

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

LIVING ROOM

by

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## STORY

The play sets place in an immersive theatre space called Living Room. Rainer, Oscar and Erin, the company members, have 'sold-out', doing endless runs of the Great Gatsby.

They long to return to their early days of making 'meaningful' art but with imminent closure and age catching up with them, time is running out.

Desperate, they start making a new kind of show...

LIVING ROOM asks us what exactly is it that we're looking for.

## FORMAT NOTES:

/ indicates an overlapping of speech.

- indicates an interruption.

... indicates an inability to speak.

## CHARACTERS

### RAINER

Black-British. Early thirties. Slight cockney accent. She has a sharp face but soft eyes.

Tough. Driven.

A Living Room Theatre company member.

### OSCAR

White-British. Early thirties. Well-spoken.

Skinny and tall. A lovable fool. A Living Room member.

### ERIN

White-British. Early thirties. Less well-spoken than OSCAR. Very intelligent and sensitive.

As the play is about an immersive theatre company, there are many different characters.

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These are all multi-rolled, played by:

ACTOR ONE

Female. British-Asian. Any age.

ACTOR TWO

Male. British-White. Any age.

They play:

PAM

STEVE

JIM

SANA

SALLY

DERICK

HENRY

BEX

SARAH

DELIVERY PERSON

CHARLOTTE

KWAME

RITA

PAUL

ALF

KLEIN

MICHAEL

WOMAN

JENNIFER

TALL MAN

AARON

MARTIN

JERRY

BALLERINA

ROGER

DEBRA

FIGURE

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SCENE 1

The Living Room Theatre.

Dark.

Glittering curtains of sequins hang from the back-wall.

A drum-kit sits stage left.

Three microphones are dotted about.

A woman crosses the stage.

She sits at the drum-kit, coughs, then plays heavy, continuous drums.

The whole room comes alive.

'A Great Gatsby' party, set in the roaring 1920s.

'Sing, Sing, Sing' by Benny Goodman is played.

RAINER plays the drums.

She's a black British woman in her early thirties, now dressed in a black suit and shirt.

Her hair is short and she has a striking face. She has a strong American accent: New York, working class.

OSCAR is spot-lit.

He is a tall, white, blonde man in his early thirties, dressed in a tuxedo. He holds a champagne flute and smiles at the audience.

ERIN, dark hair, early thirties, good-looking, in a blue dress dances.

All have New York accents.

OSCAR well-spoken, ERIN fairly well-spoken, RAINER, a working class accent.

PAM and STEVE, in their thirties, are audience members at the immersive event. They are dressed for the period but have British accents.

They hang around, sort of dancing.

OSCAR

Good evening.

The pleasure would be entirely mine if you joined our little party tonight. I was meant to call on you before but an unusual set of circumstances prevented me.

Will you have a drink with me, Old Sport?

RAINER

We are waiting for our host.

ERIN

A Mr Gatsby.

RAINER

But who is this Gatsby?

ERIN

He gives large parties and I love large parties; they're so, intimate.

OSCAR

At my parties you'll meet people who have the power to change your life in a heart beat. If someone wants to show you something, or take you somewhere. I want you to promise me. You'll always. Say yes.

The music kicks in, ERIN dances.

OSCAR turns to PAM and holds his microphone up to her. PAM is eating a big bowl of peanuts.

Madame, are you ready to say, yes?

PAM

Oh, hello, yeah, sorry haven't had dinner.

OSCAR

And what's your name?

PAM

Pam.

OSCAR

What do you do, Pam?

PAM

Oh, I work in software company that develops apps for cooking programmes.

Beat. ERIN turns to STEVE, who has an Essex accent and is drunk.

ERIN

Sir, do you know Mr Gatsby?

STEVE

Sure, yeah. Gatsby. Read that at school.

OSCAR

Splendid.

STEVE

It's the one with the pigs, right? Pigs take over the farm?

PAM turns to ERIN.

PAM  
Can I have another drink?

OSCAR  
No, Madame. You're allocated tokens for each stage of-

STEVE  
Is there a stripper?

OSCAR  
What?

STEVE  
My mate said there was a stripper.

ERIN  
Sir, we are trying to explore the intricacies of Fitzgerald's great American novel.

OSCAR  
And have fun.

STEVE  
This isn't fun. This is shit.

PAM laughs.

RAINER smashes the drums angrily. She hates STEVE and keeps on drumming, staring him in the eye, becoming more and more exasperated.

STEVE (cont'd)  
Who's that one meant to be?  
Is she a girl or a boy?

OSCAR  
Sir-

STEVE walks over to RAINER and starts touching her hat and clothes.

PAM  
When's the foam party happening?

ERIN  
Excuse me?

STEVE  
Look at his little hat.

STEVE takes off RAINER's hat.

PAM  
Where's the foam?

ERIN  
There's no foam.

STEVE  
It is a girl!

PAM  
Why?

ERIN  
Cos there just isn't!

STEVE  
Quite a good-looking girl...-

PAM  
I'm not having fun-

RAINER  
FUCK THIS!

RAINER stops drumming and throws her drum sticks into the air. She stands up and walks away.

Music stops and harsh lights turn on.

STEVE  
Oh, haven't had your tea, luv?

RAINER  
Go fuck yourself!

Beat.

STEVE is shocked and angry. OSCAR tries to cool STEVE down, ERIN tries to calm PAM down, who is upset.

STEVE  
What?!

OSCAR  
Um, please, Sir, I think you just irked her somewhat.

STEVE  
Irked?

ERIN

We just need to calm down and we can all resume!

RAINER

I AM NOT FUCKING RESUMING!

STEVE

Me and you both, luv. Drag us down to this shit-hole for 50 quid a pop. Look at this place. It's just a basement.

PAM and STEVE angrily leave. OSCAR and ERIN try to stop them.

OSCAR

Please, sir!

PAM

I want my money back.

ERIN

No, Pam-

STEVE

Me too, come on.

OSCAR

Steve!

STEVE

I should have listened to the reviews. Everyone says you're shit.

PAM, STEVE, OSCAR and ERIN all exit.

A long pause.

RAINER then angrily undresses from her costume.

ERIN re-enters, followed by OSCAR.

Everyone speaks in British accents now:

OSCAR is well-spoken, ERIN less so, RAINER has a slight cockney accent.



OSCAR goes backstage.

ERIN  
Jesus Christ, Raine, what was that?

RAINER  
He was a prick.

ERIN  
They're always pricks!

RAINER  
Yeah, and I'm sick of it!

Pause.

OSCAR returns with a beer and drinks it heavily.

ERIN  
Oscar, no.

OSCAR  
Oh, why not?

ERIN  
You know what Rupert said.

OSCAR  
Oh, shit on Rupert's face.

ERIN  
It eats into the profits.

OSCAR  
(laughing) Profits? What bloody profits?

RAINER  
I'll have one.

ERIN sighs.

OSCAR  
Nice.

OSCAR gets RAINER a beer.

ERIN  
Rupert's going to take it our pay, you know.

RAINER  
I'm not a fucking mannequin, E.

ERIN

We've had worse.

RAINER

Didn't used to.  
Remember when we started off?

ERIN

Oh, come on.

RAINER

We used to make good stuff, we used to make art,

ERIN

Yeah and remember our wages?

RAINER

No.

ERIN

Cos we didn't have any.

RAINER

This theatre, Living Room, it used to mean something.

ERIN

Raine, we've been over this a million times. We were making high-brow art stuff but also starving. We couldn't even afford the rent of this place.

RAINER

So when Rupert offered to buy it, we jumped at it and sold our souls, yes, I know.

ERIN

We did it so we could carry on doing the other stuff.

RAINER

And what happened to the other stuff?  
What happened to How we Drown in Numbers?  
What happened to Protest at Tienanmen Square?

ERIN

No one came. At least not enough.

RAINER

And now they do come. Now they burn our hair.  
Now they laugh at us.

OSCAR

And that woman tried to stick a finger up my bum.

RAINER

A woman tried to stick a finger up his bum.  
How has it come to this?

ERIN

Why are we having this conversation?  
You know what it's like out there.  
People like Gatsby, and James Bond and running  
round a shopping mall in Ipswich pretending to be a  
Zombie.  
That's what people like. That's how it is.

Pause. ERIN and RAINER sits down.

RAINER hands ERIN her beer, ERIN drinks.

OSCAR

Remember 2015?

RAINER

Yup.

OSCAR

Those were the good days.  
Remember that thing we did down in the tunnels?  
Where we blindfolded people and ran at them with a  
bassoon?

RAINER

Scared them shit-less.

OSCAR

Was that yours?

RAINER

No, Erin's.

ERIN

My favourite was that Hamlet we did in the chicken  
shop.

RAINER

Oh yeah, that was great.

OSCAR

I thought they were all great.

ERIN

Not all of them.

OSCAR

No. But they all meant something. I guess.

RAINER

Remember when we used to think them up? In between shifts at that taco place.

ERIN

Yeah.

RAINER

And then we found this place for really cheap. And we could make them. And everyone started coming. And those ideas would appear, in this room. And it was our place. That was something mad.

Beat.

OSCAR

God, this is depressing.

RAINER

Yup.

OSCAR

We could do drugs?

ERIN

I got to pick Emily up from drama club.

OSCAR

Oh, yes, drama club. Raine?

RAINER

I'm skint.

OSCAR

I'll pay.

RAINER

I'm not in the mood. Sorry, Oscar.

ERIN's phone rings. She doesn't answer it.

ERIN

Shit, it's Rupert.

RAINER

Don't answer it.

OSCAR

By the way, I thought you were very brave today. With that nob.

RAINER

Thank you, Oscar.

OSCAR

I would have done the same. But obviously I'm a spineless, so.

ERIN

What's Rupert going to say?

OSCAR

Oh, fuck Rupert with a massive rod.

ERIN

You would never say that to this face.

OSCAR

No. Obviously not, he scares me. And he's my uncle.

ERIN's phone stops ringing.

ERIN

What are we going to tell him though?

RAINER

I dunno. Truth maybe.

ERIN

Can't tell him the truth.

RAINER

He's gonna see the accounts.

ERIN

What do you think he'll do? Close us down?

RAINER

No. He wouldn't do that.

OSCAR

...He would.

They turn to him.

Actually. He's already planning to.

RAINER

What?

OSCAR

Yeah. We had a rather horrible conversation in a Pret A Manger. He's gonna sell.

ERIN  
For sure?

OSCAR  
Definitely now.

ERIN  
Why didn't you say?

OSCAR  
Cos I'm a spineless weasel, remember.

RAINER stands, covering her face.

RAINER  
Fuck-sake.

ERIN  
So, that's it.

OSCAR  
He's gonna give us a three weeks. To finish Gatsby.

RAINER  
Fuck Gatsby.

OSCAR  
Raine, we do have a contract.

RAINER  
Fuck the contract.

OSCAR  
...You can't really.

RAINER  
So, we've got to finish this show we all fucking hate  
until they close us down?

RAINER holds her face.

How has life become this shit?  
Is this hell?

ERIN  
It's not that bad.

RAINER  
Maybe for you! You've got your teaching. Your  
garden.  
Everything I've got is wrapped up in this shit-hole!  
I've got nothing else.

Pause. ERIN looks at OSCAR.

ERIN

Look, Raine. Let's just. You know. Do our time.  
Finish the run. Then we can find something better.

RAINER

Like what? Kid's clown parties? Stacking shelves?  
I haven't got something on the side. I haven't got  
anything going...  
I've just got this. This. This fucking crap.  
Just. This.

RAINER tears the last of her costume off and throws it the floor in a sad, angry rage.

She turns away.

Beat.

ERIN

...Let's just finish the run.

Beat. RAINER turns away.

OSCAR

...Unless.

ERIN

What?

OSCAR

Well. Our contract says we must perform. Doesn't  
say what we must perform in.

RAINER

...What do you mean?

OSCAR

Rupert's an idiot. He never stated, in the contract,  
which show we have to perform.

RAINER

So...?

OSCAR

We can perform anything we want.

RAINER

...We could change the show?

OSCAR

Yeah.

RAINER

...Let's do it!

ERIN  
But why?

RAINER  
What do you mean?

ERIN  
He's gonna close us down, anyway.

RAINER  
So.

ERIN  
Why go through all the effort?

RAINER  
Because we go out with a bang. We make that stuff  
that we used to make.

OSCAR  
Obviously it will run him into the ground but I'm fine  
with that.

