

PLAYS 3

SIMON STEPHENS

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PLAYS: 3

ON THE SHORE OF THE WIDE WORLD

MARINE PARADE

HARPER REGAN

PUNK ROCK



Introduced by the author

mezzmoor | drama



Characters

William Carlisle
Lilly Cahill
Bennett Francis
Cissy Franks
Nicholas Chatman
Tanya Gleason
Chadwick Meade
Lucy Francis
Dr Richard Harvey

The play is set in the present day.

The first six scenes of the play are set in the library of the sixth form of a fee-paying grammar school in Stockport.

The seventh scene is set in Suttons Manor Hospital.

Scene One

'Kerosene' by Big Black.

It's Monday 6 October, 8.31 a.m.

Lilly Cahill and William Carlisle are alone in the library.

William When did you arrive?

Lilly Last week.

William Whereabouts are you living?

Lilly In Heaton Moor.

William Whereabouts in Heaton Moor?

Lilly At the top of Broadstone Road. By the nursery there.

William That's a nice street.

Lilly I think so.

William Which number's your house?

Lilly 23.

William 23. Right. The houses on that street are some of the oldest in Stockport, did you know that?

Lilly No.

William They're old nineteenth-century industrialist houses. Some of the shops on Heaton Moor Road are even older. Practically medieval. Is it very different here?

Lilly It is a bit.

William Have you settled in yet?

Lilly I don't know.

William It must be slightly disorientating having to adjust to a new town in such a short space of time, is it?

Lilly It's not too bad. I'm used to moving about.

William Why?

Lilly My dad's worked in four different universities in the past twelve years. I've grown immune to it.

William Was Cambridge the best?

Lilly Not really.

William Were the people there unthinkably intelligent?

Lilly No. They were rude, horrible pigs.

William Did they have enormous foreheads and big bulging brains?

Lilly No. They were really rich and stupid.

William I want to go to Cambridge.

Lilly Do you?

William That or Oxford. It's my life's ambition. ~~It's~~
~~you-get-here?~~

~~**Lilly** What?~~

William What mode of transport did you use? To get to Stockport, I mean. Not to school. Although you can tell me what mode of transport you used to get to school if you'd prefer.

Lilly We drove.

William With everything packed in the car or did you hire a removal company?

Lilly We hired a removal company. We had some things packed in the car.

William I like your haircut.

Lilly Thanks.

William Is that coat real fur?

Lilly No.

~~**William** Is it fake?~~

~~**Lilly** That's right.~~

William That's a relief.

Lilly Yeah.

William It'd be terrible if you were some kind of animal killer. Imagine my embarrassment.

Lilly I'm not.

William The fur trade's abominable. People who wear fur coats should be skinned alive in my opinion.

~~**Lilly** Mine too.~~

William ~~Good thing~~ I'm William.

Lilly Hi William.

William I've been coming here for five years. I know the place completely inside out. I know every nook and cranny and everything so, if you want any help . . .

Lilly Great.

~~**William** I know parts of this school that other people don't even know exist. There are secret corridors. Deserted book cupboards. Cellars. Attics. All kinds of things. You want to know about them? Just ask me. This is the Upper School library. Don't you love it?~~

Lilly It's -

William It's completely hermetically sealed from the rest of the school. They tell us it's to keep the Lower School away. I think it's to keep us contained. Look outside.

Lilly Where?

William That track leads up to Manchester in that direction and all the way down to London in that direction. The trains come past here all the time. They need to keep us ~~locked in in case we escape.~~

~~Most of the sixth form can't be bothered to come up here any more. They go to the common room. Or to the main library. They spend an hour after hour on the internet there. Or rifling through the DVD section. I prefer it here. It's intimate. People don't like books any more. I do. There's a second edition of Walter Scott's *Waverley* from 1817 on the higher stack. You need permission to see it. I could sort that out for you easily by the way, if you'd like me to. Have you got a locker yet?~~

Lilly No.

William ~~You'll need to speak to Edwards. Edwards is all right. His nose is a slightly odd shape, which I've never trusted. I can speak to him for you if you'd like me to. Do you know where to go to eat?~~

Lilly I was going to go to the canteen.

William Don't. You mustn't. Nobody goes there. You'll die very quickly if you start eating your lunches there.

She breaks into a smile.

I'm being serious.

Bennet Francis and Cissy Franks enter.

Bennett And this monkey is stood on the bus yelling at all the little Year-Seven babies about how he'd stopped smoking and so anybody who smoked that day was getting glassed before they got off the bus. I looked at him. Pulled three cigarettes out. Lit them all at once. Smoked them.

Cissy All in one go?

Bennett Oh yes.

Cissy Didn't that hurt?

Bennett Viciously.

Cissy It doesn't look as though he glassed you.

Bennett Of course he didn't glass me. He likes my arse too much. How was the rest of your evening?

Cissy It passed.

Bennett How was your dad?

Cissy You know. The same. I wish you'd stayed.

Bennett Yes.

He notices Lilly.

Bennett Who the fuck are you?

William Bennett, this is Lilly Cahill.

Bennett Is it?

William She's new.

Bennett Are you?

William This morning.

Cissy Is she?

Pause. They look at her. William awaits their verdict.

Bennett Did we hear about you?

Lilly I've no idea.

William There was a letter.

Bennett I bet there was. There's always a letter. I'm Bennett.

Lilly Hello, Bennett.

~~**Bennett** Cahill's a very good name.~~

Lilly Is it?

Bennett It's Irish. From County Galway. It's ancient.

Lilly Right.

~~**Cissy** I'm Cissy.~~

~~Lilly~~ Hello.

~~William~~ Cissy's Bennett's girlfriend.

~~Lilly~~ Great.

~~Cissy~~ You're not from round here are you?

~~William~~ She's from Cambridge.

~~Cissy~~ I can tell. From your accent.

~~Bennett~~ She's shatteringly astute like that.

~~William~~ Yeah. You have to get up really fucking early in the morning to catch her out.

~~Beat.~~

~~Bennett~~ How long are you here for?

~~Lilly~~ I don't know. Until the exams, I think.

~~Bennett~~ Brilliant.

~~Cissy~~ What are you taking?

~~Lilly~~ Geography, History, French and English.

~~Bennett~~ Four A levels?

~~William~~ She's incredibly clever.

~~Cissy~~ Clearly.

~~Lilly~~ And General Studies.

~~Bennett~~ Yes. Everybody takes General Studies. Nobody goes. Ever.

~~William~~ I do.

~~Bennett~~ What's Cambridge like?

~~William~~ You should too. ~~It's Mr. Lloyd. He's great.~~

~~Lilly~~ I hated it.

~~Cissy~~ That's good.

~~Lilly~~ Why?

~~Cissy~~ I only really trust people who hate their home towns.
~~William~~ Me too.

~~Cissy~~ How are you this morning, William Carlisle?

~~William~~ I'm fantastically fucking brilliant, thank you very much for asking. How are you, Cissy?

~~Cissy~~ Great. ~~Happy to be here. Happy as a song tank.~~

~~William~~ Good weekend?

~~Cissy~~ Thrilling. ~~We had a dinner party on Saturday night. Bennett cooked a salmon. My mother swore. How was yours?~~

~~William~~ Terrible. Far, far better here.

~~Nicholas~~ ~~Chatman enters. He is drinking a protein drink.~~

~~Lilly~~ Why was it terrible?

~~Bennett~~ Shit. I've forgotten everything.

~~William~~ What?

~~Nicholas~~ You'll never believe what I saw on Sunday.

~~Lilly~~ Why was your weekend terrible?

~~Cissy~~ What do you mean, you've forgotten everything?

~~William~~ You're better off not knowing. Seriously.

~~Bennett~~ My English books, my French books, my History books. The works. What did you see?

~~Nicholas~~ *One Night in Paris.*

~~Bennett~~ Bless.

~~Cissy~~ What are you going to do without your books?

~~Bennett~~ Lic. Buss it. Copy yours. Steal theirs. I've not seen that film in years and years and years.

~~Cissy~~ I've never seen it.

~~Nicholas~~ You should do. It's extraordinary.

Lilly Why?

Nicholas What?

Lilly Why's it extraordinary?

William Lilly, this is Nicholas Chatman. He plays lacrosse. Nicholas, this is Lilly. She's from Cambridge. She's new.

Nicholas *assesses her before he answers her question.*

Nicholas Right.

Bennett *interrupts him before he's able to.*

Bennett I like your jacket, Mr Chatman.

Nicholas Thank you very much, Mr Francis.

Cissy Can I try it on?

Nicholas What?

Cissy Your jacket. Can I? Please.

Bennett Is it Paul Smith?

Nicholas Moschino.

Cissy It's lovely.

Bennett It looks better on Nicholas.

~~**William** What's your first lesson?~~

Lilly Geography. Period 2.

Cissy Can I keep it?

Nicholas No. Don't be ridiculous.

William Who with?

Lilly Harrison.

William I've got him, then.

Lilly What's he like?

~~**Cissy** It smells lovely. It smells all manly.~~

Tanya Gleason enters.

~~**William** What's your first lesson?~~

~~**Tanya** stops and looks at Lilly.~~

Tanya Are you Lilly?

