

Conan, My Love

Play and direction Juho Mantere

Turku City Theatre 2020

Briefly in English

Pöpö Höpöläinen is a schoolboy in a small town somewhere in Finland in the 1990's. He sincerely loves his family, heavy metal and comics. And above all his superhero, Conan The Barbarian.

The play takes us to Pöpö's schoolday. When schoolmates bully him, he runs back to his room and absorbs himself into the magical world of Conan the Barbarian. In that imaginary world he later fights the spider monster and follows Conan to meet the strange elephantman in Yara's garden.

The play also takes us to Texas in 1930's, to a saloon in a small town where Robert E. Howard, the creator of Conan the Barbarian, lived his short life. We will see how the death of his mother affects the writer and how he ended his own life on the same day his mother died.

After daddy suddenly abandons the family, young Pöpö is even more alone than before. He finds himself in a karaoke bar, from where mommy seeks comfort, and he gets dubious advice from drunken grownups. His crush to a girl doesn't give him any better experiences in real life. But in his fantasies, he is invincible.

Being left alone with his mom, Pöpö is really struggling to be the man of the house. The only role model he has left is the muscular action hero, Conan. So, he starts weightlifting and sporting like a maniac. Feeling bullied and betrayed by everybody else, Pöpö's anger and frustration grows – as does his muscles. Finally, he encounters his mom and schoolmates and chooses his destiny.