RAINER  
Everyone wins.

ERIN  
But is it worth it? Come up with a completely new  
show just to spite Rupert?

RAINER  
It's not just that! It's to make something worthwhile.  
It's to see our ideas appear on the stage. It's to feel  
that fucking fire again!

OSCAR  
Yeah!

RAINER  
And who knows? What if it's a hit. What if people  
come-

ERIN  
No one will come.

RAINER  
Why not?

ERIN  
Because they like immersive Batman, and Stranger  
Things on Ice.



RAINER

That stuff was around before.

ERIN

And now it's taken over. Have you seen their sets, Raine? The production value, it's insane. They've built like a whole town in High Barnet. There's this this WW1 trench they dug in the New Forest where you can literally sleep in mud and shit, but it's not real mud and shit, it's this really expensive stage mud and shit that's not mud and shit but smells exactly like it.

RAINER

Yeah, but what have we got that they haven't?

OSCAR

...Bad facilities?

RAINER

Ideas.  
We were always small.  
We just had us.  
No money.  
Remember when we did that thing in the swimming pool?  
Or that thing in the woods?  
It was intimate stuff, political stuff.

OSCAR

And they loved it.

RAINER

Remember we used to sit here. Get that horrible fucking wine. And stay here until morning until we had something.  
And we always got it.

ERIN's phone rings.

ERIN

Ten years ago.

RAINER

Oh, come on, Erin.

ERIN

I've got to take this.

ERIN exits.

RAINER, pumped up, turns to OSCAR.

RAINER  
Come on, O Man, let's go. You and me, come on.

RAINER looks around desperately and sees some peeling wall paper.

She grabs a pen from the side.

RAINER jumps up and down on the spot like a boxer.

OSCAR  
Um.

RAINER  
Remember what we used to do, just shout it out. No idea is a bad idea.

OSCAR  
Er.

RAINER  
Think small. But intimate.

OSCAR  
Er...shopping. Immersive shopping?

RAINER  
Political?

OSCAR  
Racist immersive shopping, in the 80s.

RAINER  
No, more current.

OSCAR  
Brexit... The musical?

RAINER  
No.

OSCAR  
My myself and Dominic Rab?

RAINER  
Nope.

OSCAR  
Priti Patel on a Hot Tin Roof?

RAINER  
What?

OSCAR  
Books. What about books?

RAINER  
Yeah. Books.

OSCAR  
Um. Christmas Carol, set on a plane.

RAINER  
No.

OSCAR  
1984, a silent disco?

RAINER  
No.

OSCAR  
Pride and Prejudice, but everyone's a paedo?

RAINER  
NO! Oh my God, no!

OSCAR  
You said no idea was a bad idea.

RAINER  
Except for those ones. They're all very bad!

ERIN re-enters.

ERIN  
Guys, I think I have to go.

RAINER  
Great.

ERIN  
Louis just threw up in the oven and Jack turned it on.

RAINER  
Can't Jack sort it out.

ERIN  
You know what he's like about sick.

RAINER  
Fuck sake.

ERIN  
Raine. Look, I wish it was different.

RAINER

Sure, whatever.

ERIN's phone rings again.

ERIN

Fuck.

RAINER

Go on.

ERIN makes to leave.

You never cared anyway.

ERIN

What?

RAINER

You were never really here these few years. Always one foot in Forest fucking Hill.

ERIN

Raine, I do have a life.

RAINER

And we don't?

ERIN

...

OSCAR

Rainer, she has kids.

RAINER

And I don't have things I should be taking care of in my life?  
I do. But this place is still top of the list.

ERIN

What are you saying? That I don't give a shit.

RAINER

Not anymore.

ERIN

I've given this place the best fucking years of my life.  
I've watch it die.  
And now you're saying I don't care?

RAINER

...

ERIN  
I'll see you later.

ERIN makes to leave.

RAINER  
Erin.  
Wait.  
Remember when we started out?  
All that stuff we made?

ERIN  
Yes, I remember.

RAINER  
Because it was all you. You came up with the ideas,  
the concepts.  
It was all you.

ERIN  
But you brought it to life.

RAINER  
Whatever, you're the brains, you know that.

OSCAR  
I thought I was.

Beat.

Joke.

RAINER  
It was all you, E. Remember when we'd sit here all  
night, remember that?

OSCAR  
We need you, Erin.

ERIN hesitates. RAINER looks at her pleadingly.

Pause.

ERIN takes the pen and goes to the board.

RAINER smiles.

ERIN  
OK.

OSCAR  
Oh, yeah.

ERIN

It's true.  
What we do best is intimate. Personal. Political.

RAINER

Yes.

ERIN

But, out there they've got big sets, huge casts,  
amazing costumes, and tons of money.  
But, yes, intellectually bankrupt.

RAINER

Right!

ERIN

But we still need to compete in some way. We can be  
small but we have to compete.  
People like historical stuff.

OSCAR

Like battles?

ERIN

No, like you're in a stone age camp and a Viking's  
trying to rape you.  
People want to be there. Smell the cooking. Feel the  
cold.

OSCAR

Um...battle of Waterloo.

ERIN

Boring.

RAINER

The Blitz?

ERIN

Bit History Museum.

OSCAR

Hitler's Bunker. The last days. You get to watch him  
freak out.

ERIN

A bit passe.

OSCAR

Passe?

ERIN

People need something more...visceral. Big events.  
They want to be a normal person at a very charged  
point in history. Lots going on.

OSCAR

The stock exchange goes bust, 1929?

ERIN

Nah.

RAINER

Kennedy Assassination?

ERIN

Been done.

OSCAR

Immersive Vietnam?

ERIN

Too light.

OSCAR

Too light?

ERIN

People want edgy, dark, horrible.  
They're sick of nostalgic films: they want to be in  
those moments of history no one wants to be in.

RAINER

Why?

ERIN

Because... I don't know.  
They just want to know.  
They want to know how it felt to be on slave ship.  
Or when the Twin Towers came down.  
They want to know every detail.

OSCAR

Jesus, what next: immersive Auschwitz?

Pause.

RAINER looks at ERIN.

ERIN looks at RAINER.

OSCAR (cont'd)  
No.

RAINER  
...Could work?

Beat .

ERIN  
...Won't it be a bit much?

## SCENE 2

Auschwitz. 1943.

Night. A blue, dark sky.

A decaying bell tower is projected.

ERIN dressed as a female prisoner, her hair short, kneels in a broken courtyard, beneath the bell tower, looking up at the moon.

A single tear runs down her pale face.

Epic, sad, choral music plays. Shouts can be heard.

ERIN closes her eyes as shouts get louder: the guards are coming for her.



SCENE 3

The Living Room theatre.

ERIN, as before, but her head in her hands, moaning.

OSCAR enters, also dressed as an Auschwitz prisoner, followed by RAINER, who is dressed as a Nazi guard.

OSCAR goes to get a drink.

RAINER  
Shit.

OSCAR  
That was a bit much.

RAINER  
Shit, shit, shit.

OSCAR  
Do you think we crossed a line?

RAINER  
Yes. We crossed a very big line.

ERIN  
Oh, God. Did you see her face?

RAINER  
Who?

ERIN  
My great aunt. She's Jewish. She's very Jewish. I haven't seen her in years.

OSCAR  
Maybe, it wasn't that bad.

RAINER  
It was.

ERIN  
Why did you make me do that?

RAINER

...

OSCAR

It wasn't my idea.

RAINER

Yeah, it was.

OSCAR

Yeah, but I didn't like it.

RAINER

You picked the costumes.

ERIN

Oh, God.

RAINER

Why am I a Nazi? You should be the Nazi?

OSCAR

Why?

RAINER

Cos...-do I have to spell it out?

OSCAR

We've always been colour blind when we do casting.

RAINER

Yeah, but there's colour blind and then there's someone who actually looks like a Nazi.

ERIN

Shut-up! Guys. Just.  
It's not your life that's ruined, is it?

Pause.

ERIN turns to RAINER.

What was that thing you were doing?

RAINER

What thing?

ERIN

That thing with your hand?

RAINER does a strange gesture with her hand.

RAINER

Nazi salute?

OSCAR  
That's not a Nazi salute.

RAINER does gesture again.

RAINER  
Yeah, it is.

ERIN  
It's not.

RAINER does it again.

OSCAR  
No, this is a Nazi salute.

OSCAR does one.

ERIN  
Yeah, that's right.

RAINER  
Course it's right, cos he was sposed to be the fucking  
Nazi!

OSCAR  
Just cos I'm blonde? That's so racist.

RAINER  
What are you even meant to be?

OSCAR  
Orange seller.

RAINER  
Why would they have an orange seller?

OSCAR  
Cos they might want oranges.

RAINER  
I don't think it was top of their list!

ERIN  
Guys! None, of this fucking matters, OK? What  
matters, is that we have immersed a bit of Homerton  
in racial genocide.

Beat.

RAINER  
At least there was no press.

OSCAR  
Although that's tomorrow.

Beat. Then RAINER takes a pen and moves to the white board.

RAINER  
OK...so we change it.

OSCAR  
What?

RAINER  
We change the whole thing, tonight.

ERIN  
Rainer.

RAINER  
All we need to do is. Change the setting a bit. Maybe.  
A different time-

ERIN  
Raine, we're done.

Beat.

There is no way we can make an entire new show by tomorrow. And we can't run this one.

RAINER  
We can change it.

ERIN  
We can't. And Rupert will sell the theatre.

RAINER  
Fine, let's just give up, let's just give up everything we've done, everything we've worked on, let's just go back to being fucking losers, let's just give up, yeah?

ERIN  
...Would it be that bad?

Beat.

Aren't you sick of it? Never knowing when the money's coming in? Watching all your friends get proper jobs, proper things? I'm 33, Raine. I can't spend another Christmas talking to Grandpa Ralph about why I haven't sorted my life out.

RAINER  
So you're embarrassed.

ERIN

Yes, I am.  
And I've got kids.  
And a boy friend who kind of hates me.  
Mostly cos I'm never there, I'm just here, with you  
lot.

And. We're not going anywhere.

Beat. OSCAR looks down at the floor.

RAINER

Big Man?

OSCAR

...I would, Raine. I really would. But. There's just no  
way. Rupert.  
Rupert's selling, and...  
Also.

RAINER

What?

OSCAR

He's got plans to turn this place into a kind of Tapas  
thing and, er: he's asked to be manager.

RAINER

Fucking hell.

OSCAR

I don't want to, Raine.

RAINER

No, course.

OSCAR

I made a deal. With my, dad.

RAINER

You hate your dad.

OSCAR

Yes, but...-

RAINER

He pays the bills.

OSCAR

It's not...- all my family think I'm a fucking joke, and  
I am a fucking joke.  
But it's not funny to them.  
(MORE)

OSCAR (cont'd)

And, yeah, I'm also sick of watching all my friends do things while I do nothing!

RAINER

Fine.

OSCAR

Raine, if there was a chance-

RAINER

It's fine, alright!

Beat.

ERIN

...I guess I'll lock up.

RAINER

Yeah, go on.

ERIN's about to leave.

RAINER (cont'd)

Go back to your nice little lives waiting for you. And you nice little friends.

ERIN

Rainer-

RAINER

Cos it's fine for me. I don't the same problem. Cos I ain't got no friends doing good things cos I haven't got any, cos I spent ten years down in this fucking hole with you!

Beat.

And I don't have another life. To go back to. Cos I've got nothing there, I've got nothing really, do I?

Beat. RAINER turns her back on them. She looks at the white board and all the notes.

ERIN

I'll lock up.

ERIN exits.

OSCAR looks at RAINER.

OSCAR

Raine, this isn't... you know, the end.

RAINER  
Course.

OSCAR  
We'll still hang out.

RAINER  
Sure.

OSCAR  
And if you need a job, we'll probably need like servers for the Tapas thing, and-

RAINER looks at him with daggers and OSCAR stops.

RAINER turns around again.

OSCAR makes to leave but then turns back.  
That thing you said. By the way. About...having nothing. That's not true. I think you've got a lot. A lot more than...a lot of people.  
I just. Think you should know that.

OSCAR leaves.

A long pause.

RAINER looks at the whiteboard. Her anger building.

RAINER's phone rings. She sees the person calling and rejects the call.

RAINER  
Fuck off.

She looks up at the whiteboard.

RAINER (cont'd)  
Fuck off. Fuck off. Fuck off. Fuck off.

She screams.

She continues to scream and swear and tear all the notes and whiteboard to pieces.

