

# *MALLBABY*

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The action takes place primarily in U.S. MALL - a unit set that allows freedom of movement and place delineated by only scant props and setpieces. Each store can be indicated by a neon sign with its name. The action is continuous and smooth; no blackouts. The time is the present.

#### CHARACTERS:

MAGGIE HARRIS - late 30s

SOLYA - late teens

RENEE - Maggie's boss and best friend

MICHELLE - Solya's best friend

SCOTT - late teens

MARK HARRIS - Maggie's Husband

VINNIE - early twenties

JUNIOR - delineated as JUNIOR M / JUNIOR S /MALLBOY - late teens  
- permutations of Solya's baby as raised by Maggie, Solya and by the mall.

DOCTOR A - doubled with Renee

DOCTOR B - doubled with Michelle

DOCTOR C - double with Vinnie

(the doctors should be doubled quickly, just with the addition of a  
white lab coat and stethoscope over the other character's costume)

MOVIE HERO'S VOICE - \*can be doubled

MOVIE HEROINE'S VOICE - \*can be doubled

BOY MOVIEGOER - \*can be doubled

GIRL MOVIEGOER - \*can be doubled

REPORTER 1,2,3 - \*can be doubled

**OPEN**

*(in darkness)*

COMPANY

*(offstage)*

*(Breathing)* Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Haaaaaa

(MAGGIE and SOLYA appear out of the dark  
each in a separate part of the stage,  
each with her hands on her own belly.)

COMPANY

*(offstage)*

*(Breathing:)* Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Haaaaaa.

(JUNIOR S. appears out of the dark.  
He appeals to Solya)

JUNIOR S.

Tell me again about the day I was born.

SOLYA

Really?....

MAGGIE/COMPANY

Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Haaaaaa...

(JUNIOR S. shifts into JUNIOR M.  
He turns to Maggie)

JUNIOR M.

Tell me again about the day I was born.

MAGGIE

Baby....

SOLYA/COMPANY

Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Haaaaaa...

(Maggie and Solya's stories interweave and sometimes overlap)

MAGGIE

I was working

SOLYA

You're sure?...

SOLYA

Well, the movie...I guess I hadn't wanted to believe yet.... I guess I wouldn't let myself believe -

MAGGIE

and your soul ran right out of the body inside me, right into your own grown body - one that was so much more ready for you, really

SOLYA

I was young - not an excuse, a fact

MAGGIE

Just ran right out!

MAGGIE/SOLYA

I guess I hadn't wanted to believe that

SOLYA

Thinking, not thinking

MAGGIE

You still have your own way of getting places

SOLYA

Thinking, not thinking

MAGGIE

circuitous

SOLYA

this can't be what I think this is

MAGGIE

Back streets. Tunnels. When you started to walk you'd escape and I'd find you blocks away

SOLYA

This can't be what I know it is.

MAGGIE

My sweet wandering boy -

SOLYA

This can't be what I -- PLEASE!

(JUNIOR S/M transforms into *Mallboy* –  
a de-evolution.)

MALLBOY

Tell me again about the day I waaaaaas boooooorrrrn.

COMPANY

*(Breathing)*

Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Haaaaaaa. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Haaaaaaa.

(*Mallboy* scuttles away from them in his gorilla/crab-like walk.  
Solya and Maggie look after him - bewildered.)

MAGGIE

My sweet sweet boy.

COMPANY

Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Haaaaaaa.

*(Lights out on on Maggie.)*

**THE MALL**

(Neon: U.S. MALL)

(Lights on Solya. Shadows of bodies surrounding her.  
She has a piece of paper in her hand she doesn't look at.)

SOLYA

Oh, my name?...Solstice - that's where it comes from - for the sun. My birthday's like the shortest day of the year and they thought the lack of daylight...that that mattered. Solya - they made it up - "l" instead of "n". I know, so weird. I mean I go into a store where they have kids' names imprinted on a million bike-sized license plates and pencil sets and there were none for me. Every one for me had to be made special and even then

SOLYA(continued)

most of the time they turned out wrong. I don't even like the sun, in the summers they'd send me out to play and I'd slip back into the basement and hide behind the ripped leather armchair, reading or just making little pellets out of foam stuff that was leaking out of the chair until it was dark and I was supposed to come inside. I've never been tan. And windows, they - I don't like them either, they...oh...I was just supposed to read this. (*She unfolds the piece of paper*) I'm not supposed say anything of my own.

