

Slow Fade

#Endure

(A short play)

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Member

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(Lighting/Sound: Darkness. Total black out to begin.)

Enter JEZIBEL

(Lighting/Sound: Lights blink up, revealing JEZIBEL standing in a pool of spotlight, staring blankly out into space.)

JEZIBEL

...

(Lighting/Sound: A second pool of light snaps into existence upstage, revealing the closed door of JEZIBEL's apartment.)

(Sound: A soft knocking sound.)

JEZIBEL

(Doesn't move.)

...

(Sound: A soft knocking sound.)

JEZIBEL

(Moves restlessly about the apartment.)

...

(Sound: Slightly more insistent knocking.)

VOICE

What are you doing?

JEZIBEL

Go away.

VOICE

Let me in.

JEZIBEL

No.

(Sound: Louder knocking.)

JEZIBEL

(Rushes to door. Opens it slightly, revealing DESPAIR's face peeking thru.)

I said, go away.

(Shuts door forcefully.)

I'm still here. DESPAIR's VOICE

... JEZIBEL

Just let me in. DESPAIR's VOICE

No. JEZIBEL

You will eventually. DESPAIR's VOICE

JEZIBEL
(Dark laughter.)
Ha ha ha ha ha ha, no.

... DESPAIR's VOICE

(A long, awkward silence settles over the apartment... Is DESPAIR gone?)

... JEZIBEL
(Creeps silently towards door.)

... DESPAIR's VOICE
Still here.

JEZIBEL
Gyah!
(Rushes to wall and tackles it. Throws shoulder against it.)

DESPAIR's VOICE
What are you doing?

(Sound: Loud, insistent knock.)

JEZIBEL
Go away.

DESPAIR's VOICE
Let me in.

JEZIBEL

You're not exactly useful.

(Moves as if about to start banging head against the wall.)

DESPAIR's VOICE

I'm more useful than banging your head against the wall.

JEZIBEL

(Stops.)

...

DESPAIR's VOICE

...Or slitting your wrists.

JEZIBEL

...

(Walks determinedly to door. Opens it slightly, enough to see DESPAIR's face again.)

I'd never do anything so messy.

DESPAIR

Wouldn't you?

JEZIBEL

No. I'd blow my brains out. Quick. Decisive. So no one could stop me.

DESPAIR

...

Let me in.

JEZIBEL

No.

(Opens door fully. Leaves it open.)

...just... stay there.

DESPAIR

As you wish.

JEZIBEL

(Watches DESPAIR silently for a while.)

...

Why do you want to come in?

DESPAIR

Why do you want to bang your head on the wall? I exist for a purpose. And it's a good one.

JEZIBEL

You're counterproductive.

DESPAIR

But I enable continuance. While I'm here...

JEZIBEL

...I'm not dead.

DESPAIR

Exactly. And if you're not dead...

JEZIBEL

...Productivity can commence.

DESPAIR

After I leave.

JEZIBEL

Why don't you stay awhile?

DESPAIR

What?

JEZIBEL

The wall... It won't bang itself.

...

Come in.

DESPAIR

Not yet.

JEZIBEL

You're worse than a cat. "Let me in! Oh, look. The door's being held open. I'm gonna think a while."

DESPAIR

Hmmmmmm... You have to bring me in.

JEZIBEL

Bring you?

DESPAIR

Usher. Draw me. Sit me down.

JEZIBEL

You make my life Hell, and I treat you like royalty.

DESPAIR

That's how it goes.

JEZIBEL

You're sick.

DESPAIR

I'm... the antidote. ...to your sickness. The wall... is undented. Draw me in. Sit me down.

JEZIBEL

(Approaches slowly.)

...

DESPAIR

Take my hand. Just... take it.

JEZIBEL

(Touches DESPAIR's hand, face, shoulder, waist... Pulls DESPAIR into the room as if guiding a reluctant lover.)

DESPAIR

That wasn't so bad.

JEZIBEL

(Not letting go.)

No.

DESPAIR

You know, I love you.

JEZIBEL

...

DESPAIR

I wouldn't bother otherwise. I'd leave you... to your empty walls.

JEZIBEL

(Clings tightly to DESPAIR.)

...

DESPAIR

That's it. Hold me tight. While I'm alive, you still can feel.
(Hugs JEZIBEL back, roughly. Devouringly.)

JEZIBEL
You're mine.

DESPAIR
Always.

JEZIBEL
(Bears DESPAIR to the ground in a frenzied scuffle. They could be making Love, except for the desperate unhappiness in JEZIBEL's face. They press together, as if trying to merge, clinging, moving as one.)
Stay!

DESPAIR
I can't.

JEZIBEL
I need you.

DESPAIR
You can't live like this.

JEZIBEL
I—

DESPAIR
No! Not for long. I'll destroy you.

JEZIBEL
(Sobbing.)
Ahhhhhh...

DESPAIR
Just... let it out!

JEZIBEL
(Wailing. Sobbing.)
Ahhhhhhhh...!

DESPAIR
(Kisses JEZIBEL fiercely, possessively. Whatever body part that's in reach.)
I'm yours...!

(Sound/Lighting: Slow fade to black. The sounds of JEZIBEL and DESPAIR continue into the total black, then slowly fade into silence.)

FINIS