She does this until exhausted, resting her head against the whiteboard.

A pause.

RAINER's phone beeps: an email.

She slowly looks at her phone.

She sits down.

She talks to herself, as if talking to ERIN and OSCAR in the other room.

She scrolls through the email and Jim's blog.

RAINER (cont'd)

(directed off) Oh, look, an email from one of our LOYAL FOLLOWERS!

Jim from Croydon. No, sorry, I can't tell you the start time, Jim, cos there is no start time because we're all a bunch of SPINE-LESS TWATS!

Oh, look, Jim's got a blog.

He likes role-play. He's got a dog called Tim.

He likes to dress up as an elf every Sunday and go fighting in strange planets. He likes to draw little worlds. Weird purple places.

Jim finds it hard to make real-life connections: HE LACKS INTER-PERSONAL SKILLS!

He's really pouring it out. He works in IT and gets bullied at the office, no one likes him. Except Mina: she works on the third floor and is nice to Jim.

He hopes one day he can meet someone who will love him for him. Aw. He wants to travel. He wants to fall in love. He wants to make his fantasy world come true!

But you know what, Jim, that will never happen because nothing ever happens.

Nothing ever really...

Nothing...

(RAINER trails off.

Her face changes as she scrolls through JIM's blog, his social media, everything.

She absorbs all this.

She has an idea.

She stands up, still holding the phone.

She takes the big pen.

She walks over to the whiteboard.

She writes: JIM, in big letters and circles it.

She then writes: LOVE, in big letters, beneath it.

She then writes: FANTASY, to the right of LOVE.



She then draws purple mountains on the white board, as a zig-zag.

She stands back.

She looks at the phone.

She looks at the whiteboard.

Then she shouts to the others.

RAINER (cont'd)  
GUYS! COME BACK!

Blackout.

#### SCENE 4

A desert. A red sky.

A strange, distant land. Purple smoke fills the air.

The desert runs on forever.

JIM enters.

He's balding, chubby and wears a t-shirt with an ironic joke on it.

He is confused and scared as he enters the desert. He's seen this place before, in his drawings and his dreams.

JIM  
...Hello? ...Hello? I'm here for the immersive  
experience?

Purple smoke gushes out of the charred earth.

JIM jumps back.

We see a fire in the gloom. A camp fire. A strange, hooded figure sits above it. They have a long beard.

Their name is RIPPON (played by OSCAR)

He has a low, strange voice.

OSCAR  
Who are you?

JIM  
...Jim.

OSCAR  
Jim. Where have you traveled from?

JIM  
Hendon. Work. Sorry, I'm late-

OSCAR holds his finger to his lips.

OSCAR  
Shoosh. Come and sit thee by the fire, my friend.  
Warm your bones.

JIM  
Oh, thank you.

JIM sits at the fire.

This place you toil in, this Hendon. Do you lead many men?

JIM (cont'd)  
Um-

OSCAR  
Just you seem like a man who commands much respect.  
A man who does not struggle to make real-life connections.

JIM  
Oh, er.

OSCAR  
Are you thirsty, Jim?

JIM  
A bit.

OSCAR  
SLAVE!

JIM shivers.

OSCAR hands him a strange hooded cloak, similar to his own.

Purple steam gushes out again from the ground and makes a loud sound.

ERIN appears, dressed in rags and a chain. Her face and body is very dirty. She carries a water jug and some clay mugs. She does not look happy.

JIM stares at her, besotted.

OSCAR (cont'd)  
Ah, there you are, slave girl. Pour Jim some water  
and then go back to your scrubbing.

ERIN  
Yes, Rippon.

JIM looks at ERIN. ERIN pours the water into the cups.

OSCAR  
...You like her, don't you Jim?

JIM  
Oh, um-

OSCAR  
You'd like to take her to the secret caves, wouldn't  
you? And make sweet music to her in the darkness?

JIM  
Well. I guess-

OSCAR  
WELL, DON'T!

JIM  
What?

OSCAR  
Don't you even think about it, Jim.

JIM  
Why?

OSCAR  
She's riddled. Absolutely riddled with the disease of  
the sweet music.

JIM

Oh, sure.

JIM takes a the clay mug of water from a very annoyed ERIN. OSCAR takes his cup too.

OSCAR

Ah, Jim of Hendon, I wish you could have seen this land only 5 winters ago!

Great lakes we had, and forests, and cities made of glass! Oh, and the dances, the great times of cheer and mirth!

And the women, Jim, the sweet maids and fair wenches.

Not like this desert weed you see before you.

ERIN shakes her head, containing anger.

JIM

What happened?

Beat. OSCAR solemnly turns to JIM, his face still covered.

OSCAR

...The man came.

JIM

...Which man?

OSCAR

A man from the great plains, a forsaken place, where the Cucka Crow flies.

Steam gushes out.

This man walked out of the dead plains, and brought the plains with him.

Steam gushes out again; there is a boom.

'The Man', played by RAINER, appears thinly in the smoke, but no one sees him.

JIM

Why?

OSCAR

They say a thousand years ago, a great and terrible tribe lived in the great plains. Magic men who could move mountains with a flick of their hand. They say this man is the last of them. And being the last, he wants to cover the entire world in his terrible legacy.

JIM

But can he not be stopped?

OSCAR

Ah, Jim, I can see that you are indeed a brave man.  
Who does not find it hard to meet people and make  
real-life connections.

JIM

Um.

OSCAR

But... no one knows where this man is...-

OSCAR starts coughing violently.

ERIN stops scrubbing and listens.

JIM notices that she has stopped and is listening.

Forgive me, Jim of Hendon, tis the smoke.

JIM

Can I help you, Rippon?

OSCAR

No, I must get my medicine, I shall return swiftly.

OSCAR exits, still coughing.

An awkward pause as ERIN and JIM are left alone.

She continues to scrub.

JIM

So...how's the...washing going? You're obviously  
very good at it.

ERIN looks at him then turns back to her washing. JIM winces from awkwardness.

...He's a funny guy, isn't he?

ERIN

No, he is a fool. He drinks his own urine. He talks to  
rocks.

JIM

Right. What is your name?

ERIN

Mina.

JIM

...

Beat. ERIN goes back to washing.

ERIN

Rippon was once a brave man, a leader of my tribe.  
But the purple smoke ruined his mind like it did so  
many. Like it did... my mother.

JIM

I am sorry.

ERIN

He is a coward, too. We all know where this man  
dwells.

JIM

Where?

ERIN

Behind those hills. Due west. Past the dead city.

JIM

You know it?

ERIN

I went there. With my father.  
I watched as this man took the words from his mouth.  
Stole the air from his lungs...  
I watched...

ERIN begins to cry a little.

JIM tries to comfort him.

JIM

Oh, please, let me-

ERIN

There is no need for tears in this place.

JIM puts his hand on her shoulder. ERIN wipes her face a little.

JIM

I will go to him.

ERIN

What?

JIM

I will find this man.

ERIN puts her hand to JIM's face.

ERIN

But it is too dangerous!

JIM  
Please. I will do it.

ERIN  
...It cannot be.

JIM  
What?

ERIN  
It was once said that a man would come from a  
distant land. A man of great substance. Who likes to  
travel. And has a dog called Tim.

JIM  
Tim?

ERIN  
This man would banish evil from this land forever.  
And I...I would fall madly in love with him.

JIM  
...

ERIN  
Take this sword.  
It was my father's.

She hands him a small sword.  
And take this.

She kisses him. Lightly. On the lips.

JIM is amazed. He cannot believe it.

He just stares forward.

She stops. She smiles. She hands him his sword.

ERIN (cont'd)  
Farewell, brave Jim.

JIM slowly leaves.

ERIN stops smiling.

She lowers her head once again.

OSCAR (or RIPPON) enters slowly.

He smiles and evil smile.

He puts his hand on ERIN's shoulder.

OSCAR  
Well, done, Mina. Well done.

He laughs a long, evil laugh.

Purple smoke gushes forth from the ground.

In the gloom, THE MAN appears once again.

He laughs too.

Both laughs merge as smoke gushes forth.

#### SCENE 5

House Lights up.

Bright.

The theatre.

Same as before but everything is obviously a set.

ERIN, RAINER and OSCAR remove their make-up and costumes.

JIM sits in the middle. He watches ERIN, longingly.

ERIN is uncomfortable with this.

OSCAR  
So. Jim, how did you find that?

JIM  
Oh, just you know, obviously. Incredible.

RAINER  
Would you like to keep doing it?

JIM  
Sorry?

OSCAR  
We were thinking of a kind of series.

JIM  
Oh, yeah, sure!



OSCAR

Thing is, mate. We did obviously use a lot your personal data.

ERIN

(Disapproving) Without your consent.

OSCAR

Which is...technically illegal.

JIM

Oh, that's fine.

RAINER

Cos to carry on... We'd have to use more.

JIM

Oh, more?

RAINER

We want to ask you some questions.

Beat. OSCAR, RAINER and ERIN stand. RAINER stands.

As RAINER speaks in this next section, RAINER and ERIN clear away the old, purple set.

The lights change to red and neon.

Distant rain can be heard.

OSCAR

Some of these questions are going to hurt.  
Some of them won't even make sense.

JIM

Oh, sure.

RAINER

But you must answer.

ERIN

Only if you want to, Jim.

JIM exits and is replaced by SANA.

SANA

RAINER

We want to build a world, Jim.  
A world around you.  
A world where you're at the centre.  
But to this we need to know everything.

(MORE)

RAINER (cont'd)

Your fears, your desires.  
Your wildest dreams.  
We want to know what you think about when you lie  
in bed at night.  
We want to know what you see when you close your  
eyes.  
We want to know who you hate.  
Who you love.  
We want to know you.  
Because this world will be you.  
The very essence of it.  
Does that make sense?  
Does that make sense, Sana?

SANA nods.

SANA is a delivery person for a delivery company. She is British-Asian.

She has short hair, tied up. She's tough and clever. She wears delivery clothes and holds  
a delivery box with a symbol on it.

Only RAINER stands with her.

RAINER (cont'd)

So. You drive a bike?

SANA

Yeah. For a delivery company. It's an interesting job.

RAINER

Right. What we do here, Sana-

SANA

I know what you do.  
See, some guys, when they're riding, they listen to  
music. Some like to sing. I like to make stories.  
I like to... re-imagine things. I like movies.

RAINER

Right.

Lights slowly change red and rain falls. The space is turned into a neon, Noir space.  
Music like Evangelis plays.

SANA stands.

SANA

And London, it's looking more like Blade Runner,  
you know? Especially round the city and Waterloo.  
It's all red and raining and you blink and there's a new  
tower block or complex or chrome something or  
other.

(MORE)

SANA (cont'd)

I like to ride round it with this heavy monologue in my head, you know, like I smoke all the time, or I've got somewhere to be. Something to do. Something important.

Cos when you ride around all the time you do feel something's happening. You see everyone having fun in the clubs or the pubs or the party pubs or in condos.

You see people rushing around. You see their faces all twisted with worry. You see people desperate to connect. But never finding the time. You see the homeless. You see the mad. And you see the chrome towers, and the gates, and the money. And the crime. And the stories about riders being dragged off their bike. I carry a little knife. Just in case.

SANA shows the knife.

And you see all the misery too. All the lonely people in their lonely flats; hand through the door to grab their little dinner, so they can scurry back to their little room to eat it.

You catch little lives through doorways and stairwells and stuff like that.

And when you hand them the box... your finger sometimes it...it touches theirs. You look at them. Like this one...woman, her names, er, Catherine. She lives, in, um, Elephant and Castle, you know those posh new flats? With all the gates?

RAINER

Sure.

SANA

It's like a whole nother town in there. You got shops, gyms, schools: everything you want. You don't have to leave.

RAINER

Right.

The Vangelis-style music gets louder as SANA ascends in the lift.

SANA takes a box of hot soup in a plastic container from her delivery box.

SANA

I go there every week. Flat 882.

I go up the lift. I can see the whole city: white and red like diamonds, like a sea. I can almost see the spaceships, the huge woman blinking on the billboard; the explosion somewhere distant, the boom.

They always order the same thing on a Friday: spicy Ramen with shrimp.

(MORE)

SANA (cont'd)

Catherine always answers the door.

ERIN enters, dressed as Catherine, the woman SANA describes.

She's blonde, good-looking, smartly dressed.