Lilly That's right.

Tanya I'm Tanya.

Lilly Hello.

Tanya Tanya Gleason? MacFarlane asked me to meet you. Did she not say?

Lilly I'm not sure.

Tanya I thought you were going to be in the common room. How did you get up here?

Lilly I just walked.

~~**Tanya** She wanted me to look after you today.~~

~~**Lilly** To look after me?~~

Tanya I've been looking for you for a while.

Lilly I'm sorry.

Tanya We had a letter about you.

Lilly Did you?

Tanya Last Friday. It said you were starting today. That you were coming from Cambridge. That your father was working in the university. That we should be especially nice to you.

Lilly Why did it say that?

Tanya I have no idea. They send us these things. I think they're all a bit dysfunctional. I like your hair.

She smiles. Comes properly into the room.

Lilly My hair?

~~Tanya It's quite Lily Allen. I noticed something about Year-Seven kids.~~

Cissy You noticed something about what?

Tanya About the children in Year Seven.

Cissy When?

Tanya This morning.

Cissy You're very random sometimes, Tanya, sweetheart, I have to say.

Tanya When they line up, if you push them. They all fall on top of one another. Like little toys.

Cissy That's really mean. They could break their little bones.

~~Tanya We were never as rude as they are. I was terrified of sixth formers. I was quite literally frozen with fear. I used to think they threw bricks at you. Flushed your head down the toilet. Set fire to your tie.~~

Nicholas Can I ask you a question?

Bennett I've a feeling you're going to, aren't you?

Nicholas Have you started revising yet?

Bennett Are you being serious?

Nicholas I kind of am, actually.

Bennett Oh my Lord alive!

~~Tanya They're only mocks. You don't need to revise for mocks.~~

Cissy I never need to. I never need to revise for anything. I just do the exams.

Bennett And get 'A's. You tart.

~~William It defeats the points of mocks if you revise for them. They're a dipstick of what stage you're at.~~

~~creationally, at this particular moment, intended to help you get a handle on how much revision you need to do from this point onwards as you move towards the final exams. They look at him for a beat.~~

~~Nicholas God, I've started.~~

Bennett You would have done. Swot.

Nicholas It's not about being a swot.

Bennett Yeah it is.

Nicholas It isn't. It's about wanting to do my best.

Cissy My mum would kill me if I got less than an 'A' in any subject.

William Would she literally kill you?

Cissy Yes. Literally. She'd burn me alive.

Bennett When do they start, exactly?
Beat.

Cissy Are you serious?

Bennett Don't I look it?

Cissy You don't know when the mocks start?

Bennett You never believe me about these kinds of things.

Cissy November 3rd, 8.50 a.m., Main Hall, French. 11.55, Main Hall, Geography. 2.05 p.m., Back Pitch, PE. Finishing Monday 10th, 2.05 p.m., Main Hall, History.

Tanya You don't do PE.

Bennett Does anybody?

Tanya How do you know when the PE exam is when you don't even do PE?

Cissy I memorised it. I've got a photographic memory.

~~Nicholas I like your badge.~~

~~As pants~~

Lilly Thank you.

Nicholas I like The White Stripes. I think they're getting better. Some bands go shit the more they keep going. White Stripes don't. They're fucking great.

Lilly I think so too.

William He's only got the last two albums.

Lilly What?

William Nicholas. He's only got two White Stripes albums. He only got *Elephant* last term. He's never even heard *White Blood Cells*. Have you?

Nicholas What?

William Have you ever even heard *White Blood Cells*?

Nicholas What are you talking about?

~~William~~ See.

Chadwick Meade enters. *He's wearing a new coat.*

Bennett Holy fucking moly on a horse, it's Kanye West!

Chadwick Who?

Bennett Have you ever set fire to a tie, Chadwick?

Chadwick No.

Bennett I should think not. With a coat like that who fucking knows what might happen?

William Chadwick, this is Lilly.

Chadwick Lilly?

William Lilly Cahill. She's joining our school. She came from Cambridge. Lilly, this is Chadwick Mead.

Lilly Hello.

Chadwick Hello, Lilly. ~~I'm sorry. I wasn't expecting a new girl. It's terribly nice to meet you. Welcome to the school. I hope you are very happy here.~~

~~Lilly~~ ~~Thank you, Chadwick.~~

Chadwick Whereabouts in Cambridge are you from?

Lilly Burwell.

Chadwick With the castle.

Lilly That's right.

Chadwick Built under King Stephen. During the anarchy. I like Cambridge.

Lilly Do you?

Chadwick I prefer it to Oxford. Not only for its beauty, but I think the university is better. Certainly in its Applied Mathematics Department. Which is my specialism. My hero worked at St John's in the twenties. Paul Dirac. Did you ever hear of him?

Lilly I didn't I'm afraid.

Bennett Chadwick, who the fuck ever heard of Paul Dirac?

Chadwick He predicted the existence of antimatter. ~~He developed the Dirac Equation which described the behaviour of electrons. He won the Nobel Prize in 1928. He said, 'The laws of nature should be expressed in beautiful equations.' He's fundamental to the way we perceive the world. He was at Cambridge.~~

Lilly I don't know him.

Chadwick He died in 1984.

William Nearly ten years before she was born, Chadwick, you could hardly blame her, pal.

~~Lilly~~ ~~Is that really your name, Chadwick?~~

Bennett What have you got?
Cissy Double Maths.
Bennett You've always got double Maths. I'm not entirely sure it can be good for you.
Cissy *kisses him. He doesn't kiss her back.*
Tanya *stands to leave.*
Cissy Where are you going?
Tanya English.
Cissy A bit early, aren't you?
Tanya I'm going to see Mr Anderson.
Bennett Are you going to ask him to impregnate you?
Tanya What?
Bennett Cissy told me about your fantasy. Did you hear this, Nicholas? Tanya's biggest dream is to live with Anderson. To be his secret lover. To have his baby. To waddle about his flat barefoot and pregnant. She's absolutely serious about it, by the way.
Tanya Fuck off.
Bennett Aren't you?
Tanya Did you say that to him?
Cissy I don't believe you, Bennett.
Bennett It's true. Am I lying? Are you calling me a liar?
Tanya Cissy. How could - ?
Tanya *goes to say something. Nearly starts crying. Says nothing. Leaves.*
Cissy Tanya! Tanya, wait!
She follows after her. The rest listen to her calling down the corridor.
Lilly I need to go and see Mr Eldridge.

William Do you know where he is?
Lilly He's in his office. I was there earlier. It's just down the corridor, isn't it?
William Second left after the common room.
Lilly That's right.
William Right then.
Lilly Good.
William I'll see you in Geography then, probably.
Lilly Yes. Probably. Where is that again?
William J3. Do you know how to get there?
Lilly I haven't got a clue. If I come back here can I go with you?
William Of course you can.
Lilly Are you sure?
William It would be a pleasure. I don't mind at all.
Lilly Thanks. Thank you, William. I'll be here at about half past.
William Perfect. I'll take you the scenic route.
Lilly Is it always this cold in here?
William Always. Until they put the heating on. Then it's insufferably hot.
Lilly I look forward to that.
~~**William** Have fun with Eldridge.~~
Lilly ~~Twit~~ I'll see you in a bit.
William Yeah. See you in a bit.
Lilly See you in a bit, Bennett. Nicholas.
Bennett See you, Lily Allen.

~~Lilly No. You did all right.~~

~~William Disappointing outcome though, I have to say. A complete embarrassment, if the truth be told.~~

~~Lilly I don't think it was. I think it was romantic.~~

Scene Three

~~'Loose' by The Stooges.~~

~~It's Thursday 30 October, 12.46 p.m.~~

~~Lilly and Nicholas are in the common room.~~

~~Lilly Hi.~~

~~Nicholas Hi.~~

~~Lilly How's it going in there?~~

~~Nicholas It's going OK. How are you getting on?~~

~~Lilly nods her head at him for a while. Smiles. Says nothing.~~

~~Lilly How's the revision?~~

~~Nicholas You know.~~

~~Lilly You ready yet?~~

~~Nicholas Oh. I think so.~~

~~Lilly Have you seen William?~~

~~Nicholas Not this morning. Not all day.~~

~~Lilly He's not been in since the break.~~

~~Nicholas I didn't notice.~~

~~Lilly Are you coming out for lunch?~~

~~Nicholas I'm going to the gym.~~

~~She looks at him.~~

~~Lilly Come here.~~

~~He does.~~

~~Take your blazer off.~~

~~He does.~~

~~Flex your muscles.~~

~~He does. She strokes them.~~

~~Thank you.~~

~~She takes an apple out of her bag. Eats it.~~

~~Do you want an apple? I've got a spare one.~~

~~Nicholas I'm all right.~~

~~Lilly He asked me out. William.~~

~~Nicholas When?~~

~~Lilly Before half term.~~

~~Nicholas What did you say?~~

~~Lilly What do you think?~~

~~Nicholas I don't know. Hence me asking.~~

~~Lilly He was really funny. His face went all stupid. I did feel a bit sorry for him.~~

~~Nicholas Why?~~

~~Lilly Have you ever noticed that?~~

~~Nicholas Noticed what?~~

~~Lilly When you think somebody's a complete dick you find out something about them and you can't help feeling sorry for them even if you really don't want to.~~

~~Nicholas What did you find out about William?~~

~~Lilly He told me about his mum.~~

~~Has he ever talked to you about her?~~

Nicholas Not really. Not much. We're not that close. What did he say about her?

