

PLAY #18 THE NEW BEGINNING

by

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## CHARACTERS

JAMES

A young writer.

THE COMPUTER

A machine with a mind of its own.

## THE NEW BEGINNING

(JAMES sits at a computer, typing. Next to him are a pad of paper, which he sometimes refers to, and a lamp. In the corner is a closed window with a chair next to it. It's dark outside. There is a glow from the screen against his face. He speaks as he types. As the action progresses, daybreak sets in outside the window.)

## JAMES

Once upon a time... No!... In the very beginning...  
No!... In the early days... Okay... His people woke up  
with the sun. And went to bed... With the moon...  
Okay, this is better.

(THE COMPUTER bleeps.)

Shut up!

(Pause. THE COMPUTER's screen  
brightens. JAMES tries to adjust it. It  
dims.)

All their days were greeted by the many forms of the  
natural world...

(THE COMPUTER bonks.)

Shut up, please. I mean it.

(COMPUTER screen brightens and dims.)

The minutes and hours they spent were one and the same  
as the minutes and hours of the living natural world  
around them.

(COMPUTER tings twice, bleeps, and then  
bonks.)

I'm warning you!

(JAMES begins typing again.)

But there was a sense of timelessness...

(COMPUTER bleeps many times. Stops.  
JAMES stands.)

What do you want from me?

(COMPUTER dings. JAMES sits. Begins  
typing.)

Timelessness free of the lines drawn to create false  
boundaries.

(COMPUTER brightens, dims, brightens,  
dims. JAMES stands. COMPUTER bonks.)

I've warned you! How many times? All night long!

(Pause. Silence. A whippoorwill sings

outside the window. JAMES looks.  
COMPUTER suddenly and continuously  
bonks, brightens, dims, brightens,  
dims.)

You piece of shit!

(JAMES clears the desk of THE COMPUTER  
and everything else, including the  
lamp. The sound of THE COMPUTER  
shutting down and dying, its final  
lights fading. Pause. Silence. Darkness  
in the room, except for the morning  
light starting to creep in through the  
window. JAMES looks at the mess.)

Oh no! What did I do? Oh... Oh...

(A sigh of relief from JAMES. He goes  
to the window and opens it. Birds are  
singing. The sun is rising. JAMES picks  
up his pad of paper and sits down in  
the chair by the window. He thinks. And  
begins writing again.)

LIGHTS FADE

END OF PLAY