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STATUS: *UPHILL* See: A brilliant writer of timeless imagination with an acute observation of people's foibles. *Independent*

What's great: The play family turns with quirky, offbeat humour but also gravity & compassionate love for the odd humans who inhabit Camden by night. *Heald*

Character: Beautifully crafted... two change agents who avoid camaraderie to see the sleep world of human experience. *Hear* 2006

Hi note: There is a huge talent and great heart in Stephens's writing. The play is constructed with skill, yielding its dark secrets slowly, and the scolding violence to set against moments of beautiful tenderness. *Daly* 2006

Why: The intricacies of childhood, tense family relationships and the wonder and disappointments of young love are caught with rare perceptivity. *Daily Telegraph*

Series manager: *Clare Bowles*

SIMON STEPHENS

PLAYS: 1
BLUEBIRD - CHRISTMAS
HERONS - 1907



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methuen | drama

Introduced by the author

Heros was first performed at the Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Upstairs, London, on 18 May 2001. The cast was as follows:

Billy Lee Russell
Scott Cooper
Aaron Riley
Darren Madden
Adele Kent
Charlie Russell
Michelle Russell

Billy Seymour
Robert Boulter
Stuart Morris
Ryan Winsley
Lia Saville
Nicolas Tennant
Jane Hazlegrove

Directed by Simon Usher
Designed by Antony Lambie
Lighting by Paul Russell
Sound by Ian Dickinson

Characters

Billy Lee Russell *Fourteen years old. A dirty, scruffed mob of hair. Wears a thin and old Adidas jacket and a Nike Air baseball cap. He speaks in the manner of somebody with a desperate eagerness to please, to satisfy, to explain, to charm others. This eagerness manifests itself also in the way that he moves.*

Charlie Russell *Thirty-four years old. Billy's father. A hulking damaged man. He wears a blue jacket over a white T-shirt and jeans and he smokes roll-up cigarettes with remarkable constancy. His skill at rolling these cigarettes betrays surprising subtlety and dexterity. Charlie trips over his words when he talks, as though he can't possibly explain everything that he needs to. This struggle results in marticulacy. And occasional accidental poetry. He is a man who has watched bewildered as almost everything that he once loved has been taken away from him.*

Michelle Russell *Thirty-two years old. Billy's mother. Separated from Charlie. She has a confident energy that she struggles to contain when she speaks to Billy, almost out of fear of frightening him. She takes great care over her appearance but there is something about her clothes, particularly about the coat she wears, which is somehow awkward. It is as though she is trying too hard. She can look, at times, monumentally tired.*

Adele Kent *Thirteen years old. She is a year below Billy in school. She wears her school uniform still. She wears it unripy. She has a disarming directness. She has bleached blonde hair and dark eyes. She has something of a reputation around and outside of the school – not for being feared, but she is respected. She is a friend of Scott Cooper's. Scott does not know she has taken to visiting Billy. At first she makes Billy nervous.*

Scott Cooper *Fifteen years old. He is big for his age and handsome. He is deeply damaged. He has a vulnerability which manifests itself in cruelty. He moves and speaks with a calmness that is disarming. Sometimes he appears slow-witted. He isn't.*

Scott Fucking get ourselves fucking sorted, eh?

He moves to leave. The others follow him. And then he stops. He turns to Adele.

You coming or what?

Beat.

I said. Are you coming with me or fucking what?

Adele Yeah. Yeah, I'm coming.

She follows Aaron and Darren out. As she passes Scott he strokes her back.

Scott Good girl.

A moment. The sound of the water.

Billy enters. *There is an urgency about him. An eagerness. He has with him a battered school bag, and a thin bag for carrying a fishing rod. He checks that nobody is watching him and then he opens his school bag and takes out some fishing accessories. Bait, tackle, a small box of hooks, a net, etc. The final object that he removes from his bag is a black, small, well-kept book. A log or a diary of some sort. He opens it and presses down the correct page. He also opens up the case for his rod and fixes the two halves together. Attaches the tackle to the reel and a hook to the tackle and finally some bait. This whole process should be done quickly, with obsessive care and attention to detail. When he has finished Billy becomes completely calm. We stay with him for a short time. He makes a few notes in his book. He hums the melody from 'Can I Pass?' by the Rebel.*

Scott enters and stands downstage to Billy's right. *Learning under the oak tree grinning, and drinking from a bottle of Stella Artois with remarkable speed and thirst, Scott waits for some time before he speaks. He watches Billy who doesn't know that he's there.*

Scott I thought you'd be here.

There is a pause. Billy keeps calm, maybe smiles to greet Scott. Scott moves, slowly, upstage towards him.

Billy Scott.

Scott What are you doing?

Billy I'm fishing.

Scott Fishing?

Billy For tENCH.

Scott *(arriving close, examining Billy's equipment)* What are tENCH, Billy?

Billy They're really small fish.

Scott What do you do with them, Billy? When you've caught 'em?

Billy I normally throw them back in.

Scott What's the point of that?

Billy It's kind of like a sport.

Scott What's the point of throwing them back in, Billy? Waste of time, eh?

Billy It's all to do with -

Scott *(cuts him off, about his beer)* You want some?

Billy No thank you.

Scott *paces around the space behind Billy. Billy remains fishing, but is always aware of where Scott has moved to.*

Scott *(finishing his bottle, pointing offstage)* Did you see them little kids just up Goresbrook just now?

Billy *(enthusiastically)* Yeah.

Scott *(putting his empty bottle in his pocket)* I was just coming down here. I'd just been with the boys all afternoon. And I was coming down here. I was looking for you. I had something that I needed to tell you. And I saw them. They were young, eh?

Billy Their legs are shorter.

Scott What?

Billy I was thinking about what it was about kids, when they're young like that, that makes them look strange. It's their legs. In comparison to the size of their heads.

Scott Did you see what they were doing?

Billy No.

Scott I think they were doing bad stuff.

Billy Oh.

Scott (*pulls out a packet of B&H*) Sex stuff.

Billy What?

Scott (*offers a cigarette to Billy, half knowing that he doesn't smoke*) Seriously.

Billy No thank you.

Scott How old do you think they were?

Billy Twelve. Thirteen.

Scott (*lights it*) At the oldest.

Billy They come round here most days.

Scott That makes me sick. Seeing that.

Billy Are you sure that's what they were doing?

Scott I should ~~fuck~~ know, Billy, eh. What do you think I am? Don't tell me you think I'm a liar, mate.

Billy I wouldn't. I'm not. It's just. That's horrible.

Scott Horrible?

Billy Yeah.