Lilly She's dead. Did you know that?

His dad died before he was born.

She died when he was little.

He was four. Imagine that.

Nicholas ~~Did he tell you that, did he?~~

Lilly ~~Imagine being four years old and watching your mum die. You have to admit it's a bit heart-breaking.~~

Nicholas Is that what he said to you? That his parents were dead?

Pause.

Lilly Aren't they?

Nicholas When did he say that?

Lilly Two weeks ago. When he asked me — They're not, are they?

Nicholas His dad's an accountant. His mum's a nursery school teacher in Cheddar. She's lovely. She looks really young for a mum. She's quite attractive as it goes.

Lilly Fuck.

Nicholas Yeah.

Lilly That's quite unsettling.

Nicholas I know.

Lilly I'm quite unsettled now. You've unsettled me.

Nicholas I didn't intend to.

Lilly Why would he lie about something like that?

Nicholas I've no idea.

He had a brother. I think this is true. I think he had a brother who died. When he was just a little kid.

Maybe he was —

Lilly What?

Nicholas I don't know.

Lilly Confused? You can't get confused about something like that. You can't mistake one for the other.

He was doing it for attention.

How selfish can you get? I'm tempted to find where he lives and go round and tell them.

Nicholas Don't.

Lilly No.

Hey

Nicholas Hey.

Lilly I've been thinking about you all morning. Did you know that?

Nicholas No.

Lilly Well, it's true. And I have to say that some of the things I've been thinking are a bit filthy.

He goes to her. Kisses her on the lips.

Nicholas I've been thinking about you, too.

Lilly Liar.

Nicholas Last night.

Lilly Yeah? What about it?

Some time.

Nicholas Can I confess something?

Lilly Go on.

~~**Nicholas** I'd never had sex before.~~

~~Lilly Right.~~

Nicholas Could you tell?

What?

What are you laughing at?

Lilly Men. Boys. They're so . . .

Nicholas What?

Lilly Nothing. No. I couldn't tell. I didn't care.

Nicholas It was fucking amazing.

Lilly It *was* a bit, wasn't it?

Nicholas You were fucking amazing.

Lilly Chump.

~~**Nicholas** Well, it's true.~~

Lilly.

Lilly Nicholas.

Nicholas I don't think we should tell anybody.

Lilly What?

Nicholas I think we should keep it to ourselves. That we're going out with one another. I think it'd probably be best if people didn't know.

Lilly Why?

Nicholas Don't you think?

Lilly I don't know.

Nicholas People here are so --

Lilly What?

Nicholas They just go on and on.

Lilly Are you ashamed of me?

Nicholas No. Don't be stupid.

Lilly I'm not being stupid in the least.

Nicholas I'm not saying that.

Lilly You just want to keep me as your little secret?

~~**Nicholas** Kind of.~~

Lilly Prick.

Nicholas What?

Lilly You. You're a prick.

How are things going with Miss Copley?

Nicholas Are you cross with me?

Lilly Has she fallen for your overwhelming sexual aura yet, Nicholas?

Nicholas Have you got the slightest idea what people would say about you?

Lilly Nicholas Chatman, the Casanova of Nurburghment. A million pheromones in every muscle.

Nicholas Shut up.

Lilly Honestly, one fuck and he wishes he'd never met me. ~~Your fool.~~

Nicholas I'm going.

~~**Lilly** Go and do your work-out. Press those benches, baby. Give them a squeeze from me.~~

Nicholas Are you around later?

Lilly Might be.

Nicholas Lilly.

Lilly I'm teasing. I'm sorry. Yes. I'm here later. I'll wait for you.

~~and~~ OK.

~~Cissy It's only because she's too thick to read them herself.~~

~~Bennett She keeps telling me that I could be a lawyer if I wanted to. I don't want to be a lawyer. Who wants to be a fucking lawyer for fucksake?~~

~~Tanya Have you ever thought that there might be a reason?~~

~~Bennett What?~~

~~Tanya That she singles you out for those kinds of suggestions?~~

~~Bennett What the fuck are you implying, Miss Gleason?~~

~~Tanya I'm not implying anything, Mr Francis. I'm just asking a question.~~

~~Bennett Have they put the hearing on?~~

This fucking room.

I need to get outside. I need to go and run around a bit. I need to do PE. I really miss PE. I never thought I'd say that, ever.

Tanya I don't miss PE teachers.

Bennett That's because they're fucking retards.

Cissy Apart from Cheetham.

Bennett He's a retard. He's a retardus primus.

Cissy He was very sweet to me.

Bennett That's because he wanted to finger you.

Cissy He told me he was really impressed with my GCSE results.

Bennett Yes, because he wanted to fucking finger you. I told you.

Cissy Bennett.

Bennett Would you have let him?

Cissy Don't.

~~Bennett I bet you would. Mind you, I can't say I blame him. People get so hot up about inter-generational sexual activity nowadays. It's ridiculous. We should just all jolly well calm down, I think. What's the youngest person you'd fuck, Tanya?~~

~~Tanya looks at him. Glances at Cissy. Looks back at him.~~

~~Bennett Sorry, you go in for the older man, do you not?~~

~~Tanya Are you asking me about my sexual experiences, Bennett? That's quite bold coming from you.~~

~~Bennett What does that mean?~~

~~Tanya smiles. Says nothing.~~

~~Bennett I'd finger a Year-Eight girl. If she was up for it. And if she wasn't, I'd definitely have a bit of a post-wank thinking about her.~~

~~Cissy Teachers shouldn't have sex. They're too old. I find it really unnerving. The idea of it. All that old skin. Wobbling about.~~

~~Chadwick enters.~~

~~Bennett You always used to look forward to PE lessons, didn't you, Chadwick?~~

~~Chadwick What?~~

~~Cissy Do you remember in swimming when he went diving for the brick? You nearly drowned didn't you, sweetheart?~~

~~Bennett Missed opportunity that one, folks.~~

~~Remember you in the changing rooms. I remember your little tiny needle stick.~~

~~Chadwick.~~

~~Tanya Here we go.~~

~~Bennett~~ ~~Is it true you squeeze lemon juice onto your hair? To make it go blonder?~~

~~Chadwick~~ Sometimes.

Bennett Does it work?

~~Chadwick~~ Yes.

Tanya Does it?

~~Chadwick~~ Yes.

Bennett You're a genius, Chadwick, I think, aren't you? But you've got to admit —

~~Chadwick~~ What?

Bennett You look pretty fucking stupid in that coat.

~~Chadwick~~ Yeah.

Bennett Did you just actually agree with me?

Tanya Shut up, Bennett.

Cissy Some people can wear a coat like that. Some people look like retards.

~~William~~ enters. *He is frantic. He is drinking a red drink out of a mineral water bottle.*

~~William~~ Somebody's stolen my money.

They look at him for a beat. He swigs.

Tanya What money?

~~William~~ I had about a hundred pounds.

Tanya What did you have a hundred pounds for?

~~William~~ It's not that much.

~~Lilly~~ ~~Where have you been?~~

~~William~~ ~~What?~~

~~Lilly~~ ~~You've not been in for days.~~

~~William~~ ~~What are you talking about?~~

Tanya What did you bring a hundred pounds to school for?

~~William~~ It was in my bag.

~~Lilly~~ When did you last see it?

~~William~~ What do you mean, when did I last see it? What kind of a fucking cunt of a question is that? 'When did you last see it?' This morning. This morning is when I last saw it. I saw it this morning when I put it in there. Somebody's stolen it. People are always doing that to me.

Tanya Are you sure?

~~William~~ Don't I look like I'm sure?

Tanya I make that kind of mistake all the time.

~~William~~ Do I look like a liar?

Tanya No.

She moves towards him.

He backs away from her suddenly.

~~William~~ Were you trying to kiss me?

Tanya What?

~~William~~ Just then?

Tanya No.

~~William~~ Were you?

Tanya No, I wasn't.

~~William~~ 'No, I wasn't.' Is that why you moved closer to me?

Tanya I didn't realise I did.

~~William~~ People do that kind of thing though, don't they?

~~Bennett~~ ~~William. What are you drinking?~~

He looks down at his drink.

William Campari and grapefruit juice.

Do you want to try some?

Bennett Are you really?

William Why would I lie about something like that? It's my favourite drink, for goodness' sake. Here.

Bennett *takes it.*

Bennett Ta.

He drinks.

Wow.

He drinks some more.

Chadwick, have you got any money on you?

Chadwick I'm sorry?

Bennett Have you, Chadwick?

Chadwick What do you mean?

Bennett I mean have you got any money in your wallet or in your pocket or in your bag or up your arse that you could spare for William? William's lost a hundred pounds and I think you should try and get it back to him, don't you?

Chadwick It's nothing to do with me.

Bennett I'm sorry?

