Belgrade Community & Education Company

Belgrade Theatre Coventry

IMMIGRATION
IN OUR OWN WORDS

Celebrating the City’s diverse communities
Belgrade Community Festival 2010

Education Pack
Scripts and Education material
for use with young people aged 11+

heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED
Immigration - In Our Own Words

In 2010 the Belgrade Community & Education Company embarked upon a project to create six pieces of theatre that highlighted stories of immigration to Coventry. This education pack is made up of six brand new short plays, written by some of Coventry’s up and coming playwriting talent, and based upon interviews with Coventry residents who have settled here from all over the world.

One young writer interviewed his grandmother, who came over from Pakistan in the 1960’s; another interviewed a woman who had arrived in the UK escaping a situation of domestic violence in her village in Zimbabwe; another interviewed a broad spread of people arriving from Jamaica in the Windrush era.

The young writers created plays that are wide-ranging and various in their themes and execution – inspiring, shocking and hopefully challenging both of what it means to be a new arrival in a community, and what it means to host new arrivals in your own community.

This education pack has been designed with a specific focus on Secondary Education. Throughout the pack we have offered suggestions of national curriculum links. The activities themselves are all drama based.

Each exercise objective is written with the expectation of it needing to be tailored to the specific abilities of your class. The exercises offered in this pack should be adaptable to all students. We leave it to you, as the teacher, to differentiate for your own pupils.

This pack is cross curricular and, at points, covers aspects of

- Citizenship
- Geography
- Drama within English
- PSHE

We hope that the material in this education pack will offer an interesting and creative approach to certain areas of the curriculum. Whether you plan to use this material in a drama lesson, PSHE, Geography or Citizenship class it is our hope that it will be engaging and useful for your students learning.

The full scripts of the plays have also been included in this pack. These provide material for reading or performance, ideally suited to use in schools and youth centres.

They have been well crafted with the help of a professional dramaturg, written especially for performance by young people, and have as their focus, local real-life stories.

The copyright owners of the scripts have granted their permission for their scripts to be used under the following conditions:

- Users of the scripts contained in this education pack may perform selected scenes in an educational context, i.e. without costume, lights or set. Permission must be obtained for any other use (e.g. performance). For permission to use a script, a letter must be obtained. Any applications for a licence to make and alterations must be addressed to The Belgrade Theatre Community & Education Company, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, CV1 1GS.
- The definition of an Educational Exercise is the exploration of extracts rehearsed by a school/community group without costume, lights or set. The results of such workshops can only be shared with staff and students of the school/community group. If any persons from outside the school/community group are admitted (e.g. students and family) the production becomes a performance and a licence is required.

In Our Own Words – Immigration

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WALK FOR YOUR LIFE
Written by Lola Johnson with the Black Youth Theatre
First performed on Monday 12th July 2010 at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry.

Overview
Walk for Your Life tells the story of Anastasia Chokuwamba. Married at just fourteen years old to her dead sister's husband, Anastasia defied tradition by fleeing her home in rural Zimbabwe after seven years of domestic abuse.

She is now living in Coventry with her daughter, Chantal. The interview with Anastasia was conducted by Lola Johnson, the writer of the play, who herself was just seventeen at the time.

Key Words
Asylum, Domestic Violence, Fear, Relationships, Culture, Society

National Curriculum Links
Geography
Appreciating the differences and similarities between people, places, environments and cultures to inform their understanding of societies and economics.

Objectives
Exercise 1 - Exploring cultural differences around the world.
- Know what the term 'cultural difference' means.
- Understand how and why cultures and environments differ around the world.
- Learn how to use empathy in order to connect with a character that may seem removed from our own experiences.

Exercise 2 - Investigating cultural similarities.
- Know what the term 'cultures' means.
- Understand that similarities exist between all cultures.
- Learn how to transform an interview into a script by changing the form of a text.

Exercise 3 - Developing debating skills.
- Know why asylum is or is not granted.
- Understand there are arguments for and against allowing asylum seekers to enter Britain.
- Learn how to create an argument through theatre using debating skills.
A Brief Synopsis

We find ourselves in a traditional ritual in a Zimbabwean village. Young girls are being induced into trance-like states to encourage the spirit of a girl who has recently died to reveal the cause of her death. A young girl, Angela, washes herself in holy water and recites her Hail Marys to stop herself being possessed. Her faith and determination result in her being the only girl who does not go into trance.

The action cuts to an immigration office in Croydon. The adult Angela recounts the story of how she came to England. She tells how her sister died and she was left to take care of her niece, eventually becoming a full time mother to her dead sister's children and forced to be a wife to her dead sister's husband.

We flash back to Angela's life in Zimbabwe. Dambanyika, now Angela's husband, calls for Angela to serve him and his friends. She appears to be more of a servant than a wife. When the dinner guests have gone, Dambanyika accuses Angela of flirting with other men at the party. He tells her that he will teach her a lesson and make it so other men have no reason to look at her. He picks up a piece of burning fire wood and crushes it into Angela's face.

Angela tells her family she is going to get wood for the fire, but actually she has decided to leave the house for good. She walks for three days to escape her abusive husband, eventually finding herself in the middle of a church congregation in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe. She collapses. Since she is in trouble, the congregation help her. A member of the congregation, Onai, offers Angela a job as a house keeper, and over time we see her becoming much happier.

A few months later, there is a banging on the door. Dambanyika has found her. He shouts that he will burn the house down and 'break her legs' if he gets in. The congregation again help her by collecting money for a passport and ticket to London.

Angela leaves for London where she is to be helped by Onai's sister. Onai's sister, however, does not treat her well, and pushes her to work too hard. Angela becomes ill with the overwork and stress, and eventually has to go to the doctor. The doctor notices the burn on Angela's face and asks the story behind it. As a result of this, the doctor tells her to go to the Home Office to apply for asylum; she cannot treat her until she has done this. In the meantime she is advised to walk to relieve her stress.

Angela finishes recounting her story to the Immigration Officer. The Officer tells her that she will not be able to give her a clear answer about her asylum application until all the evidence is available. Angela argues with the Immigration Officer. She says that she has evidence that she was being abused and that she tried to leave in order to stay safe. She wants to continue to deal with people in the same manner, she was learning how to speak to her daughter in a way that didn't perpetuate the cycle of interacting with each other in an abusive way.

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The decision in real life was that she was allowed to stay. She has five years 'leave to remain', so nothing is certain, but we hope that after those five years she will be granted an extension.

The ending was left as a cliff hanger, did you make a decision about whether the heroine got asylum or not?

The decision in real life was that she was allowed to stay. She has five years 'leave to remain', so nothing is certain, but we hope that after those five years she will be granted an extension.

We worked with the most wonderful woman called Anastasia who has had the most incredible journey in her life, from an abusive relationship at age fourteen in Zimbabwe through to escaping that experience in England. The honesty with which she was able to share her experience with me, the writer and the group of young people was remarkable.