~~Scott~~ ~~What?~~ ~~Do you have any...~~

~~Scott~~ ~~No.~~

~~**Billy** *reels in his time.*~~

~~**Scott** You wouldn't understand then, Billy, probably, eh?~~

~~**Billy** I don't know.~~

~~**Scott** You wouldn't though, would you? You know about my brother, eh, Billy?~~

~~**Billy** Yeah.~~

~~**Scott** But I've got a sister too. Now she's nine. If I ever heard that anybody was doing anything like that with my sister, Billy, if I ever saw my sister round here or round anywhere doing that kind of stuff I'd be fucking go mental, me. I'd go apeshit. I wouldn't be able to stop myself. Sometimes I get a temper on me about things like that and I end up it's like I just want to kind of fucking just go round hitting stuff.~~

~~**Billy** I see.~~

~~**Scott** She's into all kids' stuff. You know like groups and that? Like Steps and shit?~~

~~**Billy** Yeah.~~

~~**Scott** She's into all that.~~

~~**Scott** I came over 'cause I wanted to tell you something and I saw those kids and it just kind of did my head in a bit. (*Beat*) Do you ever get a feeling like you're not allowed to be a child any more?~~

~~**Billy** What?~~

~~**Scott** It's just something my dad said. He said that the problem was that children aren't allowed to be children any more. I just wondered if you ever felt like that.~~

~~**Billy** No.~~

~~**Scott** No. Me neither. If I see them round here again I think that I'll tell them to ~~fuck~~ just go away.~~

Billy They're here all the time.

Scott Are they?

Billy (*starts preparing a second hook*) Normally they just throw stones at each other. Swear. Call each other fucking cunts. They draw graffiti on the walls. Write their names. Draw dicks and tits and that.

Scott (*throws his cigarette into the water*) Good idea.

Billy (*looks up at him*) I think they look odd. I think they look out of place. I think they look like they're shaped all wrong.

Scott Do you?

Billy Yeah.

Scott (*icking up and examining Billy's fish-bait*) You think some pretty fucked-up stuff, you, eh? Don't you though, Billy? You do, eh?

From here Billy starts to avoid eye contact with Scott. Concentrates more on his fishing.

Billy What was it that you wanted to tell me?

Scott These fish, these tENCH. How often do you catch them? Say, every day?

Billy I normally catch two or three a day. At least. Sometimes much more.

Scott Nice feeling?

Billy When they come out of the water. They flash. They're all silvery. They look just magnificent. That's the best feeling.

The two boys take to staring out over the water. Scott moves closer to Billy.

Scott Two or three a day isn't many though, Billy, is it?

Billy It's all right.

~~Scott~~ ~~What was it that you wanted?~~

Scott I've been looking for you all day. I wanted to wait until I got you on your own. I wanted to tell you. I went to see our Ross yesterday.

Billy Did you?

Scott It was a bit mad. You know what I mean?

Billy I'm not sure.

Scott (*sitting with Billy, who doesn't acknowledge him*) He's changed. He seems quite quiet.

Billy I see.

Scott It was ~~quite~~ horrible, Billy. I can't stop thinking about it. It actually made me want to throw up. Ross told me, and this is what I'm here for, Billy, Ross told me to say hello to your dad.

Billy ...

Scott And I probably won't see him. I don't see your dad that much. And when I do he kind of avoids me.

Billy I see.

Scott Billy, tell him he's asking after him.

Billy Right.

~~Scott~~ ~~What was it that you wanted?~~ ~~forward to seeing him soon. He'll be thinking about him Friday, Billy. It is very important that you pass this message on, Billy, you with me?~~

Billy Yeah.

Scott Are you sure?

Billy Yes.

Scott Because you fucking better be.

Billy I am.

Scott (*Touches Billy's hair, Billy doesn't move*) How is your dad, Billy?

Billy He's all right.

Scott Good. I mean after everything that happened.

Billy He sleeps a lot.

Scott Right. Well, that probably helps I reckon, eh, Billy? (*No response.*) I would imagine that plenty of sleep is exactly what he needs even. To replenish himself. You know what I mean, Billy? (*No response. Pause. Grinning.*) I should be going, and that. Maybe bring some of the boys with us if that's all right with you, yeah? (*Beat. He stands.*) Billy.

Billy Yeah.

Scott Were you lying about your brothers and sisters?

Scott (*with a big smile*) Good man. Later, eh?

Scott exits. **Billy** turns to look away into the opposite direction from where **Scott** leaves. He reels in his hook and sits back on his heels for a short time. The lights are dimming gently. **Billy** is trying to calm himself, rocking back and forth on his heels. He is unsure what action needs to be taken but he understands that something must be done. He stands after a short time and exits upstage right.

Lights dim faintly and rise a little again.

Billy enters from downstage left after a few minutes and watches him. **Charlie** talks to **Billy** without looking at him.

Charlie One time. I come down here. There was a heron. Perched. Just resting. You know by the Goresbrook House?

Billy Where have you been, Dad? I've been looking for you for ages.

Charlie (*grins*) Just resting. Just there, like. Sitting. Beautiful it was. It had these white feathers. And you look closely you can see these feathers just getting touched by the wind. Gorgeous black eyes it had. And still like nothing you'd ever see. I come down here. Watched it. And you wait two seconds and the cunt just swoops. Drops like a lead ball. The weight of it. Plunges down. Comes up in a second with a carp in its beak, Billy. Honestly. It was one of the most breathtaking sights that I ever saw.

Billy How long have you been here?

Charlie So I come back. Two days later. Bring a gun with me, don't I? Wait to shoot the bastard. I was going to shoot it. Blow its head off and stick it on the wall at home. Buy one of those little wooden plaques. One of those things. Just glue it up there. Waiting two days. Cunt's fucked off 'a' it? Never comes back.

Billy How long have you been here, Dad?

Charlie Not long, Billy, don't worry.

Billy moves to sit with his father. *Heidgets while his father speaks.*

Charlie I remember when I bought the bastard. Lewis Matthews. Greezer who sold it to us. Told him that I wanted to shoot the herons that were eating my fish and also for protection from robbers and that and he says to me, he said, 'Charlie,' he said. 'Don't ever leave it around unloaded.' Which surprised me. At the time. He said, 'Cause one day you're going to fucking want to shoot the cunt. You'll fucking wake up and some cunt'll be fucking robbing you. So always put a fucking bullet in it. Four chambers round the barrel and it's one two three four BANG!' (*Pause.*) Sometimes I just take it out. Think about all the people I could shoot. Y'know what I mean?

Billy Dad, I've got to tell you something.

~~she starts away from her book and goes to pack up her fishing gear. She then turns to Billy and says, "I'm not going to be a fisherman, I'm going to be a writer."~~

Adele enters. She stands some distance away from Billy and from where he is packing and writing. Upstage. She waits. She spends some moments staring out over the water before she turns to watch Billy. When she speaks he stops his packing for a short time. But only for a short time.

