snuggle. He smells her hair.

Yuck. Cigarettes

CLIFF

Go suck many dicks

HOLLY

I missed you

CLIFF

I know

HOLLY

I've been stalking your Myspace page

CLIFF

I figured

HOLLY

You bought a new backpack

CLIFF

HOLLY

Target

CLIFF

You've been drunk a lot

HOLLY

I've been coping

CLIFF

Who's the tall dude with the old-timey spectacles  
The one with all the tattoos

HOLLY

Um

CLIFF

I don't want to know.  
I don't, right?

HOLLY

No

CLIFF

Ok  
What else did I miss

HOLLY

I got a job offer.  
My old housemate is touring Japan with her metal band  
She needs me to cover her for a year

CLIFF

Doing what

HOLLY

Teaching music at a school for gifted kids

CLIFF

That's terrific  
Where

HOLLY

Minneapolis

CLIFF

As in  
The city?



Yeah  
HOLLY

Are you gonna do it  
CLIFF

Yeah  
Apartments are like, a third of the price  
And they have a rad music scene  
And it pays well  
HOLLY

Sounds great  
CLIFF

Yeah  
HOLLY

Why am I here.  
CLIFF

Because I called you  
HOLLY

Why did you call me  
CLIFF

Holly reaches inside the bed. Pulls out a small canvas. Cliff examines it.

It's new.  
HOLLY

Is that a—  
CLIFF

Nutsack.  
Yeah.  
HOLLY

And this?  
CLIFF

A tongue.  
With miniature tongues growing out of it.  
HOLLY

CLIFF

Is this an ostrich

HOLLY

It is

CLIFF  
(moved)

You rendered me.

HOLLY

I'm in there too  
You can't tell  
It's this thing  
This shitty little dot

CLIFF

Holly

HOLLY

What?  
Uh oh

CLIFF

I think  
Yeah  
I love you.

HOLLY

Oh.  
Rad.

Lights change.

HOLLY breathes out. A giant cloud of  
breath fills the room, the stage, the theatre.

HOLLY

JESUS FUCKING CHRIST did you see that?

CLIFF

When are they fixing the thing again?

HOLLY

They said noon  
Mother fuck.  
I'm wearing every single sock I own

CLIFF

we're forced to use body heat  
like eskimos

HOLLY

We can't ever leave the bed  
We'll get frostbite and die

CLIFF

Ok but my flight leaves on Sunday

HOLLY

Fuck your flight

CLIFF

I gotta work the next day

HOLLY

Fuck your job  
My boss owns this douche club in the North Loop  
He'll set you up with a bartending gig

CLIFF

I hate bars

HOLLY

Do it for the material  
drunk idiots bloviating about tax reform and national security?  
It writes itself  
OH MY GOD  
We have to go to the Mall of America before you leave  
Did you know they have a bar that serves discontinued breakfast cereals?  
You can get a whole bowl of marbits

CLIFF

Of what?

HOLLY

marshmallow bits  
like the lucky charms  
They have a movie theatre too  
And old school video games  
And a bar  
We could do Jäger bombs and play Qbert--

CLIFF

Why don't you ever talk to your family

**THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!**  
**email [info@sheilacallaghan.com](mailto:info@sheilacallaghan.com)**  
**to read more**