She must be thirty, same age as me. She's wearing all the stuff you'd expect: King's Road jewelry, posh shirt. Bangles. Blonde. Perfect. And she'll say something like-

ERIN

Nasty night. Must be horrible to ride in.

SANA

Or-

ERIN

Oh, that looks lovely. Still warm.

RAINER slowly hands her the

SANA

But it's not the things she says, it's the way she looks at me. Deeply: a few seconds too long. And I can see. She's more than that. She's not just that. I can see that she's trapped. I can see that she's very, very sad. Then he comes.

OSCAR enters. He's dressed in a smart suit and tie, hair slicked back. He's got a slight cockney accent. His eyes are slightly blurry. He smiles: a nasty, little smile.

Skinny little prick, probably almost forty. Breath stinks like Friday pints and the lads. His eyes are a little blurry. But it's nothing, the night has just began.

And she goes all stiff. And she looks at me again. And I see the long red mark up her arm. And the dark ones around her wrist. I see the heavy foundation all round her neck. I see a little bit of blood in the corner of her eye.

OSCAR holds ERIN round the waist. He hands SANA a note.

OSCAR

You again. Here you go.

SANA

He always does this. He makes a point of it. I tell him, 'we don't really do tips'; I tell him every time.

OSCAR

Go on, it's fine, go on.

SANA

I look at her arms, then at him, then at the money.  
He sees me looking.  
He likes it. He makes a point of it.

OSCAR

Go on.

SANA

And I look at her. And I see her eyes close.  
And I always. I always. Take the money.  
Slowly.  
But what I dream about.  
What I imagine.  
Is I take that little knife.  
I have it ready.  
And I go to take the money.  
And I look at him smile.  
And I take his arm.  
And I watch the smile drop.  
And I stick it in.

SANA thrusts the small knife into OSCAR.

Again and again.

Blood spills out.

OSCAR, his face pale and eyes wide, shocked, slowly falls to the floor as SANA sticks the knife in.

Again and again.

ERIN screams initially, then just watches, panting.

OSCAR falls down.

SANA then turns to ERIN.

SANA (cont'd)

And then I walk up to her. I take her.

SANA slowly takes ERIN in her arms.

SANA (cont'd)

And I kiss her.

They are about to embrace and kiss, slowly.

Then ERIN's phone rings.

All music cuts.

ERIN looks awkwardly over at her bag.

SANA withdraws awkwardly.

ERIN looks at SANA apologetically.

Blackout.

## SCENE 6

The Living Room Theatre.

Night.

ERIN sits.

RAINER stands, looking at her phone.

RAINER  
Fuck sake, Erin.

ERIN  
I'm sorry.

RAINER  
She's really pissed, you know!

ERIN  
Give her her money back!

RAINER  
It's not about the money, it's about... she was really in there, you know!

ERIN  
I know, I'm sorry, Okay?

RAINER  
Who was it, anyway?

ERIN  
Jack.

RAINER sighs.

Ellie's being a nightmare. She beat up this boy at school.

( MORE )

ERIN (cont'd)

I think she's turning into one of those awful kids, you know? The ones you see on the street and you're just like, yeesch.

RAINER

Well, keep you phone off. It's not hard. Mine's been ringing all day.

ERIN sighs.

We are so close, you know.

ERIN

I know.

RAINER

People love it!

ERIN

I know! It's just.

RAINER

What?

ERIN

I told Jack I'd give this all up. Before it was going well, now it is going well-

RAINER

He should be happy for you.

ERIN

He is but... he doesn't like, you know. The kissing, I guess.

RAINER

It's just an act.

ERIN

Not from them, Raine.  
It's the way they look at you.  
Hold your hand.  
There's so much... emptiness there, in their eyes.  
It's so sad.

RAINER

It's not real.

ERIN

It is for them.

Short Pause.

Some times I see them.

RAINER

What?

ERIN

On the train, I was on the train the other day and I thought I... saw one of them. This guy. Staring at me.

RAINER

But was it him?

ERIN

...I can't do this, Raine.

RAINER

E, you're a great actor cos you're sensitive.

ERIN

No-

RAINER

But you let it get to you!

ERIN

Well, you don't have to deal with it. You don't them slobbering over you.

RAINER

What can I do?

ERIN

Why am I always the love interest.

RAINER

Because... you are. You're the Juliet, you're the pretty one. I'm just the mug with the knife.

ERIN

You've got this weird opinion of yourself-

RAINER

Look. On Friday. Everything's gonna change. Lola Shaw is coming, Lola fucking Shaw. And all the fucking press.

Once we get those reviews in we can expand, we'll have more money. We'll get more actors. You can have a rest.

ERIN

...

RAINER

Aren't you happy? About any of this?



ERIN

Course I am.  
But it's weird. It's like we've waited for it for so long  
and now it's happened, it...it doesn't...

RAINER

It's real, E.

Beat.

ERIN

But does it make them happy? The ones who come  
here?

RAINER

Yes.  
I get emails, every day. Thanking us. In tears.  
It makes them feel great.

ERIN

Then they go back to it.

RAINER

No, it changes them.  
They go out there and they quit their job, they ask  
that person out. They travel. They do those things  
they always wanted to do but were too scared.  
They say art makes no difference.  
Well, this does. What we do, makes a difference.

RAINER shows ERIN her phone.

ERIN

...

RAINER

Look at this, look at Sally. Look at Sally from  
Watford.

ERIN's phone rings again.

RAINER sighs.

E, this show's got to be big. I need your big brain, it's  
got to be smart.

ERIN looks at her phone.

If this goes well, we'll be household fucking names!

Beat.

ERIN looks at her phone then puts it down.

ERIN

OK. Show me Sally from Watford.

RAINER smiles and excitedly shows ERIN her phone.

From this point the scene changes and SALLY's voice overlaps with ERIN and RAINER as they continue to speak.

SALLY appears on stage and speaks as RAINER and ERIN build the set around her: a huge mound of parcels on one side and a trolley on another.

SALLY is young and shy. She wears a brown uniform.

OSCAR, dressed in the same brown uniform, enters and holds a broom. He helps rearrange the set too.

'One Fine Day' by The Chiffons drifts in as SALLY speaks.

RAINER

OK, cool. So, she works in this warehouse right, one of those delivery ones./ Right.

ERIN

/Right...

RAINER

But she hates it. She wants to be a singer, right. She has these kind of fantasies...

SALLY

/Dear Living Room. I hope you're well.

I have a problem but I don't think you can help me.

I work in this warehouse. It's one of those places that send books or bird feed or clothes or anything really, all round the country.

I'm very bad at this job. See I get very distracted, I always hear music, wherever I go. On the tube, on the toilet, wherever.

I love that music from the 50s. like Martha Reeves, Nina Simone, you know. I try to like modern stuff but I just can't. It's the way they move, it's the way they feel everything so much.

I want to live in this world forever. I do, but it's in my head. I can sing but I'd never show anyone. I want to show someone. I want to meet someone. Someone who I'd show. A stranger.

(MORE)

SALLY (cont'd)  
I want to show them what I see.

SCENE 7

A delivery warehouse.  
Packages on one side, a big trolley on the other.

The lyrics of 'One Fine Day' kicks in and SALLY lip syncs to the music.

OSCAR, holding a broom, moves to the music.  
It becomes a kind of 50s musical number.

She sings.

Then, DERICK, a short, fat, angry man enters. He is her boss. The music abruptly stops and OSCAR turns away, away from SALLY.

DERICK  
Jesus Christ, Sally!

SALLY  
Oh, Derick, Um-

DERICK  
I've been calling for ages.

SALLY  
It's the headphones.

DERICK  
It's not the headphones. You were humming.

SALLY  
I wasn't humming.

DERICK  
You were humming. I saw you. On the camera.

SALLY  
...

DERICK  
Sally, you are always somewhere else.

He sighs.

I see you. Shuffling about, talking to brooms.

SALLY

It's just to pass the time.

DERICK

Well, it puts you off. .  
Last week you sent all that bird seed to that lawyer in  
Clapham. What's a lawyer in Clapham going to do  
with 8 Kilos of bird seed!

SALLY

I am sorry, Mr Stone.

DERICK

I try to be fair, don't I?

SALLY

Yes.

DERICK

We're not like those big places, up north are we? We  
give you breaks. We don't make you piss in bottles,  
do we, Sally?

SALLY

No.

DERICK

I respect you. So, why don't you respect me?

SALLY

I do.

DERICK

So pay attention.  
I need you here 100 percent.

Otherwise. We're going to have to have the big chat.  
Biiiiig chat, Sally. Know what I mean?

SALLY

...

DERICK

Alright.  
Getting some new stuff in from Birmingham. Be  
ready.

He leaves.

SALLY goes back to work.

OSCAR turns around. In his uniform.

OSCAR  
What a prick!

SALLY  
No.

OSCAR  
He is though, isn't he. Stupid little man.  
Just cos you want to hum a tune.

SALLY  
I did send that bird seed to Clapham.

OSCAR  
That's nothing, I once sent a dildo to a judge in  
Swansea. On purpose.

SALLY  
Have I seen you before?

OSCAR  
Um, no, I, er, I transferred here from Stoke.

SALLY  
Oh, right?

OSCAR  
Yeah, horrible place. Nice parks though.

SALLY  
Right.

OSCAR  
They're always trying to get rid of me.  
I'm well shit at this.  
See, I've always got my head in the clouds.

SALLY  
Me too.

SALLY, as OSCAR speaks, stares at him, amazed.

OSCAR  
I'm not...mental, I just. I've got this thing.  
I always hear music. Old music. Not Miley Cyrus,  
not that shit. I can't help it.

SALLY  
...

OSCAR

I love those old songs, the way they move, the way they smile. They just seem to feel everything so much.  
I'd live in that world forever, if I could. I really would.

SALLY

...Where did you say you were from again?

DERICK, the boss, re-enters.

DERICK

Sally, are you deaf?!

SALLY

Sorry.

DERICK

Move that stuff. Over there. It's not fucking rocket science!

SALLY

I know.

DERICK

Remember what I said. Big chat. Biiiiig. Chat.

DERICK exits.

OSCAR turns around and talks as SALLY takes boxes hurriedly from left to the pile on the right.

OSCAR helps move boxes.

OSCAR

Now, if I could act, if I could dance. I'd do it all the time. I'd do it on the street. I'd get out of my head and I'd live in that world and no one could bloody stop me because I was doing it.  
I mean, that's if I could do something.  
But I can't.  
I wouldn't take shit from that little pig. If I could only do something.  
I'd walk straight out of here.

I'd make my world, my own.

Why shouldn't we live in our own worlds, Sally?  
Why shouldn't we?

SALLY drops a box.

OSCAR helps her to pick it up.

SALLY  
...I can sing.

OSCAR  
Sure.

SALLY  
No, I can. I can sing.

OSCAR  
Go on, then.

SALLY  
What?

OSCAR  
Sing.

SALLY  
No, not here. No, I couldn't.

OSCAR  
Sure.

SALLY  
But I can!

OSCAR  
Sure.

SALLY  
...

OSCAR  
No, Sally, you're like me.  
It's all going on up here.  
Big imagination. Big dreams.  
But nothing to scoop it out with.  
We're just a couple of losers.  
And that's how it is.

OSCAR goes back to moving boxes.

SALLY stares at him.

Some moments pass.

She tries to pluck up the courage.

She does.

She starts to sing. Not lip-syncing this time, using her actual voice.

She sings 'Compensation' by Nina Simone.

At first nervously but then she gains confidence.

She sings beautifully.

OSCAR stares at her.

And smiles.

DERICK re-enters. Fuming.

But SALLY continues to sing.

DERICK

Jesus Christ, Sally, what are you doing, why are you singing?!

OSCAR puts his hand in front of DERICK.

OSCAR

Calm down, fat man.

DERICK

Who are you?

OSCAR

I'm from Stoke. That's who I am.

SALLY continues to sing.

The music from the actual song, 'Compensation' by Nina Simone, kicks in.

DERICK

Sally, if you don't stop this now. You're out of here.  
And not just here.

Swindon, too. Mortlake.

Basingstoke.

Basildon.

You'll never get another job with us, Sally.

Look at this, Sally. We got packages! These are things  
people need!

The music drowns out DERICK and SALLY as OSCAR clears the stage.





ERIN

'Never have my preconceptions been so shattered'

OSCAR

Oh, yeah!

ERIN

'I expected a night of booze and lazy theatrical stunts, an unsatisfying cocktail that has now long been associated with the 'immersive experience'. Instead, these brave artists, these three dilettantes.

