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Does the Body Good

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Does the Body Good

a suburban fantasy

by Patrick Link

Does the Body Good was first produced at The New York International Fringe Festival at The Connelly Theatre, NYC, August 2007. It was directed by Kern Clark and the production stage manager was Matt Farabee. The cast was as follows:

LULU – Olivia Henderson

MILKMAN – Vince Eisenson

QUINNIE – Roz Schwartz

TEACHER – Patrick Link

CHARACTERS:

LULU - Female, thirties. Restless and alluring.

MILKMAN - Male, late twenties. Handsome and unaware.

QUINNIE - Female, fourteen. Young and precocious.

TEACHER - Male, thirties. Capable, but broken.

TIME:

Spring.

SETTINGS:

The stage is divided into two locations. One is a suburban doorstep, the other is a public school classroom. All settings should be minimal with fluid transitions.

Does the Body Good

Scene One:

(Morning. A MILKMAN is at the doorstep of a suburban home. He rings the doorbell and places a bottle of milk on the doorstep as LULU enters. She is alarmingly gorgeous and wears a pink bathrobe.)

LULU: Yes?

MILKMAN: Oh! Uh...morning ma'am.

LULU: Good morning.

MILKMAN: Ah. I hope I'm not interrupting. I'm just making delivery. I hope I'm not interrupting. Am I interrupting?

LULU: You're not interrupting.

MILKMAN: No?

LULU: No.

MILKMAN: Oh.

(Beat.)

MILKMAN: Your milk.

(He presents the milk.)

LULU: My thanks.

MILKMAN: Certainly. Well. Drink responsibly.

(He starts to leave.)

LULU: You're new.

MILKMAN: I'm sorry?

LULU: You're new.

MILKMAN: It's that obvious, is it?

LULU: I know all the milkmen, but I don't know you. So I knew you must be new.

MILKMAN: Ah. Yes. Today is my first Tuesday.

LULU: Going well?

MILKMAN: I suppose.

LULU: Suppose?

MILKMAN: Well, for a Tuesday. I've always hated Tuesdays.

LULU: I was born on a Tuesday.

MILKMAN: Well, there are exceptions.

LULU: Am I an exception?

(Long pause.)

MILKMAN: I don't mean to interrupt.

LULU: I told you, you're not interrupting. Help me.

MILKMAN: I'm sorry?

LULU: Could you open this for me?

MILKMAN: Open it?

LULU: Yes. I'm very thirsty and my hands are weak. Could you please open it for me?

MILKMAN: You'd like it open now?

LULU: Yes. Always. One must always drink their milk while it's still fresh. If you could just twist the top off, if you would be so kind.

MILKMAN: Ah. Well...of course.

(After a brief struggle, he twists off the top.)

LULU: Gosh, so strong. I've never seen a milkman so strong before.

MILKMAN: Ha. Uh. Ha. Uh. Thank you. And you know all the milkmen!

(Silence.)

MILKMAN: Ha. Well, I don't mean to keep you.

LULU: Nobody keeps me. Will you please stay while I taste it?

MILKMAN: While you taste it?

LULU: Yes. I need to make sure my milk is fresh. Will you stay while I taste?

MILKMAN: Uh. Of course.

(LULU sips the milk while never breaking eye contact.)

LULU: *(orgasmic)* Mmmmm. Mmmhmmmm. It's...*(sips)*...very, very...*(sips again)* ...very fresh.

MILKMAN: Lovely.

LULU: Would you like to taste it?

MILKMAN: Oh, I better not.

LULU: Oh, but you must taste it. It's so fresh. So fresh. Milk has never tasted so...so...

MILKMAN: Fresh?

LULU: Fresh. Yes. It is very fresh. And cool. Very cool. And very smooth. And very wholesome. Taste?

MILKMAN: I'm afraid I can't.

LULU: Why? It's most excellent.

MILKMAN: I'm afraid I can't. Company policy.

LULU: *(still sipping)* Mmm. I see.

MILKMAN: Yes.

LULU: A company policy.

MILKMAN: Yes.

LULU: *(playful)* Comp-any. Pol-icy.

MILKMAN: Yes. That's right; a policy. So, you see, I can't drink your milk.

LULU: Please. I want to share my milk with you. I want to share. Won't you please let me share?

MILKMAN: I can't.

