

Fantasizing motherhood in 'Under the Covers'

This is the fantasy of motherhood that shamefully weeped from my rock solid breasts with no mouth to feed. This is the performance that could only happen once my pre-stretched stomach produced a breathing child, or two. This is the confused longing to escape achieved motherhood, an escape akin to a sexual fantasy that only works if it never happens.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we couldn't afford babysitters this evening, please look after our children while we tip toe out of lullaby reality to drive wildly, just for an hour (adhering to speed limits).

Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are living our fantasy. We are performing at the venues we aspired to. Selling out. Getting paid. Staying overnight. Yes, we are going to stay up until at least 11.55pm. We are definitely *not* going to fall asleep in our twin hotel beds watching *The Changeling*. Because we have organised child-care. We are living the dream. But at this minute, pre-performance, we are sitting on a toilet, weeing. Sitting on the toilet, undoing our shirts to our belly buttons. Sitting on the toilet, preparing an empty milk bottle, attaching a breast pump. Balancing our mobile phones on our lap. Plopping the boob into the plastic, watching the nipple suck through the vacuum, into a new shape, until almost bleeding in those first few pumps. One hand pump, pump, pump. One hand on the phone, swiping to a photo of the baby, to induce the milk. Hands full of pump and phone...our babies, there they are, laughing, crying, feeding, facebook, emails, work, timetables, plans...milk stops, shit, ow, ow, ow. Nipples expressing blood-milk. Backtrack to photos...babies, milk, aaagh, there she flows, like sieved gold. A half-bottle-full. Breasts emptied and ready to step on stage now, the black box fantasy. Button up, admire, smile, and tip the bottle down the toilet, pump, pump, glug. Milk tears. Sorry kids, sorry breasts.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thankyou for babysitting.

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Written for:

Live Art Development Agency Study Guide 'Live Art and the Maternal' 2016

Link: <http://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/blog/live-art-and-motherhood-a-study-room-guide-on-live-art-and-the-maternal/>