(Flashbulbs flash in her face )

COMPANY 1 AS REPORTER

Over here Solya.

COMPANY 2 AS REPORTER

Look this way.

COMPANY 3 AS REPORTER

Solya.

COMPANY 1

Just one more question -

COMPANY

Solya!

(she lets the piece of paper flutter away. They pounce.

She goes)

(Lights up on Maggie and RENEE.)

**THE OFFICE**

MAGGIE

No, you can't come.

RENEE

I want to hear my godchild's heartbeat.

MAGGIE

Godchild? No fucking way. - Damnit. I am heading towards lateness at this very minute, I can tell.

RENEE

You still haven't learned to separate business disappointments from personal commitments..

MAGGIE

Payback is much sweeter than maturity. (Breathing:)Ha ha ha ha Haaaaa.

RENEE

I'm the only logical candidate.

MAGGIE

(Breathing:) Ha ha ha ha Haaaaaa.

RENEE

Aren't you a little early for that?

MAGGIE

It's supposed to be calming.

RENEE

It sounds hyperventilating.

MAGGIE

This is not a good day. This is not a good day. This is not a good day -

RENEE

That's calming.

MAGGIE

You said six weeks. Six weeks on this assinine beat.

RENEE

Oh this again.

MAGGIE

How long has it been? Six months. Six months locked in that fluorescent franchise behemoth waiting for nothing to happen.

RENEE

Something will happen. In the meantime, kick back and windowshop.

MAGGIE

My child is not having you as his spiritual guide for his lifetime.

RENEE

It's not that bad. It's your job.

MAGGIE

It's artificial.

RENEE

It's a mall.

MAGGIE

The mall that ate \_\_\_\_\_(insert local area or town). I never thought I'd miss driving to seven different stores to get my errands done. I never thought day after day I would dream about the inconvenience beyond the mall walls with longing. To get away from it - this life force feeding off its environs, killing off the mom-and-pop competition, sucking the...

RENEE

Sucking the...?

MAGGIE

Just sucking. I'm out of here.

(Renee talks to Maggie's stomach)

RENEE

What do you think about this Harrison?

MAGGIE

Don't.



RENEE

Harrison likes Mommy's field reporting assignment.

MAGGIE

Stop it - (breathes in and out)

RENEE

Harrison likes U.S. Mall.

MAGGIE

Cut it out -

RENEE

Harrison is going to drive his mother to insanity with his obsession with the mall, his fascination with multileveled monstrosities, the plethora of purchase possibilities, the variety of video games. Harrison says -

MAGGIE

Stop talking to my son!

(a beat)

(they stare at each other)

MAGGIE

I'm late.

RENEE

Maggie -

MAGGIE

I am so late

RENEE

Maggie!

MAGGIE

Chalk it up to a hormonal surge. I'm beginning to wonder if it's possible to use pregnancy as an insanity defense. I'm beginning to think I'll have a

MAGGIE(continued)

need for that. And I wonder if it's really possible for me to lose it, really possible, rather than in the realm of theoretical possibility which I suppose we all are but I feel daily closer and closer to some brink that I'm choosing to believe that pregnancy brought on because that is the safe choice, I admit. You'd be surprised at the way emotions just come over me. The way I am suddenly aware that I'm feeling something much more intensely than I logically ever thought I would feel that thing or could or should -

RENEE

Maggie -

MAGGIE

I need to breathe - I need to go.

RENEE

Do you want me to come with you?

MAGGIE

No, no no no. Thanks but-

RENEE

-No. That's ok. I'll see you later. You're late

MAGGIE

*(Breathing:)* Ha. Ha. Ha Ha. Haaaaa.

MAGGIE and COMPANY *(offstage)*

*(Breathing:)* Ha Ha Ha Ha. Haaaaaa.

**U.S. MALL ICE SKATING RINK**

(neon: Rinky-Dink)

(They glide in slow motion across the stage. Michelle skates around Solya, who shuffles her feet on skates. Extremely off-balance)

MICHELLE

I swear to God.

SOLYA

No way.

MICHELLE

Seriously.

SOLYA

You're making it up. In the back of Atomic Canine Skewered?

