

Inhospitable Soil:  
A very short one act play by Jugular Malloy

Hi alright?

*Scans audience, responds to them empathically and non-verbally*

So last weekend I went to see me Dad.

He's not been feeling well.

I got the bus from the station,

There was a Surrey woman and her Polish mate on the bus chattin away

Actually it was mostly the Surrey woman chattin away...

Y'know the way some people hear a foreign accent and take it as an opportunity for a one-way conversation

But the Polish woman brought up squirrels

And the Surrey woman was like

"Rats with tails!

No. I always say

I always say this

I always say

*Pigeons* are rats with wings

and *squirrels* are rats with tails.

*In this country*, yeah, we class them as pests.

Because they are

They're pests."

Back in North London once I'd been complaining to my weed dealer that the local foxes had massacred our chickens

But he went "You can't judge them

They're urrbanites

Like you and me

Just tryna survive

They're Urrbanites."

Last time I was struggling with my family Raj told me to look for the weeds.

Because they're everywhere

between the kerb and the road

and the walls and the pavement.

They thrive

Regardless

West Surrey has inhospitable soil

That's why it's all goarse and hard leaves

Between the barracks and the money.

Still.  
The weeds push through.

He's not been feeling well

I made a cup of tea  
I take it black now, like me Grandad.  
It smelt like the old boat club on the canal.

I complained to me Dad about me losing me hair  
He said  
"Bitumen and cuddle a black labrador"

He's not been feeling well

"Myocardial bridging.

There's just one little symptom  
There's just one little  
One little thing  
That *might* happen  
You might  
                          just  
                                  drop  
  dead.

But you're dead before you hit the floor  
It aint a bad way to go."

Woking is a London overspill town  
And you'd be forgiven for thinking that that refers to an  
overspillage of living people

But Brookwood cemetery, which is huge  
Was established in 1852 to soak up an overspillage of Londoners  
dead from cholera.

It's very pretty  
Unspoilt by the headstones they couldn't afford.

The local economy is death.

My great grandad came over from Mayo to join the British Army...

Dad and Grandad beat panels for British Aerospace  
the Brixton nailbomber went to my school  
and my childhood sounded like TRANNIIIIIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE  
He's not been feeling well.

During the ebola outbreak he said that they should napalm the  
entirety of West Africa.

*Prolonged pause*

When I popped out me Mum's fanny they took one look at me and wrote 'girl' on the birth certificate.  
No doubts.

But 23 years later when I came home looking like this for the first time and we took our tops off for haircuts me Dad took one look at me and went

"You came out like that."

He's not been feeling well.

Last Christmas he told me that he'd finally voted Tory.

He was supposed to be a socialist! Like me Grandad.

I called him an arselicker.  
And I meant to hurt him.

He's not been feeling well.

I used to freeze when he said shit like that

And when I first found my voice it shouted

And then it strategised.

My anger spake his anger.

I never told him about the *pain*

Because the pain has to ask

Do you love all of me?

But he's not been feeling well and when I called him an arselicker he demanded apology in a kiss.

"I'm a miserable old cunt."

I don't want him to die a racist.

So I decided to stop, I decided to stop, I decided to, I decided  
I decided to stop talking to the racist  
And start talking to him.  
And he's not been feeling well so on Sunday I gave him my tears

I said

It hurts me in my *soul*

when you say shit like that

because you're talking about everyone I love  
and everyone I love is me  
and I am everyone I love  
and you haven't met my family because I've protected them from you  
but will you come for my birthday?  
and meet us?  
he said "could do"  
I said "could do?"  
he said "well I might be feeling better by then"  
I said "what so you think I'm just gonna say fuck off Dad you're  
better now I don't give a shit anymore?"  
he said "that's one way of putting it."  
I said "I would like an answer, please."  
he said "Alright."

And I gave him kisses  
and blew a raspberry on his bald patch.

Our hatred is not our own.

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Jugular Malloy, 2022



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