

SCENE ONE

*A boarding school dorm late on a Sunday night. Alice is sitting on a chair. Her limbs have been tied to it. A black, beanie-style hat has been pulled over her face.*

Mia Can she breathe?

Izzy Wait . . .

*Izzy takes some scissors and cuts a hole in the hat. She makes the hole wider with her fingers. Alice's mouth can now be seen.*

Just to be sure.

Mia Stick your tongue out.

*Alice complies.*

Wiggle it around.

*Alice complies.*

Roll it.

*Alice complies.*

I can't do that, you know. Look.

*She tries to roll her tongue unsuccessfully.*

Izzy Mia . . .

Mia You know, only some people can. It's like half. It's meant to be a sign of intelligence. Or something. Or maybe gayness. I can't remember. But look. No matter how hard I try . . .

*Tries again.*

Izzy MIA!

Mia Sorry. On the ball. I know.

Izzy Alice. Honey. Tonight is the night. You are to be . . . awakened.

Mia Like that. 'Awakened'. Nice.

Izzy It's a euphemism.

Mia I know.

Izzy As I was saying. Alice. Honey. Sweetie. Darling. Tonight is the night. Let's run through this again. Are you allowed to talk?

*Alice shakes her head loosely.*

Are you allowed to complain?

*Shakes head.*

Good girl. Isn't she a good girl, Mia?

Mia Wonderful.

Izzy Now. I would like as best as possible to keep this . . . clean, impersonal, professional, etcetera. But before we start the simulation, I would like to ask our . . . charge . . . a few mandatory questions. Which in this special instance she may answer.

*Alice's head lolls.*

Stay with me, Alice.

*Her head jerks up.*

Alice. In my short time as your head of dorm. I and Mia, your esteemed house sister.

*Mia makes a mock curtsy.*

Have noticed a small pendant hanging around your neck. Am I correct in believing this to be a religious symbol?

*Alice nods.*

A symbol of devout Christianity?

*Alice nods slightly.*

A cross, to be specific. Yes?

*Alice does nothing.*

*Mia grabs the back of Alice's head and nods her head for her.*

Yeess. Our suspicions were correct, esteemed house sister, deputy head of dorm and all things marvellous.

Mia Deputy. I've been promoted –

Izzy We're short-staffed. Alice. Honey. Sweetie. Darling. You have been observed over this first week and it has been concluded that you do, indeed, wear the aforementioned symbol all the time. Or should we say . . .

*Beat.*

Religiously.

*Beat.*

Answer please.

*Alice nods her head very slightly.*

That is sufficient. Did you note the response, Mia?

Mia Yes, sir.

Izzy There are no 'sirs' in this room. Mia – do you observe a single pair, or indeed a single testicle in this dorm?

Mia No.

Izzy Correct. So none of this 'sir' business. You may refer to me as esteemed head of dorm, high priestess or, if you

prefer, more simply, God. Because. Need I remind you, Alice? Honey, Sweetie. I am your God.

*Beat.*

For tonight.

*Beat.*

So we had better take that thing off.

*Izzy goes to remove the necklace. As she does so, Alice slumps forward.*

Lazy fuck. Hold her up.

*Mia struggles to pull Alice up by her shoulders.*

Mia Heavy.

Izzy Fat.

*Beat.*

Mia/Izzy Misshapen death bat.

Izzy You sleepy, baby? Have we tired you out? Aw. Is it bedtime?

*Mia loosens her grip on Alice. She slumps forward again.*

Hold her up.

Mia I'm trying.

Izzy Alice? Stop pretending. You're making this tricky. And you wouldn't want to make this tricky now, would you? Would she, Mia? Would she be so silly as to pretend to be asleep? Silly things happen to silly girls now, Alice. Silly things . . .  
Alice?

*Izzy shakes her. No response.*

You wouldn't want us to do it all over again tomorrow night now, would you?  
Would you?

*Izzy shoves her. No response.*

Jesus, Mia.

*She examines Alice.*

What's wrong with her?

*Shakes Alice vigorously.*

She's out cold.

Mia I gave her some Valium.

Izzy You what?

Mia I. Gave. Her. Some. Valium.

Izzy I heard what you said.

Mia Well. Um. Sorry. I guess.

Izzy You gave her some Valium? You gave her a fucking tranquilliser . . . you . . . you . . . druggie.

How did you give it to her? Pop it in her tea? Slip it up her bottom while she was absorbed in *Neighbours*? Tell her it was a vitamin, a Smartie, an ecstasy pill? How did you give it to her, Mia?

Mia Well, I -

Izzy She had better be all right. If she's not we - correction, you - are in big trouble. Actually, correction, I am in big trouble, because I am head of dorm and you slipped our little house sister prescription drugs. She is basically my responsibility. Shit. Shit. Shit.

Mia Don't 'shit, shit, shit' me. Your responsibility is tied to a chair looking like a torture victim. I'd be more worried about that if I were you.

Izzy You know full well that that is different. This initiation. It's tradition. The teachers don't care. The sixth form don't care. It's practically goddamn allowed. Besides. It's meant to be fun.

*Beat.*

For us. Shit.

Mia Calm down.

Izzy Don't you dare tell me to calm down. We're screwed. Look at her. How many?

Mia What?

Izzy Pills? How many pills?