We obviously took a little bit of dramatic license when it came to the ending. It is true that Anastasia has a daughter, and some of the things about her upbringing, making connections and learning how we do things in the west, are from her life. Most of the narrative is fact, about what happened, but some of it is a bit of extrapolation. But when we spoke to Anastasia about it, she felt that it was true to life, if not exactly of her experience. What we were trying to say with the ending was that the most important lesson that that character underwent was to make a change. It wasn't enough of a change to get out of the country and continue to deal with people in the same manner, she was learning how to speak to her daughter in a way that didn't perpetuate the cycle of interacting with each other in an

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aggressive way. So I think by not having a decision about whether to stay or leave, it was saying what's most important is my daughter, and I think Anastasia would agree with the spirit of that.

Exercise 1 - Exploring cultural differences around the world.

Starter

Ask the students to think about what they are and are not allowed to do in our society in Britain. Ask them to consider how free they are to marry who they want to. Ask them to think about all the reasons that people get married in our society. In smaller groups ask the students to create a still image depicting their thoughts on why people get married in Britain.

Main

Look at this extract from the transcript that inspired Walk for Your Life. Consider the cultural differences between what happens in Zimbabwe and our culture here in Britain.

So the baby was okay, but my sister didn't make it. So here comes the culture, the culture says the milk to feed the baby comes from the mother's side, so that means the mother's side is supposed to pin point someone to look after that baby. So in that situation, there is no choice, if there is someone that is breastfeeding at that time, the baby goes there. But the problem then, was that the baby wasn't in the village, the baby was somewhere else where nobody had ever been. That's when they pin point me to go there. Now it's almost like, no more child, go now, you're going to be a grown up, to look after that baby. So they took me in, I didn't even know that was my country town, Harare, I didn't know, but of course I was just taken by the hospital cart to take me there, and I was in that hospital for three months, I didn't even know I was in Harare. So they taught me how to feed that baby, how to wash it, everything else. Then they said you can go back home. When I went to the village that's when they say, I should be a full time mother to both of them, so that means bring the wife to my sister's husband, to take my sister’s place. So you don't say anything, you don't have any ways to say 'no I can't', 'I'm not ready', you go there, do the ceremony and then you go there.

Ask the students to consider what their reaction might be if they were told to marry their sister's husband. Ask the students to devise a scene that may have happened in Zimbabwe.

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Exercise 2 - Investigating cultural similarities.

Starter

Ask the students, in pairs, to think about what 'culture' is or if they know what 'culture' means.

Culture is the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

Ask the students to think about all the different cultures that exist in your school. Ask them to consider the cultural differences that exist in the group.

Do these cultural differences impact upon the personal relationships that exist?

Read the extract in Exercise 1 and facilitate a discussion on the cultural differences between Zimbabwean and British culture. Are there any differences? If the students were in a similar situation to the woman in the extract, how would they react? Are there any similarities between the two cultures?

Main

Ask the class to look at the extract in Exercise 1 and think about how this might be made into a script. In groups, ask the students to think how they might create a drama text from this interview. Ask them to think about:

- How many characters appear in the extract?
- How do you make the characters sound like individuals? Will the Immigration Officer speak in a different manner to the woman being questioned?
- Do you want the person in the transcript (who's character name is Angela) to simply tell the story, or do you set the story in Harare with other characters involved?
- Do you create a narrator role to tell the story while you write the rest of the company to physically perform the narrative?
- How much text do you require, or do you feel that physically representing the story will be more powerful. The physical actions (stage directions) will still need to be written.
Ask the group to consider these Success Criteria when writing the script:

Criteria | Tick if you have achieved it
--- | ---
Have clearly written and included an appropriate level of detail in my script. | 
Have written creatively, and thought about how the characters might be feeling. | 
Have studied the extract and considered how the characters may speak. | 
Have used and remembered to stick to a clear structure: Exposition (sister dying), Action rising (going to look after the baby), Climax (being told to marry her dead sister's husband), falling action (marrying and resolving) (proving to and looking after the child and her new husband with no escape) | 
Have laid out my text like a script so that when I come to perform the piece, it is easier to approach. | 

Get the students to explain how they have met, or attempted to meet, all the above criteria.

Extension

Once the students have written their scripts, ask them to think about how they might perform them. This may be to simply read the script, or if they have created a heavily physical text, ask them to physically perform it.

**Exercise 3 - Developing debating skills.**

**Look at the extract below.**

**Background to the text**

Angela is being questioned by the Immigration Officer. In Zimbabwe Angela has been the victim of abuse from her husband. Angela is using this as the basis for her case to stay in England. The Immigration Officer is disputing this claim and questioning Angela’s story. At this point in the script, Angela begins to get frustrated.

**ANGELA:** Tell me! How. Do. You. Wash. Your. Clothes?

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** A washing machine

**ANGELA:** Me to. But back home I would walk one hour to the river to wash my clothes one item after another, after another, after another and then walk another hour back home. Here, I put the clothes in the washing machine and spend an hour sitting, reading magazines.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** (Sits back down) This is all very well and good but you have produced no evidence that the said abuse actually happened. (Rises dramatically) At the very least, we would need letters to show that you were indeed in hospital taking care of your nephew.

**ANGELA:** I haven’t talked to my people in over ten years. Ten years! I haven’t talked to my mother since the day I left the village. I can’t phone them, I can’t write a letter, so where exactly do you want me to get this evidence from?

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** I told you the truth. I am not volunteering.

**ANGELA:** I did settle somewhere else. I was in Harare and he still found me. The evidence you are looking for is in my hands, it’s the scars all over my body! Look! (Angela starts to make as if she’s going to strip off in the office)

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** Ms. Munamato! Stop it! What are you doing? This really doesn’t help your case.

**ANGELA:** I’m showing you the evidence. See? It’s here and here and here. It’s in this scar on my face! What more do you need from me?

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** I suggest you leave now Ms. Munamato.

**Extension Questions**

- Who appeared to have the strongest, least flawed argument?
- Who did you believe most when they were debating?
- Who was most passionately, but in a controlled way, connected to their argument?
- Split the group in half and ask one side to concentrate on the point of view of Angela and the other half to focus on the argument of the Immigration Officer.
- Ask each group to think of three points that support their argument; this will form the basis for a mini debate. Initially each group should choose a spokesperson to argue all of the points that they have come up with. The groups will then have the opportunity to argue against all the points made by the opposing team; this is called the counter argument. Each group will then pick one member to conclude, bringing all the points together in order to complete the debate, and hopefully, find a winning argument.
- Split the group in half and ask one side to concentrate on the point of view of Angela and the other half to focus on the argument of the Immigration Officer.
- Ask the rest of the class to vote on which point of view they agree with most. If you do not have enough class members to create an audience for the debate, then you should take the role of chairperson and decide the winning team. If the class are casting a vote then possibly ask them to bear the following points in mind:
  - Who appeared to have the strongest, least flawed argument?
  - Who was most passionately, but in a controlled way, connected to their argument?
  - Who did you believe most when they were debating?
  - What did you think made a good debate, and what were the most successful debate strategies?