Adele You're Billy. Billy Russell. You go to our school. (No response.) You're in Mr Webster's form. 4D. I hate him. ~~_____.~~ (No response.) You live on the Cotall Street Estate. Up Limehouse. Opposite Stainsby Road, your flat is. I've seen you. Not only at school and that. I live just near you. I'm not being a funny cow. Honestly. I've just noticed you. I'm Adele.

Billy I know.

Adele What you doing?

Billy (continuing to pack up) I was fishing.

Adele (approaches him) You're always fishing, aren't you? Heh? Every day I come here you're here fishing. With your dad normally. Where's your dad today, Billy? (No response. He continues to pack.) Don't you want to talk to us? It's all right. I'm not going to bite you or nothing. It's a bit ~~_____~~ weird though. Don't you think, Billy?

Billy No.

Billy, packed up, carrying only his book separately, goes to leave.

Adele Where are you going?

Billy (stops) Home.

~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

Billy Can I?

Adele Go on.

Billy You come down this way, every day. At the same time every day. Exact same time. And you stop. Just for a second and that. But you do, you just, you stop. At the same point. Just looking up there. Out there across the other side. And then you carry on. Can I ask you?

Adele What?

Billy Why do you do that?

Adele It's none of your business.

Billy No. I know that. I just thought I'd ask you. I'm sorry. I'm just inquisitive. I'm a strange fucker sometimes. (Pause.) Is it . . . ?

Adele What?

Billy Is it because of Racheal?

There is a moment between the two. And then Adele turns.

Adele You know something I noticed. (No response.) You're going to think this is well weird.

Billy What?

Adele You've got the same eyes as your dad.

~~_____~~

Adele ~~_____~~ Was it your dad who found her?

Billy What?

Adele ~~_____~~. Was it your dad who found her?
Long pause.

Billy Yes. It was.

Adele That's what I heard. Did you see her too?

Billy No.

Adele What was it like?

Billy What do you mean?

Adele Did he never say, your dad, what it was like? What happened? How come he found her? Anything like that?

Billy No.

Adele Did you never ask him?

Billy No.

Adele 'Cause I would have. I would never have shut up about it. It was Ross Cooper, wasn't it? And Berg Kempton. And his mates? Who did it?

Billy Yeah.

Adele Your dad saw 'em, didn't he?

Long silence.

Did you know her?

Billy Not really.

Adele (*Billy turns to her as she speaks*) I used to sit with her in English. She was very quiet. She was quite, you know, she was like quite fat and that. Never said anything but sometimes, if you were working in pairs and that, she used to know so much stuff. She used to talk about why people did things. She had all these ideas. Never told them to anybody. Except she'd tell them to me, though, and I'd tell the teacher and he'd think I was a right boffin. But it was all her.

Adele I know. (*New tactic. She moves towards him.*) I remember when you arrived at our school. You only came a couple of years back, didn't you?

Billy (*keeps his ground*) Yeah.

Adele Where did you go before

Billy Morpeth.

Adele Did you? (*No response.*) How come you changed?

Billy (*looking away*) We moved.

Adele To Corall Street?

Billy That's right.

Billy (*turning back to her*) Aren't you Scott Cooper's girlfriend?

Adele No.

Billy That's not what I heard.

Adele I'm not.

Billy Isn't he going to be a bit fucked off that you're coming round here talking to me?

Adele I'm not his girlfriend. How come you moved?

Billy (*moving to collect his fishing bag*) If I know Scott Cooper he'll be ~~angry~~ angry and he'll probably most likely ~~want to batter the pair of us.~~ want to batter the pair of us.

Adele Scott Cooper's a needledick.

Billy But he'll still ~~batter~~ batter us.

Adele How come you moved?

Adele How come you changed?

No response. Billy looks away from her.

You know what your problem is? Billy, don't you? You're just fucking plain rude sometimes. It's no wonder you've got no mates.

No response.

And I'm trying to be dead friendly. And you just ignore us.

Billy (*explaining*) I was leaving school one time last week. There was a lad waiting outside the school. An older lad. About eighteen. I watch him waiting at the bus stop. And he's waiting for a kid in Year Ten.

He turns to compliment her with his justification. She doesn't break eye contact with him.

As I'm coming out of the gates the kid in Year Ten is walking ahead of me and this lad gets him. This eighteen-year-old. Gets him. Cuts him by his coat. And he pulls his head down and smacks it against a lamp-post. Four times. Back and down against the metal bit on the lamp-post.

Adele So?

Billy I've seen teachers talk to kids as though they are worthless scabby shit. Bully them. Humiliate them. Never think about stopping and asking if they need help but instead, they just, instead they just say stupid cruel things. And the reason they do it is because so many of the kids, not all of them, but so fucking many are so fucking stupid and dick around and act like tossers. They think it's funny. It's not. It's shitty. And it ruins things.

Adele What the fuck has that got to do with anything?

Billy I come down here, Adele Kent, and there is litter, pussy fucked litter everywhere. And it's kids that have left it.

Adele Billy.

Billy Even here. Even the surface of the water. The place looks like it's fucking ripped up. People don't care. Do they? Even about trees and that? People just, why do they, just fucking, the way people treat trees around here is despicable!

Adele What has that got to do with anything?

Billy (*concluding*) It's not just me.

Adele That's not an excuse.

Billy What do you want?

Adele How did you know my surname?

Billy I found it out. I asked somebody. What do you want?

Billy I found it out. I asked somebody. What do you want from me, Adele?

Adele I found out about your dad. And I thought it was interesting. I wanted to meet you.

Billy It isn't.

Adele What?

Billy Interesting.

Adele I found out about your dad. And I thought it was interesting. I wanted to meet you. I put into mental hospital because she tried to kill herself. I only found that out just this year. My dad's psychic. He's got psychic powers. He can see people's souls. When they look like. I don't know if I like him or not. Parents are *always* interesting.

Billy That's not true.

Adele Parents are always interesting. Because they're always fucked but they're very close to how you are yourself. You do things and it's just the same as them.

Billy I'm nothing like my dad.

Adele (*ignoring him*) So when I heard about Charlie I thought that the easiest way to find out about what happened, about him, was to find out about you.

Billy I'm nothing like my dad.

Adele (*concluding*) I used to know Berg Kempton. My mum used to work in their pub up Ilford. She

used to be a cleaner. They used to come down Cottall Street. I saw him once get a baseball bat and smack this kid's arm up. The kid was, what, fifteen. How long's he gone down for?

Billy Ten years.

Adele When he comes out do you think he's going to look for your dad?

Billy I don't know.

Pause.

Adele It was this time last year, wasn't it? *(No response.)*
Billy It was a year ago on Friday. You remember? *(No response.)* It was horrible, Billy, wasn't it?

Billy Yeah.

Adele There was six of them, I heard, wasn't there?

Billy Yeah.

Adele What do you think she thought? When she saw them?

Billy I don't know.

Adele You wanna know something?

Billy What?

