

The moth's voyage
around
the
lamp

MARIE ANTOINETTE

Anne Douglas

Mark Hope

The following play was created in Zoom to be performed via Zoom

Cast

Actor A

... | ...

Lamp

Light

Wind

Another Moth (younger)

I wish my name would appear bigger and present like yours

Actor B

Mark

..... (1)

Hare

another moth

An ex-moth

A bat

A cloud

Moth (1)

Actor C

Flip Flap Flip Flap

Sh hhh

Tortoise

Balloon

A deflated piece of rubber with a bit of string on the end

..... (3)

Actor D

---> zzzzzzzzzzzed <---

DIRECTOR

ED

Edward

E.S

desert moth

A grain of sand

..... (2)

Moth (2)

Dead moth

After accessing the zoom link the spectator finds her/himself in a room of four windows. The names on the windows are initially *A, B, C* and *D*. The actors materialise on stage by renaming themselves to *...|... , Mark, Flip Flap Flip Flap* and *----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <----* and by turning their cameras on. During the play the renaming process is used by the actors to metamorphose from one character to another. When the first four characters are all present, the show begins.

<i>... ...</i>	The moth's voyage around the lamp.
Mark	A voyage or a dance of death?
<i>----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <----</i>	Oh...
	Uhh...
	I cannot see.
Mark	Asleep already...?
<i>----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <----</i>	It's just so bright.
Lamp	<i>Moth</i> doesn't know about our plan.
Mark	Dazzling... Disorientating...
<i>----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <----</i>	I just woke up.
flip flap flip flap	And it's beautiful. I feel drawn into the warmth and brightness.
Light	I don't think I can do this!
<i>----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <----</i>	Who said that?
Light	I did.
Mark	Who's I?
Light	I'm the one who is attracting <i>Moth</i> .
	The source of attraction.
<i>----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <----</i>	<i>Moth</i> ?
Mark	Fatal attraction...
<i>----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <----</i>	How many of us are there?
Light	But unfaithful in some way... It's kind of unnatural to <i>Moth</i> , right?

Mark	Do other insects count.....?
Lamp	Don't overthink!!
Light	They do! They also get attracted by me...
flip flap flip flap	Many, many, all flapping our wings being drawn in. Some of us are quite big, the size of a hand and some of us are beautifully coloured – more like butterflies than dowdy moths.
Mark	Over nothing...
	Who said moths are dowdy?
	No taste.
Wind	I just arrived, sorry.
-----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <-----	I'm starting to see something but then I close my eyes and the light is strong again.
Wind	Did you know there's an Instagram page dedicated to moth memes!?
-----> zzzzzzzzzzzed <-----	It just feels like I'm trapped...
flip flap flip flap	What is a meme in this context?
..... (1)	Didn't know moths had their own instagram accounts.
Wind	A meme? It's something that becomes culturally viral. It can be very funny.
flip flap flip flap	But as one that is circling round <i>Light</i> , I also feel pleasure, a real desire to be there.
Wind	Everyone has to have one in order to have an apparatus of existence.
another Moth (younger)	Can I join in?
	A vague light opened my eyes so I decided to circle around another time.
..... (1)	I wonder if <i>becoming mothly</i> might ever catch on?
flip flap flip flap	There is something between me and the intensity of the light that stops me touching it. I need to find a way through... It is glass or fabric, something different from the air that I am flying through. I am flapping my wings intensely to try to get past.
DIRECTOR	Scene 2.
..... (1)	A power cut!
Light	What??
..... (1)	Ahhhh, that's better.
Light	I was starting to warm myself. Becoming more intense.
..... (1)	Now it's dark, we can all see better.