Mia In milligrams, I guess, forty. Maybe fifty. It was five tablets at ten each, so –

Izzy You are taking the piss. *Tell me* you are taking the piss. Even I know that's tons.

Mia Well, she's a big girl.

Izzy I hate you. I absolutely hate you. Look at her. She's un-fucking-conscious. We're screwed. They'll tell my parents. Shit shit shit.

*Mia giggles.*

Are you laughing at me?

Mia No.

Izzy You're laughing at me, aren't you? You fucking dare...

Mia Calm down. She'll be fine. I just, well... I thought it would help.

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Izzy How, Mia, how did you think poisoning a thirteen-year-old girl would help? How? I'm dying to know.

Mia It's not poison. It's a mild tranquilliser... stops panic. Takes the edge off things. You can be nasty, when you get... you know, excited, and I wanted the initiation thing to go smoothly. I thought she'd be quieter. I thought you'd like that. You could do more to her.

Izzy Gee. What a gesture. How fucking considerate of you.

*Beat.*

Look at her.

*Izzy tries to wake her. No response.*

She's un-fucking-conscious.

Mia She's not unconscious, just super relaxed.

Izzy (*near tears*) This is it. We're screwed. I won't be a prefect, which will fuck up my UCAS, my mum... Oh God.

*Mia snorts with laughter. Izzy spins around to face her.*

Mia Sorry. It's just... the prefect thing.

Izzy Watch it.

Mia You're scared, aren't you?

Izzy No, I'm not. I'm realistic.

Mia God for the night, trembling in her pyjamas.

Izzy I am not scared.

Mia You're shaking. It's too much, isn't it? You only like good clean torture.

Izzy Fuck you.

Mia In your big wet dreams, scaredy-cat.

Izzy You little –

Mia What, little what?

Izzy Shit.

Mia Ooo . . . terrifying.

Izzy Shut up.

Mia I might collapse in fear.

*Beat.*

You're soft as a kitten, really. Aren't you?

Izzy Fuck you –

Mia As a baby's bottom. You just pretend –

Izzy SHUT UP.

Mia You just pretend. Really you have a heart of marshmallow –

Izzy Cocky –

Mia All gooey and sweet –

Izzy Cocky little –

Mia What? Cocky little what?

*Beat.*

Izzy (*snarls*) Shit.

*She turns to Alice and yanks her head up.*

(*Snarls.*) Cocky little shit.

*She starts to circle Alice.*

Mia Ooo, nasty.

Izzy Hold her up.

Mia Ooo, scary.

Izzy HOLD HER UP.

*Beat.*

This isn't over yet.

Mia Yes, sir.

*She mock-salutes.*

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## SCENE TWO

*Monday morning. Flat in London.*

*Henry's bedroom. Neat, tidy, boyish. His photographs and drawings are pinned to the walls; some have been ripped down and torn as part of a struggle the night before. The ripped pictures contrast strongly with the order of the room.*

*Henry is asleep at the end of the bed, on top of the covers. He is wearing pyjamas. Martha is asleep inside the bed. She is wearing a nightdress.*

*Martha wakes up. She groans. She sits up, and then flops down again. She lies still, as if trying to get back to sleep. She then wriggles into a sitting position and lights a cigarette. She seems to be trying to remember the night before.*

*She watches the sleeping Henry. She leans forward and strokes his hair. She tries to arrange the duvet so it covers him.*

*She walks around the bed and regards Henry at all angles. She notices he still has his socks on. She slides them off.*

*She covers him more with the duvet.*

*She touches his hair. She strokes his face.*

*She leaves the room. Sounds of her banging around in the kitchen.*

*Henry stirs. He wriggles deeper into the bed.*

*Martha returns. She has washed her face and done up her nightdress. She is holding two mugs of coffee and a book.*

*She puts the coffee and the book down and sits next to Henry. She begins to stroke his back in long, slow, luxurious motions over his pyjama top.*

*Henry stirs and wriggles closer to her. Nestling into her warmth.*

Martha Baby boy... So good.

*Regards him. Continues stroking in silence.*

Sorry.

*Beat.*

Sorry. Sorry. Sorry.

*Beat.*

Martha You look so handsome. Like a Russian soldier.

*She starts to scratch his back, gently, in long strokes.*

*Henry stretches out, still seemingly asleep, and makes a satisfied sound.*

Soldier boy. So good.

Forgive me and I will be good. I promise. Never again. Henry...

*Henry stirs. Beat.*

Can we forget about it? Please.

I'll make it up to you.

*He nods sleepily.*

Was that a yes...?

*He nods again and stretches out to be scratched more.*

*He wakes up properly. At first he is sleepy and disorientated. Then it dawns on him.*

Henry Hungover.

Martha What?

Henry Are you hungover?

Martha I'm fine.

*Beat.*

I brought you some coffee. I thought we could go out and get some breakfast.

Henry I'm not hungry -

Martha A big fry-up. Anything you want.

Henry Surprise, surprise. No food in the house.

Martha I could go and get some.

Henry Do you even know where Waitrose is?

Martha You could have it in bed.

Henry I'm not hungry, and I bet you're feeling sick.

Martha I feel fine.

Henry You feel guilty.

Martha Please, Hen. I said I was sorry. I mean it. I really mean it. It won't happen again. I promise. What can I do to prove it to you?