Chadwick I said it's nothing to do with me.

Bennett Hal

Chadwick William, I'm terribly sorry that you've lost some money but I don't really think it was my fault.

Bennett Chadwick. Get your wallet out.

Tanya Bennett. Stop it. Now.

Bennett What? What, Tanya? Are you actually trying to stop me here?

Chadwick, get your wallet out fucking now you fucking cunt-faced twat or I will beat the fucking bricks out of your arse with my bare fists while everybody else watches and sings little fucking songs, so help me God I will.

Chadwick Here.

Bennett How much is in there?

Chadwick Nothing.

Bennett How much, you lying fuck?

Chadwick Twenty pounds.

Bennett Take it out.

Chadwick What?

Bennett Take it out of the wallet

Chadwick No.

Bennett Now. Cunt-head.

Thank you.

And give it to William. He's a bit short.

Chadwick *gives the money to William.*

Bennett *watches. Has another drink.*

Silence.

Some time.

They all try not to move, apart from Bennett, who moves with some comfort.

Bennett ~~It's warmer today. I think. Don't you, Chadwick? Haven't you noticed it's warmer today? They would put the heating on just as the sun comes out. How typical is that?~~

~~An Indian summer.~~

~~He's going to the dentist this afternoon. I've got the afternoon off. I'm looking forward to that. Hang out in the sunshine.~~

~~My mum's already here to collect me. I saw her. She's waiting in the reception. I decided to just wait straight past her.~~

Everybody's being very quiet.

How's the revision going, Lilly? Have you started yet?

Lilly Yes.

Bennett Sorry? You're muttering. I didn't hear you.

Lilly I said yes. Of course I've started. The exams are next week.

Bennett *nods his head.*

He goes to Chadwick.

He stares at him. He touches his cheek.

~~Bennett Levely.~~

What did you have this morning, Chadders?

What subject did you have?

Chadwick Maths.

Bennett Maths. Very good. Very good.

I had Politics.

He burps in Chadwick's face.

Lucy Francis *enters. She's eleven. She is nervous in the room. The others notice her.*

Lucy Mum says you've got to hurry up.

Bennett *turns to her.*

~~Bennett Right. Thank you, Lucy. Tell her I'm coming.~~

~~He collects his bag and jacket. He gives William his drink back. He steps right in front of Tanya.~~

Bennett What's the matter with you?

Tanya Nothing.

Bennett You look all sad. Are you really sad?

Tanya No.

Bennett You are though, aren't you? Do you know why? Do you want to know why you're so sad? Should I tell you? You're sad because you're fat.

You're fat because you eat too much.

You eat too much because you're depressed. You're depressed because of the fucking world.

Right. My dentist awaits these elegant gnashers.

He gnashes his teeth at Chadwick. Leaves.

Tanya Are you OK?

Chadwick What?

Tanya Are you OK, I asked.

Chadwick Of course. Yes. I'm fine. Of course I'm OK.

Tanya I'm really sorry. I tried to stop him.

Chadwick Yes. I know. You don't need to -

The bell goes.

~~They all wait for a beat. Lilly's looking at Cissy.~~

Cissy What?

He was messing about.

Fucking hell. It was a joke.

~~He's just nervous. He's terrified of the dentist.~~

Are you coming to English?

Tanya looks at her. Says nothing.

Cissy I'll walk with you.

Tanya nods. Exits. Cissy follows.

Lilly What are you going to do?

About your money?

William Did you take it?

Lilly What?

William I just wondered if you'd taken it. You might have done. You never know. You might have gone into my bag and found it.

Lilly What are you talking about?

William Ha!

Lilly What?

William Tricked you!

Lilly You what?

William I'm just winding you up, Lilly. Just having a little joke. Do you want some of this?

He drinks some more Campari and offers her the bottle.

Lilly No, thank you. I'll see you later.

William Yeah. I look forward to that.

She leaves. Some time.

~~**Chadwick** How was your mock?~~

William It was good. It was Lloyd. He was very sharp. He's by some distance my favourite teacher. He gave me a cigarette at the end which was probably a bit unprofessional of him. But quite sweet as well.

~~When's yours?~~

~~**Chadwick** I'm not doing a mock. I'm just going to go down and do the interview.~~

~~**William** Right.~~

He reaches into his own wallet and gives Chadwick the twenty pounds.

~~**Chadwick** Thank you.~~

William That's all right.

Chadwick He's -

~~**William** Yeah.~~

Chadwick I don't think I deserve some of the things that happen to me, you know?

Do you?

I don't think I'm so bad. I'm not as bad they make out. I'm not as stupid as people think.

William I don't think anybody thinks for a second that you're stupid in any way.

Chadwick gets his phone out. He opens it. He finds a text. He reads it and shows it to William.

William When did you get this?

Chadwick This one came this morning.

William This isn't from Bennett, is it?

Chadwick No. It's probably from somebody downstairs. That's why I come up here all the time.

William Have you had this kind of thing before?

You should tell somebody about it. This is serious, Chadwick.

Chadwick Yeah.

Sometimes . . .

William What?

Chadwick Nothing.

William Go on. Chadwick, what were you going to say?

Chadwick There's far, far less antimatter in the universe than there is matter. Did you know that?

William I'm not entirely sure that I did, Chadwick, no. Was that really what you were going to say?

~~**Chadwick** Yes. That's one of the things that the experiments at CERN are investigating.~~

William CERN?

Chadwick The LHC?

The Large Hadron Collider?

William That broken telescope?

Chadwick It's not a telescope. It's an atomic particle accelerator.

William That they couldn't even get working.

Chadwick But they will.

His conviction stops William for a beat.

Chadwick One of the things that this collider may be able to test is where all the antimatter has gone to. Some people think that it must be somewhere. That it can't just disappear. Given its absence from the known universe they speculate that this proves that there are alternative universes. And that the antimatter resides in these alternative universes.

I think the experiments that this telescope is able to develop will prove them right. Eventually.

If it was possible to harness antimatter and to bring a single antimatter positron into contact with a single electron of matter it would create an explosion of untold force and energy. They could build an antimatter bomb. It would be ~~forty-thousand-times-bigger-than-a-nuclear-bomb.~~

~~I think that'd be better.~~

Don't you think it'd be better sometimes? Just to end it.

I do. I think about that far more than I ought to. I sometimes think that when you die it's like you cross this threshold. You cross that door. You get out of here.

Some time.

William There are other ways. Of getting out, you know.

Chadwick nods.

When I'm twenty one I'm going to inherit over half a million pounds. Did you know that? Did I ever tell you that?

Chadwick No.

William My dad made over twelve million pounds in the oil markets in Russia in the early nineties. He left half a million pounds of it to me in trust in his will. I inherit it when I'm twenty-one. I can do whatever I want with it.

I'm moving to New York. I'm going to go and live with Lilly.

Chadwick looks at him.

William We've planned it. Ask her if you don't believe me. We're going to get a warehouse loft conversion in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. I'm going to get a Lamborghini Esprit. Lilly'll probably get a haircut like Jennifer Aniston or something like that. We'll drive around. That'll be better than being dead, I think.

Chadwick Won't Nicholas mind?

William What?

Chadwick Won't Nicholas mind you living with Lilly?

William What has it got to do with him?

Chadwick She's going out with him.

~~Who is?~~

~~Chadwick~~ ~~Lilly, she's been fucking him is what I heard.~~

William She's not.

Chadwick She has.

William Since when?

Chadwick Since about the first week she got here.

Pause.

William Oh.

Chadwick Didn't you know?

William No. I didn't.

Chadwick Has it come as something of a blow?

William Well, I admit I am a little disappointed.

Silence. Some time.

Can I stay at yours tonight?

Chadwick What?

William Can I stay at your house tonight?

Chadwick I don't know.

William What would your parents say if I just came round?

Chadwick I'm not sure they'd like it. With the exams next week and everything.

William They wouldn't do anything though, would they?

Chadwick I don't know.

William I could sleep on your floor. We could top and tail. We could get up in the middle of the night and make cheese on toast and eat it.

Chadwick No.

~~William~~ ~~What are you like at home?~~

~~Chadwick~~ ~~I don't know.~~

William Are you different?

Chadwick I don't think so.

William Do you behave differently than you do here? I bet you do. Do people like you there a bit more? I bet they do, don't they?

Why won't you let me stay then?

Chadwick It's not about letting you do anything. It's just not really my house.

William I could come round after the exams then. Couldn't I?

You know what it is that's wrong with your bone structure? I just figured it out. It's your nose. It's a little bit too high up your face, I think. Isn't it? A bit too high up there?

I'm going to be fucking really fucking late now. I've got lessons all afternoon.

~~I have to say, I feel like you've really let me down.~~

Scene Four

'The Woman Inside' by Cows.

It's Monday 10 November, 8.27 a.m.

Bennett, Tanya, Nicholas, Cissy, William and Lilly are in the common room.

Bennett What?

Tanya A wasp!

Cissy Where?

Tanya There.

Cissy Fuck.