Adele I'm on seven different types of medication.

Billy You what?

Adele I take two different types of pills for epilepsy. I've had fits. Two fits. Not for years.

Billy So what do you want me to do about it?

Adele And I have nightmares.

Billy What?

Adele I think it's almost funny sometimes. I've seen people, people I know, take speed, pills, drugs, gas, booze,

chocolate, glue, smack. I've seen people smoking smack outside my flat. Billy, on our estate. Right in front of the Old Bill.

Billy What are you telling me this for?

Adele *(moving towards him)* Sometimes at night I still get frightened. On the streets near where I live. Of the gangs there. The junkies. The scumfuckers. The scuzzbags. The perverts.

Billy What are you going on about, you?

Adele I just wanted to meet somebody. To talk to somebody. Somebody who knew her. I wanted to meet you, Billy. To see if you were all right. Billy, I think about her all the time.

Long pause. They should be quite close now.

Billy You know who frightens me.

Adele Who?

Scott *has entered with Aaron and Darren. The three boys drink beer. Smoke cigarettes. They surround Billy and Adele, but remain around the peripheries of the stage for now, allowing them to continue uninterrupted.*

Billy All the winos and that. The boozers. When you walk past them, you never know if they're going to smack out or what.

Billy I have this theory about what happens to you when you're dead.

Adele Oh yeah?

Billy I think when you're dead you go up to heaven and you meet God and He asks you if you think that, after the things that you have done in your lifetime, you deserve to go to heaven or to hell. And you have to answer. And the answer decides where you go but you have to be completely absolutely honest about it. And there's nothing worse than

Darren What?

Scott Billy's mum. Have you seen her?

Darren Nah.

Scott Straight up, man, she is fucking tight.

Darren Right!

Scott Ain't it, Billy? Don't you think, I mean, I know you're not meant to think stuff like this but your mum, Billy, even you can see that she is one straight up fucking sweet bit of pussy, yeah?

Billy Why are you talking as though you're American? Some time. Some vision. **Scott's** cigarette close up to **Billy's** unflinching face.

Scott Billy.

Billy What?

Scott Billy.

Billy What?

Scott Billy.

Billy What?

Scott Shut your mouth or I'll cut your eyes out.

Darren (*finishes his beer in celebration*) Damn straight, Scott.

Scott Billy's mum's got a sweet little pussy though, Billy, ain't it?

Darren What are her titties like, Scott?

Scott Fucking I never saw her titties, man.

Darren Nah?

Scott Nah, I fucked her with my eye closed.

Darren Sweet.

Scott Tight little cunt but, to tell you the truth, Billy, eh? Her face is a mushy pile of shit.

Darren You know what I heard about his mum, Scott? I heard his mum works hard.

Scott Damn hard.

Darren Work all night sometimes.

Aaron I seen her. But I spent my money elsewhere. Because I figured she's a fucking filthy cunt. With lice. Crabs. All manner of venereal disease.

Darren (*swigs from Aaron's bottle*) Aids.

Scott Billy, has your mum got Aids?

Aaron (*wipes bottle neck*) Did she get it from fucking monkeys, Billy, cause I heard she's hungry for monkey cock? Although that's an unsubstantiated rumour.

Darren Billy's mum's got Aids big time.

Aaron (*lights a cigarette*) Billy, do you ever think about what it would be like to fuck your mum? Do you ever think about that? 'Cause if you ever do, just ask Scott, and I'm sure he'll tell you. (*Hacking cough/laugh.*)

Billy Shut up.

Darren (*claps/rubs his hands*) Oooooohhhh!

Aaron (*in a fake scientist's voice*) I do believe that this peculiar worm is turning, Scott.

Scott (*threatening, quiet*) I can see. (*Beat.*) Boys. (*Another. Release.*) Lay off, eh? We're just joking, Billy. Just pissing you about. No offence, eh? Billy? No offence? Is it? Boys? Billy? You're not offended, are you, Billy? We're sorry, aren't we boys?

Aaron Yeah. Right.

Scott (*perhaps ruffles his hair*) **Billy**. You need to chill, man. ~~I'm not even washing my hair yet. I'm not even washing my hair yet. I'm not even washing my hair yet.~~

Billy What?

Scott Have you got any money for us?

Billy I've got one quid fifty.

Scott That's fine, Billy.

Billy What?

Scott Just give us your one quid fifty then, if that's all you've got.

Billy I need it.

Scott I'm sorry?

Billy It's my bus fare.

Darren You need it?

Billy I...

Aaron I'm a little surprised by that comment, frankly.

Billy I need the money to get home.

Scott (*not menacing*) Just give it to us, Billy, would ya? Stop confusing the issue with irrelevant ~~things~~ horseshit.

Billy *hands over the money.* He starts to *move away from them.*

Billy I won't be able to get home now.

Scott I'm sorry?

Aaron Billy, you can ~~see~~ walk, man, can't you?

Scott How's your dad, Billy?
Billy *stops.*

Darren I was speaking to Bergsie's brother.

Aaron ~~That's what he said.~~ He is certainly not happy.

Scott Year ago this week, innit?

Aaron Friday.

Darren Apparently Bergsie's had to tell his brother not to go near your dad or nothing because he wants to cut him himself when he comes out.

Darren That's what he said.

Scott Won't be long now, will it? Good behaviour and that. Couple of years maybe.

Darren Eh that.

Aaron Billy I heard something about your dad.

Darren I heard lots of things about his dad.

Aaron Is it true that your dad likes a nice pull.

Darren A nice what?

Aaron A nice pull. A nice wank. A nice little shuffle.

Scott Don't we all, Billy, eh? That's not a crime.

Darren Fucking hope not.

Aaron Yeah. But a nice quiet pull when he's fishing.

Scott What?

Aaron Gets it out in public.

Scott No?

Aaron No shit. My sister saw him.

Darren Fuck off!

Aaron He grinned at her and everything.

Darren Just where Racheal was and that.

END OF SCENE

Page.

Charlie Why?

Billy What?

Charlie Why do you want to know?

Billy Because I think about it all the time.

Charlie It was a long time ago, Billy.

Billy Dad, it was a year ago. It's not that long.

Charlie I don't remember much about it, Billy. I try not to think about it.

Charlie *reels in his line, removes the bait from the hook.*

Billy Dad, did you see them get her? Ross and Bergsie? Did you see them?

No response.

Ross's brother reckons you saw them and that you phoned the police. Is that true?

No response.

Dad, are you scared about what's going to happen when Bergsie gets out? Because I am. I think we should think about going, Dad.

Charlie Billy, I've told you. I'm waiting.

Billy I don't think it makes any sense waiting, Dad.

Charlie Billy.

Billy Dad, Ross's brother reckons that when Bergsie gets out that he's going to try and stab you. And I believe him, Dad. I honestly do.