**Extension Questions**

- Do you understand that cultural differences and cultural similarities exist?
- What is your opinion on asylum seekers in Britain?
- Who did you believe most when they were debating?
- How would you feel if you were not welcome in a country and it was too dangerous to return to your place of origin?
In Our Own Words – Immigration

Overview

MOJDOM@COVENTRY.CO.UK

Written & Devised by Tracey Street and the Senior Youth Theatre
First performed on Tuesday 13th July 2010 at the Belgrade Theatre Coventry.

Overview

MOJDOM@COVENTRY.CO.UK explores the experiences of young people from Poland who have travelled to Coventry since their country joined the EU in 2004. We witness the meeting of two communities, the established Polish community, present in Coventry since World War II, and the emerging community of new arrivals.

Keywords

Growing-up, Communities, Forgiveness

National Curriculum Links

Citizenship

Appreciating identities are complex, and change over time and are informed by different understandings of what it means to be a citizen in the U.K.

Exercise 1 - Exploring what the character wants to achieve in saying a line.

Know what the term objective means when acting.
Understand how and why a character may say one thing but think another.
Learn how to develop a character further than the script by justifying acting decisions and using skills of inference.

Exercise 2 - Empowering young people to make their own choices by looking at the exercise 'forum theatre'.

Know what the definition of the term 'Forum Theatre' is.
Understand the importance of viewing a given situation from an alternative standpoint.
Learn how to analyse a situation with a consideration of at least one other perspective.

Exercise 3 - Deepening understanding of dilemmas facing young people by exploring the internal feelings of a character.

Know that people are more than two dimensional.
Understand that it is necessary to take the time to consider underlying themes before making a judgement.
Learn how to use empathy in order to analyse the complexities of a given character.

Brief Synopsis

We meet our main character, Jarek, in his bedroom in Wroclaw, Poland. He awakes suddenly to a knock on his door. Jarek's two friends Matjek and Rishu rush in and greet him in bed.

Jarek tells his friends that he has failed to get into university. Rishu explains that he is about to lose his job and Matjek says how his girlfriend Kasia is talking of marriage and settling down. They want to get away from Wroclaw. They decide to move to Britain, Coventry, to make a new start and fulfil their dreams.

Jarek has the difficult task of saying goodbye to his mother. His mother makes him promise that he will contact her everyday and that he will go and find the local church as soon as he arrives in Coventry.

Jarek and Rishu arrive at the bus station. Matjek is nowhere to be seen. Rishu explains that Matjek's girlfriend refused to let him go. The two remaining men decide this will not affect their adventure.

After 28 hours on a bus, Jarek and Rishu arrive in Coventry. At the bus station Jarek meets a young Polish girl called Ania. He asks Ania if she would show him around Coventry. She agrees and they swap numbers.

Jarek and Rishu make for the local pub. They attempt to join in with some of the conversations that the locals are having, but after listening to the regional accents, they realise they may need to develop their English skills further.

Ania, Rishu and Jarek are having a drink. Jarek is on the floor, having drunk far too much. Ania asks him to stop, or even just slow down. He agrees to slow down for Ania.

Ania, Rishu and Jarek walk into Coventry's Polish Centre. The priest quickly realises that Jarek has no plan and no money to survive. After a few strong words, the priest offers Jarek a job.

Jarek and Ania meet again at a party. Their relationship has progressed and they are already in love with each other.

Back at work, the priest is forced to address an issue with Jarek's conduct. Jarek has had an argument with an older member of the Polish community whilst working at the Centre. Jarek walks out in frustration after telling the priest that he feels the community needs to evolve and embrace the twenty first century.

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The next day at the Polish Community Centre, Jarek is late and very hung-over. He finds it difficult to do his job, the priest offers him a job.

Ania and Jarek have a massive argument about his drinking and drug taking. Ania decides she can't take it anymore. After Jarek refuses to stop, she ends their relationship.

Jarek meets with Rishu, and drinks some more. He ends up in a fight with three men from Coventry. He is arrested. After a night in the cells, Jarek is met by Ania. Ania questions how he has got himself into this situation and why he no longer follows the dreams that he came to England to realise. She kisses him and leaves.

Ania asks him to stop, or even just slow down. He agrees to slow down for Ania.

Jarek goes back to see the priest at the Polish Community Centre. Jarek apologises and admits that he has made mistakes. Jarek asks for his job back and the priest is happy to have him.

Jarek creates a website to help Polish arrivals find their way in a new city, Coventry. The play closes with a surprise party for Jarek. He has settled in and begun to fulfil his ambition, and is providing a service in the city, one much needed for stability and community cohesion.
Exercise 1 - Exploring what the character wants to achieve in saying a line.

Starter
Ask a member of the group at random to explain what they want to achieve by the end of the session. This may be anything, big or small. Ask them what they want to achieve by the time they leave school at 4 o’clock. Request they then physicalise this objective, making the private objective of the student public.

Main
Ask the group to split into pairs and read the scene below.

Jarek, very drunk, comes outside. Ania follows him out, they are arguing.

Music and dancing fades under scenes

JAREK: Get off me! I'm fine. Zostaf Mie! (Leave me alone)

ANIA: I'm not going anywhere. I'm getting you a taxi. You need to go home…

JAREK: Look if you want to go, go…

ANIA: I'm not leaving you here like this! Have you seen the state you're in?

JAREK: I'm going back in…

ANIA: No you're not!

JAREK: You can't stop me!

ANIA: You said all this would stop Jarek, you said all this would change.

JAREK: All what????

ANIA: You said all this would stop Jarek, you said all this would change.

JAREK: All this!!!! You promised me!

ANIA: You just want to stop me having fun… I don't know why I even bring you…

JAREK: (Exasperated) You know what? I don't care anymore. Go out with Rishu and get drunk every night! Drink as much as you like, take as many drugs as you like! But d'you know what? Just stay away from me… (apart she starts to leave)

ANIA: You're being an idiot!

JAREK: Look I'll do what I want OK? I'm sick of people telling me what to do and how to live my life. It's all bullshit! I'm not in Poland! I'm in Coventry and I'll live here how I want.

ANIA: You said all this would stop Jarek, you said all this would change.

JAREK: (Ania, no come back please. Ania, I'm sorry. Please come back, I'm really sorry!) (Ania can ad lib throughout Jarek trying to stop her)

Ask the students to perform the scene, but declare before every line an objective, a phrase that encapsulates what the character wants to achieve by saying the line.

