

The Tent

by

Pascoe Foxell

THE TENT (V.O.)
I tried to escape once before.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A ROPE slips through the the grasp of two human hands. They grab for it, but it's moving too fast.

ROPE-HOLDER (O.S.)
Ah damn!

THE TENT (V.O.)
I came so close to my goal.

The entrance of the EMF festival looms up ahead.

Floating towards it, we see A TENT, the wind carrying its ballooned-out form through the air, rope trailing behind it. It gets closer and closer to the festival.

A second later though, The Tent's OWNER sprints towards The Tent. RUGBY-TACKLES it to the ground just moments before it crosses into the festival.

THE TENT (V.O.)
So close.

Some of the air goes out of The Tent's inflated fabric as our narrator SIGHS.

TITLE CARD

"The Tent".

EXT. FESTIVAL ENTRANCE - DAY

The Tent stops to look up at the sign. Then runs inside, delighted.

EXT. THE FESTIVAL - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The Tent sees all sorts of THINGS HAPPENING around him, EXCITED PEOPLE everywhere. He carries on his lolloping.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A series of brief moments:

-The Tent's Owner opens up the car-boot- wrapped-up Tent inside.

-The Owner walks through a field full of tents, Tent slung over one shoulder.

-They reach an empty patch of campsite, dump the bag there.

-They extend out a tent-pole.

-This pole is attached to another, then balanced it The Owner's hands. It's clearly way too long. Confused, they pull it apart again.

-Taking a piece of Tent fabric, they wrap it round a pole, tight, then flex the pole. The fabric falls off, to the Owner's frustration.

-One pole is pushed through an opening in the fabric. The Owner applies some pressure and it makes a nice ribbing shape inside the fabric.

OWNER

Ah!

-They do the same with another pole.

-A large swathe of fabric is pulled taut.

-A pole-end hooks into a little ringlet in the fabric.

OWNER

(under their breath)

Good good good. One last bit...

-They zip up a long opening in the middle of the fabric.

Pleased, the Owner moves away from The Tent to admire their handiwork.

THE TENT (V.O.)

This year though, events conspired to be much more in my favour...

We get a full look at the finished tent as well.

OWNER

Oh.

It's a MAN'S SUIT. Not a tent anymore, although certainly made out of the same stuff. Just a fully tailored suit, zips all the way down it, poles forming the basic skeletal structure. It sticks in the ground, standing up on it's own.

With a slight POPPING sound, a man's head, SAME COLOUR as The Tent, appears out of the suit's neck-hole. It looks around in shock.

Then GRINS.

THE TENT

I'm free!

It runs off with a weird lolloping motion, legs not quite bending in the right way. The Owner looks on, non-plussed.

EXT. EMF BEER TENT - DAY

The Tent sees the sign/beer/people with beer, is excited. He walks towards the beer-tent.

But then A GREAT GUST OF WIND starts up. The Tent's fabric fills with air and he's THRUST BACKWARDS a few steps, only barely staying upright.

EXT. BEER TENT - DAY

The Tent still stands outside the beer-tent. But he's STEADY now, the wind catching but not moving him.

He takes one step forward, then reaches down to something- one of TWO ROPES attached to his hips. He grabs it, tugs the METAL HOOK on the other end, pulling it from the ground.

He throws the hook to the ground a few paces ahead of him. It sticks hard in the earth.

He takes another step forward.

EXT. FESTIVAL STAGE - DAY

The Tent watches a talk, rapt with attention.

INT. GENERAL FESTIVAL FIELD-Y AREA - DAY

The Tent is wandering around, smiling at people. To one side is the "Lost and Found" Tent/Booth. The Owner is there.

OWNER

Yes, my tent. Orange, with zips
and poles and things.

The Tent hears this, stops.

LOST & FOUND PERSON

Nothing handed in, I'm afraid.

The Lost & Found Person spots The Tent over the Owner's
shoulder.

The Tent smiles, makes big pleading eyes, shakes his head from
side to side.

The Lost & Found Person turns back to the Owner.

LOST AND FOUND PERSON

But I'll let you know if I see
anything.

The Tent lollops off at speed.

INT. RADIO PLACE - DAY

He talks to the radio HOST.

HOST

So tell us, sir, have you been to EMF before?

THE TENT

I came last time, but I didn't have the chance to experience it properly.

HOST

No?

THE TENT

No. My owners, they tied me to the ground with ropes, left me in the field with the gazebos.

INT. RADIO PLACE - DAY

THE TENT

A man came. He said he was there to help. But he just took his mallet, banged my restraints in further. Then he looked at me and he said... "Everyone should have a mallet".

The Tent is clearly very distressed by the memory.

HOST

It's not your fault.

The Tent rocks from side to side as he talks, losing it a bit.

THE TENT

Is that true? Do you think he was right?

HOST

No, no... I don't have a mallet, for one.

The Tent gets right up in the Host's face.

THE TENT

(Screaming at him)

BUT EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A MALLET!

