

FREDRIK  
BRATTBERG

VIRUS  
– A FUGE

English version  
by May-Brit Akerholt

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by

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'''

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*Two shadow figures*

*Two people*

*Two hand puppets*

*Two finger puppets*

*A home where He and She live.*

*In the middle of the living room is a model town. In the model town is a home that looks like the previously mentioned home. In this home there is also a model town with yet a home.*

*He is standing by the model town. He is working on it, screwing, cutting, gluing, etc. Little He stands by the model town in the model town doing the same, as does the Very Little He.*

*She enters from the side.*

**She:** I fell asleep.

I must've fallen asleep.

It's not like me, to sleep like this in the middle of the day.

**He:** No.

*She sits down.*

**She:** I feel completely dazed.

My head's completely dazed.

**He:** You get like this.  
You get like this if you sleep in the middle of the day.

*Pause. He keeps working, She stretches, tries to recover.*

**He:** Would you like to have a look.  
**She:** Have you made something new?  
**He:** I have.  
I'm always making something new.  
I'm changing it. Developing it.

*She walks over to the model town, looking at it.*

**She:** You keep going on with this, don't you.  
**He:** Yes.  
**She:** You're creative.  
**He:** I am.  
**She:** You always have been. Creative.  
You've always been good with your hands.  
**He:** Yes.  
Thanks.

*Pause. She keeps studying the model town.*

**She:** But you've stained your shirt?  
**He:** Yes.

**She:** Let me have a look.  
Now *that* one won't be removed in the wash.  
See I we have stain remover.

**He:** Yes.

*He goes to look for stain remover, She keeps looking at the model town.*

**He:** Do you know where it could be?

**She:** No.  
No I don't. Look on the shelf in the hall.

*Pause.*

*Little She enters from the side.*

**Little She:** I fell asleep.  
I must've fallen asleep.

**She:** She's coming out.  
She's been asleep too, same as me.

**Little She:** It's not like me, to sleep like this in the middle of the day.

**She:** Fascinating.  
I forget, from one time to the next, how fascinating  
this is.

**He:** Isn't it. Thanks.

**Little She:** I feel completely dazed.  
My head's completely dazed.

**She:** It's not difficult to see where you get your inspiration.

**He:** No it isn't.

That's what it's like to live with an artist.

**She:** You can say that again.

**Little He:** Would you like to have a look.

**Little She:** Have you made something new.

**Little He:** I have.

I'm always making something new.

*Little She walks over to the model town.*

**She:** There's a model town there.

**He:** Yes.

That's the new one I'm working on.

**She:** They have a model town too.

**He:** Yes.

A model town in the model town.

**She:** Fabulous.

**Little She:** You're building and building.

You keep going on with this, don't you.

**Little He:** Yes.

**Little She:** It's creative.

**Little He:** It is.

**Little She:** You've always been good with your hands.

But you've stained your shirt?

**She:** He has stained his shirt too.

He's stained his shirt, same as you.

**Little She:** Now that one won't be removed in the wash.

See if we have stain remover.

*Little He goes to look for stain remover.*

**She:** How funny. You know what, that was really very funny.

**He:** Thanks a lot.

**She:** Imagine including that, that he too has stained his shirt.

To include small details, to have an eye for that.

**He** I do, don't I.

Thanks.

**She** Very good.

That's really very good.

**He:** We don't have stain remover.

**She:** Don't we?

You need a stain remover to get rid of that one.

*Pause.*

**He:** *To those in the little model town.*

Sorry ...

Sorry but ... I've stained my shirt, and don't have stain remover.

**Little He:** I was just looking for it as well, just now.

**He:** Yes I know.

**Little He:** You can borrow mine, if I find it.



*Little He keeps looking for stain remover.*

**She:** Do you borrow from each other? I didn't know that.

**He:** Oh yes.

We do sometimes.

**She:** We've lived together all this time, and I didn't know that.

The thought that you may borrow from each other, has never occurred to me.

**He:** We do.

Like now, if I can't find stain remover, I can ask.