Nicholas That's not a wasp.
Cissy Of course it's a wasp. Fuck.
Tanya Get rid of it.
Nicholas It's the middle of November. It's a fly.
Tanya It's a wasp, you fucking idiot. Open a window.
William I can't see it.
Nicholas 'Fucking idiot', that's a bit strong.
Cissy There. My God, it's in your hair.
Tanya It's gonna sting me.
Cissy Get it. Kill it. Fuck!
William Don't kill it.
Cissy What?
William Don't kill it.
Tanya Has it gone yet?
William You mustn't kill it. It's a living creature.
Cissy Are you being serious?
Bennett It's a fucking wasp.
Nicholas Just open the window.
Bennett Wait.
Tanya William, please will you open the window?
Bennett Hold on. Watch.
Cissy Bennett.
Bennett Trust me. Watch.
Tanya William, open the window.
Bennett No. Don't. William. Don't. Watch this.

He moves to grab the wasp in his hand.
He moves suddenly and with some elegance.
He squeezes his fist closed.
Opens it.
He has caught and killed the dead wasp.
The others look at him and at the wasp. He plucks it from his fist and holds it between two fingers.
Cissy Oh my God.
Nicholas How did you do that?
Bennett Magic. My dad taught me. You just have to watch the way they move.
Tanya That's freaky.
He looks at her.
Bennett You want to hold it?
Tanya No, thank you. It's really odd.
William I don't think it's odd. I think it's cruel.
Bennett *looks at the dead wasp. He gives it to William.* **William** *takes it. Looks at it.*
Puts it in his pocket.
Cissy Cruel? How's it cruel? Wasps are vicious, pointless things.
Nicholas It's pretty fucking impressive is what it is.
Cissy Didn't it sting you?
Chadwick *enters.*
~~**Bennett—Chadwick**~~
~~**Stand there.**~~
~~**Now wait there—**~~

~~Thanks.~~

No. They never do. Not if you're quick enough.

Chadwick Lloyd's had a heart attack.

Everybody turns to look at him.

Eliot just told me. He's in Stepping Hill. He nearly died. He didn't. They don't know how long he'll be in there.

Bennett Wow.

William What did you say?

Chadwick Late last night. Lloyd. He had a heart attack.

William A heart attack?

Chadwick It was quite severe. I think there were complications. Eliot said that somebody told him that he'd lost complete consciousness for a few seconds.

Tanya Jesus.

William Lloyd?

Chadwick That's what I said.

William Is he dead?

Chadwick No. He's in hospital.

William But he died? For a bit?

Chadwick No. He lost consciousness, that's different from dying.

Bennett You can't die for a bit.

William I saw him yesterday.

Chadwick Yes.

William I don't believe you.

Chadwick I'm not lying, honestly.

Pause.

Cissy Fucking hell, eh?

Tanya At his age. With that level of smoking. That's serious. And it's the History exam this afternoon as well.

Pause.

Bennett Do you know what I liked about him?

William He's not dead.

Bennett I always liked the way he moved his hands. He had these little jerky movements. They were charming. Oooh! They'd take you by surprise.

William Don't talk about him like he's dead. He's not dead.

~~Cissy I can't understand teachers have heart attacks. They wander round like trauma victims. You look into their eyes. They're terrified. They all end up with stomach ulcers. They all suffer uncontrollable sweating. They haven't got a clue who half of the school is. It's ridiculous. They're the ones who are meant to be looking after us.~~

William I'm going to go and see him. Does anybody want to come with me?

Does anybody want to come with me to see him?

Tanya It's half eight, William.

William What?

Tanya Maybe after school. We could go. We don't know what time visiting is.

William What?

Tanya I'm not entirely sure he'll be able to take visitors for a couple of days. My granddad was like that. They kept him sleeping, mainly.

Bennett Did I tell you you could fucking move. Did I?

Chadwick No.

Bennett Then what the fuck are you moving for?

Chadwick I wanted to put my stuff in my locker.

Bennett Well you can't. Today, Chadwick, as a little tribute to a dying Lloyd, you are my doll. Do you understand me?

Tanya Bennett.

Bennett What? What, Tanya?

Tanya Leave him alone. It's boring.

Bennett Boring? I'm not bored. Are you bored, Chadwick? Are you bored, Nicky?

Tanya You're such a -

Bennett What?

What am I such a, Tanya? Come and tell me.

~~Oh. Fuck it. I'm playing. I'm playing. I'm being a prick.~~

Chadwick Come in. Come in, lovely boy. Put your stuff away I'm being an arsehole.

How are you today, Chadders?

Chadwick I'm fine, thank you.

Bennett Ready for your General Studies exam?

Chadwick Yes.

Bennett Me too, lovely, me too. It's my last one. I'm tempted to do it with my eyes closed.

That's awful fucking horrible news about Lloyd, isn't it? I wonder what he looked like. I wonder if he stopped breathing. I wonder what colour he went. Have you ever seen anybody die, Chadders?

Chadwick No.

Bennett I heard you get an erection. Is he too old to get an erection, do you think?

~~Gissy Bennett.~~

Bennett I bet he's got a fucking huge cock. A really fucking big schlong, don't you think, Chadders?

Tanya You're sick.

Bennett Have you ever had an erection, Chadwick?

Tanya Don't.

Bennett What! I'm only asking. I'm only asking my mate Chadders.

Have you, Chadwick? Have you ever had an erection, Chadwick?

Have you ever come?

Chadwick Yes.

Bennett How do you know?

Chadwick It's obvious, isn't it? Don't you know that?

Bennett I can't imagine you coming. Do you wank all the time at home, Chadwick? What do you think about when you're having a wank? Do you think about girls or boys?

Chadwick I think about girls. Don't you?

Bennett Your mum doesn't count, Chadwick, can I just say that?

Or do you think about fat little Tanya mainly? You're in there, mate, by the way. You should definitely ask her out. You'd make a lovely couple.

Have you ever had a girlfriend, Chadwick? Chadwick, answer my fucking question, you uptight prick cunt.

~~Chadwick What?~~

Bennett Chadwick, have you ever had a girlfriend in your whole fucking life?

Chadwick No. I haven't. Not yet.

Cissy Ah!

Bennett They will drop off eventually, you know? They'll dry up and drop off. Like dead fruit.

Cissy That's not true. Don't listen to him.

Bennett What do you think, Nicky? Poor lamb's never been kissed.

Nicholas *doesn't answer.*

Cissy God. Can you imagine? Doing it with Chadwick. Sorry, Chadwick. No offence or anything.

Chadwick No. None taken.

Bennett You should give him some tips, Nicky. You get fucked all the time is what I heard.

Nicholas Who told you that?

Bennett Everybody knows about that, don't they, Lilly? ~~(To Tanya) I can't believe you're being such a cock-tease with him. It's fucking cruel if you ask me. (To Nicholas.) Haven't you got any mates who are interested in charity work?~~

Nicholas No, Bennett. I haven't.

Bennett Couldn't you ask Copley for him?

Cissy Have you seen her face?

Bennett Have you seen her cunt?

Her cunt is so fat.

Tanya This is just —

Bennett Do you know what that means, Chadwick? A fat cunt like that?

You don't, do you?

Mind you, you wouldn't know what to do with it, Chadwick, ~~would you, son? If she came up to you and bent over you,~~

~~desk in the middle of Physics to reach your work, you wouldn't have a clue where to start.~~

Chadwick And you would?

Bennett What did you say?

Chadwick I said, 'And you would?' Know where to start, Bennett.

Bennett I don't believe you said that out loud.

Chadwick If she leant over your desk in the middle of Physics what are you saying you'd do?

Bennett I'd fuck her until she fucking screamed.

Chadwick Does that mean you're bisexual? *A pause.*

Bennett Tanya, have you got some lipstick.

Tanya What?

Bennett Have you? Have you got any lipstick, Tanya?

Cissy Bennett, the bell's about to go. Everybody'll come out.

Bennett Can I ask you something, Tanya old girl? Do you think I feel bad about myself because you keep on sticking up for him? Is that what you think?

He goes to Chadwick. He grabs a fistful of his hair, really tightly.

Bennett Tanya. Take your lipstick out or I'll properly hurt him.

There.

Now Chadwick, come over to Tanya. And she'll put some lipstick on for you.

Tanya What?

Bennett Come on Tanya.

