

ZERO

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MY WHOLE LIFE HAS BEEN A TRIP.

Cast:

0/Null

A/Child/Mum/Lasse

B/Misanthrope/Eva/Mathias/Silje

C/Super/Jorg/Pablo

D/Sabatour/Red/Paco/Kjell

E/AngrySelf/Lisa/Nurse/Dad/Trude

The set consists of four panels on wheels made of thin white sheets stapled onto wood. These can be formed together to make four falls, a cube, that could surround a bed/table and chair (also on wheels). The panels are thin enough to be used for shadow work, thick enough to be used for projection, and white enough to be ward or nothing at all.

SCENE 0

Three dead bodies (Pablo, Paco and Null). Eva sits in the chair smoking a cigar, blowing smoke rings. Null smokes two cigarettes while lying down, eventually she speaks. Mum and Dad argue in silhouette behind the screens.

NULL

I'm 10 years old. I absorb everything unfiltered
I think that God is listening when I pray.

I've seen three dead bodies, two old and one young

I cry at night and feel as if I'm all alone and no one can
save me

I feel sorry for Mum and Dad
I realise that the concept of home has never truly existed

I think about the fact that when I grow up and I'm allowed to decide things for myself, my joy will be complete

I feel certain I'm going to live forever, but I think about death almost every day.

[PAGES OMITTED]

SCENE 5

Three flats make three walls, the fourth wall is open to reveal a bed and a chair, this is the ward.

Null sits on the bed. Nurse takes notes from the chair.

NURSE

It's been six months since you were placed in compulsory psychiatric care.

NULL

Isn't it about time you let me stay on a voluntary basis?

NURSE

It's regrettable, but it will be a long time before you reach that milestone. You're going to be moved. Moved to an institution for patients with chronic mental illness.

NULL

Have I got a chronic illness?

NURSE

You do. You will be on medication for the rest of your -

NULL

Out of the question.

NURSE

Then you will be on and off

NULL

The rest of my life?

NURSE

Likely to take your own life.

Null purses her lips.

NURSE

We think you could benefit from electroshock therapy.

NULL

(threatening)

Have you lost your minds? I'm only -

NURSE

Age is no barrier. We've seen positive outcomes in patients as young as -

Voices interject. Could be seen as silhouettes.

SABATOUR

(speaks from behind a flat)

These people are sicker than I ever expected... I'm going to have to inwardly oppose them.

SUPER

(speaks from behind a flat)

Nod politely.

Null nods politely.

NULL

I'll consider it.

NURSE

You're being moved in two days time.

B picks up the flat on the ground and builds Mathias' wall. Also becomes Mathias behind it. Nurse waits, watches interaction.

Null runs to the flat and knocks on it. Mathias appears.

NULL

I'm being moved. You need to ask to be moved too.

MATHIAS

I'll do it.

Mathias goes behind the flat.
Shadows of him talking with C.
Muddled arguing in Norwegian. He
come back out.

MATHIAS

I can't be moved, but I'll come visit you.

Null cries. Mathias hugs her. Nurse
stands.

MATHIAS

Thanks for everything.

All the flats are moved to create a
line, one big screen, up stage.
Nurse/Lisa/Virgin Mary's silhouette
behind the screen. Null turns to
ask her:

NULL

Can I go back with you?

The flats are moved to create a big
white room and revealing Lasse who
speaks to one of the flats, a
radiator.

Null pinches herself. It doesn't
help.

LASSE

Ta det tilbake din jævla dritt!

The translation (Take it back you
fucking piece of shit!) is
projected on a screen.

Null approaches the confrontation.

NULL

What you doing?

LASSE

There is someone living in the radiator *and* someone living in the air conditioner!

He points to the opposite flat.

NULL

What are they saying?

Lasse speaks to the radiator.

LASSE

Hva sier du!?

The translation: (What you saying?)
is projected.

Beat.

Lasse listens. Then scoffs.

LASSE

They're telling me to shut up.

NULL

You ought to tell them to shut up right back!

LASSE

(laughing)

That would lead to some serious consequences. What was it, last week, two weeks, days, they started eating away at my brain.

Null laughs. A growl starts from behind the radiator(flat). Is it the radiator growling? It's Trude.

TRUDE

Growls

Trude appears from behind the flat and enters the room. She holds a plastic glass of water.

NULL
(to Trude)

Meow.

Trude throws the cup of water in Null's face and takes off her trousers. She plants her bum on the table and rubs it against the table top.

TRUDE
(snarling)

Like daaaaaat!

Null laughs. Lasse doesn't.

TRUDE
(to Null)

I am going to kill you.

NULL
Go for it, it's all the fucking same to me.

LASSE
Trude did too much ecstasy and acid in the 90s. She's been here...

NULL
I want to die

LASSE
...6 years now.

The flats are moved to create a smaller white room. Null sits with her Support Worker (Silje). Null stares at her chest.

Beat.

NULL
Are your tits real?

SILJE
It's better if we don't discuss me.

NULL
You're 23.

Silje doesn't react.

NULL

But we can talk about me, of course.