**She:** But ...

**He:** Yes?

**She:** But I'm just thinking ...

I've been sleeping in the middle of the day and I ... I think I may be on my way to getting sick, that there's something ...

**He:** Yes?

**She:** And she. She came in and felt just like me. You don't think ...

**He:** What?

**She:** You don't think that she could've had it first and then, in some way then ...

**He:** No.

No, no. That's impossible.

That's not possible.  
**She:** No?  
**He:** No.  
**Little She:** Now something's happening here.

*Very Little She enters the very little model town from the side.*

**Very Little She:** I fell asleep.

I must've fallen asleep.

**She:** What's happening now?

**He:** It's in the little model town.

The model town in the model town.

**Little She:** She's been sleeping too, same as me.

**Very Little She:** It's not like me, to sleep like this in the middle of the day.

**Little She:** Fascinating.

**Little He:** You see where I get my inspiration.

That's what it's like to be married to an artist.

**Very Little She:** I feel completely dazed.

My head's completely dazed.

**Very Little He:** Yes that's what happens.

That's what happens when you sleep in the middle of the day.

**Little He:** *To He.* Hey!

Hey there!

**She** He's talking to you.

**He** *To Little He.* Yes?

**Little He** We don't have stain remover.

**He:** We'll have to manage without then.

**Little He:** But I can ask the others, I've stained my shirt too.

**She:** Ask the others?

**He:** *To Little He.*  
Yes.  
Why don't you ask the others.

**Little He:** *To Very Little He.*  
Sorry.  
Sorry.

**She:** He's asking the others?

**Little She:** What are you doing?

**She** He's asking the smallest ones?

**He** Yes.

**Little He:** Sorry, but I've stained my shirt and I don't have stain remover.

**Very Little He:** Hang on, I'll have a look, perhaps we do.

**Little She:** Do you borrow from each other?

**Little He:** Yes.  
We do sometimes.

**Little She:** The thought has never occurred to me that you ... that you borrow from each other.

**Little He:** Yes we do.  
Like now, if I can't find stain remover, I can just ask.

**Little She:** But ...

**Little He:** Yes?

**Little She:** But I'm thinking that ...  
I actually think that I'm getting sick and what if ... what if it comes from there.

**She:** You see!  
You see! She's thinking the same as me.  
I'm not feeling well and it can come from there.

**He:** From the smallest ones?

**She:** From down there.

**He** From the model town in the model town?

But honestly, darling ... now you're exaggerating.

**She** Yes.

**He** You're really exaggerating.

**She** Yes.

No.

I don't know.

**He** Hang on, be quiet.

He's saying something.

**She** The smallest one?

**He** Yes.

Shh.

**Very Little He:** We have stain remover.

**She:** Did he say something?

What's he saying, I can't hear.

**He:** It's not so easy to hear the smallest ones, but you can see. He's holding up stain remover.

*Very Little He gives stain remover to Little He.*

**Little He:** Thank you.

*To He* Hey!

Hey there!

**He:** *To Little He.*

He had some?

**Little He** Yes

*Little He gives He a very small spray bottle of remover.*

**He** Thanks.

**She:** Are you going to use it?

**He:** Yes.

**She:** You're borrowing from the smallest ones.

**He:** For the first time. It's brand new, you know, this model town in the model town.

*He tries to spray the stain with the very little spray bottle.*

**She:** So now you're borrowing from them?  
You're borrowing from the smallest ones?

**He:** I am.

**She:** That spray bottle, I wouldn't even touch it. She was sick, the very smallest one, and now you're touching that bottle. It could easily be where it comes from, from her, the smallest one.

**He:** Come on, it's not coming from the small ones.  
It's not coming from those small ones.

**She:** But if I'm worried about it, the least you can do is support me.  
You can at least take my side.  
I'm worried, I'm telling you.  
I'm actually really worried.

**He:** Sure.  
Yes.

**She:** Yes?

Let me have a look at that bottle.

Hold it up, don't give it to me. I don't want to touch it.