Well, just you see. I will. It might take time, but I will.

*She starts to stroke his back again.*

Let's have a nice day together. We can do anything you want.

*He flinches away from her stroking.*

Henry Stop touching me like that. It's perverse.

You don't remember much, do you?

Martha I –

Henry I find that a sick justice. Whenever this happens, I wake up remembering it. Remembering everything you said, and you wake up weird and optimistic.

Martha Please –

Henry You can't really be sorry. Not if you don't properly remember.

Martha Don't be nasty to me, I beg you. Don't, Henry. Don't. I'm just trying to make it. Up. I won't do it again. We can clean the flat together. I wish I could take it – (Gulp.) – back. I don't think you understand – when you are older you'll understand. (Gulp.) Don't be cruel. I mean it. (Sobs.)

*He watches her cry.*

*She cries harder. He watches in silence.*

*She starts to gasp. She starts to hyperventilate.*

*He doesn't budge.*

What if you don't? If you don't, what will I do? You're all I have. What will I do? I love you. I'm not perfect, I love you. I will get better. Please, Hen, you're scaring me, you're frightening me, please. What will I do if you don't – You're all I have. My baby boy, my baby boy. (Gasp.) Scaring me. *Henry*

*Henry gets up. Exits.*

*When he is gone her hyperventilation calms noticeably. When he re-enters it increases in volume and speed.*

*Henry is now carrying a brown paper bag. Expertly and dispassionately he fixes it to her mouth. He starts breathing in a deep slow regular breaths and signals to her to do the same. She does and begins to calm. When she is breathing regularly he takes the bag away and gently lowers her back onto the bed. He*

*props her up. He fetches a glass of water and a single pill. She takes it and gratefully gulps it down with the water.*

Henry You shouldn't have coffee this early. You know it doesn't help.

*Beat.*

I know you egged that on.

I don't know if you could help egging it on. But I know you did.

*Cruella.*

I should be the one having a panic attack. What would you do if I did, huh?

*Henry convincingly mocks Martha's hyperventilation. He increases it in speed and volume, then flops back on the bed as if dead.*

*He twitches a few times.*

*Martha whimpers.*

*Henry sits up.*

Sorry. Maybe that was cruel.

*She curls up into the bed.*

Mummy . . .

*He tries to pull the duvet away from her. She clings to it.*

OK. I'm sorry.

*Martha . . .*

*He curls round her on the bed and hugs her.*

Are you my mummy?

*She nods.*

Take me home?

*She nods.*

Really promise. Really try.

OK?

Then I'm sorry. You're sorry. Let's call it quits. But this is the last time. I know I say it every time.

But I mean it.

Martha I do too.

Let's spend the morning in bed. Be lazy.

Henry Makes a change.

*Martha arranges herself on his bed.*

In here?

Martha Your room's nicer. Better light.

*They arrange themselves, Henry on the bed, Martha in it. Martha props up the pillows. Henry clears the rest of the glass and then reaches under the bed and pulls out a sketch pad and materials. Martha opens her book – a historical biography of Marie Antoinette. She is halfway through reading it.*

*Henry draws. Martha reads.*

*After a few moments, Martha stops reading and starts to watch Henry work. She puts her book down and takes the sketch pad from him.*

If it's through a window, the perspective is going to be different. See? There is more of a gradient. And you have to think about the glass in the window. Are those patterns for stained glass?

Henry Not sure.

Martha If they are, and the window is divided up into little parts, it might diffract the view out the window differently – (*Adds to the sketch.*) See what I mean...

Henry Think so.

*She does a quick rough sketch.*

Sort of...

*Adds to the sketch.*

More like that?

*She hands it back to him.*

Martha You know what you're doing.

*Goes back to her book.*

This is good. Marie Antoinette knew her rights.

Henry She got executed.

Martha I would rather have led a short life of incomparable luxury and decadence than a long and boring one.

Henry That doesn't surprise me.

Martha If I was her and you were my little princeling, you would have had a fleet of white horses and an army of beautiful concubines. You wouldn't have complained.

*He laughs.*

Although you would have lasted till you were...

*Flicks back in the book and checks.*

About ten years old.

Sod the concubines, then.

*Goes back to reading. The door buzzes.*

*Beat.*

*Door buzzes again.*

Oh, ignore it. Probably Sonia or something.

Henry Did you pay her?

*Door buzzes again.*

Did you pay her for the last time?

*Door buzzes again.*



Jesus, Martha, you didn't, did you?

Martha I did. I bloody did. Ignore it.

*Door buzzes in rapid, urgent blasts.*

She'll go away.

*Door buzzes in one long continual blast.*

Henry (*sighs*) Is there any cash in the house?

*Henry's phone beeps. He checks the message and laughs.*

It's Mia, it's her, she's outside. Thank God. I thought we'd have Sonia's bruiser boyfriend to deal with again.

Martha Mia?

Henry Yes, Mia.

Martha Why? She should be at school. Why?

Henry I don't know.

*Door buzzes again.*

I'm letting her in.

Martha Why? Why's she here? Why?

Henry I don't know.

Martha Little shit.

Henry Please don't. It's too early for this.

Martha She can't stay here.

Henry Stop it. I'm going to buzz her in?

