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*As the audience enters, the actors slowly drift from backstage to eventually stand downstage centre. As they walk, they talk amongst themselves, occasionally glancing at the audience with gentle curiosity. If they see a friend and they feel like waving or saying hi, they do. They remain casual. There is the sound of a machine in the distance and the spandex is illuminated with colours that slowly shift. The show is already underway. When the house closes, JP signals the actors to begin. The sound changes, and the sound of crickets slowly creeps in.*

NGOZI: (to JP) Okay?

GREG: Hi.

MAIKO: Things are going to start in a sec.

GREG: Now might be a good time to turn off your cell phones or whatever else you have in your pockets.

NGOZI: (to JP) Are we okay?

JP: Standing by.

GREG: (to JP) Thanks.

NGOZI: Okay.

MAIKO: Hi. Okay, so, the desire here is to tell the truth about our situation in such a way as to keep you interested and, at the same time, touch you in ways that can't be entirely controlled, predicted, described, or, for that matter, understood.

GREG: So, that's the basic deal here.

NGOZI: Of course, to speak truthfully can be difficult – some say impossible – but possible or not, we’re going to give it a shot.

*(The house lights very slowly fade.)*

MAIKO: The first truth wanting to be aired – and an obvious one at that – is that these words coming out of this mouth are not spontaneously occurring to this person here and now. This mouth simply delivers them to you.

NGOZI: There’s the hope that on the way to you these words will be electrified by this mouth, this being, and by striking your being will yield unexpected sensations created by all of us at once together.

GREG : What’s being sought is the blurring of common sense distinctions as we fade into each other during something that could be called the ‘twilight of our being.’

NGOZI: That may sound frightening to you but in the long run it won’t be.

MAIKO: Perhaps an imaginary group hug may be the best way to proceed.

GREG: Feel free to shut your eyes for a moment – go ahead. If you like. We’ll make sure no one hits you.

NGOZI: Now. Imagine the entire room is hugging you, from all the other people to the bricks in the walls, down to the chair that is sucking gently on your bum. It’s all hugging you.

MAIKO: Imagine for a moment that when the hug is at its most intimate you lose that sense of distinctness you hold close to what you call your own heart and everything bleeds into everything else.

GREG: While the sensation may be strange, there's nothing to fear. You won't disappear, you will not become nothing or no one.

MAIKO: Think of those times when you're in a room talking with a few friends as the sun goes down.

NGOZI: When it becomes dark before you realize it's dark.

GREG: As the light disappears, the faces of your friends appear to become the faces of strangers, right, or worse, they appear grotesque, monstrous.

MAIKO: You may experience a bit of terror.

NGOZI: A terror in response not only to the shifting faces of your friends but also to the alarming fact that you hadn't noticed the sun had gone down.

MAIKO: 'How could I have not noticed?' you might ask yourself. 'I've been left behind thinking it was day when all around me night has infiltrated.'

GREG: The first clue had been the strange faces that had taken over your friends, the kind of blurring that always happens when things are said to be in their twilight.

MAIKO: Do you think what you're experiencing is real?

NGOZI: Twilight is when the truth is always revealed.

MAIKO: It's twilight.

GREG: It is twilight.

MAIKO: It's a nice night.

NGOZI: It's a beautiful night.



GREG: It's a quiet night.

MAIKO: Let's see if we can find some true universal love songs.

NGOZI: All right.

*(The actors perform a small piece of choreography. The music, Eddie Harris's 'The Things You Do,' starts.)*

GREG: That's nice.

NGOZI: That is nice.

MAIKO: I feel like talking.

NGOZI: I feel like talking, too. Do you?

GREG: I do. What should we talk about?

MAIKO: I wouldn't mind talking about the revolution.

NGOZI: Do you want to talk about the revolution?

GREG: I guess for a while and then I'd like to stop.

NGOZI: Suddenly?

MAIKO: Suddenly we'll just stop talking when we've all had enough.

NGOZI: Okay.

GREG: What if we have enough at different times?