SILJE

What do you want to do with your life?

NULL

I need to think about it.

Beat. She thinks.

NULL

I want to be an actor.

SILJE

Oh, that's cool.

Null stands and approaches the front of the stage. She stares at the audience. Lights and smokes a cigarette... stares.

The lights fade. Spotlight on Null. The "I'm flying" scene from The Titanic is projected behind her.

LEONARDO DICAPRIO

Hold onto the railing, keep your eyes closed. Don't peak.

NULL

I'm not.

LEONARDO DICAPRIO

Step up onto the rail. Hold on. Keep your eyes closed. Do you trust me?

Null drops her cigarette. The Titanic goes up in flames, lights return to stark bright, flats are moved back to big white room. Lasse, Trude and Kjell are there, waiting. Lasse sit with his hands over his ears. Trude kisses him on the top of his head. They laugh.

Kjell smiles at Null. Null returns the smile.

Silje meets Null at the front of the stage.

NULL

I hate my pills. I can't stand popping 19 of the things every day.

SILJE

There is an injection you can have instead. You'd only need it twice a month.

NULL

I want it.

Silje exits. The table is rolled centre stage. A pub. Kjell and Null take a shot together. They just stare and smile. Bartender approaches and refills their shot glasses.

BARTENDER

Fine evening?

NULL

We've come from the mental hospital right up the road.

Kjell smiles at the bartender.

NULL

We're on unescorted leave.

Kjell and Null laugh at themselves and take another shot. Bartender exits fearfully.

Null grabs Kjell's face and kisses him. The intensity grows and they throw themselves on the table and begin fucking. Kjell reaches under the table and procures a white powder, speed.

He throws the powder in Null's face, they continue kissing.

Kjell reaches under the table and this time procures a carton of eggs. They each take one in their hands and threaten to throw them at the audience. The lights focus to a spotlight on the two of them on the table staring at the audience, eggs raised, ready to throw.

NULL

I'm beautiful and talented and brilliant at everything I do.

Kjell smashes the egg on Null's forehead.

NULL

I'd make a good actor.

Kjell stand on the table and dances. Throws more powder into the air. Null claps, egg still in hand, it smashes, yolk drips.

Lights shift.

Null alone laying covered in egg and flour. A birthday candle in her mouth. She is a cake. Baked. Silje approaches.

SILJE

It wasn't exactly clever running off like that.

NULL

I've never been one for doing the clever thing... I just do whatever I do.

SILJE

Well you are going to have to accept the consequences if that's the case.

Null obtains a lighter and lights
the birthday candle in her mouth as
if it's a cigarette.

SILJE

It annoys me that you smoke.

NULL

This is my freedom.

Silje doesn't react.

NULL

You can keep your opinions to yourself.

SILJE

You can smoke in the smoking room.

NULL

I need a change of scenery.

Null smokes the birthday candle.
Beat. Silje watches.

SILJE

Tomorrow is the day that you will be starting your new meds.

Null looks away from Silje towards
the audience. Silje takes a needle
and injects Null with it. Upon
injection everything goes quiet.
Silje looks at Null with morbid
empathy, then exits. Null is alone
laying on the table.

Silence.

Null is alone.

NULL

Two weeks pass. I've stopped taking the pills. Everything's
good. I'm good. I can't hear the voices in my head. I'm not
sad. I'm not happy. I don't feel as if anyone's out to get
me. There are no thoughts in my head at all. Zero.

Beat.

Trude approaches with a pack of cards and begins shuffling at the end of the table. Lights expand. Lasse is still behind talking to the radiator. Kjell is no longer there.

Null speaks to Trude who can't hear her.

NULL

Leonardo feels so far away, so stupid.

Silje approaches Null, still lying on the table.

SILJE

How are you?

NULL

I feel fine.

SILJE

You can be discharged before too long.

NULL

I've been here three months now.

SILJE

We're pleased.

Null looks at Silje, her first human contact since -

NULL

When will my thoughts return?

Silence.

NULL

I'll be needing them if I'm going to get anywhere with my acting plans.

Silence.

NULL

You can't make it as an actor without any thoughts or feelings.

SILJE

A reduced emotional spectrum is one of the side effect of your new medication.

NULL

Is it normal for someone's thoughts to disappear?

Piercing silence. Long uncomfortable beat.

SILJE

They should come back in due course.

Beat.

SILJE

Do you feel better than you did before?

NULL

How would you define "better"?

Beat.

SILJE

You ought to reconsider your career plans.

Trude, still shuffling at the end of the table, perks up.

TRUDE/ANGRY SELF

I am going to get angry now

NULL

You are entitled to your opinion.

SILJE

I would advise against it.

Silje exits.

Null tries to turn to Trude/Angry
self, who is still playing with
cards at the end of the table.

NULL

I barely have the energy to -

Trude grabs Null hands and helps
her sit up.

TRUDE/ANGRY SELF

Make for the door

NULL

Slam it

Trude exits. The flats all fall to
the ground, slamming.

NULL

I'm going home to start my life is over.

END OF CHAPTER...