Acting Objectives
The concept of an acting objective is to give one actor a purpose for saying a line or acting a scene. In everyday life we all have objectives to fulfil, whether that is to buy a paper or split up with a partner. The actor’s objective, in this case, will be spoken before a line (e.g. the line is “I really love you and I want to be with you”; the actor’s objective behind this might be ‘forgive me for what I’ve done!’) Objectives will hopefully give your students a reason for saying the line and an understanding that in real life we all have an objective but it is not always immediately apparent from the words we use.

This will give the pupils a reason for saying the line, and give the audience an insight into the inner workings of the character.

Ask the students to consider what people are actually thinking when they say something.

What do they want to achieve by saying what they say?

Exercise 2 - Empowering young people to make their own choices by looking at the exercise ‘Forum Theatre’.

MojDom@Coventry.co.uk tackles many issues and challenges that affect young people today. Using improvisation and ‘Forum Theatre’ can help students to reflect on the issues in a safe environment.

Forum Theatre
Forum Theatre actively encourages the audience to get involved. There are many versions of this theatre style, but for our purposes we are going to focus on one. The actors perform a scene. When an audience member has the urge to change the scene, or wants to make a suggestion, they may say ‘stop’. The word ‘stop’ allows the audience member to then take the place, with your permission, of an actor and continue the scene with a new direction. Anyone may say ‘stop’ at any time. This exercise requires the people taking part to be very flexible.

Give the students one of the following scenarios in pairs. Ask each pair to improvise their scenario in front of the rest of the group, first without interruption and then a second time following the framework outlined above.

Scenario 1
Characters – Young person, Manager.

You turn up at work half an hour late after a heavy night out. You have to convince your boss to keep you despite him being very unhappy with your lateness.
In Our Own Words – Immigration

Education Pack & Scripts

Scenario 2
Characters - Young man 1, Young man 2.
You go out on a night out and your friend offers you some white powder. He says it will make you feel great. You have to choose whether you take it or decline his offer, risking your friendship.

Scenario 3
Characters - Young man, Young girl.
You have been offered to go on a night out by your friend but your girlfriend asks you to slow down and consider not drinking. You have to choose whether to go out or stay in and remain sober.

Scenario 4
Characters - Priest and Young person.
You used to only drink when you were having a good time with your friends. In recent times you have begun to drink alone, and now you are beginning to rely on drink to get through the day. You’re not sure who to tell, but you go and see your local priest and decide there whether to ask him/her for help or not.

Scenario 5
Characters - Young person 1, Young person 2, Man in pub.
You have recently come over to England from Poland and you know nobody. You walk into a pub and attempt to join in with some locals conversation. You find it very difficult to understand what they’re talking about, but you really want to make friends.

Following the improvisations, ask the students to look over these Assessment Criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I contribute and add to the improvisation.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can create an interesting and believable character.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I commit to the improvisation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I use the space well.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I use my whole body when I create a character.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I develop relationships with fellow actors.</td>
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</table>

Exercise 3 - Deepening understanding of dilemmas facing young people by exploring the internal feelings of a character.

MojDom@coventry.co.uk tells the story of a young man being pulled in different directions by the temptations presented to him. Ask the students to read the scene below and consider what might be going on subconsciously for the character of Jarek.

Jarek arrives with shades on, looking seriously the worse for wear. The priest is sitting waiting at the computer.

KSIADZ: You’re late.
JAREK: Yeah I know, sorry.
KSIADZ: That’s the second time this week.
JAREK: OK I’m here now.
KSIADZ: Have you been drinking?
JAREK: What?
KSIADZ: I can smell it. There is a time for work and a time for play.
JAREK: I’m here for work.
KSIADZ: Look at the state of you. You’re a disgrace.
JAREK: OK...
KSIADZ: You think you’re working like that?
JAREK: Ok you’re telling me off, I get it...
KSIADZ: I’m telling you to come to work.
JAREK: I am at work!
KSIADZ: On time!

Ask students, in partners, to rehearse and perform the above scene. When they perform the scene for the rest of the class, the audience are allowed to stop the action and tap a character that they would like to know more about. The student playing the character then has to proclaim out loud, what is going on inside the character.

Extension Exercise
Read the scene above and think about what the characters are saying. Anything that is explicit and said out loud write on the top of the iceberg. Think about what the characters may be feeling. All these thoughts should be written on the bottom of the iceberg. This is the subtext of the piece.

Do this for both of the characters.

Once this is completed, ask two volunteers to perform the scene. The audience (the rest of the class) can say ‘stop’ at any point, and ask what the characters are feeling above or below the water.

An A4 size image is on page 16 of this education pack for photocopying for your students.
LOST & FOUND
Written & devised by Acting Up with Orla O’Connor and Lisa Byrne
First performed Monday 1st July 2010 at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry.

Brief Overview
Lost and Found explores the notion that belonging is not about where you were born, but where you settle and make your home. The play follows the journey of Keira, a mixed race girl living in Coventry. Keira heads back to Ireland to see her ill Grandfather who has never approved of her racial origins. The piece was developed from interviews with both first and second generation members of the Coventry Irish community. A recurring theme of the interviews was a feeling of mixed identity and of not quite knowing where home is.

Key Words
Body Language, Identity, Social Status, Belonging

National Curriculum Links
Drama within English
Using inventive approaches to making meaning, taking risks, playing with language and using it to create new effects.

Exercise 1 - Exploring physical performance, and its importance in theatre.
Know what the term ‘physicality’ means.
Understand how important the body is in theatre.
Learn how to create a character physically and use your body to convey meaning.

Exercise 2 - Understanding that you do not need a script to create a piece of theatre.
Know that a story can have different interpretations.
Understand the devising method the ‘Acting-Up’ group, and the directors, used to create Lost and Found.
Learn how to make a story into a piece of theatre by changing the form of a text.

Exercise 3 - Exploring the idea of status.
Know what the term status means in relation to social status.
Understand that every scene has to have characters of varying status for it to be credible.
Learn how to play a variety of statuses in a given scenario.

Brief Synopsis
It is St Patrick’s day in Coventry and Breda is at home getting ready for the night ahead. Suddenly there is a knock on the door. It is her brother Sean. He wants to talk.

Breda has a daughter, Keira, 17, living with her in Coventry. She is mixed race, her mother Breda originally from Ireland, her father originally from the Caribbean. She has visited neither of the home countries of her parents. Keira is out with her friends at the St Patrick’s Day parade. To celebrate St Patrick’s Day, they are indulging in a can of Guinness, a new taste for them all. Keira receives a text from her mother asking her to come home.

Keira and her friends head back to the house for the regular St Patrick’s Day party. However, on arrival, they discover that there is to be no party this year, so they leave. Breda, Sean and Keira are left to talk. Breda tells Keira that they are unexpectedly going to Ireland for a few months. This angers Keira. She has made plans - she has college and even a date.