Charlie *removes his line and packs up his rod. Starts to leave.*

Adele *enters quietly and lies down staring at the sky.*

Charlie He won't.

Billy Dad, I really think that he's going to try.

Charlie He won't. He won't be out for ten years, Billy. We won't be here then.

Adele When it gets as hot as this I can't even think.

Charlie *leaves. Billy watches him go. He opens his book and writes. He continues to write while Adele talks to him. The lights should brighten and become warmer throughout this scene.*

Billy I like it.

Adele I feel like I'm trapped in a cupboard. They shouldn't make us go to school when it's as hot as this. They shouldn't make us do anything. Nothing.

Adele ~~Has Scott spoken to you?~~

Billy I watch all of the people who come down here. On their way somewhere.

Adele Has he, Billy?

Billy No. Nobody ever stops.

Adele 'Cause he told me he was going to.

Billy Well, he hasn't.

Adele Good. I was worried that he would find you.

Billy Do you remember when you were little how aeroplanes sounded?

Adele *(propping herself up)* What?

Billy Did you ever lie on your back and look up at the sky and watch the aeroplanes fly over your head and listen to the sound that they made?

Adele All the time.

Billy As they get older, people just don't notice things like that.

Adele They don't get time.

Pause. Billy gets up, starts to reel in his line and remove the bait and the hook.

Adele (*considered*) Sometimes I wish I could still be in primary school. I used to love it there.

Billy There's no point wasting time thinking about things that have finished, Adele. You have to, I have to, I look forward to stuff all the time.

Adele What do you look forward to?

Billy Going away. We're going away. Me and our dad. We're going to leave here and go down and live by the sea.

Adele When?

Billy Soon.

Adele I'd like to meet your dad.

Billy You said.

Billy (*stops packing, sitting*) Sometimes. Mostly. He's been all right. My mum's a bit of a fuck-up and he's looked after me and that. Sometimes he gets angry. Sometimes he don't say nothing. For days. Just sits there staring at his toe or something. Sometimes I think he wants to fucking kill me. When he gets angry it gets quite bad. A lot of the time he just warns me about stuff and then never does anything.

Adele Did you ask him about Racheal?

Billy (*resumes packing*) No.

Billy Do you believe him?

Adele Sometimes I do. Sometimes it's just weird. He gets really into it. He gets obsessed about things. Sometimes it seems quite believable. He told me once that I had the same powers. As he did.

Billy Fucking hell.

Adele I don't think it's true. But last summer I saw Racheal. Honest.

Billy Fuck off.

Adele I did. In our house. Running up the stairs in front of me. This was, what, two months after she died. (*Pause.*) Her mum gave me all her schoolbooks. To help me with my coursework and that. I will read them. Look at her handwriting. (*Pause.*) Billy, do you ever get the feeling that you're not allowed to be a child any more?

Billy Why do you ask that?

Adele It's just something my dad said to me.

Billy No. I never feel like that.

Billy, *packed up, sits looking out over the water, away from Adele.*

Adele No. Mc neither. (*Beat.*) Do you know Aaron Riley?

Billy Yeah.

Adele (*standing, straightening her skirt*) Last Saturday, yeah, he was down the Anglers. He took four pills. Four Es. In half an hour. Passed out. He had to go to hospital and have his stomach pumped. He's fifteen. I saw him at school yesterday. Asked him how he was. He said he was fine. He didn't know what all the fuss was about. Somebody asked him if he would do the same thing again. He said he didn't know. But he might do. I think he's a fucking thick cunt and he's probably going to fucking die.

Billy Right.

Adele (coming to join him) Do you know what worries me?
Billy What?

Adele It worries me that I've not got anything to look forward to.

Billy That's not true.

Adele Sometimes I think it is.

Billy Isn't there something you've always wanted to have? Or always wanted to be.

Adele See, that's the thing. I don't think there is any more.

Billy That's bad.

Adele Sometimes I get so angry about stuff.

Billy You shouldn't.

Adele I get frustrated.

Billy What about?

Adele About all kinds of things. About how stupid boys our age are. I prefer twenty-year-olds, that. They know what you want. And about how petty and stupid and bitchy the girls are. I end up clenching my fists up, sometimes, when I'm angry. Pull at my hair. Hit my face with my hand, hard. But that's not the same, is it? As having ambition, Billy?

Billy Bergsie was twenty, Adele.

Adele (walking away) I know.

Billy And Ross.

Adele I know that.

Billy (walking away) ~~She's not really. But you know~~

~~she's not really. But you know~~

Billy I heard that she wouldn't drown.

Adele What?

Billy That's what I heard. That's what the police said. That there were signs of a struggle. That she fought and kicked. So in order to keep her down under they threw rocks at her. To knock her out. And to weigh her down.

Adele She must have realised what was happening.

Billy She must have done.

Adele She must have known that she was going to die.

Billy I know.

Adele Can you imagine?

Billy No.

Adele She was thirteen, Billy.

Billy They must have been very scared.

Adele Who?

Billy Bergsie. Ross. The rest of them. They must have been frightened. (Pause) ~~Sheep~~

~~numbers on. Photographs. Porno mags. And graffiti. And everything that find seems to lead back to what happened to Rachel and how much she must have known -~~

Adele That's bullshit.

Billy - and what they were feeling when they realised that she was going to die. There are so many things that I find. That I come across. I don't know what to do with them all. I don't know how to make them all make sense. I end up just writing them down.

Adele You what?

Billy I write them down. I've got a book.

Adele (quietly, angry) That's fucking weird.

Billy No. It's not though.

Adele Billy. (Beat.) Do you know what I was asking about Scott for?

Billy No.

Billy No.

Adele He's found out about me coming here. To see you and that. So he's just been acting like, like just a wank.

Billy I see.

Adele I've been off this week for three days because I've been ill. And while I've been off he's told everybody in my class that I was pregnant. Which was why I was off.

Billy Dick.

Adele I came into the form room this morning. And he was in there. He went into my bag when I wasn't looking and he got a tampax out of my bag and stuck it on the board. In front of everybody. He was just laughing and that. Teacher saw him and he didn't even do anything.

Billy He's just a dick.

Adele No. It's more than that. He keeps boasting about what happened. And joking about it being a year ago. He's a fuck. He makes people feel crippled. And people let him get away with it because they're scared of what he might do. It's just not, it's not fair, Billy. It's cruel, is what it is. And it's not enough, Billy, to just, just, just write it down, Billy. It's

Billy What is it that you want me to do, Adele?

Adele I don't know.

Billy Tell me what it is that you want me to do and I'll do it. I'll honestly do anything that you ask me.

Adele Billy.

Adele moves towards him but stops herself before she touches him.

Adele Billy, I think he's going to try to come and find you.

Long pause.

Billy Do you know what my ambition is?

Adele What?

Billy I've got two.

Adele Go on.