OSCAR

Oh, god.

ERIN

Have turned this tired old medium on its head. Have re-vitalised it. This is the future of political theatre.'

They cheer.

RAINER

They're all like that.

ERIN

They're not. Telegraph called us 'weird and evil'

OSCAR

Oh fuck those posh heads. It's everyone else and everyone else loves us!

They cheers. OSCAR sits down.

Jesus I'm so happy I could piss myself. You know my dad actually called me up and said 'well done'. He actually used those words.

RAINER raises her glass. Everyone follows. And drinks.

RAINER

Can't believe you actually went to the factory, O-Man.

OSCAR

Well, you know, got to live your art. She actually left. We changed her fucking life.

ERIN

Is this champagne? Takes weird.

OSCAR tastes it.

OSCAR

It does taste weird.

ERIN

Oh, it's fine!

OSCAR stands.

OSCAR

No!

Gone are the days we drink from some strange bottle  
and do not know.

ERIN

(laughing) Where you going?

OSCAR

Shops.

RAINER

Shops are that way.

OSCAR looks a bit queasy.

OSCAR

I think I need something, you know. I think need  
some kind of bun. My stomach's all: (queasy gesture).

ERIN

I'll buy you a bun.

OSCAR

And real champagne.

ERIN

Yes, real champagne.

ERIN walks away to exit and OSCAR sits next to RAINER.

OSCAR

(calling off) And some feta, buy some feta from that  
little Turkish place!

ERIN

Fine, yes.

ERIN exits. OSCAR sits next to RAINER. He clinks her glass, they drink.

OSCAR

God, do you remember sitting here. Drinking  
Rupert's weird lagers and picking who would clean  
the toilet.

RAINER

Dunno. Quite liked those weird beers.

OSCAR

And crying on the bus home?

RAINER

Come on, it wasn't that bad.

OSCAR

Not for you. You never did Doctor Who on the South Bank.

RAINER

What about those fringe plays.

OSCAR

Oh, god, those awful, awful fringe plays.

RAINER's phone rings. She looks at it. She rejects.

OSCAR (cont'd)

Who is that?

RAINER

Um. Just. My auntie. Yeah. My mum's. A bit sick.

OSCAR

Serious?

RAINER

Um...don't know.

OSCAR

Should you see her.

RAINER

Nah. She's like a cockroach. She'll survive anything.

OSCAR

Raine-

RAINER

Oscar, you ever seen my mum down at these shows?

OSCAR

No.

RAINER

Exactly.

OSCAR

...

Beat.

RAINER laughs and leans her head against OSCAR.

RAINER

So, what you gonna do with all your cash?

OSCAR

Drugs and cheese obviously, you?

RAINER

Put it back in here.

You know that warehouse. Just behind the theatre?  
All those empty lots?

OSCAR

Yeah.

RAINER

What if we bought them? Imagine. Multiple shows,  
going on, all at once.

OSCAR

How we can cover that?

RAINER

You heard of the McIntyre Grant?

OSCAR

Yeah.

Raine, no one's ever won that over the age of 50.

RAINER

No one's ever done what we've done.

We can get it, Oscar. I know we can.

Beat. OSCAR takes her hand. She looks at him.

OSCAR

Raine, you know the...Christmas party that wasn't  
really a party cos it was just us drinking gin and  
dressed up us elves?

RAINER

Yeah?

OSCAR

And that thing that happened in the cupboard, that wasn't a thing, cos it didn't mean anything?

RAINER

Yeah?

OSCAR

...Well, it did mean something to me.

RAINER

Oh.

OSCAR

Yeah, I've been thinking about it. Like. You and me. In the park. Or renting a cottage in Cornwall.

RAINER

You mean dating?

OSCAR

Yeah.

She breaks away from him slightly.

RAINER

But...Oscar. O Man. Big O.

OSCAR

Yeah?

RAINER

You can't be serious.

OSCAR

Why?

RAINER

Because... you're...  
You're Lord Eton Mess of Hampstead and I'm just...  
someone from Barking.

OSCAR

Oh, come on.

RAINER

We're very different.

OSCAR

Why? We both do this. We both like...beer. Our parents hate us.

RAINER

Yeah, but I'm me.

OSCAR

Raine, you got this idea of yourself. But it's how people see you. It's not how I see you.

He takes her hand again.

He leans in slowly.

He kisses her.

Slowly.

Then they slowly break away.

They look at each other.

She smiles.

They kiss again.

ERIN rushes in.

Pale, frantic.

ERIN

Is that door locked?

RAINER

What?

ERIN

Is it locked?

OSCAR

I'll check.

RAINER and OSCAR stand.

OSCAR exits to check on the other door.

ERIN shows RAINER her arm. OSCAR re-enters.

RAINER

Erin.

ERIN

Do you remember that guy, Jim, or something. The one we did that purple planet one for?

RAINER

Jim from Hendon?

ERIN

Yeah, him.  
I think it was him.  
His face was covered but.  
I'm sure it was him.  
The way he...-

OSCAR

What happened?

Lights change as if putting on a performance.

ERIN

...I was crossing the street, right, you know the high street, cos the Turkish place didn't have champagne, so I went to the Co-Op.

RAINER

OK?

ERIN

And there was this kind of guy at the bus stop, just sitting there by the ATM and kind of just staring at me. But I couldn't really see his face. He had this cap on. And this scarf over his mouth.

RAINER

Yeah?

Lights change and the sounds of super-market can be heard. FX change as if they were making a performance, as before.

ERIN

So, I go into the Co-Op and I get this feeling. Like I'm not really there. Remember that thing we did, that show? In the supermarket? When you're there and it's all empty? But you meet someone there? Someone important? Someone who says something to you and it changes your life forever?



RAINER

Yeah, sure.

ERIN

Well I suddenly look around and I realise no one's there. It's suddenly empty. And I got the champagne. But I'm shaking. My hand's shaking. And the lights flicker. And there's silence. Just like there was, in the show. And suddenly all this light pours in from the street. From the sun, I guess. And I look over. And it's the guy from the ATM. Crossing the street. From the bus-stop. And he's walking straight to me. And he's wearing the clothes, just the same as the show.

And he walks in and the doors open.  
And he walks up to me. Just the same.  
And he takes my hand. Just the same.  
And he says those same words.  
Those words. From the show. Words that mean nothing. Everything. Words that will change your life forever.  
'I hope I'm not disturbing you. I hope this isn't too much.  
But I saw you across the street. I saw you in here.  
And I had to come over.  
I had to tell you.  
I had to tell you.  
That I know you. I can see you. I can see you. And you are special'.

Beat. ERIN looks at her hand

ERIN

I just let the bottle fall to the floor. I don't hear it smash. I look at him. And I tell him. I got to go. I tell him I got to go now.  
But he just says those words again. 'I had to tell you, I had to tell you'.  
And by that point I'm trying to walk away. But he's following. And he's saying the words.  
Again and again, he's saying them. 'I had to tell you, I had to tell you, I'm sorry'.  
And now I'm on the street and now I'm running.  
But he's running too. And he's grabbing at my hand and he's saying those words, he's screaming them now:  
'You are special! You are special! You are special!'  
(MORE)

ERIN (cont'd)

And now I'm in the street. I'm in the road. And there's cars. And lights. And screaming. And I hear this big truck stop and screech but...I can't see anything. There's too much light. Too much sun. But I can still hear him. Coming. Shrieking. And when I look back, I see him screaming in the middle of the road. I can see him, I can...

## SCENE 11

The stage is dark.  
'The Waltz from Swan Lake Plays'

A woman dressed as a beautiful white swan appears.  
She dances around the dark stage.

A man enters. Her name is CHARLOTTE. She smiles.

CHARLOTTE

Dear Living Room. My name is Charlotte.

Basically, I've always wanted to be a ballerina. But my mum always said I had fat legs. Big legs and a big fat head. So, I never tried really. So, what I want is this.

RITA

My name is Rita. I live in a very tall high-rise in Tufnell Park. I have a very nice view. I like to sip a coffee in the morning and press my fingers against the window.

Only thing, I can't help dreaming of just jumping off.

ALF

It's not that I hate my colleagues. In fact I'm a people's person. Every Friday, I'm there, at the bars by the river, drinking cocktails and laughing at everyone's jokes. I would say I am actually quite well liked.

Only thing is...

CHARLOTTE

Me there, on a dark stage, dancing, twirling. Like that film with Natalie Portman. But not as dark.

RITA

It's not that I'm a dark person. I'm described as quite bubbly. It's not that I want to die either. I mean either if I did, I really don't have the time.

ALF

When I'm talking to them on the Friday, and everyone's a big drunk from the offices, you know. I sometimes...I sometimes zone out... People's moves moving but I can't hear. And I look at the river. And I imagine... this kind of flash.

CHARLOTTE

And out there in the audience, I see this face.

RITA

I just want to fall. I want to feel what it feels like.

ALF

It's a flash, then a loud noise like thunder. But ten times louder. And the whole sky goes white.

CHARLOTTE

A face, smiling up at me. A familiar one.

RITA

Wind rushing past. The feeling of your body.

ALF

Then people are screaming. And there's all this fire, coming from the river.

CHARLOTTE

It's her. It's my mum.

RITA

I just want to have the feeling. See the ground, grow.

ALF

And this big white cloud. Yeah, mushroom cloud.

CHARLOTTE

And I link eyes with her. And I smile too.

RITA

I don't want to die. Just fall.

ALF

I want to see a mushroom cloud on a Friday night.

CHARLOTTE

I want to see my mum there. That's all.

RITA

Is that OK?

ALF

Is it possible?

CHARLOTTE

Does that make sense?

SCENE 10

The Living Room theatre.

Some months have passed.

Music continues lightly.

The company has bought the empty lot behind their theatre and now run many performances in and around this new complex.

Living Room is still their base, though.

There is a large map on the wall, of all the new rooms in the space.

RAINER looks at the maps.

BEX enters, a new actor and hired hand, she's carrying a large gun.

RAINER  
Hey, Bex, where you taking that?

BEX  
The roof. They need more guns.

RAINER  
More guns?

BEX  
More guns.

OSCAR enters.

He's wearing a black leather sort of gimp outfit. He looks exhausted too. He takes a beer from the fridge.

OSCAR  
Jesus Christ.  
You know room 8? You know Apocalypse Sunday?

RAINER  
Yeah.

OSCAR  
The guy said I'm a crap cannibal.

RAINER  
You're not a crap cannibal.

OSCAR  
I know I'm bloody not!

RAINER stands and looks over at the maps.

RAINER  
How's the Bank Robbers? They fine for smoke?

OSCAR  
Yes, they're fine for smoke.

RAINER inspects maps, OSCAR sits and drinks.

OSCAR (cont'd)  
I'm fed-up, Raine. This is me: fed-up.

RAINER  
Yeah, I can see that.

OSCAR  
You know that replica flat we made for that guy?

RAINER  
Yeah.

OSCAR  
He just sits there all day long until I knock on the door at exactly quarter past three, dressed as a cleaner and I clean his flat.

And he says, thank you. Then I leave. Then he sits there. That's it.

RAINER  
Well, he pays us.

OSCAR  
It's not the point. This isn't acting. Don't know what this is.

I spend half the time shouting at people in dark rooms, then the other dressed as a cucumber cos some twat wants to make an 'immersive salad.'

I swear, I'd rather be doing Doctor Who on the Southbank!

RAINER  
No, you wouldn't.

OSCAR

I don't know, Raine, I dunno.

RAINER

Look, Oscar.  
I get it.  
But it's not my fault we're so popular.

OSCAR

I don't want to be popular. I want to make stuff that  
actually... means something.

RAINER

This does mean something.  
  
This is everything.  
  
People get to live out their dreams.  
  
And they go out there-

OSCAR

I know. I know.

RAINER

Look. You're right. It is getting a bit... stupid.

OSCAR

Yes.

RAINER

But now we've paid of the space.  
We can pick and choose.  
Start making the good stuff again.

OSCAR

...Yeah.

RAINER

You think we need, Erin, don't you?

OSCAR

I never said that.

RAINER

We can do it ourselves, Oscar. Have a bit of faith.

Slight pause. RAINER goes back to the maps.

OSCAR

Raine.  
What you doing tonight?

RAINER

Um. Nothing.

OSCAR

Do you want to go for some Ramen? And an IPA?  
That's what people do, don't they, Ramen and IPA?  
When they're dating.