LULU: You're new.

MILKMAN: I am.

LULU: You're tense. You're nervous.

MILKMAN: It's a Tuesday. Tuesday's are trouble.

LULU: I'm an exception. I'm not trouble.

MILKMAN: Oh, yes you are.

(LULU shakes her head.)

MILKMAN: What are you then?

LULU: Thirsty.

(Their eyes lock.)

MILKMAN: You've uh...got some on your chin there.

LULU: Where?

MILKMAN: There.

LULU: Where?

(THE MILKMAN reaches for LULU's chin. They kiss. Seven seconds.

Lights change. Classroom. QUINNIE, 14, and her TEACHER, 30, face each other in two classroom desks. He holds a test covered in red ink.)

TEACHER: "If it's June now, what month will it be in 100 months?"
Quinnie? Quinnie. Come on now. Not again. I'm not mad. Nobody is mad at you. This is to help you. You know this. Come on now. If it's June now, what month will it be in 100 months. C'mon, 100 months, what month will it be?

(Silence.)

TEACHER: Don't do this. Don't sulk. You haven't done anything wrong. We're not mad. Nobody is mad...well fine, you're mad. But nobody else is mad. Let's just talk. Doesn't have to be about the test, let's just talk. About whatever. Quinnie?

QUINNIE: Please don't call me Quinnie anymore.

TEACHER: What?

QUINNIE: Please don't call me Quinnie anymore.

TEACHER: What should I call you?

QUINNIE: Anything but that.

TEACHER: What's wrong with Quinnie?

QUINNIE: I don't like the way you say it.

TEACHER: How do I say it?

QUINNIE: Like a teacher.

TEACHER: Well I am a teacher. And your name is Quinnie. I think it all works out very nicely.

QUINNIE: Call me Alice.

TEACHER: Excuse me?

QUINNIE: Call me Alice.

TEACHER: I won't call you that.

QUINNIE: Why not?

TEACHER: You know why not, Quinnie.

QUINNIE: Alice, please.

TEACHER: No.

QUINNIE: Why not?

TEACHER: That's my wife's name.

QUINNIE: Oh? Is it?

(Beat.)

TEACHER: "If it's June now, what month will it be in 100 months?"

QUINNIE: You took her picture down.

TEACHER: What?

QUINNIE: Her picture. With the red cashmere sweater. It's not on your desk anymore.

TEACHER: The frame broke.

QUINNIE: How'd that happen?

TEACHER: "If it's June now..."

QUINNIE: Are you fighting?

TEACHER: ...what month will it be in 100 months?"

QUINNIE: I'm wearing lacy underwear. Do you like lacy underwear?

TEACHER: That's inappropriate.

QUINNIE: Oh? Is it?

TEACHER: We're here about your test Quinnie.

QUINNIE: It has lavender hearts on it peppered across the back.

TEACHER: Answer my question.

QUINNIE: You answer mine.

TEACHER: I asked you first.

TEACHER: No. I don't. I don't know what you're talking about. We're here for your test. So, let's do the math. It's June now. 100 months. What month will it be?

(Silence.)

QUINNIE: That tie looks nice.

TEACHER: Thank you.

QUINNIE: I thought you weren't going to wear it anymore.

TEACHER: I wasn't.

QUINNIE: But you are.

TEACHER: Can't help myself sometimes.

QUINNIE: I know you can't. You poor thing. It looks nice.

TEACHER: Thank you.

QUINNIE: You're welcome.

(Lights change. Doorstep. The Kiss continues. Five more seconds. They break. They catch air. They stare.)

MILKMAN: You are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen.

LULU: Am I?

MILKMAN: Without any doubt at all.

LULU: Thank you.

MILKMAN: You're phenomenal.

LULU: Thank you.

MILKMAN: And so polite.

LULU: Thank you.

MILKMAN: Thank you. Your lips. They taste so...wholesome.

LULU: Must be the milk.

MILKMAN: Apparently. You goddess.

(They stare.)

MILKMAN: So, this is what it's like to be a milkman. My—oh—my.

LULU: Happy first Tuesday, Mr. Milkman.

MILKMAN: Thank you. And I was just hoping for a tip.

LULU: Low on cash. Sorry.

MILKMAN: I'll forgive you.

LULU: Look at that face. You're like a puppy in a window.