*Beat.*

Don't give me that, that . . . expression. I know you don't get on, but please be nice to her, or if you can't do that just don't be anything. OK?

*Beat.*

OK?

Martha It's just . . .

Henry What?

Martha She always interrupts, you know?

Henry She's your daughter, act like it.

*Door buzzes again.*

Martha She doesn't like me.

Henry She's fifteen. Just be nice, OK?

Martha She looks at me nasty.

Henry Jesus, Martha, can I let her in?

Martha She's not staying.

*Henry presses a button. Mia's footsteps can be heard coming up the stairs.*

Henry Please. Don't make a scene.

*Mia enters.*

Mia Hi.

*Pause.*

Martha (*stilted*) How are you?

Mia Been better.

Martha Oh.

Mia I had a horrible journey. You know, those days where everything seems to be working against you. Ticket machine doesn't work, train stops on the track for about half an hour, babies crying . . . all that, today. Should have been here earlier. Well, I would have been, you know what I mean.

Martha That's a big bag.

Mia Don't worry, I'm not here for long -

Martha There's not enough -

Mia Room. I know.

Henry It's a Monday. Shouldn't you be at school?

*Mia shrugs.*

Why are you in London? Did they let you out for the day?

*Pause. She won't meet his eyes.*

Mia?

Mia I've just come for the keys.

Henry What?

Mia The keys to the Docklands. The keys to Dad's flat. Will you give them to me?

Henry What's going on?

Mia She knows.

Henry You know?

Mia School called. Last night. They spoke to you.

Martha I don't remember.

Henry The phone. It did... That was your school?

Mia Yeah.

Henry She... you hung up, didn't you? Christ.

Martha I don't remember.

Mia You were pissed. I think they knew that. They called Dad.

*Beat.*

They called Dad in Hong Kong. He's flying over.

Martha Excellent. Daddio is flying over to take over. 'Bout fucking time. You lot exhaust me.

Mia He's flying over. To talk to the school.

Henry What?

Mia He's leaving tonight.

Martha You spoke to him?

Mia Briefly.

Martha And how was the darling man?

Mia Brief.

*Beat.*

You should have these back.

*She chucks a bottle of pills on the bed.*

Henry You took them from here?

Mia Sorry.

*Beat.*

Sod that. I'm not. I've been sorry all night. Enough with being sorry.

Martha You took my pills?

Mia Yep.

Martha I need these pills. My doctor gave me these pills.

Mia I know, Mum, Martha, whatever.

Martha Don't be cheeky.

Mia That's not what I meant. I meant 'whatever' as in whatever your name is, whatever I'm meant to call you. Not 'whatever' as in I don't care... I do care.

*Beat.*

Those are ridiculous pyjamas.

Martha You stole these.

Henry Leave it, Martha.

Martha What would have happened if I'd needed them, eh? She stole them from me. On purpose.

Mia You have more. It's not as though you don't have more.

Martha How do you know that, Missey?

Mia You don't exactly hide your prescription stash.

Martha See. See. She's always rude to me. She steals from me. She has no –

Henry Leave it. Both of you.

*Heavy pause.*

Martha (*getting up to go, mutters*) Always interrupting.

*She exits.*

*Sound of water running and door closing.*

*Mia flops down on the bed, exhausted.*

Henry He's coming over?

Mia Just get me the keys, Henry.

Henry Why? Why's he coming?

Mia Please. Just go and get them.

Henry What's going on?

*Mia is fingering some of Henry's drawings.*

Mia This is good, you know. I think you're getting better.

Henry You're either sick, or you're in trouble. And you don't look sick.

Mia I think I saw one of your paintings by the station. Did you do one there? On the wall behind the car park?

Henry You're in trouble, aren't you? You did something.

*Beat.*

And you don't look sick.

Mia It was really pretty.

Henry Mia?

Mia I wish you'd draw me.

Henry Why did they call?

Mia Just get me the keys. Henry.

Henry Not until you tell me.

Mia Fine. I'll find them.

Henry Mia, spit it out.

Mia You don't. You won't. You don't want to know. You'll hate me.

Henry I could never hate you.

Mia (*almost to herself*) What are they going to do to me . . . ?

Henry Who?

Mia The school, you fool. They're going to expel me, Hen. I just know they are. And Dad. Oh God.

Henry Mia. I don't care. I won't hate you. I promise I won't. I promise. Just tell me.

Mia (*into the pillows*) Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

Henry Whatever it is. Whatever you've done. I'll support, I'll stand by you. I promise.

Mia You really promise?

Henry Promise. What was it? The pills. You tried to sell the pills at school or something?

Mia Sell them? No. I didn't think of that. Though I could have made a fortune. They're all loaded. Could have flogged them round exam time when everyone's stressed.

Henry That's not funny.

Mia I wasn't trying to be.

Henry Tell me.

Mia It was something that started as fun and ended up...

*Beat.*

Serious.

Henry It must be serious if Dad's planning to show his face. So you didn't sell them. You took them? What?

Mia I...

Henry What?

Mia I gave them to a younger girl.

Henry OK. Right. How old?

Mia Thirteen.

Henry *Mia!*

Mia You said you wouldn't be angry.

Henry OK. Sorry. Is that it? Is that all?

Mia Sort of.

Henry What do you mean, sort of?

Mia I gave her rather a lot.