Breda informs Keira that her Grandad is really ill and Uncle Sean simply cannot cope on his own.

They travel to Ireland and Breda is re-united with her father, whom she hasn’t seen for seventeen years. He is happy to see her, but bitters about her lack of contact over the years. Keira comes in to see her Grandad for the first time. He refuses to talk to her, he doesn’t want a mixed race granddaughter.

Keira and Breda head to the pub to meet Uncle Sean and his children. Keira and her cousins are left outside to talk, they chat about how grumpy their Grandad can be. It materialises that Breda, Keira’s mother, ran away to England after her father found out she was pregnant with a black man’s child.

Keira heads back to her Grandad’s house and confronts him about the last seventeen years. She tells him everything she thinks about his behaviour, which is not positive. Breda hears the argument and comes in to diffuse the situation. Keira storms out after being told by her mother to leave.

Breda and Uncle Sean discuss what will be best for Grandad in the long run. He does not like other people making decisions on his behalf.

On Keira’s return from shopping she finds herself alone with her Grandad in the house. She goes to her room where she starts singing. When he speaks to her about it, Keira immediately thinks he wants her to be quiet, but her Grandad tells her that her Grandma also enjoyed singing. Keira’s Grandad goes onto to tell her how she reminded him of her Grandma – the way her Grandma could put him in his place, and the songs she sang. An immediate connection is formed between the two characters.

Grandad finally admits to Breda that Keira is a credit to her and that he regrets not seeing her grow up. He asks Breda for forgiveness. After quoting her mother “What’s past is past”, Breda forgives her father.

Keira asks her mum why she had not been completely honest with her over the years. Breda tells Keira that her Grandad has ‘mellowed’. That back then, if she were to have stayed in Ireland, Keira’s Grandad would have made her give her baby up for adoption. This information takes Keira aback. She also questions why her Dad did not stay. Breda tells Keira that he had to go back to his home, but that they had had some wonderful times. Breda then tells Keira that her Grandad is about to die. Keira feels sad as she has only just begun to get to know him.
Interview with Lisa Byrne, Co-Director Lost & Found

How was the process of devising and writing the script?

We had quite a few interviews with second generation Irish immigrants. There was one girl in particular who was born in England and went back to Ireland to live for a time. She found it very difficult. She ended up coming back to England, that was the story that started to formulate the idea for the play.

I specifically remember one session, it was one of those sessions where you just go off on a complete tangent. By the end we had found the main characters and the narrative for the piece, all the elements were there but weren't formulated in any kind of structure.

Having written and devised the play, what do you think are the main themes?

The central character ended up being half Caribbean on her dad’s side and her mum was an unwed woman in Ireland in an inter-racial relationship. I think there are a lot of things to be said about that, especially with the Irish mentality. I think it’s very political in terms of the way racism still exists in older generation Ireland. We see it as racist, they don’t, it’s maybe the way they were brought up. I feel the play is tackling these issues. We wanted to look at it from the second generation point of view, from Keira’s perspective. The Grandad maybe the way they were brought up.

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You touched on race as an issue and also identity in terms of Keira’s character. How did the actors connect with these themes?

In terms of identity I think they have all had issues with knowing who they are. Two of the group members were immigrants to Coventry, so they knew it from the point of view of members of an incoming community. We did a lot of work on what it feels like to be the new community coming in and how natives deal with that situation. This was kind of where the character of Keira was born.

What was the biggest struggle in rehearsals?

They didn’t really know a lot about Ireland, and our interviews came quite late on in the process. The cast had ideas but they didn’t know enough background information to work that into their improvisations. That made the process quite tricky.

What was the highlight?

They really got under the skin of the subject, it really showed in their performance. They understood the themes, what it was about and the relationship between Keira and her Grandad. They got to grips with the eventual acceptance of Keira by her Grandad.

Do you feel they had ownership of the piece because they had created it?

They knew and understood the characters - in that respect they had ownership over it. It wasn’t just a script they were given.

Exercise 1 - Exploring physical performance, and its importance in theatre.

Starter

As humans we communicate mostly through body language.

Body Language is silent (non-verbal) messages communicated through the sender’s body movements, facial expressions, voice tone and loudness, etc. In social psychology, all behaviour in the presence of another person is considered communication.

Ask the students to think about how we might tell someone without speaking what we want. Ask the class to consider a request, something they need to ask for. This might be a drink, to turn the lights off, to get a chair, etc.

Two volunteers should stand in the middle of the space and improvise a short scene. Label the volunteers ‘A’ and ‘B’. ‘A’ should, without speaking, ask ‘B’ to fulfil one request using only body language.

When the starter has drawn to an end, ask the group to consider what silent body language strategies worked best and what did not work as well. Ask the class to remember these successful strategies as they move on to the main exercise.

Main

Split the group in half and ask them to get into pairs. Give one half of the group ‘Scene 1’ and the other half ‘Scene 2’. Ensure that the separate halves do not listen to the initial readings of the scenes. Ask the students to think about how they can change their physicality in relation to the character they are playing.

Scene 1

Keira - 17, mixed race (born in Coventry), has Caribbean roots on her father’s side, and Irish roots on her mother’s side.

Bill - Keira’s Grandad, fairly old and very ill.

Keira has recently discovered that her Grandad, whom has not been part of her life since her birth, is racist and does not like the idea of having a mixed-raced granddaughter in his life.

Bill is sitting in his chair reading the paper. Keira enters. She stands for a moment with her fists clenched, staring at him.

KEIRA: You stupid, twisted old man. (Bill looks up) So you don’t like me because of who my dad is hey?!

Well tough. There is nothing your grumpiness or rudeness can do to change the fact that I am your granddaughter. (Slapping her uriets) we have the same blood!

Do you think I want to be here?
BILL: Do you think I want you here?

KEIRA: We are here to help you. If mum and me hadn’t come over you would be rotting away in your chair.

BILL: Don’t speak to me like this.

KEIRA: Why not? You need to know what a small-minded horrible old man you are!

**Scene 2**

Keira - 17, mixed race (born in Coventry), has Caribbean roots on her father’s side, and Irish roots on her mother’s side.

Bill - Keira’s Grandad, fairly old and very ill.

Keira returns to the house with some food shopping. She is alone in the house with her Grandad. Whilst she’s unpacking the bags, her Grandad joins her in the kitchen. Keira ignores him and continues putting away the shopping. She puts the kettle on.

BILL: I’ll have one of those if it’s going.

Keira begrudgingly gets another cup

BILL: I heard you... the other night... singing.

KEIRA: What? I can’t sing now?

BILL: No, no... I don’t... ah Jesus. You have a lovely voice.

Keira turns back round to face him

KEIRA: Oh.

BILL: Your... er... your grandmother used to sing that song.

