

ANATOMY 1968 by Karen Hartman

Unpublished

The Hong Kong Hilton. Val is on her honeymoon. Mid-argument with her husband, who is on leave from the Vietnam War and resisting romance.

VAL

My whole life will I hear from you, shh shh shh?

I was better off teaching first grade eating sauerkraut. You buy a pound of meat, a pound of kraut, a loaf of bread on Monday and you have supper every night the whole week. You buy a pair of shoes or a coat each fall, you buy a lipstick every six months, you buy fabric as needed and you sew some really stylish things.

Shh children Shh. This is a book. It has a spine. Do not break the spine if you want your book to remain firm, attractive and coherent.

This is a vowel. This is a marigold. That is a hawk.

Do you have any idea how it feels to say, George Washington, and they have no idea who is George Washington? Mother Goose and they ask mother who?

Do you imagine me illuminating such concepts for people who were unborn the year of our first date?

They cried when I left. They don't believe I'm coming back.

They made a big card out of butcher paper and all wrote their names. Next to the names were tear stains.

These are children who three months ago could not write their names.

Do you think I'll ever be that again? An authority?

Do you think anyone, even my own offspring, will again dress neatly for the privilege of sitting at my feet, hushing while I read, waiting for the thoughts I supply?

A boy asked me where his big brother went. In front of the whole class. I said:

Time is not moving through us. We are moving through time. So the past is real. A person who dies is still real. He is not in the present. But he is in the past, really truly in the past. It's just that we see the past so dimly and the future only in grim blips. Yet they are real. Just as your home is real – even though this room is not home. Your lunch is real. Although you have not yet eaten lunch. A person who dies exists as surely as home, lunch, and every other thing beyond our sight.

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You are welcome to perform this monologue for free!

You may CUT but you may not CHANGE the words. Please introduce the monologue with title of play and author's name (this is a monologue from Leah's Train by Karen Hartman).

Feel free to send a video link to yourself performing the monologue through the Contact page, and let me know if I may share! Thanks and be well, KH

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