Henry How many?

Mia Forty mills.

Henry You're joking. Even Martha couldn't handle that. Fuck.

Mia I didn't realise.

Henry You know the dosage. That's tons, Mia.

Mia No. You know the dosage.

Henry Of course you do. You've given them to her before.

Mia No. You always do. She never wants me to.

Henry What happened? After you gave them to the girl? What happened to the girl?

Mia She sort of fell asleep.

Henry Passed out.

Mia No. She did wake up at one point. She was just tranquillised really. Slower. Quieter.

Henry She told on you?

Mia Not exactly. We sort of told on ourselves. Well. It was obvious. What we'd done. Besides. We couldn't lie. They found it in her bloodstream.

Henry *What?*

Mia She's in hospital.

Henry You're joking. This is an exeat, and you're joking.

Mia I wish I was.

Henry Oh, Mia. Oh God.

Mia I'm sorry. I... I'm sorry.

Henry And he's coming over? Definitely?

Mia Definitely.

Henry Oh, Mia. How could you?

Mia Don't.

Henry Why does he have to be involved? Why didn't they call me? I could have come. They know me. I always drop you off.

Mia I told you. They did call.

Henry I should have got to the phone. Shit. Why didn't they call my mobile? I gave that number to your house mistress. For emergencies. Why didn't they call that?

Mia After speaking to Martha, they decided they were 'concerned' about my domestic situation. She must have been smashed. The look on their faces was priceless. God knows what she said. They had to call Dad. You're barely eighteen, Henry, you're not old enough.

Henry She was in a state last night. Angry at everything. Everyone.

Mia Well she's hung herself this time. 'Who looks after you in the holiday, Mia?' 'How regularly is your mother like that, Mia?' 'Since when have you had access to your Mother's drugs. Mia?' Bla bla bla.

Henry What did you say?

Mia The truth. That I barely lived here, just bummed at friends' houses mostly, or the Docklands place.

Henry This is bad.

Mia I know.

Henry This couldn't have happened at a worse time. She's getting better. See how she left before getting nasty. She's learning some self-control.

Mia Dream on, Henry. I've heard it all before. Just get me the keys, OK?

Martha (*from offstage*) HENRY!

Henry WHAT?

Martha FORGOT MY TOWEL.

*Henry finds one and exits to give it to her. While he's gone Mia begins to smoke one of Martha's cigarettes.*

*Henry re-enters.*

Henry 'We'. You said 'we'. Who else was involved?

Mia Another girl. Izzy.

Henry Older?

Mia Year above.

Henry Which hospital is she in?

Mia They moved her to a London one this morning. The Portland.

Henry You have to go there.

Mia Go there?

Henry Go there and find the girl. Talk to her. Apologise. Convince her to say it was all Izzy. That Izzy, um... coerced you into it.

Mia What's the point?

Henry Then Dad won't have to get too involved. He knows Martha's a prescription popper anyway. If he thinks it wasn't so much you -

Mia Because I'm clearly such an innocent lamb.

Henry If the school think it wasn't so much you, he'll just throw a bit of cash at the school and fuck right off. I don't want him to come here.

Mia It won't work.

Henry It might. You've got to. You've got to try. He can't come here.

Mia Come with me.

Henry You know I can't.

Mia Why?

Henry If I'm around she won't drink today. She feels too guilty.

Mia Please. I want to go before she gets out. This place gives me the creeps.

Henry Hey...

Mia Sorry. But you know what I mean. It used to be nice. It should be nice. It's just so weirdly squalid now. Ugh.

Henry You'll be fine. Come straight back after.

*Pause.*

Mia You promised, Henry.

*Pause.*

Henry OK. Wait. My phone.

*He shoves on some clothes.*

Mia Docklands keys, Henry.

Henry In there.

*She finds the keys and jingles them.*

Mia Come on!

Henry My phone -

*He goes to grab his phone.*

Mia Sod that. You want to be free as a birdie. We could make a day of it. Hospital in the morning. Millennium Wheel in the afternoon.

Henry What if...?

Mia Pussy.

Henry But seriously, if...

Mia Mummy's boy.

Henry Fine.

*He scribbles Martha a quick note and leaves it on the bed.*

*He gives his sister a playful push towards the door. She pushes him playfully back. He exits ahead of her.*

*While he can't see, she pockets the note he left for Martha.*

*Mia exits.*

Martha (from offstage) HENRY!

*Martha re-enters. Soaking wet in a towel.*

HENRY!

SCENE THREE

*2000*  
*Later that day. A private hospital room. Alice is in the hospital bed, her head partially swathed in bandages, and hooked up to a drip. It is not clear whether she is sedated, unconscious or asleep. Henry and Mia stand on either side of her. Mia is peering at Alice.*

Mia Say something. Something. Please.

*Beat.*

She looks bad, doesn't she?

Henry Jesus, Mia.

Mia She's only wired up to this. Is that good?

Henry This is frightening. You know that. You are frightening.

Mia Don't.

Henry Don't what? What do you want me to say? That it's fine. You could have told me. Prepared me. Fuck. What had she done to you?

Mia It's not that...

Henry What? 'Not that' what?

Mia Simple.

Henry It is that fucking simple. You don't go around doing that to people. You just don't.

Mia You don't understand.

Henry No. You're right. I don't.