KEIRA: Did she?

BILL: Ah she had a good set of lungs on her your grandmother. Bit like yourself.

KEIRA: Mum sang it to me when I was little.

After reading the scenes, ask each partnership to attempt to create a silent performance of the scene. Ask the students to consider how they may use their body and facial expressions to communicate what the characters are saying.

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**Exercise 2 - Understanding that you do not need a script to create a piece of theatre.**

**Starter**

Ask the class to think about their best personal story. Ask them to think about a story that is interesting and exciting but also appropriate to be told in a classroom. The story could have come from any time in their lives. Ask each student to create a still image which symbolises the conclusion of the story.

**Main**

The Belgrade Theatre’s ‘Acting Up’ group set out to create a piece of drama that tells the story of Irish settlers and race issues between generations. The group created the text by interviewing local Irish natives who have settled in Coventry. They then used the settlers’ accounts to create the script.

Ask the group to break into partners. Label the partners ‘A’ and ‘B’. Ask ‘A’’s to tell ‘B’’s the story they considered in the starter. Tell ‘B’’s it is important that they listen carefully, as after ‘B’’s have finished, they will be asked to repeat the story to the rest of the group in the first person, making the journey their own and creating a new piece of theatre. Ask the group to look and tick off this Assessment Criteria in order to make the stories the best they can be:
In Our Own Words – Immigration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I stay in character for the whole performance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use space well.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen to my classmate(s).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my body in performance in order to enhance the story.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I co-operate with others.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

When the groups have completed the Self Assessment Criteria ask them to explain to their partner their justifications for marking as they have.

**Exercise 3 - Exploring the idea of status.**

**Starter**

Ask the group to walk around the space occupying the whole room. Ask the group to think about what status means to them.

**Status** is the position of an individual in relation to another or others, especially in regard to social or professional standing.

As they walk, you will shout out numbers that they have to respond to physically. Ask them to consider number one as being the lowest status they could possibly be and number ten the highest. All the numbers in between should be varying degrees of status from one to ten.

This should demand that they begin to consider how people of differing statuses might physically move and interact.

**Main**

Ask the class to break into groups of three.

To denote who has the highest status, ask the groups to rehearse and perform the scene below whilst passing an object, or stealing an object. The person with the 'object of power' is the character with the highest status at that point in the scene.

You may ask the audience to call out when they feel the 'object of power' is not with the right character.

This exercise may also be reversed for the person with the lowest status on the stage.

**Scene 1**

Keira - 15, mixed race (born in Coventry), has Caribbean roots on her father's side, and Irish roots on her mother's side.

Bill - Keira’s Grandad, fairly old and very ill.

Keira has recently found that her Grandad, whom has not been part of her life since birth, is a racist and does not like the idea of having a mixed raced granddaughter in his life.

Bill is sitting in his chair reading the paper. Keira enters. She stands for a moment with her fists clenched staring at him.

**KEIRA:** You stupid, twisted old man (Bill looks up). So you don’t like me because of who my dad is hey!?

Well tough there is nothing your grumpiness or rudeness can do to change the fact that I am your granddaughter. (Slapping his wrist) we have the same blood!

**BILL:** Do you think I want to be here?

**KEIRA:** Do you think I want you here?

**BILL:** We are here to help you. If mum and me hadn't come over, you would be rotting away in your chair.

**KEIRA:** Don't speak to me like this.

**BILL:** Why not! You need to know what a small-minded horrible old man you are! (Breda enters)

**BREDA:** Keira stop, stop it

**KEIRA:** Mum, he is unbelievable. Why didn’t you tell me he was a racist? Hey? You knew he hated me.

**BREDA:** No I didn’t want... (Interrupting)

**KEIRA:** Tell me the truth?

**BREDA:** I... I didn’t want... oh Keira love it’s... [Bill turns up the T.V.]

**KEIRA:** Turn that off, I’m talking to you (she grabs the remote and throws it at him) [Bill grabs Keira]

**BREDA:** Get out! Get out!

**KEIRA:** What? Your sticking up for him after all he’s done?

**BREDA:** Go! (Keira storms out)

**Extension Exercise**

Ask the students to perform the scene again but allow the status to vary, giving different characters the highest or lowest status where it may not be appropriate. Challenge the students to play the same status.
Extension Questions

- Is physicality important when communicating with someone? Why is it important?
- How would you feel if you were excluded because of the colour of your skin? Has this ever happened to you?
- What does the word ‘status’ mean?
- What demonstrates our ‘status’?
- Can we create theatre from our own stories?

LOOK WID YU EYE

Written by Daniel Christie
First performed on Tuesday 14th July 2000 at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

Brief Overview

Daniel Christie was keen to explore his Jamaican roots with his new play Look Wid Yu Eye. Interviewing a variety of people of Jamaican heritage, he was able to construct this social commentary on what it may have been like for Jamaican settlers in the 1950s.

Look Wid Yu Eye is set in 1950s Coventry. It follows the story of Winston, a black Jamaican man, who has recently arrived in England.

Key Words

Relationships, Love, Racism, Cultures, Tolerance, Alienation

National Curriculum Link

Geography
Appreciating the differences and similarities between people, places, environments and cultures to inform an understanding of societies and economies.

Exercise 1 - Understanding that we are all, in some way, diverse.

- Know what the term ‘diversity’ means.
- Understand that we are all, in some way, ‘diverse’.
- Learn how to use stage directions to influence our performance with a focus on ‘cultural diversity’.

Exercise 2 - Exploring inclusion and what it means to belong

- Know that the term ‘belonging’ has no simple definition.
- Understand the reasons why it can sometimes take time for an individual to fit into society.
- Learn how to deal with people that won’t accept you using interpretative skills.

Exercise 3 - Understanding the dangers of stereotyping.

- Know what the term ‘stereotype’ means.
- Understand the dangers of ‘stereotyping’ in society.
- Learn how to use empathy in order to appreciate how ‘stereotyping’ manifests itself in today’s society.
Plot Synopsis

The play begins in a dingy bed and breakfast in the heart of Coventry.

Having only just arrived in the UK, Winston has little money, no clue where his friends are and no family. His main priority is to find a bed for the night. He enquires of a Bed and Breakfast, but is greeted with a barrage of racist stereotypes and is declined a place to stay.

Leaving feeling alienated, Winston literally bumps into a girl on the street, knocking all of her possessions to the floor. The collision compels them to stop and talk. The girl is called Wendy, and knows the difficulties of finding a place to stay as she is also from the West Indies. Wendy thinks she may like Winston more than just as a friend. She invites Winston to come and stay at her house until he finds his feet.

The play moves to Wendy’s home which she shares with a group of female friends. Her friends are none too pleased with Wendy, the sensible member of their group, bringing back a relative stranger to their very small living space. But after chatting to Winston, the women realise that they are in no danger. They offer Winston a drink, but he declines.

