

Blue Handed

*(Breaking The Silence
Testimony 41, Hebron)*

A Play for 2 Voices

By
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Both actors to us:

1

I'm thinking about hands

The hands that touch

The hands that soothe

The hand that wears the wedding ring, the engagement ring, the going-steady-like-
in-a-50s movie ring

The hand you hold

The hand you sculpt with, paint with, gesture with

Even when you're on the phone and no one can see you

2

Um, no, I-

I'll talk. Sure.

I don't remember exactly what happened.

1

I'm thinking about the hand that waves to a friend

The hand covered in henna on a wedding night

The hand that slaps

The hand that steals

The hand that balls into a fist

2

I think about it sure

But again, like I said:

He was just some Arab,

We said hands up

He was standing at the checkpoint.

HANDS UP!

	1
The finger on the trigger	
The finger that gestures “over here”	
The middle finger – an insult but somehow silly,	
Or when both hands go up	
	2
HANDS UP!	
	1
And the fingers are spread	
Like in a cop show	
	2
Let me see your hands!	
	<i>Actor 1 lifts their hands up, palms open.</i>
	1
These are my hands.	
	<i>Silence.</i>
	<i>1 puts hands down. 1 becomes the interviewer, perhaps addresses 2 now, perhaps still addresses us.</i>
	2
Yeah so, we had a guy in our unit, really screwed up.	
	1
Screwed up how?	
	2
He enjoyed abuse.	
	1
Ok.	
	2
He once hurt someone so badly	
	1
What happened?	

2

There was some roughing up, they were pushing each other, some Arab and, I don't know, they were arguing. The soldier had stolen a box of tobacco from this Arab. The Arab suddenly said, "Thieves! Thieves! I saw you!" We tried to push him away, "What do you want? No one touched your stuff!"

1

The soldier was talking?

2

Yeah, he said: No one touched your stuff. You calling me a thief?!

1

Had he stolen the tobacco from the Arab?

2

No one knew.

1

Ok go on.

2

Ok so he said, "You calling me a thief?!" and started beating him up, really badly. The soldiers said, hey, stop. But they beat him to a pulp.

1

Who beat whom?

2

The soldiers beat up this Arab. And he took a wire, that soldier. He was really screwed up. He wound up this wire around and around this guy's hand.

1

Around his hand?

2

Yes. I'm telling you, we tried to stop him. He said: "I won't let him go, he raised his hand at me! He will be punished!"

Silence. 1 to us again:

1

I am thinking about when I was a kid
And I had this teacher who always said:
Don't put your hands in your pocket

I said: Why?
He said, It looks sloppy
I said, It's my hands in my pocket, what's sloppy?
He said, It makes you look like you're up to no good.

And the other kids started to make fun of me:
"What's in your pockets?"
"You touching yourself?"
"You playing with yourself?"
Stuff like that.

I wasn't.
...But actually
Sometimes I -
Not like I was playing with myself
But
You know at 7
Sometimes my hands inside my pockets
Would *drift* there,
And I'd
Feel myself.
Like: I'd hold myself.
There
To feel.

Until this kid,
Somehow this kid got this handkerchief with blue ink on it
And he got it into my pocket
How?
I don't know how
But so when I put my hands in my pocket that day
The day in question
They came out blue
Blue
I was 7. *Crazy*.
I reached into my pocket and I didn't realize what I was feeling
Something felt sticky, and I pulled it out
My hand was covered in blue ink.
I was
Pardon the phrase
Caught red-handed.

I never put my hands in my pockets again.

Silence.

1

(Interviewer again)
So what happened next?

2

Oh. Ok, so this soldier was crazy, he wound this wire around and around the Arab's wrist, as close as he could to the skin. We tried to cut it off for about an hour. We couldn't. It literally cut into him.

1

Oh my god.

2

Yeah. I know. His hand got blue in a second.
And the guy cries
"I can't feel my hand any more!"
We got to actually digging in with a knife to loosen it
Screwed up, that soldier, really screwed up

1

What did you do with that Arab?

2

Let him go, what could we do?

1

With his hand in that state?

2

We told him, "Go to the hospital". We can't do anything.

1

You cut the wire-...

2

We couldn't. We tried. You know how many times we tried to cut off that wire? We couldn't manage it. I'm telling you, the best medic I ever saw, really soft hearted, he says to me: "I want to kill the person who did this. It's a sure amputation, if we can't get it off." A whole hour, I tell you. He went through hell with this. He says to me: "I'm a medic, I can't believe I'm letting such things happen." That's what he told me. You see what a state he got into? He tells me: "I'm ashamed of myself for being a medic and letting such things happen." That medic... that medic.

1

That medic?

2

That medic really went through hell.

Silence.

1

I'm thinking about hands
The hands that touch
The hands that soothe

The hand that turned the page of the paper when I read this story last year
The hand that covered my mouth
The claws I made in anguish

The hands that typed this play

And the hand
Elsewhere
That even now
Though gone
Might be felt

And other hands
That throw stones

Or make bombs

To avenge

2

Hands up!

1 lifts hands up, Now one hand is blue¹.

...End of play

¹ The hand should covered in paint or dye, a shocking blue.