Mia In the context, what happened, what we were doing. It seemed OK. It seemed perfectly fine – allowed, even.

Henry All right? *This* seemed all right –?

\* Mia It's different in there: different rules, different power levels... it's messed up. Back in school, at night, when all the teachers are in bed and the power shifts... when age becomes like a rank. And people are bored.

Henry You can't excuse this, Mia. Nothing can excuse this –

Mia It's a different world, with different rules. And some stuff... well, it seems OK. Allowed even. But in the light of day, here. Before that, even, soon as I walked out of the gates and saw normal people, no uniform. Then I realised how messed up it was, what happened. But when I was in the dorm, with Izzy, tying her up – well, I could only see the particles, the teeny tiny particles. Not the whole picture.

Henry You frighten me.

Mia Should I try and apologise?

Henry What if we're seen?

Mia It was your idea.

Henry I didn't know how bad this was, did I? If I'd have known –

Mia Alice...

Henry Let's just go.

Mia Relax, her parents don't know what we look like.

Henry They probably do now.

Mia They dropped her off early at the start of term. So we never met.

*Beat.*

I've seen photos, though... by her bed. They looked nice.

*Henry fingers some paper cups by the side of the bed.*

Henry Jesus, Mia. These are still warm.

Mia (*distracted*) So they've just left.

Henry So they've gone to get more coffee. I think we should go.

Mia It was your idea.

Henry Because I thought she'd be propped up in bed feeling a bit woozy. Not. Not. Looking like a war victim. Jesus, Mia.

Mia But our plan –

Henry Is defunct. Let's go.

\* Mia (*distracted*) Have you seen the size of this?

*She is examining a bruise on Alice's face.*

It's massive.

Henry Please. Let's go. This is freaking me out. Besides, she could wake up.

Mia I thought you wanted her to wake up?

Henry How many times? This is different to what I thought. This is entirely different. Jesus. If she wakes up and sees you hovering here she'll probably scream. I would. Sod the plan. Let's go.

*They both hear the sudden sound of someone knocking on the door. Scared, they hide under the bed.*

*Izzy enters, sniffing. She is holding an enormous, extravagant bunch of flowers and a grotesque handmade card. She relaxes as soon as she realises the room is empty of visitors. She puts the flowers down on the foot of the bed. She walks up to Alice and peers at her.*

Izzy (*softly*) Alice? Honey?

*She tugs at her shoulder gently, no response. Tries again. No response.*

*Pause.*

*She flicks her face lightly with her finger. No response. She repeats the action harder. No response. Satisfied that Alice is unconscious she begins to take in her own handiwork and lets out a low wolf whistle.*

Alice, honey, you're a state . . .

*Mia and Henry sneak out behind Izzy. Mia puts her hand over Izzy's mouth. Izzy shrieks.*

Mia Shhh . . .

Izzy It's you. You scared me.

*Beat.*

Was it you two in here before?

Mia Yeah.

Izzy God, you got me all riled up. I thought it was the parents. I was exploiting my hay fever to the maximum.

*She looks around the room.*

Not bad, eh? She must have had insurance.

Mia Shhh . . . you might wake her.

Izzy Relax. She's out cold.

Mia Or pretending to be.

Izzy (*overly sweet*) Alice? Honey?

No response.

Henry Stop it.

Izzy Why are you here, then? To apologise? Spare me . . .

*Izzy grins at Henry and Mia. she leans over and tweaks Alice's nipple. No response.*

Told you. She's out of it.

*Izzy sticks out her hand.*

Izzy.

Henry I know.

Izzy Henry, right? Mia talks about you a lot. I hear you're an artist?

*Mia has just noticed the flowers.*

Mia You brought her flowers?

Izzy She told me you quit school to be a painter. I think that's sooo -



Mia And a card -

Izzy - cool, you know? I like to paint as well. I made this card. Look.

Henry Why bother?

Izzy Mummy thought it would be appropriate to offer my deepest sympathy. Besides, it's not going to hurt.

Mia She looks bad, doesn't she? I didn't remember her looking that bad.

Izzy You seem to forget what we did to her in the last twenty minutes.

*Beat.*

Besides, bruises take time to swell and change colour. Haven't you ever had a black eye?

Mia A lax ball in the face.

Izzy Crap at catching.

Henry And I suppose she was crap at catching too?

Izzy She was just . . . crap.

Henry That's a horrible thing to say.

Izzy Lots of true things are.

*Both girls peer closely at the bruise.*

Mia Who gave her that? You or me?

Izzy Which would you prefer?

Mia You.

Izzy Then it was me.

*Henry is guarding the door, facing away from the girls. Izzy checks him out.*

So how come you're here?

Mia He's supporting me.

Izzy That's so sweet.

Henry I think we should go now, Mia.

Izzy She can sign the card if you want . . . (*Beat.*) I like your T-shirt.

*Sound of footsteps approaching and a hospital trolley passing the door.*

Mia They might come back with medicine or something.

Izzy Good idea. Let's go for a drink.

Mia Won't your mum want you back or something?

Izzy (*while arranging the flowers neatly by the bed*) Stuff it, I'm in so much trouble already it hardly matters if I get in a bit more. What can they do? Yell? I think Mummy's yelled herself out of oxygen.