The following morning the others have all gone off to work and Winston and Wendy are left in the room alone. Winston tells Wendy he is searching for his childhood sweetheart, Shirley, who left Jamaica a few years earlier. This upsets Wendy, but in a bid to keep their newly formed friendship, Wendy agrees to help Winston find his lost love.

Winston, Wendy and her friends head to a dance. The friends find it amusing to spike Winston’s drink with shots of alcohol. Winston ends up a little merry and takes a blonde girl outside. In the morning Wendy confronts Winston about this, Winston pleads his innocence and, in a bid to hide her jealousy, Wendy tells Winston she has located Shirley.

Wendy takes Winston to the place where Shirley is working. Shirley is delighted to see him for his innocence and, in a bid to hide her jealousy, Wendy tells Winston she has located Shirley.

Winston goes to a bar to drown his sorrows. In the bar he meets two men, Paul, of Irish origin and the bartender, who is white British. The topic of conversation turns to the new arrivals in Britain. The two men appreciate a diverse society, which raises Winston’s increasing like he does not belong in England.

Wendy takes Winston to the place where Shirley is working. Shirley is delighted to see him but reveals that she has found a new man, a white man. Winston is heartbroken, and feels increasingly like he does not belong in England.

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What do you feel the script is trying to say?

The script says that love isn’t necessarily a straightforward thing. The script also shows that there are good people in the world, who will rally round and help you when you are in need.

What do you think about the race issues?

The play does go into the race issues at the beginning when Winston first arrives in the country. The Bed and Breakfast owners refuse him a bed. They have a sign that reads ‘No Dogs, No Irish and No Blacks’. But Christie deals with this well by having the white characters in the bar at the end of the play. They show the good points about immigration and the good things that immigrants are doing for the country. So it had a nice balance. While Christie was writing, I told him to ensure that it’s not all one sided - be truthful. We tried to make sure that that came across.

What were the cast like?

(Laughs) Truthfully! They were good to work with, though at times they were tricky. One of the main issues with my cast was punctuality and time keeping. We didn’t have a main character until very late on which made rehearsals quite difficult, not only frustrating for me, but also for the rest of the cast. When you rehearse without a main character, it makes it hard to do everything you want to do. Sometimes we spent quite a bit of time re-running things, which is completely necessary in rehearsals - you need to get everything as good as possible - but for the cast it was frustrating.

It’s a strange process, you always think you know what it’s going to be like, then its not. I’ve worked with the cast before and they have made a big journey since then. When we first worked together it was chaos. This production wasn’t. Rehearsals are rehearsals, so there are always going to be tricky points. Stick to the schedule, that’s what people need to do.

The theatre, B2, is not the most conventional space, how did you deal with that as a director?

I like the space. Anna Lewis who designed the set, took suggestions from everyone and then she came back with an idea… I thought, ‘cool this is the set’. We knew then what we had to work with. Once we had the design we couldn’t really do much outside that idea. It worked well for me because I managed to use the whole stage. If I needed to isolate a scene, I could focus the lights on a specific area.

We didn’t rehearse in the actual space, so it was hard for the cast to see what it would be like, and what I was trying to do. I would give direction and they would wander off. They’re used to playing in the space. Transferring from the rehearsal room to the theater wasn’t too difficult, they could then see what I was trying to do, and where they couldn’t go.

Daniel Christie wrote the play and also took the part of ‘Young Winston’. How was it to work with someone with such an in depth knowledge of the piece?

It was useful. I didn’t need to do that much with him in terms of his character, which was good as I only had two weeks to work with him. That was really beneficial, I didn’t need to sit down with him and explain the emotions and what the character was going through because he had written it.

Interview with Leon Phillips, Director Look Wid Yu Eye

What did you think of the script when you first read it?

When I first saw it? I thought it was a good script. It wasn’t in its full form. I could see it needed some work, but I could certainly see where it was going. The main character hadn’t decided which of the girls he was going to choose. We couldn’t leave it like that - the audience would be like, ‘what?’. But when we first got the script I could see it had potential.
**Exercise 1 - Understanding that we are all, in some way, diverse.**

**Starter**

Ask the students what they think the term ‘diversity’ means.

**Diversity** is the understanding that each individual is unique, recognising our individual differences.

Ask the pupils to then describe one unique quality about themselves - something that makes them different to everyone else in the room, that makes them special.

**Main**

Ask the group to read this stage direction from the play in groups of three. Ask them to consider the idea of diversity when reading.

A Bed and Breakfast reception area in Coventry, late 1950s. It is a Thursday evening. Deirdre and her husband Tony own the dusty, cluttered, over-decorated, little place with damp stained wallpaper. But there is a big picture of the queen on one of the walls.

Tony is off stage bang something with a hammer. He is repairing floorboards in the office behind the desk. Bright and cheerful Deirdre, is in charge of the reception desk. Something about how she uses her body and pronounces her words gives us the blatant impression she believes she is somewhere posh.

The front door jingles a bell as it swings open letting in a strong audible gust of wind, symbolising the Windrush.

Enter Winston, fresh from Jamaica with a grip (suitcase) in each hand. He approaches the desk, tired and weary. He is angry, grumbling into his shirt collar in frustration.

**Extension Exercise**

After the students have created their own version of the script, ask them to read the actual text considering ‘racial diversity’. Has it changed over the last sixty years and if so, how?

**WINSTON:** The bloody cheek.

Deirdre’s face drops into disappointment when she realises her new customer is black

**DEIRDRE:** Not another one!

Winston arrives at the desk. He tidies his collar and repositions his pork-pie hat in two moves and smiles patronisingly.

**DEIRDRE:** What do you want?

**WINSTON:** Tell me you have a room fi me. And before you answer, I already know I’m a black man! Is you people call us fi come ya!

**DEIRDRE:** We have no room for you here.

**WINSTON:** How you mean fi me? You don’t know me.

**DEIRDRE:** I know your sort. Just sling your hook.

**WINSTON:** I have money.

**DEIRDRE:** I don’t want your money.

**WINSTON:** Look man, if it’s even just for one night! I need to rest bad!

**DEIRDRE:** (Calls out) Tony!!

**WINSTON:** (Off Stage) What?

**DEIRDRE:** (Calls out) It’s another Sambo, and he wont listen to me!!

**TONY:** (Off Stage) Christ, hang on.

Tony storms onstage, brandishing a claw hammer. He threatens Winston with the tool. Winston uses one of his grips as a shield as he jumps backwards frightened. Then the shouting begins.

**WINSTON:** Is what you deh pon man? You mad?

**TONY:** Who do you think you’re shouting at, Darkie?

**WINSTON:** It’s just a room me want!

**TONY:** Jesus Christ, why won’t you Darkies learn?!

**WINSTON:** Learn what?!

**TONY:** No Dogs!
WINSTON: Me have no darg!
TONY: No Irish!
WINSTON: Me no Hirish!
TONY: No! Bloody! Blacks! That’s about you.