RAINER

...Oh. Actually, I've got to clean out immersive  
farmer's market. It's getting smelly.

OSCAR

OK. Fine.

RAINER

...What?

OSCAR

Every time I ask you to do something ,you're  
suddenly busy. And I know when you're busy, Raine.  
It's up there on the wall.

You just don't want to.

RAINER crosses to him, smiles and holds his shoulder and looks saucy.

RAINER

Oscar. I want to.

Oscar looks at her hand, rubbing his chest.

Pause.

RAINER kisses his neck.

RAINER (cont'd)

We got 5 minutes before immersive Chicken? Want  
to go the cupboard?

OSCAR pulls away slightly and stands.

BEX, the hired-hand enters. She's carrying a rubber chicken. They don't notice her.

OSCAR

Oh, the cupboard.

RAINER

What?

OSCAR

Look, I'm fine with the occasional quickie, or being  
groped in the Moon Room but...

(MORE)



OSCAR (cont'd)

I do have feelings, you know!

I'm not just a piece of gristle!

They notice BEX as she speaks. It's awkward.

BEX

Rainer.

RAINER

Oh, hey Bex.

BEX

Just to let you know they're waiting for you in the  
Chicken Room.

RAINER

Oh, yeah, thanks Bex.

BEX leaves.

OSCAR sighs.

RAINER (cont'd)

I think she hates me, you know. The new girl, Bex.

OSCAR

Are you embarrassed, Raine? To be seen with me.

RAINER

No! Look, no.

Thing is.

To be honest.

I've never really gone on... a date.

OSCAR

What, ever?

Not one?

RAINER

No. I mean, I've got off with people.

It's just the whole... sitting somewhere, with napkins.

And. Candles. And. Eyes...-It just freaks me out.

OSCAR

Fine.

RAINER

It's not you.

OSCAR laughs, dryly. RAINER takes his hand and squeezes it.

RAINER (cont 'd)

Look, I'll get over it.  
We'll go somewhere nice.  
Promise.  
OK?

ERIN enters.

She wears a coat and looks pale. She holds a letter.

OSCAR is very pleased to see her and hugs her.

RAINER looks back at her maps. It's very tense between RAINER and ERIN. The next bit is spoken quickly:

	OSCAR
Erin!	
	ERIN
Hey, Oscar.	
	OSCAR
Haven't seen you in... how's it going?	
	ERIN
Fine. Not bad.	
Things look good here.	
	RAINER
They are good.	
	ERIN
Well, that's why I said it.	
	RAINER
Well, I'm glad.	
	ERIN
So am I.	
	RAINER
Great.	
	ERIN
Good.	

Fine. RAINER

Brilliant. ERIN

Beat. OSCAR looks at ERIN and RAINER.

Want a tour? OSCAR

No, can't stay. Got the twins in the car. Driving up to Jack's parents tonight. ERIN

Lovely. RAINER

Yeah, this came through the door. ERIN

RAINER takes the note and reads it.

What is it? OSCAR

It's that weirdo from the supermarket. He says he's angry that you've replaced me and he's going to come after you. ERIN

... OSCAR

RAINER hands back the note.

You're not worried? ERIN

No. Security's tight. We vet everyone. RAINER

Well, I thought I'd let you know. ERIN

How is my replacement?

Oh, Catherine? Oh yeah, she's very good, RADA. RAINER

Obviously, not as good as you. OSCAR

RAINER

Well.

OSCAR

But, until you come back.

RAINER

She's not coming back.

She sent me a very, very long email.

Beat.

OSCAR

Why?

RAINER

It's the shows. She doesn't like them.

ERIN

I don't like what happens after them.

RAINER

Oh, what, people feel better about themselves?

ERIN

Not always.

They go out there, and they expect the world to just change around them.

They expect everything to be like a dream and when it's not, they get depressed.

But I guess you don't read those emails.

RAINER

You're just being negative.

ERIN

Do you remember Sally? The singer? She quit her job, she quit everything, and then she realised how hard it was and now she just sits at home-

RAINER

So what, just don't follow your dreams?

ERIN

Don't let it destroy you, no.

RAINER

...

ERIN

And it's not just her. Did you hear about that guy who attacked his boss cos he did it here?  
Or that gang that smashed up that shop.

RAINER

It's just one nutter.

ERIN

It's not. People are going there and doing it for real.  
People who never even came here. It's getting out of hand.

RAINER

...

ERIN

Anyway. I've said my piece.

RAINER

Yes, you've said your horrible, fucking piece.

ERIN makes to leave.

RAINER (cont'd)

You're so transparent.

ERIN

What?

RAINER

Everyone agrees, that this is a good thing.  
Everyone.  
They're calling it a new kind of therapy.  
And we keep it affordable. Accessible.  
It makes people feel good.

ERIN

But when does it end?

RAINER

As soon as they leave this fucking door.

If a couple of weirdos, don't know the difference-

ERIN

Fine, Raine, fine. Keep going.

RAINER

You're just jealous.

(MORE)

RAINER (cont'd)

You're jealous because you know we don't need you.

OSCAR

Raine-

RAINER

We thought we did. .  
All those years.  
But look at us.

Look at what we're doing.  
How we've grown.

And you know what, E?  
That wasn't you.  
That was me.

It was me.

## SCENE 11

A police station.

Interrogation room.

A large mirror at the back.

An ugly table. Coffee rings. Two chairs, either side.

MICHAEL sits on the right side of the table. He stares forward. He is good-looking, with dark hair, and smart clothes. Reasonably well-spoken.

DETECTIVE KLEIN enters. She's in her thirties.  
Slight cockney accent. Tough but kind.

She holds a cup of tea and a note book.

KLEIN

So, sorry, Mr Barnes. That's hot now, be careful.

KLEIN hands MICHAEL the cup of tea. She sits at the desk, and takes her notebook and smiles sympathetically at MICHAEL.

MICHAEL

That's fine.

KLEIN

Now. Obviously this is a very difficult time-

MICHAEL

I just want to help.

KLEIN

So. Last night. Where were you?

MICHAEL

I was in.

KLEIN

When did you get back?

MICHAEL

I didn't.

Beat.

KLEIN

Mr Barnes. My understanding was that, your wife was at home in your flat, last night, in Battersea, when an unknown assailant entered and... proceeded to...repeatedly-

MICHAEL

I know what happened. I was there.

KLEIN

...You saw him?

MICHAEL

Yes.

KLEIN

But you didn't try to stop him.

MICHAEL

...He over-powered me.

Beat.

KLEIN looks at the large mirror (down-stage), at her colleagues behind the mirror and frowns, confused.

KLEIN

Mrs Barnes is... currently unable to identify the man,  
do you think you-

MICHAEL

Dark hair. Dark curly hair.

KLEIN gets her notepad out and writes.

KLEIN

Anything else?

MICHAEL

White.  
Medium height.  
5. 10" Probably.

He moved quite slowly.  
He was quite well-spoken too.

He had nice clothes.  
Very presentable.

KLEIN

Presentable?

MICHAEL

Yes.  
The kind of guy that seems at ease with the world.  
Where ever he is.  
The kind of guy.  
Who makes other people feel at ease.  
Effortless.

KLEIN

Mr Barnes-

MICHAEL

But under that.  
Quite sad.

Very sad, in fact.

KLEIN

You know him?



MICHAEL

Yes, I do.

His hands were just like mine.  
His voice.  
His eyes.  
His walk.

He lives with us.  
In the same flat.

KLEIN looks at him. She begins to understand. As MICHAEL talks, KLEIN stares at him, attempting to contain her rage, squeezing the cup of tea.

KLEIN

...I don't understand.

MICHAEL

Neither did I.

See, I've been going to this place.

It's called the Living Room. It's a theatre.

KLEIN

I know it.

MICHAEL

I blame them. I blame them, for this.

See, they made me this flat.  
Just like mine, and they got this actress, to look like  
her.

So, after work I'd go there.  
I'd enter the door, I'd dump my bag, just like the real  
thing.  
And I'd say hello to her.  
I'd go over to her.  
I'd make a mint tea.  
More and more I like mint tea these days, after work,  
in this grey, big mug.

So, I'd do that.

But what I wouldn't do. I mean, in my real flat. In real  
life.

Is take the mug. The grey one.  
And bring it down.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)

On her head.

Again and again and again.

With all the. Hot water coming out.

KLEIN

...

MICHAEL

See, I'd never do that for real.

But you think about it.

Like jumping in front of a train. You don't want to.

But you think about it.

KLEIN

Mr Barnes-

MICHAEL

They told me it would never leave that room! They said it would help me. Stop me thinking about it.

KLEIN

Mr Barnes-

MICHAEL

Cos it wasn't me in my flat, last night!

It wasn't me who did that stuff!

I didn't hold that mug above her head.

I didn't bring it down.

I didn't hear her scream as the hot water burnt her.

I didn't hear her flailing hands.

It wasn't me who didn't call the police.

It wasn't me who watched her on the floor.

It wasn't me who.

Who... smiled.

DETECTIVE KLEIN, unable to contain her rage, throws the hot cup of coffee in MICHAEL's face.

MICHAEL doesn't move.

He calms right down.

He looks at KLEIN.

He smiles. Lightly.

Lights change.

RAINER and OSCAR enter the room quickly, OSCAR holds a towel which he tries to dry MICHAEL with.

MICHAEL just stares at KLEIN (who is played by the actor BEX.)

RAINER

Oh, my, God. I am so sorry. That wasn't meant to happen.

MICHAEL

It's fine.

OSCAR

We'll refund you-

MICHAEL

No.  
I want you to keep that in.

OSCAR

What?

MICHAEL

It was perfect.

MICHAEL hands OSCAR the towel, smiles, and then exits.

RAINER turns on KLEIN/BEX.

RAINER

Jesus, Bex, what was that?

You had the script, you knew.

BEX  
You didn't see him.

He meant it.

RAINER  
He hasn't. Anyway it was kind of my idea.

BEX  
Your idea?

RAINER  
It's an act, Bex.

BEX  
It's sick.  
It's fucking sick.

BEX exits, almost in tears.

RAINER  
Bex!

Beat.

OSCAR  
It was sick.

RAINER  
Oscar-

OSCAR  
What do you mean it was your idea?

RAINER  
Thing Erin said. About people going out there and  
doing it for real.

OSCAR  
But they are.

RAINER  
They're not.

OSCAR  
I was near the station this morning.  
And there was this explosion.  
Everyone started running.

RAINER  
It's just kids.

OSCAR

It wasn't Raine, I recognised them from here. That revolution show we did?

And I swear, one guy was staring right at me. Right at me.

RAINER

Was it him? Jim?

OSCAR

Dunno, his face was covered.

Raine, things are getting out of hand.

RAINER holds his hand.

RAINER

Oscar, what you doing tonight?

OSCAR

I dunno. Go home and cry probably.

RAINER

Don't do that. Let's go out. Ramen and an IPA?

OSCAR

Really?

RAINER

Yeah. That new place. It's just outside.

A busy, trendy restaurant.

Two people sit at thick wooden tables, hunched over bowls of Ramen and drinking beers.

A view of the street. People moving with umbrellas.  
Heavy rain.

A solitary figure in a dark cap and coat stands outside the window, standing in the rain.

OSCAR and RAINER sit there too, they awkwardly spoon soup into their mouths.

Pause.

OSCAR  
This is nice.

RAINER  
Very nice.

Beat.

OSCAR  
How nice though?  
Like on a scale of one to ten.

RAINER  
...Um, six?

OSCAR  
Six?!

RAINER  
6 is good.

OSCAR  
Yeah, for like a sandwich or a trip to Lego Land.

RAINER  
Oscar, it's fine.

Really.

OSCAR  
It's not.  
Admit it. It's a shit date.

RAINER  
It's not!

RAINER looks outside. She's distracted.

OSCAR

Should have taken you to the BFI. That's where I should have taken you. Everyone loves the BFI.

RAINER

Sorry?

OSCAR

The BFI!

RAINER

What about it?

OSCAR

What are you even looking at?

RAINER

No, it's just that guy, do you seem him? He's standing out there in the rain.

OSCAR

So?

RAINER

It's pissing down.

OSCAR

Are you so bored you have to talk about the weather?

RAINER

I'm not bored!

OSCAR

You are bored. Your face is well bored.

RAINER sighs.

RAINER

Oscar, why you being so weird? We've been out like this a million times.

OSCAR

Not like this. Now we're all datey. We're a couple of daters.