MAIKO: Well, the feeling of having enough will probably travel in cycles, right.

GREG: Okay.

MAIKO: We just have wait out any downturns until our cycles match and then we can stop.

GREG: Okay.

NGOZI: Okay.

MAIKO: Before the revolution the world had become a place I was unable to accurately describe.

GREG: But during the revolution the fundamentals became so crystal clear. For the first time in my life, anyway ...

NGOZI: And since the revolution, there's a vagueness and a trust in something that shouldn't be reduced – can't be reduced – to words.

MAIKO: Before the revolution a few things had gone off the rails.

GREG: Absolutely obvious things like food, shelter and meaningful activities with which you could pass the day that didn't seem to involve doing things you would rather not.

NGOZI: I always felt like I was an integral part of some useless machine that used my body as a battery.

GREG: During the revolution I just remember how all my cells felt aligned toward a simple common purpose; fundamental contradictions were eradicated.

MAIKO: Before the revolution people treated each other with such contempt most of the time.

GREG: During the revolution you either treated people with a respect bordering on mania or you simply cut off their heads.

MAIKO: Before the revolution there was a glazed look on everybody's face – an angry look or a sad look, a hollow look.

GREG: Before the revolution everybody was always attempting to fuse into a scene, to become popular.

NGOZI: Popularity and relevance to the people were always getting confused.

MAIKO: Since the revolution there has been a machine created that flies around looking for people who aren't happy, snatches them up and creates pure happiness which it sprinkles onto the heads of the populace.

GREG: It's supposed to feel really good.

MAIKO: Loneliness is still okay, though. It's just a certain kind of redundant unhappiness that is discouraged.

GREG: Loneliness is a sign of intelligence.

NGOZI: Before the revolution they tried to round up all the intelligent people.

GREG: Before the revolution I once felt a Supreme Intelligence enter my life, a presence as large as seventy-two sneezes in a row.

MAIKO: That's big.

GREG: You're telling me – I had to wear a diaper.

NGOZI: Before the revolution I was once stalked by a Supreme Intelligence; it was always hanging out in my periphery.

MAIKO: I had a job once with a Supreme Intelligence.

GREG: How did it pay?

MAIKO: I was reimbursed in thought.

NGOZI: How was that?

MAIKO: Mind-boggling.

GREG: A boggled mind can be an asset.

MAIKO: You find?

GREG: Well, you're not as susceptible to the manipulations of advertisers.

MAIKO: That's true.

*(The music and crickets fade.)*

NGOZI: Though it is hard to have meaningful relationships with anybody other than the void.

MAIKO: And the void's never been very good in bed.

NGOZI: The void's not bad in bed.

MAIKO: No, it's not bad. It's just –

GREG: People are so much more exciting to have sex with.

MAIKO: Of course.

NGOZI: (*laughs affectionately*) People.

(*Pause.*)

MAIKO: I love people.

GREG: People are people.

NGOZI: Among other things.

MAIKO: Yes.

GREG: Before the revolution I had a hundred lovers. It was a festival of flesh.

NGOZI: Before the revolution I had a lover I couldn't shake. My lover was like a wart on my heart.

MAIKO: Before the revolution I had elevated being single to a science.

GREG: What were the tenets of your system?

MAIKO: Well, I found that singlehood could be maintained by rigorously keeping my politics shifting around the spectrum. I mapped all possible political positions according to all four points of the compass, plus the additional up and down, and then –



NGOZI: Could you show us in the air with your hand?

MAIKO: Sure. (*demonstrates*) All four points of the compass plus the additional up and down.

NGOZI: Right.

MAIKO: And then with my shifting beliefs I would try to create geometric shapes that would be interesting to myself only.

GREG: So?

MAIKO: So like this. (*demonstrates*) That way I never remained in one spot for any length of time so no one was able to relate to me for any length of time. As I and a potential lover would come in close to kiss, as I would feel the dew of their nose breath

condensing on my upper lip, I would suddenly switch my entire belief system and they would find me untenable.