Cissy: Oh my God

~~Bennett Chadwick, come to Tanya. Fuck your lips.~~

~~Tanya.~~

~~He spins in her face.~~

~~Do it.~~

~~Now.~~

~~Thank you.~~

~~Chadwick It's nice.~~

~~Cissy What?~~

~~Chadwick I like it. It smells nice.~~

~~Bennett You look so fucking gay, Chadwick, you make me want to do a piss.~~

~~Kiss him.~~

~~Cissy What?~~

~~Bennett Kiss him. For me.~~

~~She looks at Bennett. She goes to Chadwick. She kisses him with a real sexuality.~~

~~Bennett What are you doing William?~~

~~William Just having a bit of a dance.~~

~~Bennett watches Cissy kiss Chadwick.~~

~~Bennett Hey, Chadwick. That's my girlfriend.~~

~~Chadwick and Cissy stop kissing.~~

~~Bennett What the fuck are you doing, kissing my fucking girlfriend?~~

~~Chadwick You told me to.~~

~~Cissy He tasted like crisps.~~

~~Bennett Right in front of me.~~

~~Chadwick You told me to, Bennett. I didn't want to.~~

~~Bennett You didn't want to! What are you saying! What are you saying about Cissy, Chadwick? Are you calling her? First you snog her right in front of me and then you go and call her like that. I should cut your face off for that. I should cut your ears off. I should cut your needle dick off. You fucking pervert-fuckhead cunt.~~

~~William Stop it, Bennett.~~

~~Bennett What?~~

~~William Stop it.~~

~~Just leave him alone.~~

~~Bennett Are you actually talking to me now?~~

~~William You're a complete fucking prick. Leave him alone.~~

~~Bennett Listen to him.~~

~~William I mean it, Bennett. Leave him alone. Now.~~

~~Bennett Listen to the brother fucker over here.~~

~~William What did you say?~~

~~Bennett Oh, I think you heard me, William, didn't you?~~

~~William Come here. Come here and say that.~~

~~Bennett I said, 'Listen to the brother fucker over here.' I was talking about you. I was referring to your brother.~~

~~William I'll kill you for that.~~

~~Lilly William, calm down. He was winding you up.~~

~~William Yeah, well, I'll wind him up. I'll wind him up like a knot.~~

~~The bell goes.~~

~~They go to move.~~

Where are you all fucking going? Stay there. Stay there, Bennett. I'm not scared of you. I'm not scared of anybody. You want to know how hard I am?

Lilly William. It's registration.

William Come on, Bennett. You cunt. You fuckhead. Come on then. Any time. You and me. Outside. Now.

Bennett Have you heard him?

Cissy He's talking like a comic book.

Bennett You're talking like a character from a film.

William I could beat you in a fight really easily.

Bennett I'm sure you could.

William I tell you. One day, soon, you are going to get the surprise of your life. (To **Chadwick**.) Don't listen to him. He's worth nothing. He's just a big empty vacuous awful space.

Chadwick I don't mind.

Bennett Don't you?

Chadwick I don't worry about you lot any more.

Bennett Well. That's big of you.

Chadwick Human beings are pathetic. Everything human beings do finishes up bad in the end. Everything good human beings ever make is built on something monstrous. Nothing lasts. We certainly won't. We could have made something really extraordinary and we won't. We've been around one hundred thousand years. We'll have died out before the next two hundred. You know what we've got to look forward to? You know what will define the next two hundred years? Religions will become brutalised; crime rates will become hysterical; everybody will become addicted to internet sex; suicide will become fashionable; there'll be famine; there'll be floods; there'll be fires in the major cities of the Western world. Our education systems will become battered. Our

~~health services unsustainable; our police forces unmanageable; our governments corrupt. There'll be open brutality in the streets; there'll be nuclear war; massive depletion of resources on every level; insanely increasing third-world population. It's happening already. It's happening now. Thousands die every summer from floods in the Indian monsoon season. Africans from Senegal wash up on the beaches of the Mediterranean and get looked after by guilty liberal holidaymakers. Somalians wait in hostels in Malta or prison islands north of Australia. Hundreds die of heat or fire every year in Paris. Or California. Or Athens. The oceans will rise. The cities will flood. The power stations will flood. Airports will flood. Species will vanish for ever. Including ours. So if you think I'm worried by you calling me names, Bennett, you little, little boy, you are fucking kidding yourself.~~

Bennett Blimey.

That's a bit bleak, Chadwick.

Chadwick Just because something's bleak doesn't mean it's not true.

Cissy I don't believe that.

Chadwick You should do.

Cissy We can educate each other.

Chadwick We don't.

Cissy We can change things.

Chadwick We can't.

Cissy We can. There's science. There's technology.

Chadwick It won't help now.

Cissy People have always said the world's going to end.

Chadwick They were wrong. I'm really fucking not.

~~I was right about your lipstick, too, Tanya. It does taste nice.~~

~~He ticks his own lips. Leaves.~~

Bennett Ah! First period! Once more into the breach. What time's the exam?

Ten o'clock, isn't it? Lovely. That was fun that, William. I rather enjoyed myself. Same time tomorrow, old bean?

Until the exam hall, lovelies. Don't be late.

~~He leaves.~~

Cissy We've got English.

No response.

We'll be late.

No response.

At least he'll notice you.

Tanya leaves.

Cissy stands for a while. She has no idea where to go or what to say or what to do.

She leaves.

Nicholas Are you all right?

William Am I what?

Nicholas I was asking if you were OK.

William Do I not look it?

Lilly It's good that you stood up to him.

William Are you both free now?

Lilly Until the exam.

William Well. You'll like that.

Nicholas I can't believe they make us do a lesson. For one period . . .

William Have they turned the heating off in here?

Nicholas No. I'm really warm.

Lilly I'm boiling.

William looks at her.

William I feel a little bit let down.

Lilly What by? What by, William?

William It's hard because there are some things that have happened that are entirely my fault.

Lilly What like?

William You know what like.

Lilly I don't.

William All of you talk about it all the time.

I'm not that naive. I know I might look it. I know I might look like 'oh William'. William Bilham. William Tell. William the thick. William the Great. Do you think I'm William Shakespeare?

They look at him.

Because I might be. It's entirely possible. ~~Look at the news!~~

Nicholas What?

~~William~~ ~~A hundred and ninety people were killed yesterday in a plane crash in Brazil. Why do you think that happened?~~

Lilly It skidded. On the runway. The runway was wet.

William Oh right. Yeah.

Nicholas That's true.

William That's what they tell you is true.

Nicholas Are you saying you caused the plane crash, William?

~~William~~ ~~Wouldn't you like to know?~~

380 Punk Rock

~~I bet you really -~~

How long have you been going out, you two?

Nicholas William.

~~**William** Why the fuck won't anybody come with me to Lloyd's funeral, for fucksake!~~

Lilly He's not dead. He didn't die. Chadwick said -

~~**William** They should close the whole school is what they fucking well should do.~~

How many times have you fucked her, Nicholas?

Nicholas William, shut up.

William Or what? Is his cock really huge?

Lilly Be quiet. You're making a fool of yourself.

William What?

What?

Have I said something really embarrassing?

I'm sorry.

God.

I'm really sorry. I didn't even hear myself speak.

~~Come here. Come here, Lilly. My best friend.~~

Lilly William, get off.

~~He kisses the side of her head.~~

William I could eat you. I'd better go now.

~~**Lilly** William, where are you going?~~

William I'm going to go and see Lloyd. Get a bit of conversation. Bit of stimulation. You know what I mean?

Lilly You've got your exams.

William I've got what?

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Lilly You've got the General Studies exam. You've got History this afternoon.

William looks at her briefly, slightly confused by what she's talking about. Then he leaves.

They watch him go.

They look at each other.

Nicholas Are you OK?

Lilly I think so. Are you?

He nods. They hold each other's gaze for a while.

Scene Five

'Fell in Love With a Girl' by The White Stripes.

It's Monday 10 November, 4.38 p.m.

Lilly What?

What?

~~Aren't you going to talk to me?~~

Are you just going to look at me, William, because it's creeping me out a bit?

Why are all the windows open? Did you open them?

What did you want? Where have you been all day?

Look. I got your text. You asked me to come here so I came.

It's getting dark. I'm going to go home unless you speak to me. I mean it.

William Lloyd died. This morning. When we were in here. I went up to the hospital after I left you and Nicholas. I was too late. I tried to get you all to come earlier. You all stopped me.

~~It was a horrible place.~~

~~He's the second person I ever met who's died now. How many people do you know who've died?~~

I was meant to have exams, wasn't I? I got lost coming home. I was wandering around.

Have I missed them? My exams? Did I miss History?

Lilly nods.

William While I was wandering about I realised something about you. I realised what you are. In real life. It came to me. Like an epiphany.

Lilly What are you talking about?

William You're a robot, aren't you?

Lilly What?

William Where did they make you? What laboratory did they make you in?

When I asked you out, were you already going out with Nicholas?

You were, weren't you? Why didn't you tell me? Why didn't you say anything about it?

Can you hear that?

Lilly What?

William That banging?

Lilly No.

William Are you lying?

Lilly I didn't know what to say. I really liked you. I really like you. I didn't want to let you down.

William Good answer. I brought you a present when I was ~~out and about. It's a very early Christmas present.~~

Lilly Fucking hell.

William 'Fucking hell.' If my mum could hear you swearing.

~~**Lilly** You can't give me this.~~

William 'You can't give me this.' Yes I can. I just did. I got one too. I got some CDs. Look I burnt them on for you.

Lilly William, there's three hundred songs on here.

William 'William there's a hundred songs on there.' Ha!

Lilly Did you buy all these?

~~**William** Did you buy all these?~~

Lilly I thought you said your mum was dead.

William My stepmum.

Don't.

Lilly What?

William Look at me like that. You look exactly like her. I really hate it

~~Will you do me a favour? In return for my present?~~

Lilly It depends what it is.

William Will you stop burning yourself? Because I don't think it's very good for you. I think you'd be better off stopping.

Will you, Lilly? Do you promise?

A long pause.

Lilly I'll try.

William Try really hard.

Lilly William, are you alright?