Light Brighter and brighter.
flip flap flip flap Silence... Stillness... Darkness all of a sudden...
another Moth (younger) The dark makes me more active.
..... (1) Brighter and brighter with no power. That's
amazing...
Light No... You've got me wrong. *Director* just cut me off.
Sh hhhh Denser?
Light And I was on my way up!
Sh hhhh To where?
..... (1) Ahhh... As we adjust to the dark, it seems to get
lighter...
Light To pursue our plan!
..... (1) I thought the plan was secret.
ED Then we take *Lamp* and follow what we have
discussed.
Who's going for it?
Light Don't you remember? I need to be brilliant and
captivating, right? Do we want *Moth* or not??
..... (1) Maybe attracting moths is over-rated...
Light I said I wasn't feeling comfortable with this.
Supposedly they follow the moon, right?
..... (1) Apparently so...via transverse orientation.
Maybe...
Light I'm just pretending to be that natural source of
orientation.
..... (1) Moths don't call it that though.
Light Yes. They call it *celestial*.
..... (1) Mooning can be an offence here...
Sh hhhh It is what happens in certain circumstances... A
configuration of events, a coincidence of sorts, a
dance between the energy of the light and the energy
of a small living creature... But why the circling
round *Light*? Why the desperation to be close to it?
Lamp Aha!
..... (1) Disorientation...
Lamp Testing contact zones? Kissing surfaces??
ED Yes, we see and we see. Turning it off is another
form of seeing...
Disorientation is always pointing somewhere.
..... (1) But maybe nowhere in particular.

Wind Sometimes I have to close my eyes just to see better.

ED "Even a stopped clock gives the right time twice a day".
Not once.
Twicw.
Twice!

Wind Wise...

DIRECTOR Scene 3.

..... (1) ...So a stopped clock is more often correct than a clock running a bit fast or slow.
Clock missed the end of Scene 2 :(

Wind Who needs a clock anyway??

Edward But these are all movable parts.

..... (1) (The same a few hours later).

Sh hhhh My brain is trying to catch up... Still in Scene 1.

..... (1) Scene 4.

Edward Hi everyone!

Wind Hi *Edward*.

..... (1) Scene 5.

Tortoise Is there a hare in the room?

Wind What?

..... (1) Several.
We're still looking for the tortoises.
...Must have a proper balance.

another Moth (younger) Sorry.

Tortoise I am moving very very slowly...compared to the speed of the hares around me...

..... (1) Why?

another Moth (younger) I don't want to be alone in the air.
Can you turn on *Light*, please?

Tortoise But as a tortoise I don't fly. I breathe so you are not alone.

another Moth (younger) Can I come down to you?
...land on your shell?

Tortoise Of course. You can land on me even... a tickle.

another Moth (younger) Are you warm?

E.S. Bring a gift, please.

another Moth (younger) I will try to have a gentle landing.

E.S. We're craving.

another Moth (younger) I can bring you silk. Do you like silk?

E.S. Love silk...

Tortoise ...very much. Your landing surface will be hard and ridged... You weigh nothing compared to me so I may not know you are there...

another Moth (younger) I have my sisters, the caterpillars, on a farm producing their cocoons for industry.

Hare ...You can land on my head if you wish, as long as I can still rotate my ears...

another Moth (younger) Do you feel me?

Tortoise?

E.S. *Tortoise!*

Hare It's amazing how these humans industrialise everything...

Tortoise No, but like *Hare*, if you land on my head I will feel you...

Hare No sensible animal would have imagined you could farm caterpillars.

Tortoise Don't have ears like *Hare's* to rotate... Mine are different...

Wind I know... Terrible species... Extraction is their motto.

Hare ...Or rabbits.
Luckily they don't farm hares... Better to be shot than farmed...

Wind Rabbits are cute and fluffy.

Hare Hares are noble...and prone to over-confidence...

Tortoise But maybe they started farming caterpillars because they were curious about the incredible transformations, the beautiful silk thread, the cocoon, the completely different creature that emerges...

another Moth (younger) *Tortoise*, I really like the texture of your skin. It really shows me how time imprints on one's surface. Hmmm... That could be a beautiful way to look at it.

Hare Is that a polite way of commenting on my age?

E.S. Hahahahahaha!

another Moth (younger) ...of admiring it!!!
You wise girl!!