MILKMAN: Wolf.

(Time passes.)

LULU: Well, thank you, sir. For the milk and for the delivery. It was a very lovely delivery.

MILKMAN: My duty and my pleasure.

LULU: I'll be sure to call on you when I need refilling.

MILKMAN: I will always be there to fill you.

LULU: I'm sure you would be.

MILKMAN: I would be. With bells on. Maybe just bells on.

LULU: Well, thanks again.

(THE MILKMAN puts his hand on the doorknob to enter her home.)

LULU: Take your hand off that.

MILKMAN: What?

LULU: Take your hand off now.

MILKMAN: What's the matter? I was only going to go inside.

LULU: I don't let anyone inside.

MILKMAN: I'm sorry?

LULU: I don't let anyone inside.

(Lights change. Classroom. Quinnie and Teacher.)

QUINNIE: June.

TEACHER: I'm sorry?

QUINNIE: That's what month it would be in 100 months. It would just be June again.

TEACHER: Why do you think that?

QUINNIE: 'Cause it's one of those trick question things.

TEACHER: It's not.

QUINNIE: It's not?

TEACHER: No. It's not. Work it out on paper.

QUINNIE: I don't know how to.

TEACHER: You do.

QUINNIE: December?

TEACHER: You're just guessing. Solve it.

QUINNIE: I can't. Please show me how.

TEACHER: Right, the trick is being able to recognize patterns. First, how many months are in a year?

(TEACHER shows QUINNIE on paper. She doesn't look at the page. She looks only at him.)

TEACHER: There are 12 months in a year. So we'll say, "hey, if it's June now, it'll be June again in 12 months, and June again in 24, months, and June again after 36, and then 48..." and on and on until you get to 96 months. It will be June again in 96 months-so you were close with your guess. But once you do it out on paper you'll see you have to add 4 more months to reach 100. June + 4 months = October. Are we clear? Quinnie?

QUINNIE: You're a good teacher.

TEACHER: No, I'm not.

QUINNIE: Yes, you are. You're a good man, Mr. Harrison. A good man.

TEACHER: Well, thank you.

QUINNIE: No, you didn't hear me. I said you're a good man.

TEACHER: Thank you.

QUINNIE: I'll say it again. You, Mr. Harrison. You. You are a good man.

TEACHER: That's enough.

QUINNIE: You're a good man. You shouldn't feel bad.

(She slips off her shoe.)

TEACHER: Quinnie.

QUINNIE: You're good. G. O. O. D.

TEACHER: Quintin. You should stop now. You need to be good.

QUINNIE: I am good.

TEACHER: Well, I'm not. Okay? I'm not good. And you're too young to know the difference.

QUINNIE: That's not true. I do know. I know a good man when I see one. Clearly Alice doesn't. I don't know why she doesn't appreciate you.

TEACHER: Of course she does. She's my wife.

QUINNIE: I can tell. The wife in the broken frame.

TEACHER: Well, you know what? She's still my wife. For better or worse, she's still my wife. And I can't do anything about that.

QUINNIE: You could.

TEACHER: No. Believe me, I can't. I can't do anything.

QUINNIE: That's silly.

TEACHER: I'm not disagreeing. But that's the situation. So let's not discuss it anymore. Ever. Is that abundantly clear to you?

QUINNIE: So, it's only Alice.

TEACHER: Yes.

QUINNIE: Alice in the red cashmere sweater.

TEACHER: Yes.

QUINNIE: Then why are you wearing my tie?

TEACHER: It's my tie.

QUINNIE: But I gave it to you. It looks nice because it's from me.

TEACHER: No. It looks nice because it's red and white. And those are our school colors. I'm showing my school spirit.

QUINNIE: What's the school song?

TEACHER: No idea. See, I told you. I'm not a good teacher. In fact, I shouldn't even be a teacher.

QUINNIE: What should you be?

(Silence.)

QUINNIE: Mr. Harrison? What should you be?

TEACHER: I should be going. And so should you.

QUINNIE: Don't you trust me?

(TEACHER starts to pack.)

TEACHER: Study hard. Be sure to do all the practice problems...

QUINNIE: Look at me, Mr. Harrison. Look at me.

TEACHER: ...the odds and the evens...

QUINNIE: You're not looking!

(He looks.)

QUINNIE: I thought we were friends.