MICHELLE

He's all like, look, I got promoted to assistant manager and look that means I got my own key and alarm code and look this is what we've been waiting for so hop up on the steel table baby while I take off my uniform.

SOLYA

I'm never eating there again.

BOTH

EEEW.

MICHELLE

So I had to think quick - I told him there was no way I'd ever do it there and I'm in training anyway so isn't that totally inconsiderate for him to not think of that and then dumped him off at Between the Covers in the self-help section before I came here.

SOLYA

This morning.

MICHELLE

Yeah. Until they start serving scrambled egg on a stick they don't open til 11:30.

SOLYA

He's never heard of sex at night?

MICHELLE

His curfew's a 1/2 hour after closing.

SOLYA

So you didn't.

MICHELLE

And I won't. He's not getting me that easy. It's not in the game plan, y'know? I don't need to be sidetracked like that. By the worry. I mean all the things that could happen - he doesn't think that far ahead. And I don't want to be the only one doing the thinking. It's like they just leave that part to us, y'know?

SOLYA

I guess.

(Michelle pirhouettes.  
Solya doubles over.)

COMPANY

Oh.

MICHELLE

What's with you?

SOLYA

Cramps. Ow. Shit.

MICHELLE

I don't get cramps anymore which I consider a step on my way to being an Olympiad. Those girls don't even get their period. Y'know, it wouldn't...kill you...to exercise.

SOLYA

I know. I'm like the queen of bloat.

MICHELLE

I mean, people can't tell you these things unless they're your best friend and even then -

SOLYA

I know.

MICHELLE

I don't want you to be mad at me.

SOLYA

I'm not.

MICHELLE

Or offended.

SOLYA

I'm not - it's just all I've eaten is no-fat everything and look.

MICHELLE

You're not fat. I didn't say you were fat.

SOLYA

I know.

MICHELLE

I didn't because you are not fat. Just...We could do it together, it won't take more than a month tops, I'll be like your best friend slash skater slash personal trainer. It'll be fun.

SOLYA

Cool. (*grabs stomach*) Ow.

MICHELLE

Oh...OK, don't look.

SOLYA

What?

MICHELLE

Don't look. I know he's your boyfriend -

SOLYA

He's not my boyfriend.

MICHELLE

BUT it doesn't hurt to maintain mystery. That is one of the keys to transforming a relationship from hooking up to boyfriend. The other is affirmations - Scott is my boyfriend. Scott is my boyfriend.

SOLYA

Scott is not my -

MICHELLE

No No No! You don't want to de-firm. You want to a-firm. Solya, don't!

SOLYA

I'm not looking.

MICHELLE

Your eyes keep darting that way.

SOLYA

He can't see that from here.

MICHELLE

He can feel it. I swear. Think different thoughts.

SOLYA

I am.

MICHELLE

More different.

SOLYA

What's he doing?

MICHELLE

You need a hobby.

SOLYA

You mean an obsession.

MICHELLE

I'm making something of myself -

(light shift to away from Michelle)

COMPANY

*(Breathing)* Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.

SOLYA

I'm just supposed to know what I want. And O.K., there was going to be college. That's just a given. Someday, maybe. I'll know the thing. I'll know. Now I just know what it isn't. This isn't not it. This isn't it. How am I supposed to do this?

COMPANY

Haaaaa.

(JUNIOR S appears)

JUNIOR S

Did you say something?

Hello?

You were talking to me. You said something which if you repeat I can give you an answer to -

SOLYA

To myself. I was talking to myself.

(a look between them)

I guess.

JUNIOR S

Jesus - crazy lady.

SOLYA

Hey! You don't talk to me like that. It's an issue of -

JUNIOR S

Whacko!

SOLYA

You don't get to call me that! You hear me!  
You don't get to call me that!

(JUNIOR S. grins at her. teasing.)

JUNIOR S.

Loco!

(JUNIOR S. runs away. Lights up to include Michelle)

MICHELLE

Oh! Wheelies. Down the handicap ramp. I thought, y'know, when he got his license, he'd give that up.

SOLYA

It's part of his feet.  
(*she looks*)  
It's like he's flying.

MICHELLE

You are so gone.

SOLYA

I am not.

MICHELLE

Gone.

(She pushes Solya off the ice  
and over at Scott  
- right into him.)

COMPANY

Ahhhhhh. (*exhale*)