*He holds up the very little stain remover in front of She, she tries to read it.*

**He** Can you read it?

**She:** I think it says ... kills bacteria. They usually do, don't they, stain removers.

You know what ...

You take this bottle and spray the smallest town clean.

**He** Yes.

I can try, but ...

**She:** Try.

*He takes the very small spray bottle and tries to sprays the home in the very smallest model town.*

**He** This one is ...

It's not easy to get ... to get a hold on ...

**Very Little She:** What's he doing?

What's happening?

**Very Little He:** It looks like he's ...

He's washing our table.

**He:** This doesn't help much, I'll ...  
I can't push it properly and ...

**She** Let me see ...  
Perhaps we have something else.

*She is looking for another type of spray.*

**He** I don't know if anything's coming out.  
I don't understand, is it empty or ...

**Very Little He** Something's coming out.

**He** What's he saying?

**Little He** He's saying that something's coming out.

**He** *To She.*

Something's coming out here.  
Something's coming out, at least they've had some  
spray on their table, I wonder if you ...  
If you can find a cloth.  
See if you can find a small cloth or ... or something we  
can cut up.

*She comes back, carrying bottle of chlorine spray.*

**She:** What about this one?

**He:** That one?  
Are we going to use chlorine.

**She:** If so, only one squirt.  
Hold it over them and give it one squirt.

*Pause.*

One squirt.

**He:** One squirt?

**She:** Yes.

*He holds the chlorine spray over the smallest model town.*

**He:** Like this?

**She:** And then you give it one squirt.

**Little He:** What are you doing?

**Little She:** Chlorine spray.

It says chlorine spray.

**Little He:** No.

No, you're not doing that.

**Very Little He:** What ...

**Very Little She:** Oh no, what's happening.

**She:** One squirt.

One squirt.

*He pumps the spray bottle.*

**Very Little He:** Fuck.

Bloody hell.

**Very little She:** Chlorine.

**Very Little He:** Chlorine.

It's fucking chlorine.

**She:** And then isolate her, the other one.



The one in this model town.

**He:** Yes.

**Very Little She:** I can't breathe, I ...  
Help.

**Very Little He:** Help.

**Little He:** *To He.*  
They're dying down there, do you realise that!

**Very Little He:** I can't ... breathe ...

**Little She** They're dying!

**Little He** They're dying down there.

*Very Little She and Very Little He die.*

**Little He** They're dead.

**Little She** He ...  
He's killed them.

**He:** *To Little He and Little She.*

That ...

That wasn't the intention ...

**She:** And now you isolate the other one.

**He:** That wasn't the intention, to kill them, I ...  
I was just going to clean.

**Little She** You don't just walk into people's homes like that.

**Little He** No, you don't.  
You don't just walk in like that and start to clean.  
And if you do, if you walk into people's homes like that, well, you  
should use a bottle that fits the size of their home.

**He** Sure.

Yes.

**Little He** Yes.

**She:** And then the other one.

Then you isolate the other one.

**He:** Yes.

*He puts his hand down in the model town and pushes Little She to the side.*

**Little She:** Hey, what ...  
What are you doing?

**Little He:** Let go of her.

*He puts walls around Little She, so she becomes separated in her own room.*

**Little He:** What are you doing?

**He:** *To Little He.*

She'll have to stay here for a while, you see ...

**She** She could be infectious.

**Little He:** Infectious?  
That she can infect you, are you ... ?  
Are you out of your mind?!

**He:** No. It just has to be like this. For a bit.

*He carries a chair into Little She's room.*

**He:** There. Now you can stay here./Now you have  
somewhere to sit

This can be your chair.

**[She** And a blanket.

**He** And a blanket here. That you can pull over you.]

**Little She:** *To He.* Am I going to stay in here?

**He:** Yes.  
For a period of time.

**Little She:** How long's that?

**He:** Aah ...  
I don't know.

**Little She:** You don't know?!

**He** Ten days.  
A week maybe.

**Little She** But...  
God help us.

**Little He:** But what about food? She's got to have food.

**He:** *To Little He.* You can give her food. Of course she'll  
have food.

**Little He:** There's no door! There's no door into the room.  
You want me to climb over the wall, is that it?  
You want me to throw food over the wall?

