

THE MOMENT WHEN MEANING BECOMES HASHTAG

A private library.

The feel of the room is decadent.

Pog sprawls on a couch.

Gomey stands by a large globe. He spins it, once or twice.

Everything is dim.

A small window on the back wall, center stage.

POG: Gomey?

GOMEY: I'm not in the mood, man.

POG: Oh. I thought

GOMEY: Well, you thought wrong, man. Because, I am not. [*Spins the globe.*] I am not. [*Spins the globe.*] I am not like Comcast—"On Demand," you know.

POG: By the way, I lost my glasses.

GOMEY: I'm not interested in your eyes. What they see. Covet. And what they don't. Your brain. Your body. I'm just not in the mood, man. Absolutely not, man. Not. Not. Not. No matter how you slice it. [*Spins the globe with style.*]

POG: The memorandum or the manifesto? Which one?

GOMEY: Why do you have to prattle off in such euphemisms when we both know you're just lusting for it. You're like a computer, man. A god-damned horny computer. But, I'm not interested. No, I'm not, man.

hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag
hashtag hashtag hashtag hashtag, and so on and so forth ...

GOMEY: Well now, that's interesting. [*Gomey's entire demeanor has changed. He is almost glowing.*] It looks like our neighbor's got himself a Rhino. A good-sized Black Rhino. You know the one with the short, puckered mouth. And you should see it going at the daisies.

Gomey suddenly leaves the globe, rushes to the back window.

POG: [*Still, on couch, and speaking with great effort.*] A rhino, no shit.

Gomey returns to globe.

GOMEY: You should see him, man. How virile and fiery. All that tough seething lust and eminence. It's not obvious, man. But I can tell, man. I can tell. O, it's like a fire that just will not die. [*Spins the globe with new energy, dreamily, lustfully, maniacally.*]

POG: The world is a thing that goes round and round and then no longer. . . [*Pog's voice trails off. It seems like he was going to say more. He is just staring at the globe like it's about to stop.*]

GOMEY: [*As though hypnotized, like a child, spinning, and spinning, the globe.*] I think I'll kill you the next time we're in "media res" as you call it. You pig, you. Yeah, just snap your neck in the middle of it.

POG: We should have some tea. We should have toast. Tea and toast. It's the perfect way to settle things. My mother would make me tea and toast. She's dead now.

GOMEY: That's too obvious, man. [*Still in a trance, spinning.*] Just way too obvious.

POG: Funny. When I was a kid the do-re-me song made me inconsolably sad. I couldn't feel anything other than sadness when I heard that part about the doe, a female deer. Strange ... Perhaps it was the melody that was doing it to me, moving me towards

sadness ... A vibrational causation.

GOMEY: Causation. Causation. You pig, you. I should cut you into pieces and then feed you to the rhino in the daisies. Or maybe I'll dump you in the lake. I know how afraid you are of water. Like you'll get short circuited. You pig, you. You pig, you. Hahahahahahahaha.

Pog gets up, in a rush, exits stage left. The sound of puking offstage.

GOMEY: And then I'll tweet all about it. Hashtag rhino. Hashtag you pig, you. Hashtag death. Hashtag OMG why didn't I think of this when we lived in Alabama. Hashtag Hahahahahahahaha.

Gomey stops laughing. Sighs deeply. And then just spins the globe. Over. And over.

A strange, twisted silhouette lurches past.

CURTAIN.

NIGHT HAWKS ON THE VELD

Pog, Gomey, Woman, Counterman.

ACT I

Night.

A diner on the veld.

A giraffe can be seen slowly moving in the far distance.

Pog sits at the counter.

Gomey sits at a table, a shot glass in front of him.

A bored counterman tends to the counter.

A woman, possibly for hire, sits at the counter a few seats away.

Pog gets up, tosses coins on the countertop. He leaves the diner.

GOMEY: He's going out to that giraffe again. And he's going to stroke, I just know, that damned giraffe's neck. And that giraffe's going to twist its long neck back at him and whisper in his ear. Or maybe just breathe, torrid, against his neck. And then I know just how that long neck's going to dip and Pog's going to straddle it and then, as the neck's lifting up higher and higher, he's going to slide, giggling, back down onto its back.

He pauses. Looks down at the shot glass. Almost

touches it.

GOMEY: And then he's going to stop with the giggling and just smile, broadly, and dumbly. Until he kicks it hard, yelping, in the sides. Like you would to spur on a horse. And then the giraffe's going to flap into the sky. And then [*sighs*] they're going to tour, in their ecstasies, all through the stars, alien cities with their shining finery, spider wombs and far, brilliant reaches of time itself.

Gomey gets up, tosses coins on the table. And leaves the diner.

WOMAN: Barman. More coffee.

CURTAIN.

ACT II

Pog enters the diner, sits at counter.

Same woman, seated as before, smiles weakly at him.

The counterman looks up from texting.

Pog points to the coffee machine.

The counterman pours a coffee, sets it in front of him.

WOMAN: [*To no one in particular.*] Fucking giraffe.

Pog sips his coffee. The counterman, who has resumed texting, lets out what might be a sigh, or a scoff.

POG: [*With real vehemence.*] Yeah, that fucking parasite!

An extended pause in which we can hear the occasional night bird or howl or disturbing, pained roar of something like a lion. The pause is heavy, barbed.

POG: [*More subdued now.*] Yeah, fuck. That fucking giraffe that came to me and bowed before me. That fucking giraffe that brought me garlands! That giraffe

that laid eggs at my feet. That giraffe that chewed greens for me.

And when Gomey, the man of my life, confronted us (o, sad, sad day) the giraffe reared up off the veldt, rearing up out my heart. If I must be honest, I felt like I was a snake in Eden. Gomey went right down. He groveled. It was heartbreaking. Gomey, prone, under those hailing blows.

He pauses. Touches the shot glass.

POG: O, it was rending. But exciting, like prize money floating into my greedy giraffe heart.

Humiliation's no joke. But there, the giraffe and the Eden Snake, risen up out of my heart, all pissing on poor Gomey.

The woman places her hand on Pog's, a kind of lover's or maternal gesture.

POG: I thought everything was fine, my life, my moral philosophy. [*And, then, aside to the woman.*] You must be new here, Karen, I never forget anything. I'm pathological, really.

The woman, slack-jawed, looks at Pog. She says

nothing.

POG: If someone were to ask me on the street, I'd say, sure, basically I'm a good person. I've never murdered anyone, never cheated the elderly out of their savings, you know, those terrible things we read about in the paper.

COUNTERMAN: [*To no one in particular.*]
Springboks played with massive heart today.

A roar of something like a lion is heard. Pog, woman (Karen?), and counterman pay attention. The roar fades into silence.

POG: [*Speaking into his coffee mug.*] And, now, the man of my life's out there, pissed on, kicking about, drained, like a wounded bird.

For a moment he appears on the verge of tears, a violent torrent. But whatever it is passes.

The woman places her hand against the side of his face and he leans into it, moaning slightly.

POG: [*In a tone now that is impossible to pin down. Is*

he upset? Excited? Jaded?] And it's going to be a long night on the veldt.

And he laughs. Laughs several times in quick short bursts. Again, here, the tone is unclear.

The counterman texts. Then stops.

The woman's eyes maybe brighten for a moment. And then go dim.

Pog looks out into nowhere for a long time.

Looks at the woman for a moment.

It's a moment where anything seems possible.

It's a moment that goes on forever.

CURTAIN.