Billy I want to go out to the sea. Into the ocean. With my dad. I want to see dolphins swimming, real dolphins swimming in the ocean. And I want to be able to ride on a roller coaster. A big fucking proper one. In like Disneyland and shit. I'd fucking love that.

Aaron, Darren and Scott have emerged from the peripheries of the stage. They are drinking bottles of Stella Artois and smoking cigarettes and scrawny joints. **Adele** leaves, unable to touch **Billy**. The lights begin to fall into evening.

The physical gestures of the boys, especially of **Aaron**, should be exaggerated, demonstrative.

Aaron (giggling, stoned, drunk) See that tree?

Darren (the same, but more so) What?

Aaron The fucking tree, man! See that tree?

Darren Yeah.

Aaron I hate that tree.

Darren Right.

Aaron I piss on that tree.

Darren Right.

Adele: "Shit" (she quickly exits)

Billy I know that.

Aaron I rape it.

Billy You said.

Aaron I laugh at it. I piss on it. I think it's fucking funny.

Darren It makes him chuckle. Giggle.

Aaron And I think you and your dad are fucked in the head.

Darren But we like ya.

Aaron We do.

Darren (*offers Billy a blast on the joint, Billy ignores him*) 'Cause you're a funny boy.

Aaron Nature boy!

Darren It's lovely.

Aaron And we like your dad.

Darren In our own little way.

Aaron He's all right.

Darren (*breathing the joint out*) He is.

Aaron For a pervert.

Billy Aaron.

Aaron Billy.

Billy I hope you fucking choke on your ecstasy tablets the next time you take them. I hope they stick in your throat and tear up your insides and burn up the sides of your

Billy goes to collect his bags, tries to leave.

Scott (*still in the peripheries*) Did you tell your dad, Billy?

Billy (*freezes*) What?

Scott Did you tell him that Ross was asking after him.

Billy (*turns to face him*) Yeah.

Scott And that Bergsie is set on him.

Billy Yes. I did.

Scott What did he say?

Billy He's not worried.

Scott He ~~was~~ should be.

Aaron Damn ~~was~~ straight he should be.

Billy He's not. He said it doesn't matter.

Darren Did he?

Scott I would say it mattered a lot.

Darren (*throws his beer bottle away, it smashes*) He's a prick, man.

Scott I would say it mattered a hell of a lot, Billy.

Billy He said it didn't matter because they're not going to be out for ten years.

Scott They'll be out before then, Billy.

Billy He said they'll not be out for ten years and that we're not going to be around when they get out.

Scott You're not going to be around?

Billy We're going away.

Scott Where are you going? (*No response. He moves in on him.*) Billy?

Billy Southend, maybe.

Scott What?

Billy Or Portsmouth. Or Brighton, or Cornwall or somewhere, anywhere, somewhere by the sea. Somewhere where there's water.

Scott (*up very close*) Is that what he said?

Billy (*not turning away*) That's where we're going.

Scott He said this, did he?

Billy It's true.

Scott When are you going there, Billy?

Billy Soon.

Scott Soon? Soon? Soon? When is soon, Billy? ~~Soon.~~

Scott *moves away from Billy to enjoy the whole space.*

Aaron He tell this to you?

Billy Yeah.

Aaron You believed him, Billy, did you? Did you really?

Scott When's soon, Billy?

Billy In a few months. After I've finished school.

Scott (*picks up Billy's bag, feels the weight*) He told you this, Billy. And, Billy, tell me. How is he going to afford to move you somewhere close by to the sea, Billy? How is he going to actually afford to do that exactly?

Billy He'll get a job.

Scott Will he? Will he really? (*Lowers his bag down.*)

~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~

A beat. Scott finishes his own beer bottle, belches and throws it violently away towards the canal.

Scott (*quietly, controlled, moves close to Billy again*) Billy, let me tell you something. Can I? Billy, your dad is a ~~monkey~~ monkey. No one's going to give him a job, Billy. He's never going to leave this place. He's never going to leave this estate, Billy. It won't happen.

Billy That's not true.

Scott (*genitly, he maybe strokes Billy's hair*) It is true, Billy, of course it's ~~really~~ true, mate! And he knows it's true. You know what, Billy? He's been ~~lying~~ lying to you.

Billy No.

Scott He's been lying because he's too scared to admit to himself, or to you, what the truth is.

Billy No.

~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~

Scott (*prodding at, examining Billy's face*) And you know what, Billy, I think that you know he's been lying to you. I think that you've known all along. It's pathetic, Billy ~~and~~

~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~
~~What's he going to do?~~

Aaron and **Darren** have become very still, watchful.

Billy (*calmly, plucking up courage*) Scott.

Scott What?

Billy Scott.

Scott What?

Billy Scott.

Scott What?

Billy I heard what you did.

Scott What?

Billy I heard what you did to Adele, Scott. And I think you're an arsehole for it, Scott. I think you're a coward. And I hope that your brother gets raped up the arse when he's in prison. Until it bleeds and fucking everything. Because he's a nonce, Scott. And everybody knows that he's a nonce. And everybody hates him and you and your whole family because of it. I hope you realise that. And I hope that you are haunted until the day you die, by the, by the, the ghost of Racheal King. And that you never forget her or what your brother did to her. And that you never not for one second, ever know what it is to hope. I hope that happens to you, Scott. Because that is what you fucking deserve.

Billy you're a wanker.

Scott Billy.

Billy You're a wanker, Scott, and your brother's a nonce and everybody knows it and everybody has always known it.

Scott Dick.

put his head towards him. He holds the neck of his T-shirt and headbutts him twice in the face. Billy crumples and Scott pushes him to the ground. He kicks him in his side. Billy is whimpering.

Scott (to Billy) Shut the fuck up. (To Aaron and Darren.) Fucking hold him down.

Darren Why?

Scott You heard me, hold him fucking down.

The two boys do and Scott starts to pull Billy's trousers down.

Aaron (giggling) What you doing, Scott?

Scott Give me your bottle.

Aaron You joking?

Scott begins to beat up Billy

~~Scott~~
~~Scott~~
~~Scott~~
~~Scott~~

Aaron Shit, Scott, man. Take it easy, boy.

Scott Don't you dare tell me what to do. Don't you dare tell me what to do.

Darren (scared) Scott, man, please don't.

Scott (started at Darren) What did you say? What did you fucking say?

Darren and Aaron pull back, frightened by Scott and appalled hysterically but quietly. As the attack continues Scott becomes increasingly scared.

Scott This boy is a fucking deadbeat. (To Billy.) This is from Ross, Billy. A little fucking anniversary thank you. (Rams hard once with the bottle.) And this is from Bergsie. For everything you and your fucking dad have fucking done to my family. (And repeats each time.) This is from Adele. This is from your dad. And this is from your mum. And this is from Nobody tells me what to do. Nobody speaks to me like that. Nobody speaks about my brother like that. Nobody speaks about my brother. Nobody speaks about me. Nobody.