Tortoise I feel very special as a tortoise, ancient and

contemporary at the same time. My slowness is important to this feeling...

another Moth (younger) I know. I envy you in a way.
For me it's all about excitement and stimulation, acceleration and success.

another moth Ancient? Is that several weeks old...?

another Moth (younger) I can't feel that I'm in control, you know?
There is always another light that flashes back strongly.

DIRECTOR (Everyone stop please. We are changing the set. Be prepared for act 2. Paul, put the sun up. Miriam, cue the music. Everybody ready to start in five.)
5.
4.
3.
2.
1.
Act 2.

Wind Can I smoke a cigarette first??

another moth Was that Led Zeppelin as an intro?

desert moth Zzzzzzzzzz.

another moth *Lamp* might be a stairway to heaven.

desert moth Zz.

another moth Bzzzzzzzzzz.

desert moth (singing)
"There's a lady who's sure
all that glitters is gold
And she's buying a stairway to heaven
When she gets there she knows,
if the stores are all closed
With a word she can get what she came for
Ooh, ooh, and she's buying a stairway to heaven".

Lamp I'm feeling a bit confused... is there another *Director*? I'm the one who directs *Light*!! I cover it and define where it goes, I'm the Light Director!!!

DIRECTOR Ok ok ok!
Take it!
It's yours.
I'm ouuuut.

another moth Do you have a qualification to be the Light Director?
We need to know...

Lamp Don't take me wrong. You don't have to be sensitive
about it. Are you the *Director*? Of what??? This
voyage??

desert moth I wanna know too.

Balloon I am not sure I am directable... as a balloon.

another moth Why are they now playing *God Save the Queen*? It's
inappropriate...
Who's the Sound Director????

desert moth What is going on here?

Balloon Everyone knows the first two lines and can sing
along...that is why...

desert moth They asked for *Desert Moth*.

another moth ...Maybe another moth has got into the sound desk...

desert moth I am here.

Balloon You have come a long way... It's snowing here...

Light Ok, I was supposed to be the star that brightens the
set... If I'm no longer needed, I'll be in my room,
backstage.

an ex-moth (I was just eaten by a bat).

desert moth I am ready for this.
I believe I can do it.
Please support me.

a bat That was tasty...

Balloon *Bat*? They are all hibernating...

desert moth Even you, *Balloon*.

a bat Only the lazy ones...

another Moth (younger) Ok... I think I will be gone now.

a bat You should try the new heated beatbox from ASDA...
err...batbox.

desert moth I feel this was a mistake. My utter despair finds no
echo here.

another Moth (younger) Sorry... My mom is calling me! She says she wants to
train me to be the best night pollinator.

desert moth I'm talking to myself...

a bat In heaven there will be no spell-checker...

desert moth Maybe if I become *Director* it would help.

Balloon Oh!

desert moth Yes.....

a bat	Perhaps...
desert moth	If I became <i>Light</i> it would help.
another Moth (younger)	<i>Desert Moth</i> ?
a bat	Possibly.
another Moth (younger)	Do you want to join me?
desert moth	Ohhhh!
	Are you talking to me?
another Moth (younger)	Yesss!
Balloon	But where are you?
desert moth	Yes yes yes!!!
	Yes!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
a bat	Perhaps...
another Moth (younger)	Here, on the top of <i>Tortoise's</i> shell.
desert moth	I'm on stage.
another Moth (younger)	Ok... I'm here.
desert moth	Yes yes, I'm here too.
a bat	Me too.
another Moth (younger)	So...
a bat	Where's <i>here</i> ?
another Moth (younger)	Do you want to join me?
desert moth	Can anyone turn on <i>Light</i> ?
a bat	Join?
desert moth	?
another Moth (younger)	We can just leave all this behind, you know?
desert moth	Yes yes...
a bat	Behind where?
Balloon	I am hurtling above the clouds... Need someone to draw me back in...
another Moth (younger)	My mom says it's only light pollution!!
a bat	Don't worry... You'll burst in a moment.
desert moth	Shoot <i>Balloon</i> .
	It will come down!!
a bat	What's that untidy bit of rubber floating down?
	Maybe we can reuse the string?
desert moth	I see it too...
a cloud	Wow... This is relaxing.
another Moth (younger)	(...)
a deflated piece of rubber with a bit of string on the end....	Passing you, cloud, as we speak. At great speed...
I wish my name would appear	