*Pause.*

Come on. Let's go to the pub. Let's go . . . somewhere.

*Beat.*

What's with the faces? We should be celebrating. She's not nearly as bad as we thought.

Mia As you thought.

*Izzy gives Alice another glance. She picks up the clipboard at the end of the bed and strikes a comic, learned, doctorly pose.*

Izzy She's not dead. She's not about to die. So we're fine. Let's go toast to tough little Alice. Come on.

*She saunters offstage, throwing a backward glance at Henry.*

Come on.

*She exits.*

Mia She fancies you.

Henry She scares me.

*They exit.*

*Alice shifts in her bed and begins to cry.*

#### SCENE FOUR

*Tuesday morning. Martha's flat. Henry's bedroom.*

*Martha is in his bed. There is an overflowing ashtray next to the bed – it should look as though she's been camping there all night.*

*Sound of Henry opening the door.*

Martha Henry?

*She gets out of bed.*

Henry? HENRY?

*Sound of a shower running.*

*Martha sits back down. She stands up. Sits back down. She is clearly disconcerted. She goes to stand by the door. She goes to leave the room, but at the last minute thinks better of it and returns to the bed. She gets in the bed, sitting up. She wriggles further down into the bed. She pulls the duvet over her head. Stays like this for a while.*

*Martha sighs. Water is still running. She sits up again. Opens a book. Tries to read nonchalantly. Can't focus. Finds a cigarette. Smokes it nervously. The shower sound stops. She hurriedly puts it out, dives into the bed and covers her body and head with the duvet.*

Henry (*offstage*) Martha? Where are the clean clothes? My shirts. I washed them. I strung them up in the...

They're not here...

*Beat. Henry enters, dripping wet with only a towel around his waist. He searches his room for his clothes and can't find them.*

Where are all my clothes?

*Martha wriggles further down into the bed.*

Where are they?

MUMMY.

Where are they?

*She sits up.*

Thank you.

*They stare at each other. She looks at his upper body. She notices a love bite on his neck.*

Give me something to put on.

*Beat.*

If you're not going to tell me where they are, I'll find something temporary.

Don't look at me like that.

Martha Why not?

Henry You know.

*Beat.*

Where are my clothes?

*She stares at him.*

Fine. Fine. I'll wear... I'll wear... this.

*He holds up one of Martha's dressing gowns, a long white one with a flower design.*

*Martha moves towards the edge of the bed closest to him and sits on it.*

Martha You're wet.

*He turns away from her. There are scratches on his back. He chasteily slips on the dressing gown and only when he's covered drops the towel. He ties the cord tightly.*

*Martha laughs at the sight of him. He smiles, shrugs and stares down at himself.*

Your hair is wet.

*He rubs his hair with the towel.*

You could have worn what you came home in.

Henry It was dirty.

*Beat.*

Martha You're dirty. What's that on your neck?

Henry *(as if to a deaf person)* Where – are – my – clothes?

Mummy? MARTHA?

Martha *(as if to a deaf person)* Where – was – my – son?

Henry This isn't funny.

Martha Tit for tat. Tit for tit. I'll tell you if you tell me. Where were you?

Henry Out.

Martha Who with?

Henry Friends.

Martha You don't have any friends.

Henry You don't know everything about –

Martha About you, I do. You don't have any friends. You never had any friends.

Henry I was at a friend's flat. I missed the last bus. Where are my clothes?

Martha Who?

Henry Who?

Martha Who was your friend?

Henry A... a... mate, OK? Someone I used to know.

Martha Called?

Henry None of your business.

Martha Don't get cheeky. I'm your mother, not one of your... mates. What was the name?

Henry *(searching)* Ian.

Martha A boy.

Henry Yes. A boy.

Martha You stayed the night, with, a, boy?

Henry Two boys.

*She starts to laugh.*

Martha Come here.

*She opens her arms. He approaches her warily. She hugs him.*

Beautiful boy. Beautiful baby, covered in marks. You silly thing.

*Rocks him.*

You could have told me. But then, I think I always knew. I don't mind... I know some parents mind. My parents would have really minded. God... my father. But they were religious, and, not as close as us, eh? No. I don't mind a bit. I just don't want any secrets between us.

Beautiful boy. Russian soldier. You have to tell me all about it – not the details mind. But we can have a gossip. To be honest, I was starting to suspect, you being so gentle. So sweet. So utterly unlike any . . . Modern times, though, modern times –

*Henry has reached into the bedclothes and pulled out a strip of cut-up shirt material.*

Henry Jesus Christ.

*He reaches in again and pulls out a handful. He springs up.*

Get up.

*She sits frozen.*

GET UP.

*She stands. Henry yanks the duvet from the bed. Revealed are a pile of his clothes, all cut up into teeny tiny strips. Henry climbs onto the bed. He picks up handfuls of the material. He starts to laugh. Martha, nervous, starts laughing too.*

You – (*Laughs.*) You – (*Laughs.*) You – (*Laughs.*) crazy – (*Laughs.*)

*Beat.*

– bitch. You crazy bitch.

Martha It doesn't matter, does it? I'll buy you more. I just. Had. A moment. Last night. I was angry with you. You disappeared.

Henry Crazy –

Martha You disappeared and you didn't –

Henry – BITCH.

*Silence.*

Martha Sorry.