I'm so tense I could literally shit.

RAINER

Why?

OSCAR  
Cos things have to go well.

See, I've always liked you, but you've never liked me,  
so. You've got the higher ground.

RAINER  
It's not a battle.

OSCAR  
Obviously, it is.

RAINER  
Oscar, it's just you and me, like it always was,  
nothing's changed, OK? Just relax!

RAINER smiles at him and OSCAR sips his beer.

Besides, I did always like you.

OSCAR  
...Really?

RAINER  
Yeah.  
Obviously you can be very irritating. Bit all over the  
place. You look like a cheese string.

OSCAR  
And the liking bit?

RAINER  
I like you. I just do. I like nearly everything about  
you. A lot.  
Even the stuff I don't like, I quite like, in a way.

She takes his hand.  
She holds his.

OSCAR  
OK, how about we finish these and then get very,  
very, very, drunk!

RAINER  
Yes! Then we can see the space.

OSCAR  
...Oh. Yeah.

RAINER  
What?



OSCAR

I'm just...- kind of sick of all of that.

It's like. Everything's dissolving.

It's like those guys who work down the London Dungeons, you know, and start to lose their fucking minds?

It's like I'm living in the London Dungeons.

RAINER

Oh, come on.

OSCAR

No, honestly, this, me, you, this bar.

Even this feels unreal.

And you start to lose sight of what actually is real.

What's important.

RAINER

...

OSCAR

Have you seen your mum?

RAINER

Not yet.

OSCAR

Raine.

RAINER

I don't need a lecture, Oscar.

I'll go see her. Once things have settled.

But we got to keep going. Until everyone knows who we are.

OSCAR

Why? Why is it so fucking important?

RAINER

Because...

Because... when I was young my parents split up. My dad always wanted to be a musician. And he was good but he never... he never made it.

My mum always called him a dreamer.

(MORE)

RAINER (cont'd)

She hated him by the end, she was jealous.

She stopped him.

Well, she's not gonna stop me.

OSCAR

...

RAINER takes OSCAR hand and smiles. She picks up a plate and then taps the wooden table.

RAINER

Oscar, this is real.

And this is real.

And this is real.

She kisses him and smiles.

RAINER (cont'd)

OK?

OSCAR smiles back.

The solitary figure from outside walks into the restaurant.

They wear a black cap and dark, thick coat.

They are soaked.

There is a whining noise that gets louder and louder.

The person customer eating noodles also stops eating and turns slowly to the woman.

RAINER and OSCAR turn to her.

FIGURE

Living Room.

OSCAR

...What?

FIGURE

Living Room.

RAINER

Oscar.

FIGURE

You took her from me

RAINER  
Get down, Oscar.

FIGURE  
YOU TOOK HER!

FIGURE opens her coat to reveal bomb charges and explosives attached to a detonator in her hands.

RAINER  
GET DOWN!

FIGURE  
THIS IS FOR ERIN!

FIGURE detonates bomb jacket.

A large explosion.

The room is filled with white smoke.

Whining noise, deafening.

Smoke fills the air.

Screams.

Body's try to find each other.

Scene 12

Living Room Theatre.

OSCAR sits at a small table.

RAINER sits opposite him, washing a small cut on his forehead and applying a plaster.

OSCAR winces.

OSCAR  
Ow!

RAINER  
Sorry. Hold still.

OSCAR  
How did he even know we were there.  
Did you hear what he shouted?

RAINER  
He's just trying to scare us. It's just flour.

OSCAR  
It's that Jim guy. It's a warning.

An explosion in the distance, outside, sounds. RAINER ignores it.

OSCAR (cont'd)  
We need to tell the police.

RAINER  
They'll close us down.

OSCAR  
Good.

An explosion outside. Followed by shorter ones.

Have you seen these requests?

Dear Living Room.  
I want to strangle my mum, I want to strangle her on a  
Saturday night.  
I want burn some cars and riot.

I want to detonate a bomb on a busy tube. I don't  
support terrorism, I just want to know how it feels!

RAINER  
So what? They come here, they get it out their  
system.

An explosion.

OSCAR

Rainer, look, listen. Listen to that.

An explosion.

RAINER

It's just kids.

OSCAR

We've started something.  
People don't have to come here anymore.  
They can just do it themselves.

RAINER

...

OSCAR

Let's close it down.

RAINER

And disappoint all those people?

OSCAR

You don't care about them, Raine.  
It's about you. You going down in history. Living  
your dream. You're just like them.  
But you don't care about them.

RAINER

...

OSCAR

I want to be with you, Raine.  
But not this.

RAINER

Oscar, please. I need you. I need you.

I haven't got anyone else left.

OSCAR

So, let's stop this.

RAINER looks at him.

Her eyes water slightly.  
She wants to. But she can't.

She slowly shakes her head.

RAINER

...

OSCAR

I'm sorry, Raine.

He breaks away from her.

She sits down.

She puts her head in her hands.

She's alone.

In the dark, a woman runs past. Then disappears.

RAINER's phone pings.  
It's an email request for a show.

RAINER

(shouting off)

Oh, look, Oscar! A request! Someone wants a show!

The request is read by someone offstage. A woman in her sixties, a slight cockney accent .

JENNIFER

Dear Rainer.  
I hope you're well.

It's mum.

RAINER stops.  
As the next bit is read, RAINER slowly breaks down.

RAINER

...Mum?

JENNIFER

I'm feeling a little better today. Auntie Jane's with me.  
I don't want you to worry, Rainer.  
I know you're busy.  
I saw you up there on the tele, you know.  
That grant you won?  
They say no one's ever won that under 50.

You looked so happy, Rainer.  
I'm so proud.

I've been thinking a lot.  
I know you think I never really cared.  
About all this.  
But I did Rainer.  
I just didn't want...  
I didn't want you to...  
To end up like dad.

He was a dreamer. And I loved him.  
But in the end. All he did was dream.  
And when it didn't come true.  
All he wanted to do. Was die.  
And he killed everything around him.

I just didn't want.  
I didn't want you to do the same.

But you didn't.  
You made it Rainer.  
You made it.

You made something good.  
And I know I never said it.  
But I love you.

RAINER

It's not good, mum, it's not good!

RAINER breaks down in tears.  
She sobs. Long, guttural sobs.  
She bows her head.

The old woman re-enters and approaches in the dark. RAINER looks up.

RAINER (cont 'd)

Mum?

Mum?!

The woman disappears.

Into the courtyard.

RAINER follows her.

SCENE 14

Living Room Theatre.

Courtyard.

Rain.

Explosions in the distance.

A ballerina enters. A man in a white gown and a silvery, feathered mask.

He dances across the street.

He disappears.

Thunder flashes.

A man stands there.

He holds a large hammer.

He disappears.

The whole sky is lit up.

RAINER looks up at the sky, her eyes widening.

BEX enters.

BEX  
Rainer? Rainer?

RAINER  
Bex!

They embrace.



RAINER (cont'd)

What's going on?

BEX

All the shows. They sort of... exploded. Everyone ran out. I couldn't stop them.

RAINER

Calm down.

BEX

They smashed up Waitrose, Rainer. A bunch of guys dressed as marmots smashed it up. Just cos the manager wouldn't accept they were marmots.

A woman runs by, waving a plastic baby around and shouting: I'm a Yummy Mummy, I'm a Yummy Mummy, I'm a Yummy Mummy, again and again.

RAINER

What about the police?

BEX

They can't stop it. No one knows who's who. Could be a bus driver. Could be a guy playing a bus driver. Could be a guy playing a guy who's playing a bus driver.

An explosion.

The BALLERINA enters again, dancing around the street. He has a shrill, horrible voice.

BALLERINA

Do you know who I am?

BEX

Watch her, Raine!

BALLERINA

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

RAINER

No.

BALLERINA

I'm me.

I'm me.

I'M ME!

BEX  
I saw your friend. Erin.

RAINER  
What were?

BALLERINA  
Do you want to watch me dance? Do you want to  
watch me dance in my lovely shoes?

BEX  
Up there, the top room. With some guy.

RAINER  
What, Jim?

BEX  
No, someone else.

BALLERINA  
I always wanted to be a ballerina. But mother always  
said my head was too fat.  
Well, look at me now, mum! LOOK AT ME NOW!

RAINER  
Excuse me mate, can you actually stop.

BALLERINA  
What?

RAINER  
Yeah, it's really annoying. Your dancing.

BALLERINA stops.

BALLERINA  
What? I have packed out great halls in Moscow, don't  
you know.

RAINER  
Yeah, and we're trying to talk. There's quite a lot  
going on.

An explosion in the distance.

BALLERINA  
Ah yes, the revolution.

RAINER  
What revolution.

BALLERINA  
The revolution of the self.

He begins dancing again.

BALLERINA (cont'd)

It all started here.  
At the Living Room Theatre.  
That was the place, the school.  
That taught us who we really were.

And now, we are re-born.

RAINER

But you're not though, are you, you're just a guy in  
massive pants.

BALLERINA

How dare you!?

RAINER

I started that theatre, right? And that's all it is: theatre.

The man with the hammer enters. His name is AARON. RAINER doesn't see him.  
Only BEX does.

BEX

Rainer.

RAINER

It's not real.  
It's not Moscow.  
It's Homerton.

And you're just some nutter!

BEX

Rainer!

RAINER

What?!

RAINER turns and sees AARON, the man with the hammer. BALLERINA smiles.

AARON advances on RAINER, slowly. Holding the hammer.

RAINER (cont'd)

Oh.

BALLERINA

Ah! A man with a massive hammer! How delicious.

RAINER

Easy mate.

BALLERINA starts dancing around AARON, laughing.

BALLERINA  
What were you saying, little girl?

RAINER  
Easy.

BALLERINA  
Go on, big man. Smash her with your big fat tool.  
Go on!  
Hahahahah!

AARON smashes the BALLERINA across the face.

The BALLERINA falls to the floor with a sickening thud.

They stare at AARON.

AARON  
I fucking hate ballerinas.

Beat.  
They are terrified, they don't know what to do.

AARON (cont'd)  
I want to tell you my story.

RAINER  
...OK.

AARON  
My name is Aaron.

I used to work in one of them supermarkets. One of the big ones.

At the front with the self-service machines. I used to help people. With the machines. It weren't the people was the problem. I like people. I used to like to chat to them, before my boss stopped me.

It was the machines.

Every day.

All of them pinging off, all at once.

'Do you have a bag? A points card.

(MORE)

AARON (cont'd)

Someone's coming to help you.

I came to help them.

That's all I was.

I wasn't even serving them.

I was serving the machines that they serve themselves.

But I used to have this dream. That one day I bring in a hammer. And I smash every fucking one.

RAINER

Aaron. I remember you. We built that room. Do you remember?

AARON

Yeah. Living Room.

That room. Made me feel good.

To smash that fucking thing up.

But then.

I still went back.

Every morning.

Back to the real thing.

RAINER

I know, and-

AARON

Cos it weren't enough, you know?

The room.

I had to keep going back, again and again.

RAINER

It's never gonna be enough, Aaron.

AARON breaks down slowly into tears.

AARON

But then this morning, I did it.

I took the hammer.

I went in.

I did it.

I did it.

I DID IT.

He bows his head.

AARON (cont'd)

But now, I don't know what to feel. I don't know what to feel...

Beat. RAINER and BEX slowly approach AARON. RAINER comforts him. BEX takes the hammer very carefully from his hand.

RAINER

Aaron, I'm sorry.  
I'm sorry. That you feel that way.

But we should never have built you that room.

AARON

That room was good.

RAINER

It wasn't good.  
It wasn't.

A lot of us hate what we do, Aaron.  
So we go out there and we find something we love.

But not that room.  
Not this.

BEX has taken the hammer from AARON's hand.  
RAINER holds his shoulder. AARON cries into RAINER's chest, gently.

A scream in the distance.

RAINER (cont'd)

Erin...?

BEX turns to AARON, who leans against her shoulder now.

BEX

Go find her, Rainer. Go to the theatre.

RAINER

But?-

BEX

We'll be alright.

RAINER hesitates but then exits.

After she's gone, BEX lifts AARON's head.

He's smiling.  
She smiles at him.  
She kisses his forehead.

The BALLERINA also lifts her head from the ground.

BEX (cont'd)  
We'll be alright, won't we?

## SCENE 15

The roof-top.  
Rain.

RAINER enters.

Suddenly, the sky is lit up with explosions.  
RAINER screams and covers her head.