William I'm just a bit.

~~**Lilly** What?~~

~~William I can't think of the word.~~

Lilly For what?

William When you haven't slept enough?

Lilly Tired?

William Yes. I'm a bit tired.

Lilly You couldn't remember the word 'tired'.

William Do you know what I figured out?

Lilly What?

William That it's not me. It's not my fault. It's not a problem of genetics, it's a problem of geography. It's Manchester. It's Stockport.

Lilly What is?

William You go downtown. Yes? You go down to the Arndale. Yes? All the kids in there look like they could slice your stomach open and reach their hands inside your stomach and pull your insides out. Yes?

Lilly They don't.

William You walk into a room. Yes? Everybody knows you've walked into that room. Everybody's waiting for you. All these people are waiting for you. Aren't they? With their legs and their arms and their hair hanging down in front of their faces when they cry.

Some of the things you told me weren't true.

Lilly What things?

William You know what things. There's a lot about you which is a lie. The way you tie your tie is a lie. You're relying with the way you tie your fucking tie.

Lilly This is exhausting me.

~~William Yeah.~~

Lilly I'm going home.

William Don't.

Lilly Why shouldn't I?

William I'm scared of what I might do if you leave.

She looks at him.

Lilly Yeah.

We all get scared, William.

Sometimes the world is a bit unnerving. Some people do awful things but, and you need to listen to this, William, seriously, most of the time the world is all right. You need to get that into your head and stop moping about.

William Moping? Is that what you think I'm doing?

Lilly Most people are all right.

William They're not.

~~**Lilly** They're funny. They chat a bit. They tell jokes. They're kind. They're all right.~~

William You so should have gone to the College, shouldn't you?

Lilly You know, ninety-nine per cent of the people in the school are perfectly good people. Ninety-nine per cent of the young people in this country, William, and nobody ever says this, ninety-nine per cent of the young people in this country do a really good job at the actual work of being alive. They'll survive. Happily. They'll grow up. They'll end up doing jobs. Being married. Living lives which are perfectly good and reasonable and all right and happy ones. That's not a bad thing, William. You know? What makes you think you're any different? What makes you think you're so special? When I was ten -

~~William When you were what?~~

~~Lilly Listen to me. I'm trying to tell you something. When I was ten I used to get headaches.~~

William What are you talking about?

Lilly They were properly fierce. It used to feel as though the front of my head was being carved in two. They could really bring tears to my eyes. I didn't tell my mum about them for weeks.

William Why are you telling me this?

Lilly But after about two weeks I did.

William I think you've gone a bit mad.

Lilly I told her. She took me to the doctor and the doctor gave me some aspirin and told me to drink more water and get some more fresh air and to eat less sugar and so I did and the headaches went away.

William I'm not talking about headaches. This is more than a headache.

Lilly Maybe you should tell somebody.

William Are you trying to inspire me? With your little tiny story? You want to inspire me? Take your top off. That'll inspire me. Let me see your tits. That'd be a massive ~~inspiration I think. That'd really cheer me up, Lilly. Honestly.~~

Lilly I'm sorry I didn't want to go out with you. I wanted to go out with Nicholas instead.

I really love him.

~~But I always thought you'd be my mate. And I would still really like to be in spite of everything. Because actually I think you're not that well and I'm worried about you and I want to get you some help.~~

William Ha!

~~Lilly What?~~

~~William Can I ask you this, when you have sex with him, with Nicholas, does it hurt?~~

Does it?

Please tell me.

Lilly No.

William Doesn't it?

Lilly No.

William What's it like?

~~Lilly It's lovely.~~

William Right. That's good. That's good for you. I don't like him. Personally, I think he's a fraud. I think he's a liar. I think he's made of lies and shit. But that's just my opinion.

Lilly He isn't.

William I am completely entitled to my own opinion. Don't you dare try to tell me that I'm not because I fucking am.

Some time.

Lilly Nicholas told me that you were lying about your parents.

Why did you lie about your parents, William?

William I didn't. I wasn't. I didn't lie.

Lilly He told me your parents are still alive but that you had a brother and it was your brother who died when he was a baby.

William Lies, damn lies and statistics.

Lilly Why did you lie about it, William?

Why did you lie about your parents being dead?

Is it true about your brother?

Did you have a brother who died? Why did your brother die?

William Can you hear it?

Lilly What?

William I can hear it again. That banging.

Lilly I can't hear it at all.

~~**William** Fictic was a boy killed himself here once. When it was a boys' school. He climbed onto the roof of the quad. Jumped off. This was back in the seventies. Maybe it's him.~~

Were there a lot of gypsies in Cambridge?

Lilly What?

William We should sort them out, us two, I reckon. Go on a march.

Lilly Sort who out?

William I know we could. When two people love each other as much as we do then I think they can do anything.

Lilly I don't love you.

William You must do.

Lilly I don't, William.

A long pause. Longer than you think you can get away with.

William turns the lights off. *He stands still for a long time.*

Lilly Can you turn the light back on please, William?

William I'm sorry. Did you say something?

Lilly You're starting to -

William I don't blame you. By the way. I'm rubbish, me. I'm a waste of time. I'm not even worth the space I take up. I'm not even worth the paper I'm written on. I've got no friends. I've got no imagination. I've got no ideas.

~~**Lilly** Stop it.~~

~~**William** I hate my shoes. I hate my house. I hate this school. I hate my hair. Can I have a haircut?~~

Lilly What?

William Will you give me a haircut, please? A better one. One that makes me look less of a fucking spastic -

Lilly Don't say that.

William - than this haircut makes me look.

Lilly I hate that word.

William Cut my hair.

Lilly With what?

William I don't care. Your hands. Your ruler. Pull it out. I'm just. I want it to stop.

You know when I'm with you?

Lilly I've only known you a month.

William I feel like I'm earthed. Here.

He touches the side of her head with the palm of his hand. Nothing apparently happens or changes.

And watch what happens if I let go.

He lets go.

See?

Nothing apparently happens or changes. He smiles for a while. He stops smiling quite suddenly.

Who are you?

Lilly What?

William I don't know who you are.

~~**Lilly**~~

William Can I tell you something?

Lilly What?

William Do you want a word of advice? A word to the wise?

Lilly -

William Tomorrow.

Lilly What?

William Don't come into school.

Scene Six

'Touch Me I'm Sick' by Mudhoney.

It's Tuesday 11 November, 8.57 a.m.

The stage remains empty for a while. Bennett enters. Then Nicholas.

Bennett They've marked the exams.

Nicholas *looks at him for a while.*

Nicholas What?

Bennett I just saw Gilchrist. She said she'll give us our results later.

Nicholas Fuck.

~~**Bennett** Yeah. She had a remarkable look on her face. It was like a combination of glee and fury.~~

~~I absolutely know that I have really properly fucked them all up.~~

~~My parents will go fucking mental.~~

Nicholas Yeah.

~~**Bennett** They'll drag out the same old speeches. About the fecs. Do you know what we have to do to get the money to send you to that place? Do you have the slightest idea how much it costs every year?~~

~~I don't actually. Do you?~~

Nicholas Have you seen Lilly?

Bennett I've not seen anybody all morning. Maybe they're all hiding. Maybe they all know something we don't.

Aren't you worried at all about your results?

Nicholas Too late to change anything now.

Bennett Well that's very fucking mature I have to say.

He lights a cigarette.

He looks at Nicholas.

~~**Bennett** How are things going with her? What Lilly?~~

Nicholas They're all right, thank you.

Bennett She's lovely.

Nicholas Yes. She is.

Bennett She's surprisingly smart. I like her cos she's rock hard. She's very lucky.

Did you hear that Tanya's dad came up to the school?

Nicholas Lilly mentioned that she'd seen him.

Bennett Yesterday lunchtime he came and spoke to Edwards. She must have rung him during the day. The fat bitch. He kept me here till half past six last night. Bastard. He was probably marking our exams while I was sat there doing fucking lines.

Nicholas You shouldn't have spat at her.

Bennett *looks at Nicholas for a beat.*

Bennett No. I shouldn't have done.

It was stupid. I just really wanted to. I wanted to try it out. I wanted to know what it would feel like.

~~Do you ever get things like that?~~

~~Nicholas I'm not sure.~~

Bennett Have you ever wanted to set fire to things?

Nicholas Nothing serious. Maybe the occasional dustbin.

Bennett Have you ever wanted to blow something up?

Nicholas Fuck, yeah. Who hasn't?

Bennett Have you ever wanted to kiss a boy?

Nicholas No.

Bennett Never?

Nicholas No.

Bennett Liar.

Nicholas I'm not lying.

Bennett I wanted to kiss Thom Yorke once.

Nicholas Yeah?

Bennett And David Bowie.

Nicholas *looks at him for a beat. Smiles at him.*

Pause.

Nicholas I was so hungover this morning I couldn't believe it.

Bennett Where were you last night?

Nicholas I went out with my brother. He's come home for Christmas.

Bennett Already? Fucking students. How is he?

Nicholas He's really well. Mum and Dad are happy to see him.

Bennett How's Durham?

Nicholas He loves it, I think.

Bennett That's good. Are you all going away for Christmas or something?