Sorry. Sorry. Please.

It's OK now. See? It's OK. Now I know where you were. So it's OK. Now I know what you are. It's OK. I just . . . No secrets. I can't bear it. Please.

Henry What am I, Martha?

Martha With men. You like men.

*Henry laughs.*

Henry You'd love that, wouldn't you?

Martha I love you. Whatever you are.

Henry I was with a girl. (*As if to a deaf person.*) I – was – sleeping – with – a – GIRL.

That's where I was. I didn't come home last night because I was with a woman. And that's where I wanted to be. With her. Not here. I could have come home but I didn't. Did you hear that? That is what I am. Just a little bit normal.

*Beat.*

That changes things, doesn't it?  
You don't like that so much.  
But remember. You love me.

*Beat.*

Whatever.

Martha Take it off.

Henry What?

Martha My dressing gown. Take it off. It's mine. I want it back.

Henry No. Sew me an outfit and I'll take it off. Stitch my clothes back together and I'll take it off. Behave like a remotely attractive human being and I'll take it off.

Martha Was that . . .

Henry What?

Martha Was that your first time?

Henry Yes.

Martha Oh.

Henry It had to happen. It was going to happen.

Martha I just thought. That. You didn't like women.

Henry You thought I liked men.

Martha No. Yes. No. I don't know.

You're an artist. You're a gentle, perfect son. You're . . . pretty. It made sense.

Henry Well. You clearly don't know me so well after all.

Martha It's. Just. A shock.

Henry That I'm straight? God! You live in an upside-down world. Martha. Look. It wasn't to hurt you. I had to do something for me. Don't you see?

Martha You're not mine any more. You're hers.

Henry I'm always yours. But I'm mine as well.

Martha Did she hurt you. Your back?

Henry You should have seen her.

I'm joking.

Martha Why didn't you call? I got. Panicky.

Henry I was busy. Doing things. Doing things I should be doing. Don't make me feel like . . . like it's wrong. I'm your child, not -

Martha Russian -

Henry I know. Russian soldier. Whatever. Just let me go a bit, please. This is crazy behaviour.

Martha Are you clean now?

Henry I showered.

Martha You don't smell? You know. Of another -

Henry Person. No, Mummy.

Martha Come here.

*He goes to her. She smells him and strokes his hair. She hugs him tightly. She starts to open the front of the dressing gown.*

Henry What are you doing?

Martha I want to see you.

Henry Christ. Why?

Martha Your body. I want to see if you look different. If you feel different. (Urgently.) Please. I need to. You're my child.

*She smells his chest and buries her head in it. He sighs and wraps his arms around her, rocking her slightly. She presses the love bite with her fingers.*

Does it hurt?

Henry No.

Martha Is she pretty?

Henry Yes.

Martha Will you see her again?

Henry Maybe.

*She buries her head in his chest again. He wraps his arms around her and rocks her. They stay like this for a few moments. Suddenly Henry springs back. And shoves Martha away.*

*There is now another love bite on his neck.*

*Martha is smiling.*

Martha When you do. You can show her that.

Blackout.

12501

SCENE FIVE

*Hugh's flat at Canary Wharf. It is minimalist and impersonal. A businessman's bachelor flat. It is his crash pad for his rare and increasingly infrequent visits to London. The flat is filled with light from large glass windows. There is evidence of a small drunken party: an iPod attached to speakers, an empty vodka bottle, some beer cans, a crammed ashtray, a twistier board – all of these inconsistent with the overall design of the flat. There is also a large stain on the carpet.*

*Mia walks in, dishevelled – she has just woken up. She is ending a call on her mobile phone, having just been talking to Hugh. She takes in the state of the room, the stain on the floor ...*

Mia Bugger.

*She begins manically to tidy the flat.*

Izzy! Henry! Guys ...

GET UP. Dad just called. He's landed. Izzy. IZZY! Come on. You have to go.

*Izzy stumbles out of the bedroom, wrapped in a sheet. She flops onto the sofa. Mia yanks at the sheet.*

Get dressed. You have to leave.

HENRY ...

Izzy Ouch. Stop shouting. My head hurts.

Mia HENRY! COME ON.

Izzy He's not here.

Mia What?

Izzy He left. Earlier.

Mia To go where?

Izzy Probably to buy some milk or something. Chill.

Mia Get dressed, Izzy, you have to go. (*Yanks at sheet.*) Now.

Izzy Hey ... I'm naked, you brazen hussy. Stop. Yanking. What? Want a bit of me too?

Mia Get up.

Izzy Your brother loved it ...

Mia Ugh. Ugh. That is so ... disgusting. I don't want to know.

Izzy I think we have a connection, you know. A special connection. It's like we understand each other. Mentally ... spiritually ...

*She really enjoys saying this, knowing it winds Mia up. She mock-bumps the air.*

Physically ...

Mia Izzy. You disgust me. (*Mocking.*) Mentally, spiritually ...

*She finds pants on the floor.*

Ugh ... physically. You can have these back.

*Izzy catches the pants and dangles them on her finger.*

Izzy Ripped them off me. Like an animal. He's gorgeous. So ... manly –

Mia (*snorts*) Manly?

Izzy So ... commanding. Like I said, I think we have a connection. I noticed it as soon as we met. It ... it ... crackled with intensity ... could you tell?