Lights fade. Music briefly.

Lights rise on Billy sitting alone, reading from his book. The lights reveal that it is a new day, perhaps something in the afternoon. He flicks back a couple of pages, forward a couple. He starts to write something but doesn't. He closes his book. He stares out for a few moments. For a moment he seems to be watching something move on the far bank of the water. Adele joins him on stage. He doesn't acknowledge her.

approach. He sits staring out front. Adele stands behind him watching him with great caution. She speaks with great gentleness and concern. He is even, detached.

Adele Are you all right?

Billy Yes.

Adele Are you sure?

Billy I'm fine.

Adele I heard what they did. Aaron told me. I think you should think about phoning the police.

Billy ...

~~Adele ... what about you?~~

Billy You know what happened when my dad phoned the police.

Adele Did they hurt you, Billy?

Billy Yes.

Adele Maybe you should go to the hospital.

Billy I'll be all right.

Adele Maybe it will be easier when you leave.
Pause.

Billy Maybe.

Adele *moves closer.*

~~Adele ...~~

~~Billy ...~~

Adele *(edging closer.)* I used to watch him with Steph, his little sister. She's nine years old now, Billy. She's a sweet little girl. He used to punch her in the face with the ball of his hand to get her to do what he wanted her to do. And the stupid thing is that Ross was just the same with him. And he

used to have it. And his dad. You know some people can turn rooms so horrible? They can twist the atmosphere of a room without actually doing anything. Scott's dad's like that. *(She sits with him, still looking at him.)* Billy, I'm so sorry.

Billy It wasn't your fault.

Pause.

Adele Did he say anything about me?

Billy No.

Adele Sometimes he lies about me.

Billy He didn't this time.

Adele He tells people all kinds of shit.

Billy He didn't even mention your name.

Adele He tells people that we slept together. Which isn't true. We never did. I've never slept with anybody, Billy. I haven't. Honestly.

~~Billy ...~~

Adele Billy, talk to me.

Billy What do you want to talk about, Adele?

Adele I want to make sure that you're all right. I feel guilty. I feel that it was in some way my fault what happened to you.

Billy You want to feel better about it all?

Adele Billy, don't. *(Beat.)* I just want to talk to you.

Pause.

Billy, what are you going to do?

Long pause.

Billy You should have been here earlier. There was a heron. Just sat on the other side of the canal. Down by Goresbrook House. It was magical. Sat still as stone.

Dropped into the water. Like a lead ball. Came up with a carp in between its teeth.

Adele (turning away from him) I hate it when you go like this.

Billy Like what, Adele?

Adele I hate it when this happens.

Billy When what happens?

Adele I feel sick. Nervous. I feel like I'm waiting for something terrible.

Billy Nothing terrible's going to happen, Adele.

~~I depended from my primary school. Because I took a kitchen knife into my class. And I warned people not to go near me. Because I was feeling sick and I was worried and I didn't know what I was worried about so I panicked about everybody. It felt exactly like this. It makes me feel that I'm too fat. That I'm ugly. That my skin is horrible. That my clothes are sticky. It's how I feel, Billy, when I'm going to have one of my fits.~~

Long pause. Billy looks at her for a short time. Looks away again.

Adele (turning to him) Billy. Can I see your book?

Billy (to her) Why?

Adele I want to know what is that you write.

Billy Why?

Adele I want to understand how it helps.

He passes it to her. Looks back out. She opens it at the beginning. Reads a page. Flicks forward a chunk. And back. Reading random pages with great care.

What are these numbers at the end of each day?

Lights - fade - Music -

Billy They're all the people who have passed by where I fish. I count them.

Adele Why?

Billy I have no idea.

She reads more.

Adele You write down all the graffiti.

Billy ...

She reads more.

Adele I like this. Can I read a bit to you? 'Some of the people look like sticks. They look like they could snap. They have nodules in odd places. I think that's very true.'

She finds a new passage and reads it with care.

'When the sky gets blue like this it makes the colours on the buildings seem more acute. The range of the chemist. The blue colour of the bookies.' (Beat.) Who's Leanne? And Danny?

Billy They're my brother and sister.

Adele I didn't know you had a brother and a sister.

Billy They live with my mum.

Adele Do they? How come?

Billy They're younger than I am.

Adele So?

Billy I decided that I wanted to leave and come and live with my dad. They were too young to decide for themselves. So they stayed. I don't see them very often.

Adele Do you miss them?

Billy Yeah. I do.

Adele Why don't you go and see them?

Billy No he doesn't.

Michelle (standing the collar of his jacket up) Billy, I see, I'm not going to lie to you.

Billy He doesn't.

Michelle (very gently, perhaps stroking his face) He does. He told me that Danny and Leanne. He talks to me for hours. He Billy, he just won't.

Billy (backing off but not turning away) Fuck off.

Michelle Billy.

Billy Just fuck off. You liar. You fucking lying cunt.

Michelle Billy.

His movements become slightly hysterical. Perhaps he hits himself as he backs off.

Billy He wouldn't do that to me, after everything you did to me? No way would he do that. No way would he do that. You fucking lying bitch cunt.

Michelle Billy don't go.

Billy moves away; upstage. **Michelle** watches him as he grabs his diary, opens it, and grasping his pen in the fist of his hand writes down his furious last note. She leaves gently. He reads some of his writing out loud as he writes. Perhaps he becomes isolated by light. He is exhausted. Perhaps his breath. He speaks hurriedly. Pausing to recover as though suffering from a stitch.

Billy This is the final entry into this journal. It is Friday. Today the sky is more purely blue than I can remember seeing it before. It seems terrible and huge and magnificent. This is everything.

He begins to change from writing into scribbling. Vicious sharp lines that almost tear the pages. And, shaking, he starts to tear up the pages of his book.

Isolating light falls on Billy.

Darkness. Perhaps music.

The lights rise again with Aaron, Darren and Scott sat around the stage. Still drinking. Still smoking. Darren rolls a scrawny joint. Billy, some distance behind them, holds his dad's gun to Scott's head. Until he speaks the boys don't notice him. He speaks calmly. He chooses his words with great care and he reasons with very simple, straightforward logic. Scott doesn't pay any attention at first. Perhaps we don't see the gun for a few moments.

Billy You need to apologise to me.

Aaron (seeing the gun, confused) Billy?

Billy You need to apologise to me.

Billy *[Redacted]*

Scott What?

Billy *[Redacted]*

Scott turns round and sees the gun. Aaron and Darren are slightly paralysed by surprise.

Scott Billy, for fucksake -

Billy (interrupting him, calmly reasoning, pointing the gun clearly now) What you did, the things which you did. You shouldn't treat people like that.

Scott Christ, Billy, is that real?