The sounds of planes dropping bombs.

A soldier, dressed in an old fashioned, WW2 uniform enters. He holds an old rifle with a bayonet.  
His name is ROGER.

ROGER  
GET DOWN!

He helps RAINER to the ground as the bombs fall.

RAINER  
What's going on?

ROGER  
Nazis!

He shoots into the sky.

ROGER (cont'd)  
The skies filled with them.

RAINER  
Don't I know you?

ROGER  
Maybe. Roger's the name. Killing Nazis is the game.  
I'll tell you what.  
There's nothing worse than a Nazi.  
Dry biscuits. Old cheese. The back of a woman's  
knee, these are all awful things, but not quite as bad  
as a Nazi.

A bomb falls. They cover their heads.

RAINER  
I do know you.  
You work at the petrol station.

ROGER  
What. No.

RAINER  
Yeah, I bought that weird pastie of you once, I was  
really hungover.

ROGER  
Wrong person.

RAINER  
It is you.

ROGER  
Madame, I am a captain in his Majesty's Army.  
I don't work in a petrol station.  
I work full-time defending you dumb civilians from  
bombs.  
And battering Hitler.

RAINER  
Those aren't bombs, they're just kids throwing  
fireworks.



A huge explosion. RAINER ducks her head. Explosions stops after this.

ROGER turns to her.

RAINER (cont'd)

Whatever it is it's not gonna hurt us.

Roger, I've seen you down the pub, with your mates, playing a that board game, doing a bit of role-play, that's fine. This is weird.

ROGER

One: I don't do role-play cos I don't know what it is.

Two: why are you so quick to discredit my cause?

RAINER

I'm not.

ROGER

Maybe you're one of them.  
A Nazi spy.  
A lady Nazi spy.  
The worst kind.

RAINER stands and ROGER does also. ROGER gets ready to stick his bayonet into RAINER.

RAINER

Take it easy, Roger.

ROGER

You want me to prove myself, do you? Is that what you want?

Cos here we go!

He's about to lunge when a torch light flashes on him.

DEBRA, a police-woman enters.

She holds a torch and a baton, ready to strike.

DEBRA

Oi! Drop it!

ROGER

What?

DEBRA  
Police! Drop the weapon!

ROGER crumbles immediately into the coward he is. He drops it. DEBRA enters properly.

She's a policewoman in her thirties. Slight cockney accent.

She pushes ROGER against the wall and cuffs him.

DEBRA (cont'd)  
You too! Against the wall.

RAINER  
But I'm not part of this.

DEBRA  
That's what the last guy said. Before he tried to bite my face off.

RAINER  
How do I know you're a real officer?

DEBRA  
(menacing)  
Want me to show you?

DEBRA gets a call on her walkie-talkie.  
She moves off to listen to it.

DEBRA  
Look, I've got people, badly wounded. I've got half a high street on fire.  
I've got people, running around, pretending to be dogs.  
I've got things on!

RAINER  
But my friend.

DEBRA  
We are clearing every building. Get against the wall!

The sky is lit with explosions again.

DEBRA's walkie-talkie goes off.

RAINER takes advantage of the moment to exit. She runs into another room.

DEBRA (cont'd)  
Oi!

SCENE 16

Another large room.  
Dark.

RAINER enters and quickly locks the door behind.  
DEBRA can be heard, banging on it.

RAINER rests her against the door.  
The banging finally stops.

Suddenly, ERIN is lit.

She stands in the middle of the room. She wears a white dress.

She stands there in the dark, staring ahead. Eyes wide.

RAINER rushes over to her, tears in her eyes. Hugging her.

RAINER  
Erin...ERIN!

ERIN  
Rainer...

RAINER  
I'm so sorry, Erin.  
You were right, you were right about everything.

I do need you.  
I've always needed you.  
You're my best friend.  
I'm sorry.

ERIN doesn't answer.  
She just stares ahead.

RAINER (cont'd)

What's wrong?

How come you're here.

ERIN

Bex called me. She said you needed my help.

RAINER

I never told her that.

ERIN

...

RAINER

Where's Jim? Where's Jim from Hendon?

ERIN

It's not Jim, Raine.

The room is suddenly lit.  
Harsh, white lights.

OSCAR kneels on the ground.  
AARON, the man with the hammer, stands above him.

He holds the hammer above OSCAR's head.  
Ready to strike.

There's a voice in the darkness.

BEX (OFF)

She's such a good friend, isn't she?

I called her.  
She came.

BEX enters.  
She holds a knife.

BEX

Not like you, Raine.

RAINER moves to help OSCAR.

BEX (cont'd)

Don't.  
Or I'll smash his stupid head.

RAINER

...I don't understand.

BEX

Don't you remember?

That flat in Elephant and Castle.

Me with a box of shrimp?

The city like diamonds.  
White and red.

ERIN

Sana.

BEX/SANA

You remember my name.

RAINER

...You...you ride that bike.  
We made you that world.

SANA

Yes, and we never got to finish, did we?

It was so easy sneaking into your group.  
People will believe anything these days.  
And I was quite good at drama in school.  
I think I got a...B+.

ERIN

Why didn't you just talk to us?

SANA

You hid away.  
They hid you away.

RAINER

What are you doing, Sana?

BEX crosses quickly to RAINER.

SANA

What are you doing?  
What the fuck are you doing?

OSCAR

Rainer.

SANA

You made all of this.  
You let people dream.  
You showed them what they could be.  
And now you're trying to kill them?

RAINER

Listen.

SANA

Why are some people given everything?  
Why are some people born rich?  
Why are some people allowed to dream?

Aren't we all special.

RAINER

Yeah, not like this.

SANA

Like Aaron.

See, you built Aaron that room. You helped him to see. What he could be. And then, today, he did it. He became himself. He became complete.

He finished his story.

But I never got to finish mine.

Do you remember? Erin? Do you remember?

We were interrupted.

ERIN nods slowly. Tears in her eyes.

And until we finish the story.  
I can't be complete.

Stand him up, next to her.

AARON stands OSCAR up, next to ERIN.

The sound effects, including rain, music and explosions, build in line with what BEX/  
SANA is saying.

Do you all remember?

Rainy night. Red neon. Flat 882.

It's funny how the city looks more and more like a  
Sci-Fi. Red and white chrome.

(MORE)

SANA (cont'd)

You can almost see the flying cars. The hologram poster of the women. The explosions in the distance.

An explosion sounds in the distance. They look up.

SANA (cont'd)

It's all come true.

ERIN

Sana, it was my fault, my phone went off-

SANA

Don't speak.

ERIN

It wasn't his fault.

SANA

Aaron.

AARON raises the hammer.

ERIN

NO!

SANA

Then don't speak.

Tell me about that night.

ERIN

...You come to the door.

SANA

What number?

ERIN

...8...8...2.

BEX smiles.

SANA

And what do you say?

ERIN

Something about the weather.

SANA

What about the weather.

Come on you remember.

ERIN  
...'It's nasty'.

SANA  
Yeah?

ERIN  
...'Must be horrible to ride in'.

SANA  
...Mmm.

ERIN  
Then you hand me something.

BEX hands her something.

SANA  
And.

What do you say?

ERIN  
...'It's still warm.'

There is loud knocking at the door.  
The police. Shouting outside.

Everyone looks.

The banging continues.

RAINER  
Look, Bex, you can walk away from this. You haven't  
done anything. Not yet.

BEX  
Exactly, Rainer. Exactly.

BEX turns back to OSCAR.  
Another explosion in the distance.  
The music builds with everything else.



BEX (cont'd)

He comes to the door.  
Skinny little prick.  
Breath stinking of Friday's pints.

She goes all stiff.  
Looks up at me.  
See the marks on her wrist.  
On her neck.  
Bit of blood in her eye.

The banging intensifies.

And he hands me a note. A tip. I tell him we don't do them. He makes a point of it.

OSCAR stares at BEX, not blinking. He refuses.  
She puts the knife to his neck.

SANA

He makes a point of it!

OSCAR still refuses.  
SANA puts her knife to RAINER's neck.

OSCAR grimacing, hands BEX a note.

ERIN closes her eyes.  
The music reaches a crescendo.

BEX

And I see her eyes close.  
And I always. Always. Take the money.

But what I dream about.

What I imagine.  
Is I take that little knife.

I have it ready.

And I go to take the money.  
And I look at him smile.  
And I take his arm.  
And I watch the smile drop.  
And I stick it in.

The police break through.

The stage is lit with white and blue.

Shouts of: STOP, PUT YOUR HANDS ON YOUR HEAD!

The music continues.

BEX looks up horrified as her fantasy has been ruined.

AARON looks up, terrified too.

BEX looks back at OSCAR.

She takes the knife and thrusts it into his chest.

Again and again.

Blood spills out over his white shirt.

He falls forward.

BEX lets OSCAR's body fall to the floor.

RAINER screams.

She rushes over to OSCAR.

She cradles his head and tries to stop the blood from flowing.

ERIN exits.

BEX and AARON both stand. They hold their hands behind their heads and turn away.

As the light shrinks and the sound dies away, RAINER is left alone, on the stage, holding OSCAR's body.

She cries.

She tells him:

I love you. RAINER

SCENE 17

The Living Room Theatre.

Day-time.

Sunny.

Months later.

Sounds of construction in other rooms.

The space is being converted into a Mexican restaurant.

RAINER stands over a map.

OSCAR enters, carrying a huge vat of mayonnaise and places it down next to RAINER.

OSCAR  
Jesus Christ, have you ever seen that much  
mayonnaise in one place.

That is a lot of mayonnaise.

Have you decided then?

RAINER  
Um, I dunno. Do we need that many toilets?

OSCAR  
I dunno Mexican food. Lot of chilli. Lot of shitting.

Mmm. RAINER

OSCAR grimaces.

You alright? RAINER (cont'd)

Yeah, just the old wounds acting up. OSCAR

OSCAR pulls up his t-shirt slightly to show some small but dark scars.

You love saying that, don't you. Old wounds. RAINER

Are you belittling my wounds? OSCAR

Wouldn't dream of it. RAINER

They smile and they kiss.

ERIN enters.

Erin! RAINER (cont'd)

Hey! Erin. OSCAR

Hey. Had my lunch break, so... ERIN

Looks exciting.

Not particularly. RAINER  
Just toilets, really.

At least the toilets aren't trying to kill you. ERIN

The reason I haven't been down-

Don't have to explain. RAINER

I do. ERIN

No, I do. RAINER

Yes, that's true. ERIN

Right. RAINER

Yeah. ERIN

Cool. RAINER

Fine. ERIN

Beat.

RAINER gives OSCAR a look: get out of here.

Oh, right. OSCAR  
Yeah.  
Um.  
I'm just gonna go...check on... um... on...-

Are you trying to make something up? ERIN

Yup. OSCAR

It's fine. ERIN

OSCAR exits.

I am sorry. RAINER  
For what it's worth.  
I am.  
Really.  
You were right.  
And I didn't listen.  
And I'll understand if you don't. Want to see me  
anymore.

I'm just sorry.

ERIN smiles.

OSCAR (OFF)  
Are you finished?

ERIN  
Yes.

OSCAR re-enters.

OSCAR  
Great.  
Don't like the big room. It's very dark in there.

ERIN  
What's in the big room?

ERIN goes to inspect the big room. RAINER looks at OSCAR, smiling slightly.

RAINER  
Nothing. Rupert said we could do whatever we want  
with it.

OSCAR  
As long as it doesn't bring in the National Guard.

ERIN  
You could have a drama club in there? Or a little  
cinema?

RAINER  
You could.

ERIN then looks at RAINER, then smiles. RAINER smiles.

ERIN  
I mean. Maybe.

RAINER  
Maybe.

OSCAR  
Oh, shit, can we have a photo please?

RAINER  
Really?

OSCAR  
It's for Oscar, he wants a before and after. Line-up.

They line-up.  
OSCAR places his phone on a timer.  
On the desk.

They line-up.  
They pose.

OSCAR (cont'd)

Anyway. It all worked out in the end. Didn't it. Happy families.

ERIN

Yeah.  
I guess it did.

RAINER

Everything back to normal.

They continue to pose.

They are still.

They don't blink.

They smile.

They stare.

The builders also freeze.

They are all fixed, like one of their performances.

They smile.

They stare.

They smile.

They stare.

They smile.

They stare.

They smile.

They stare.

They smile.

They stare.

They smile.

They stare.

Just another performance.

End.