**He:** Hang on, I'll fix it. /Just hang on.  
You won't have to climb over the wall, look.

*He cuts out a door in the wall.*

**She:** Is she going to have a door? Then she can go in and  
out.

**He:** He can't climb over the wall.  
It'll have to be like this.  
She has to have a door.

There.

[Put toilet back in]

**Big She:** I fell asleep.

**Big She:** I think I feel asleep.

**She** There.

Now she's awake.

**Big She:** It's not like me, to sleep like this in the middle of the day.

**Big He:** No.

**Big She:** I feel completely dazed.

My head's completely dazed.

**Big He:** Yes you get like that.

You get like that if you sleep in the middle of the day.

**She:** She ... She's not well, just listen.

Oh my god, what is ...

You ...

You have to tell her that ... that everything's under control, that we know where the infection comes from, that we're controlling it.

Tell her that we've sprayed chlorine and isolated one of them.

**Big He:** Would you like to have a look.

**Big She:** Have you made something new?

**Big He:** I have.

I'm always making something new.

*Big She walks over to the He and She's home, which is part of a large model town. Big He sits and cuts and glues next to this large model town.*

**She:** Tell her.

**He:** *To Big She.*

Sorry!

**Big She:** You keep on going with this, don't you.

**Big He:** Yes.

**Big She:** You're creative.

**She:** She can't hear you.

**He** Sorry!

**Big She** *To Big He.*

You always have been, creative.

**He** Sorry, there's an infection here!

**Big She** You've always been good with your hands.

**Big He** \*I have. Thanks. [Jo. Takk.]

[**He** There's been an infection here, down here!]

**She** She can't hear you.

**Big She:** But have you stained your shirt?

See if we have stain remover.

**Big He:** Yes.

*Big He looks for stain remover, Big She looks at the big model town.*

**He:** There's been an infection but we've ...

**She:** We've fixed it!

**Big She:** They're talking to me.

**Big He:** Yes they are.

They're very social.

**Big She:** Fascinating.

**Big He** When somebody goes over to them, they ...  
they go over to them too.

**He:** Everything's under control, and ...

**She** And one's been isolated!

**Big She:** They say they've isolated one.

**Big He:** Isolated one? You'd better ask what they mean.

**Big She:** *To He and She.* You've isolated one, what do  
you mean?

**He** There's been an infection here, down here, but we've  
stopped it.

**She:** We've isolated one and sprayed chlorine.

**Big She:** *To Big He.*

There's been an infection down here, what they mean by that. Down here.

**Big He** That's the new thing these days.

They mean in their model town.

**Big She** Oh, they mean in their town.

**Big He** Yes, isn't it groovy!

A model town in the model town.

**Big She** *To He and She.* My goodness, you have a city.

You've been given a city.

**He** Yes, I'm always making ...

**Big She:** *To Big He.* He says it's him who's made it.

*To He.*

How clever.

Yes, how very clever.

**Big He:** But listen, we don't have stain remover.

*Big He walks over to the big model town.*

**Big He** *To He.* Sorry, but I've stained my shirt and I don't have stain remover.

**Big She:** Do you borrow from each other?

**Big He:** We do sometimes.

**He:** We only have this. This little one.

*He holds up the very little stain remover. Big He takes it.*

**Big She:** You're using that?  
Are you going to use that ... a ... tiny dot.

**Big He:** Yes, if something comes out.

**He:** *To Big He.*  
Something's coming out.  
It doesn't show but something is coming out.

**Big She:** No honestly ...  
Now you're touching that bottle, the same one  
everyone's been touching, and there's already  
one in isolation here.

*Big She picks up a big chlorine spray and gives it to Big He.*

**She:** What's she ...  
What's she doing?

**Big She:** One squirt.

**Big He:** With chlorine?

**Big She:** On the model town in the model town.  
One squirt.



*Big He holds the chlorine spray over the little model town.*

**He:** What are you doing?

**She:** Chlorine.

**He:** No.

No, you're not doing that.