~~Nicholas I don't think so.~~

Bennett We're going to fucking Reykjavik of all places.

Nicholas *looks at him. Smiles.*

Nicholas I shouldn't have been drinking. I'm on painkillers for my ankle. I feel fucking shit now.

Bennett What happened to your ankle?

Nicholas I twisted it. Playing rugby.

Bennett When was this?

Nicholas Last week.

Bennett You never told me this.

Nicholas *looks at him.*

Bennett Can I see it?

Nicholas *shows him his ankle.*

Bennett It looks red, Nicholas.

Nicholas Yeah. You should have seen it last week.

Bennett *touches it. He winces as he touches it as though feeling Nicholas's pain.*

Nicholas It's all right. It doesn't really hurt any more.

~~Cissy enters.~~

Cissy Don't tell my mum. Don't tell my mum. Don't tell my mum. Don't tell my mum.

Nicholas Don't tell your mum what?

Cissy I just saw Anderson. I got a 'B' for English.

Bennett Fucking hell.

Cissy I know.

Nicholas A 'B'?'s not bad.

Cissy Are you being serious?

Nicholas A 'B''s good I think.

Cissy If she finds out she'll kill me.

Nicholas Cissy, I think you're exaggerating.

Bennett You don't know her mother.

~~**Cissy** How can I stop her from finding out?~~

Nicholas Don't tell her.

Cissy She'll get the report.

Bennett Hide it. Burn it.

Cissy Don't be fucking stupid, Bennett. She knows there'll be a report. It's the end of the term. There's always a report.

Bennett Tipp-Ex over it.

Cissy Oh you're so not helping.

~~**Tanya enters.**~~

Tanya What is the matter with you?

Cissy I got my English results.

Tanya Already?

Bennett She got a 'B'.

Tanya Ouch! Have you ever got a 'B' in anything before?

Nicholas She's worried her mother's going to kill her.

Tanya Yeah. She will.

~~**Cissy** If I fuck up -~~

Bennett You already have, sweetheart.

Cissy No, properly. If I properly fuck up. If I don't get the grades I need for my place in the summer, not in the mocks, in the real exams, then I'll go -

I don't know what I'll do.

Tanya You won't. Fuck up. You're being really stupid.

~~**These are just mocks.**~~

~~**Cissy** I'll never get out of Stockport. I'll never leave. I'll be stuck here for ever. There's a whole world out there and I'll never see it once, not ever. All these things I want to do, I won't be able to do them.~~

Tanya You keep going on about that.

Cissy looks at her.

Tanya It's not about Stockport, Cissy. It's about you. You were made here. You keep trying to pretend that you weren't. It's ridiculous.

The two girls look at each other.

~~**Cissy** I don't know what to say...~~

~~and I don't know what you're laughing at.~~

Bennett What?

Cissy You're meant to be my boyfriend.

Bennett Oh, come on!

Cissy You're meant to stick up for me.

Bennett It was funny. She was being funny.

Cissy All you ever do is laugh at me.

Bennett Well. Can you blame me?

Cissy What?

Bennett You *are* ridiculous. For somebody so clever you're unbelievably fucking stupid. How could I fail to laugh at you?

Isn't she? Isn't she, Nicky?

Chadwick enters.

Bennett Chadwick, isn't Cissy fucking ridiculous?

Chadwick I don't think so. She's always seemed rather intelligent to me.

Bennett I'm not denying that. I'm not talking about her intelligence for fuck sake.

William enters.

Bennett William. Answer me this. Why is it that every single person in this school judges everybody else by the level of their intelligence? Not by their wit. Not by their appearance. Not by their dress sense. Not by their taste in music. By how many 'A's' they got at GCSE.

William pulls a gun out of the inside pocket of his blazer.

William I've no idea.

He shoots his gun at the lights in the common room. He smashes the bulbs.

The room darkens.

It works then.

I did warn you, Bennett. Don't say I didn't warn you because I really fucking did.

He points his gun at Bennett

Bennett What? What the fuck? No. No. God. Please. Don't.

Bennett covers away from him. *Wherever he goes to, William follows him with his gun.*

Nicholas William.

William turns to look at him. *Points the gun at him when he does.*

William Yeah. What?

Nicholas Don't.

William Don't what?

Tanya has started crying. Cissy moves to the door.

William Don't. Cissy. Fucking just don't.

Nicholas William. People will come.

William What?

Nicholas People will have heard the gunshot. They'll be here any second.

William Do you think so?

I can't hear anybody coming. Can you hear anybody? *They listen.*

Nicholas Put the gun down before anybody gets hurt.

William Don't be fucking stupid.

It feels funny. It's a lot lighter than I thought it would be. It's a lot easier to aim.

Hey, Bennett. Hey, Bennett. Get up, Bennett. Stop fucking crying and fucking listen to me.

~~*You know when you spot at Tanya, what was it like?*~~

What did it feel like?

What was it like for you, Tanya?

Tanya William, stop it.

William I heard you got a detention. Shit.

Did your parents find out?

Bennett. Did your parents find out?

Did your parents find out about your detention, Bennett?

Bennett No.

William Didn't they?

How come? What did you tell them? What did you tell them, Bennett?

Bennett I told them I was at football practice.

William Ha! Did you? How did you think of that? That's fucking brilliant. That's fucking genius is what that is.

~~*Can I tell you something, Bennett?*~~

No other animal in the world polices its behaviour via a third person. Did you know that?

Bennett Did I know what?

William If a monkey steals another monkey's nuts he doesn't go and get a third monkey to sort him out. If a cat shits on another cat's tree that cat doesn't go and tell a big huge third cat and get him to sort the first cat out. Does he? No. Of course he doesn't. Only human beings do that. I hate it. You spat at Tanya. Tanya should have stabbed you or something. She didn't. She rang home and told her dad. It's pathetic. As far as I'm concerned that means you're free to do whatever you want with her. Batter her. Shoot her. Rape her. She's the only one who should be able to stop you.

Don't you think?

Don't you think, Bennett?

Everybody's being really fucking quiet today.

Don't you think, Nicholas, shouldn't Bennett be allowed to rape Tanya now?

Nicholas No.

William What?

Nicholas I said no. He shouldn't. That's horrible. That's a crazy idea.

William What did you say?

He looks at him for a long time.

Nicholas I said that's a crazy idea.

William Don't say that.

Nicholas We can't operate like --

Bennett Don't, Nicholas.

Nicholas We can't control a community --

Bennett Nicholas, be quiet for God's sake.

William Ah! That's quite sweet. She's protecting you, look.

I don't want to talk about this any more.

He shoots Bennett twice. He dies. Cissy screams. She tries to stop herself.

There is some quietness. Some stillness for a while.

William Can you smell burning?

Something's burning. Can you smell?

Nicholas No.

William Here. Nicholas.

Nicholas What?

William Watch this.

He shoots Cissy. She dies.

Nicholas William!

Tanya is crying. Chadwick is crying.

William Did you say something?

Chadwick Me?

William Yeah.

Chadwick No.

William I thought you said something.

Chadwick I didn't.

William I thought somebody said something. Just now. About -- did you say something about a fire?

Chadwick No.

William You did. I heard you.

Chadwick I didn't, William.

William It's probably just me. Is it just me? Am I the only one who heard him talking about the fire?

This happens to me all the time.

He points his gun at Nicholas.

William You know when you're thinking?

Nicholas Thinking? Yes. I know when I'm thinking --

William When you're thinking, yeah, and in order to like make a decision, yes? Sometimes you have to weigh one side up against the other and you need to have a jolly good debate in your head about what is the right thing to do and what is the wrong thing to do, yes? And sometimes when you're doing this each side kind of has a voice in your head. You know that?

Nicholas I think so, William.

William Sometimes when I do that -- the voices sound like they're coming from over there. Or over there. Or over there. Sometimes. Not often. That sounded as though it was coming from Chadwick. How very embarrassing. I am sorry.

Nicholas Don't be.

William I am. I will be. Because I am. You can't exactly choose these things can you?

Can you hear anybody coming?

They listen.

Told you.

William turns away from Chadwick. Without William noticing Chadwick takes the opportunity to turn and run through the classroom door.

William notices him too late. He points his gun. He puts it down again. He laughs a little.

He got away!

He turns and shoots Nicholas. Nicholas dies.

He looks around at what he's done.

There's some time. He looks at Tanya. She's crying her heart out.

~~William Did you hear about Billy?~~

Tanya What about her.

William She's dead.

Tanya Dead?

William Not literally. She's just in a bit of trouble.

Tanya Why?

William She did something.

Tanya What?

William Something really bad.

Tanya What did she do?

William What's wrong?

Tanya Nothing.

William You're crying.

Tanya Yeah.

William You're so lovely. Don't cry. Here.

He smiles. Goes to hug her. She is terrified. He hugs her. Lets go. Sits down on a table.

A long pause.

Dear God. Please -- Dear God. . . Are you there? Dear God, please look after little baby Abstair and Mum and Dad and --

He breaks into uncontrollable giggles.

~~I always find it hard to keep a straight face.~~

He goes to shoot himself. He holds his gun in his mouth. After a short while he retracts it.