Billy (coming forward) It's my dad's. He uses it for shooting herons because they kill his fish. And he uses it for protection against robbers. And if you don't apologise to me, Scott, I'm going to shoot you in your head.

Scott (scrambling backwards) For fucksake, Billy, what -

Billy For all this time. For all the money I've given you. For all the things that have happened here. All the things which you have said to me. All the things which you have

done and which Aaron and Darren have done to try to impress you.

Scott Billy, please.

Billy And the things which you've said about my dad. And the things which you've said about my mum. And my brother and my sister.

Scott (*becoming more frightened*) Oh! Fucking fuck.

Billy And the things which you did to Adele.

Scott No. No. No. No.

Billy And what you did to me. Scott. What you did to me. You need to apologise to me for these things. Because it's just not fair. It's just not right, Scott.

Scott I wasn't -

Billy You need to apologise, Scott.

Scott I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. It wasn't me.

Billy How do you know about my brother and sister, Scott?

Scott What?

Billy You heard me.

Scott My sister knows them. My sister knows your Leanne. They're in the same class together. At primary school.

Billy *takes this in for a while. Might be backing off and then...*

Billy (*closing in*) What did you mean it wasn't you, Scott?

Scott (*terrified now*) I mean, I, I don't know. I mean. Shit. Please don't kill me.

Billy (*tighter*) What did you mean it wasn't you?

Scott I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Scott (*folding in on himself*) I try. I try. I try. I try. I lose my temper. I try really hard to, to just. I try so ~~hard~~ hard, Billy.

Billy What is?

Scott It's so mad. Please. It's just difficult because it's so. Terrible.

Billy What is, Scott?

Scott With, with, with Ross and with what you said and what happened and all that shit. People don't. Please don't, don't, don't hurt me, Billy.

Billy That's not enough.

Scott Please don't hurt me, Billy.

Billy It's not enough.

Aaron (*frightened, maybe crying*) Billy.

Darren (*the same*) Billy, don't, ~~don't~~.

They perhaps move towards him, very cautious.

Billy Shut up, ~~shut up~~ shut up just, honestly, just shut up. Or I swear I'll, I'll, I will kill him.

They freeze.

Scott Please. I'm so sorry.

Billy Are you scared, Scott?

Scott What?

Billy Are you scared?

Scott Yes.

Billy How scared are you, Scott?

Scott I'm not my brother. I'm not my dad. I'm not...

Billy Answer my question.

Scott I'm so very scared. I don't want to die, Billy.

Billy I've nothing left to lose, Scott.
Scott Please, Billy.

Billy (*standing almost over him, like an executioner*) I've nothing left to lose any more. You took it all away from me, Scott. You and your brother. And what you did to my dad. And my mum. And this place. And all of this.

Scott I'm only fifteen, Billy.

Billy I'm ~~fourteen~~ fourteen, Scott, you idiot.
~~Scott is talking about the first school he attended.~~
~~blackboard.~~

Scott Please. Billy, Billy, Billy, please. I don't want to die, Billy. I want to live, Billy.

Billy What for, Scott?
~~What for, Scott?~~
~~What for, Scott?~~
~~What for, Scott?~~

There's nothing left for us now, Scott, is there?
~~There's nothing left for us now, Scott, is there?~~
~~There's nothing left for us now, Scott, is there?~~

~~A moment. Scott is talking about the first school he attended.~~
~~blackboard.~~

BLACKOUT.

The lights fade to darkness.
They rise fairly quickly.

Billy sits alone on stage. *It is the morning. He stares out to the audience for some moments. Exhausted. Frightened. Moved.*
Adele joins him. *She is extremely cautious. Moves towards him.*

Adele Billy?

Billy Yeah?

Adele Did you kill him?

Long pause.

Billy I saw my mum last night.

Adele (*moving closer*) Oh yeah?

Billy I told her to tell Leanne and Danny to come here. At three thirty. I hope she told them.

Adele Did you kill him, Billy?

Billy She was funny. She made me laugh. With her fucking stupid coat on and that.

Adele Billy.

Billy I don't want to talk about it, Adele. (*Pause. Looking away.*) If you could be any animal in the world, Adele. Any animal at all, other than a human being, what would you be?

Adele (*looking away*) I don't know. A cat.

Billy (*looking to Adele*) Why?

Adele Just so you can sleep and that.

Billy (*looking away*) I'd be a fish, I reckon.

Adele Why would you be a fish?

Billy Because they have no memory. They just swim around. If you have no memory you're never frightened about stuff.

Adele (*looking to Billy*) What are you frightened about, Billy?

Billy Everything that I can remember.

~~Everything that I can remember.~~

Billy Cats eat people.

Adele Everything, Billy?

Billy But then cats are scared of water so I'd be able to swim away. (*Looking to Adele.*) Are you all right?

he came from or anything but I always had the impression that it was horrible.

Billy How?

Adele Just the way he moved and stuff. He always looked frightened that anything could happen.

Adele ~~.....~~ *(Looking at Billy.)* ~~.....~~

Did you kill Scott? *(Pause.)* Billy. *(Pause.)*

Some time. Billy looks away out to the audience. Adele watches him.

Billy No. Of course I didn't.

Adele Thank God, Billy.

Billy Why?

Adele Just thank God, is all.

Billy It was funny.

Adele What?

Billy He wanted so badly to live, Adele.

Adele What?

Billy He was crying. Like a little baby and everything.

Adele Billy...

Billy I thought there must be a reason for him wanting to stay alive so badly.

Adele He was scared you were going to shoot him in the head.

~~.....~~
think I was scared about Ross, but they were so scared I think that they would shoot me in the head when I saw Scott...
~~.....~~

sound of things and the way they smell, Adele. But they couldn't handle it. So they got frightened. And I started to figure out how everything joins up, Adele.

Adele What?

Billy The blue sky. And the flowers in the towpath.

Adele What?

Billy Everything is just joined up.

Pause. He looks at her.

Adele I'm so glad you stayed.

Adele I wanted to check that you were all right. I wanted to find out if you'd hurt him or if you'd got hurt. Or if she had hurt you.

Billy I was thinking about my test. I was trying to figure out what I'd say if I got asked if I deserved to go to heaven or if I should really go to hell. I think I deserve to go to heaven, I do. I think I really fucking do and all.

She holds his eye contact. He looks away again.

If the police find me, if they come, what do you think they'll do?

Adele I don't know.

Billy *(back to her)* Do you think that this means that I won't be able to leave here now, Adele?

Charlie: ~~.....~~
Adele: ~~.....~~
~~.....~~
happened. There is a difference, a caution in the way he moves or the way that he looks at his son that we have never seen before. We can infer from this that the police have found. He sits down next to Billy. The three of them look out at the canal together. Charlie rolls a cigarette but doesn't light it.

Charlie: Billy.