NGOZI: Were there not some people whose grasp of their own politics was so tentative that they would be willing to forgive even the most intolerable points of view?

MAIKO: Yes, I realized quickly that I would have to avoid the lightly convicted person, so I only dated fanatics.

GREG: Did you have to believe in things you didn't believe in?

MAIKO: Well, since a belief system is a shifting mix of ideas gleaned from contrasting the information from all your experiences with the information from all your experiences I just made sure I experienced nothing. I spent my entire time in a sensory deprivation tank.

NGOZI: It must have been hard to meet people.

MAIKO: Exactly.

GREG: And since the revolution?

MAIKO: Well, since the fundamental points of view have happily collapsed into one or two or whatever, people are trying to get into my pants all the time.

GREG: Nice.

MAIKO: I just go with the flow.

*(Eddie Harris's 'The Things You Do' and crickets are re-established.)*

NGOZI: I had a lover during the revolution.

GREG: I didn't know that.

NGOZI: Yeah.

GREG: Yeah?

NGOZI: It got really bad.

MAIKO: How?

NGOZI: It was – it was just terrible.

GREG: Do you still see them?

NGOZI: No.

GREG: Are they still alive?

*(Pause.)*

NGOZI: No.

MAIKO: Did you have to kill them?

*(Long pause.)*

NGOZI: No. Maybe. I don't know.

MAIKO: I'm sorry.

NGOZI: All I did was bolt the door. I was very frightened.

GREG: No surprise.

NGOZI: I guess not. I was always either over- or underestimating my own cowardice.

GREG: It was a hard thing to call.

MAIKO: I was a huge coward.

NGOZI: I was a superficial monster: all my actions came from the surface of the surface of the surface's surface.

GREG: Since we couldn't change the important things, it was the superficial things that occupied so much of our energy.

MAIKO: I lost a friend over the question of how to hold a spoon.

NGOZI: Exactly. You remember the famous revolutionary maxim 'the personal is political'?

GREG: Who can forget it.

NGOZI: Well, it seemed to take on a life of its own.

MAIKO: Yes.

NGOZI: How you brushed your teeth became an indicator of your political position.

MAIKO: Do you consider the revolution to have been a success?

NGOZI: Success?

MAIKO: Are you content with the way things are?

GREG: I believe so.

MAIKO: You?

NGOZI: Well, you know, contentment – no one ever promised me contentment.

MAIKO: No, that's true. I don't remember seeing contentment on my list of ingredients.

GREG: No, personally, I'm mostly composed of water.

MAIKO: Sometimes a gurgling brook sounds content.

NGOZI: The only time I've ever gurgled was when I tried to hang myself.

GREG: How did you botch it up?

NGOZI: Well, that was the thing that came between me and that lover. My lover denied me my right to end my life, something I fully consider *IOI*. My lover cut me down and I cut my lover off.

MAIKO: Sent them packing?

NGOZI: Into the night.

GREG: What happened to them?

NGOZI: They were hanged.

MAIKO: I'm sorry, that's terrible.

NGOZI: It is. I miss them. I sometimes like to think that I can feel them in the room, that I can talk to them.

GREG: Do you feel like they're in the room right now?

NGOZI: No, I never feel like they're in the room; I just sometimes like to think I can feel them in the room.

MAIKO: The city's a big place. They could be in almost any room.

GREG: It is big.

NGOZI: I'm sure I'll encounter them again someday, somehow or other, even if it's just in the smallest of gestures that I accidentally acquired from them.

MAIKO: The way you wipe your nose?

NGOZI: Could be.

MAIKO: Brush your teeth?

NGOZI: They looked so funny when they brushed their teeth.

MAIKO: The way they said 'hi' to strangers.

NGOZI: I guess I could meet them almost anywhere.

*(Music and crickets fade.)*

GREG: Do you remember the way the revolution started?

NGOZI: I remember there was a lot of smoke.

MAIKO: There were burning buildings.

NGOZI: Things were collapsing.