The Tent pulls away, embarrassed.

THE TENT

I'm sorry, I'm sorry...

EXT. OUTSIDE OXHACK TENT/DEMO TENT - DAY

The Tent holds a BEER, is drunk.

He walks over to a giant event-tent. Sees the big crowd milling around inside/outside, is impressed. He goes over to the event-tent-wall, tries to act all casual.

THE TENT

Big crowd you got. Pretty good, pretty good.

(beat)

I've seen bigger. I've hosted bigger, I should say.

EXT. OUTSIDE OXHACK TENT/DEMO TENT - DAY

Outside the big event-tent, drunk.

THE TENT

Well, I fold outwards to enlarge myself, it's actually very impr--

(he stops, hearing something we can't from the event-tent)

No I can't do it for you!

(listens again)

I am a tent that can *walk around!*

Wow! That's what you should be saying- wow! Wow, this tent probably isn't a big liar, he probably is amazing in all sorts of ways!

The Tent flounces off.

EXT./INT. MUSIC VENUE (EMFM TENT?) - NIGHT

The Tent is at a music thing (Nottinghack Time Band? Tom's DJ set?). He's all covered in GLOW-LIGHTS and LEDs and whatnot.

He's DANCING like a TENT. I'm not sure what this means. Strange unbending arched limbs, I guess...

EXT./INT. MUSIC VENUE (EMFM TENT?) - NIGHT

Here again- The Tent is dancing again. But now everyone's doing the TENT-DANCE!

Including ALL THE PEOPLE who climbed inside The Tent earlier.

INT. LHS BIKESHED/SOMEWHERE ELSE - NIGHT

He talks to a girl, LAUREN.

LAUREN

It's very impressive, the outfit...

She yawns on her last word.

THE TENT

You need a place to rest...

LAUREN

No, no...

The Tent unzips his big zip, pulls his body open to reveal a HOLLOW INTERIOR.

THE TENT

(entirely serious)

Climb inside. I have room.

Lauren looks at The Tent, bewildered.

INT. LHS BIKESHED/SOMEWHERE ELSE - NIGHT

A small queue of people has lined up to climb inside The Tent. They do so, one after the other- everyone's fascinated, delighted, not quite wanting to question it.

INT. LHS BIKESHED/SOMEWHERE ELSE - NIGHT

We catch the last part of the final person climbing in.

The Tent, satisfied, zips himself up.

Looks around the room, smiling. But then grips his stomach- something unsettled in there.

EXT. WHEREVER WE JUST WERE - NIGHT

A DRUNK FESTIVAL-GOER is doubled over, trying to throw up.

THE TENT comes running over to a nearby spot, doubles over in almost exactly the same pose. RETCHES. The drunk person looks over, distracted a moment from their own plight.

The sound of The Tent throwing up is accompanied by one THUMP and then ANOTHER (and another?). The drunk stares in shock.

The Tent walks off, fine now. The drunk person goes to where he just was, looks down. TWO PEOPLE (Lauren?) lie on the ground, covered in bits and pieces of SICKLY-YELLOW FABRIC.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

The Tent watches PAUL pilot a DRONE through the sky.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

The Tent holds the Drone, whispers to it.

THE TENT

I had an owner once too, you know.

The Tent sneaks a look at Paul, nearby.

THE TENT

But I got free.

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

The sun rises on an mostly empty festival.

EXT. FESTIVAL FIELD - DAY

The Tent sleeps on the ground.

It wakes, hearing something...

OWNER (O.S.)

Did you say you saw it here
somewhere?

The Tent jumps up, hides behind something.

OTHER PERSON (O.S.)

Yep, this way. Just on the ground.

The Tent creeps round the side of a bigger tent (or something like that), keeping out of sight.

OWNER

It's not here.

The Tent keeps creeping- trips on something, making a SOUND.

The Owner turns that way. The Tent SPRINTS off.

It runs through the festival, dodging this way and that, round various festival exhibits and tents and things.

It comes round a corner and--

RIGHT THERE is the Owner. The Tent stops short, SHOCKED. And with a slight SCREAM and POPPING sound, it flies backwards.

The thing that lands back on the ground is no longer a Tent-Man, just a NORMAL-LOOKING TENT- lying on it's side, bottom facing forwards. It sits there, unmoving.

OWNER

There you are.

The Owner walks towards The Tent.

THE TENT (V.O.)

I'll miss being at the festival.

The Owner reaches down to grab one of The Tent's guy ropes.

THE TENT (V.O.)

Maybe I'll be able to come next
time.

They pull the rope off the ground, tugging The Tent with it.

But it SLIPS out their grasp, as The Tent flies off the ground with a strong WHIRRING sound.

OWNER

Ah, damn!

As The Tent flies high up into the air, and the top part of it comes into view, we see what's carrying it: the DRONE from earlier.

THE TENT (V.O.)

Or maybe I'll be too busy having
some other adventure...

The Tent flies off into the morning sky.

THE END