bigger and present like yours	.
a cloud	Only occasional balloons and aeroplanes to annoy you. Sorry to be antisocial. Bye bye.
Wind	Noooo!
	What about the joyful and graceful dance you promised me...??
a grain of sand	. = Me.
a cloud	To see a world in a grain of sand...
a grain of sand	.. = Dancing.
Wind	Haha!
a cloud	And eternity in an hour...
Wind	Only if I blow strongly.
a grain of sand	_ = Universe.
a deflated piece of rubber with a bit of string on the end....	And lots and lots of company... Can we see you?
a grain of sand	Can you?
	Was wondering that...
a cloud	Great, until you get stuck on someone's foot...
a deflated piece of rubber with a bit of string on the end....	Not sure... I can imagine you though and see you in the company of trillions of others.
another Moth (younger)	My antennae reacted to the familiar yet frightening melody of <i>Wind</i> . It now whispers to me hope and might-have-beens.
Wind	Did I!?
DIRECTOR	(I'm back, god damn it!). Stop! Prepare for the Epilogue. 10 minutes left!
Wind	I dare you to stop me!!!
DIRECTOR	E, P...
..... (1)	So what's the programme?
DIRECTOR	I... L, O, G, U, E. Just follow the rules. 3. 2. 1.

..... (1) 0.
-1.
-2.
-3.
-4.

Wind I hate symmetries...

..... (1) -94.
Fearful symmetry.
I like identifying.

Wind I can't follow you.
I only see dots...and a question mark.

..... (2) Don't worry about it... You're *Wind* so you never follow.
Lead the dance, then.

..... (1) Where's the music?

Wind Thank you for recognising my wishes.
Who will join me?

..... (1) Which wishes were those...?
Recognition may have been accidental.

..... (2) ____/``````|_____|''''''''_____

Wind Of a joyful and graceful dance.

Moth (1) Am circling *Light* and it's warm and beautiful... I feel drawn in but wonder if there is danger here?
But, yes, a joyful and graceful dance...

..... (3) ____((**%F%\$&?><Nnnnnmmmm

..... (2) =====('''''''')_____

Wind Who is making doodles????

..... (1) Hbcbs/bdsv/sbhwouhbjbbdsbsdbjvbjbsdv.

..... (2) It's a dancing dot!

..... (3) _____

..... (2) Yes!

...|... So this has gone to absurdity...

..... (2) I can hear music.
I can see again...
Now I understand.
The sun is rising...
Yes!

another Moth (younger) I think I see it too.
The doomed light...

..... (1) (Lights gradually increase until the stage is flooded

with pink light).

another Moth (younger) It's getting hot in here.

Moth (1) Hi *Moth* and *Younger Moth*, good to have company.

Moth (2) If we have the same name our voice will be one.

..... (1) (A voice off-stage) Where's the cake?

another Moth (younger) I can feel a drop of sweat coming down my neck...

..... (3) Are you imagining it...?

Moth (2) We could talk to each other and not be accused of craziness.

..... (2) But craziness is good...

another Moth (younger) I think we can join, yes... The dance will turn out to be a ballet.

Moth (1) Is it *Light* up there getting stronger?

another Moth (younger) I feel it too.

Tell me.

Moth (2) I'm going there.

another Moth (younger) Can we trust this??

Moth (2) See you on the other side!!!!

(Gone)

another Moth (younger) Is there any other??

DEAD Moth

..... (1) Alarum.

ALL CHARACTERS Clapppppping!!!!

Clapppppping!!!!

Clapppppping!!!!

CURTAIN

Improvised by MARIE ANTOINETTE, Anne Douglas and Mark Hope

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is part of *Riffing the Archive: Building a Relation*
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