**Little He:** What ...

**Little She:** What's happening.

**Big She:** One squirt.

*Big He gives it one squirt.*

**Little He:** Fuck.

Bloody hell.

**Little She:** Chlorine.

**Little He:** It's fucking chlorine.

*Big He puts his hand into the model town and pushes She to the other side of the living room.*

**She:** Hey, what ...

What are you doing?

**He:** Let go of her.

*Big He puts walls around She, so she is separated in a room of her own.*

**Big He:** *To Little He.*

She'd better stay here, in case she's infectious.

**Little She:** I can't breathe, I ...  
Help.

**Little He:** Help.

**He:** *To Big He and Big She.*

They're dying down there, do you realise that!

*Little He and Little She die.*

**Big He:** *To He.*

That wasn't the intention.

**Her:** But how am I going to get food?!

**He:** She has to have food!

**Big He:** She'll have a door.

*Cuts out a door.*

**Big She:** Then she can go in and out!

*A very big chlorine spray appears, but it's so big that He and She don't see it. Only Big She and Big He can relate properly to it and to Very Big She and Very Big He.*

**Big She:** Chlorine ...  
Chlorine spray.

**Big He:** *To Very Big He.*  
No.

No, you're not doing that.

**Big She:** *To Very Big He:*

Stop.

Stop.

**He:** What ...

**She:** What's happening?

*He and She are sprayed with a big squirt of chlorine.*

**He:** Fuck.

Bloody hell.

**She:** I can't breathe, I ...

Help.

**He:** Help.

I ...

**Big He:** *To Very Big He and She.*

They're dying down there, do you realise that!

You're killing them!

*He and She die.*

**Big She:** There ...

They ...

**Big He:** They're dead.

*Pause. Silence. Big He and Big She sense something, something is happening high above their heads.*

**Big She:** Now something's ... something's happening here.

**Big He:** Yes but what ...

**Big She:** I can feel it.

**Big He:** Yes.

**Big She:** There's something there ... up there.

**Big He:** What ... what is it ...

**Big She:** No I ...

*Big She and Big He are sprayed with a very big squirt of chlorine.*

**Big He:** Bloody hell ...  
Fuck.

**Big She:** I can't ...

**Big He:** Damn it.

**Big She:** I can't breathe I ...  
Help.

**Big He:** Help I ...  
I ...

**Big She:** Help.

Help.

I ...

*Big He and Big She die.*

**The end.**

Fredrik Brattberg (1978, Noorwegen) is toneel- schrijver en componist. Hij studeerde compositie bij Wolfgang Plagge. Zijn composities – variërend van opera en kamermuziek tot werken voor koor en symfonieorkest – worden internationaal uitgevoerd. In 2004 schreef hij in samenwerking met de Canadese toneelschrijver Lance Woolaver de opera *The Heart on the Door*. In 2008 debuteerde hij zelf als toneelschrijver met *Det banker, Amadeus*. Zijn stuk *De terugkomsten* werd in 2011 geselecteerd voor het internationale Festival of Contemporary Playwrights 2011 in Kopenhagen. Voor *De terugkomsten* ontving Brattberg in 2012 de Ibsenprijs en in 2015 de cultuurprijs van de gemeente Porsgrunn (voor zijn gehele werk). In 2016 werd hij genomineerd voor de Franse toneelschrijfprijs Le Prix Godot. Samen met Jon Fosse en Arne Lygre is hij de meest gespeelde Noorse toneelschrijver in het buitenland.

Toneelwerk

*Posisjonen* – 2017

*Barnet. Båten* – 2017

*Urtene. Komfyren. Koppen.* – 2017

*Sørsida* – 2016

*Winterreise* – 2016

*Katten* – 2016

*Faren til barnet til moren* – 2015 *Tilbakekomstene* – De  
terugkomsten – 2011 *Monsemann* – 2011

*Besøk hos familien Hansen halv syv* – 2009 *Det banker,*

*Amadeus* – 2008