How does this compare to the scenes they have written themselves?

Go through this script and pick out places that you think ‘cultural diversity’ might not be accepted. Think about stereotypes and how people can make judgments before any words have been spoken.

Exercise 2 - Exploring inclusion and what it means to belong.

Starter

Start by asking the students to find a space on their own. Ask them to think about being safe, happy and comfortable. Ask them to think about a physicality that is all these things. Is this physicality open or closed? Is the physicality small or wide? Is the physicality high or low?

Ask the students to think about where they feel most comfortable and a place that they feel they belong, at school, at home, in the cinema, etc. Ask them to consider that particular place.

Request they walk around the room. When you say ‘stop’, they should get into a shape that they feel best represents the place they feel safest, or where they feel they belong. Go round the group and ask each student to describe their safe, and comfortable space.

Main

Look Wid Yu Eye was written based on interviews with the Caribbean community of Coventry. It is important when creating a text for theatre that the text is interesting for stage. This means that sometimes a writer will be forced to change locations, character names and the time period the story is set in.

Look at the extract of a transcribed interview below. Think about what may have alienated this person when they first came to England.

Since you’ve lived in the UK, have you experienced any discrimination?

Yes, about twice, but for me I don’t care what people think. I just see everybody as a person. I don’t care what you think about me. I just say what you say about me because that cannot hurt me. Right, I don’t worry about, you know, two person call me ‘black’, called me ‘nigger’. But this is a woman. Maybe a white boy wouldn’t get away with it, but because it’s a woman, you know, you just leave it you know. And what happened was, one of them was my ex wife and one of them was a lady at a pub, so you know, I didn’t do anything, I didn’t do anything. So that’s all the discrimination I get.

That’s the only discrimination?

In my face. But I know people do say it, because I’ve been on the bus and I see somebody sit beside a lady, the lady draw up like this (shows pulling back to draw away from him) and she’s like 95.

So she didn’t want to sit beside you?

I was like, you know, I just look in to her face and I say [makes noise with his teeth]. Because I’ve come in the bus, her seat is there, my seat is there, you know the bus, you have the passage here and she sits there and I sit there, she was like drawing away from me.

Ask the students to think about what the man in the transcript is saying and the story he is telling. Ask them to think about the following questions.

- How must he have been feeling as people drew away from him as he sat on the bus?
- What would it feel like to be in a foreign land where people don’t quite accept you?
- Have you ever been in the minority? If you have, what does that feel like?
- Do you want to be accepted in society? If so, why?

In groups, ask the students to think about how this scene might be performed physically, how they might create a representation of the transcript without speaking. How do they show the character’s feelings using only their ability to move to convey the meaning of the text?

Get them to consider the ‘Starter’ exercise in relation to the character in the transcript.

Does their concept of safety and feeling of belonging match that of the transcript?

Ask the students to think about what may have alienated this person when they first came to England.

Use these Success Criteria to guide the students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Success Criteria</th>
<th>Task if you have achieved it</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have shown the character to be physically responsive to the lady on the bus.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I have created a piece of physical theatre that tells a story.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the idea of belonging and that it can mean different things to different people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used my own experiences of belonging to influence my physical piece.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand where I feel I belong, where I feel safe and comfortable.</td>
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</table>

Ask the students to discuss the criteria above and their justifications for ticking the Success Criteria boxes.

Exercise 3 - Understanding the dangers of stereotyping.

Ask the group to consider the term ‘stereotype’.
**Stereotype** is a commonly held public belief about specific social groups or types of individuals. Stereotypes are standardised and simplified conceptions of groups based on some prior assumptions.

Shout out the following characters and ask the class to immediately create a physical and vocal representation of that character based upon their own opinion.

- A Cockney (person from London)
- A Northerner
- A French person
- An Irish Person
- A Jamaican
- A blonde
- An old age pensioner
- An asylum seeker

Discuss the meaning of the word ‘stereotype’ in light of this exercise.

Ask the class why we have stereotypes? Do we judge people immediately?

**Main**

Consider the extract from Exercise 1. Ask the group to explore what Deirdre and Tony’s opinion of Winston was. Get them to perform the scene in groups of three, but instead of Winston walking out of the Bed and Breakfast having been unsuccessful in securing a room, he has to persuade Tony and Deirdre to allow him to stay. The groups can start with the script and then finish by improvising a new ending. This should force the students to challenge stereotypes in the scene.

Use this Assessment Criteria to assess the students’ work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand what the term ‘stereotype’ means.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that stereotyping can be dangerous in society.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can create a piece of drama that is informative and teaches through its content.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I concentrate and stay focused when performing.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I help other actors in performance.</td>
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</table>

**Extension questions on the play as a whole.**

- How do you think the character of Winston felt when he arrived in Britain (in the 1950s)?
- How can we, as a society, be accepting of all cultures, and create a place that people feel they belong to?
- Do we want to be accepting of every culture? Where do we draw the line?
- What are the similarities and differences that exist in your class? How can we learn from the cultural differences that exist all around us?
- Are stereotypes a good thing, and do we all engage in stereotyping?
Brief Synopsis

We find Rustum and Gul hidden in a freight container in Calais on the last leg of their journey to the UK. Gul is becoming increasingly claustrophobic as a result of experiences on their long journey, and finds he can longer bear the confines of the boxes in the container.

This triggers a series of reflections on the situation back home and the journey this far, as Rustum desperately tries to convince his companion not to give them away this close to their final destination.

The first flashback involves Gul and Rustum being taunted by a Turkish guard on the border of Turkey and Greece. After being verbally abused by the guard and physically threatened by his dog, the two characters climb over the fence with twenty-nine other refugees gaining access to Turkey.

Rustum argues that Gul owes him for saving his life.

Gul says that despite this, after his experience of hiding in a graveyard, he can't face getting back into another box.

The second flashback follows their journey over a mountain path. The two men take it in turns to carry each other. Rustum questions how Gul can consider giving up after all they've been through together.

Gul explains that he now feels that he owes it to his family to go back home to Afghanistan to help them. Gul pulls out a picture of the mountains near their home, and the pair reminisce about the beauty of the landscape. Looking at the photograph, the two remember why they have tried so hard to get to Britain. They want to make money for their families to better the life of their children, the mood is suddenly optimistic again.

Gul agrees to climb back into the container box once more.

Two lorry drivers enter. They have heard voices and have come to investigate the possibility of stowaways. After finding no one, the drivers decide to turn the temperature down in order to drive out anyone who may be hiding in the containers. The lorry drivers leave.

Exercise 1, Understanding what the term ‘asylum seeker’ means.

Starter

Ask the pupils to explain what they think the term ‘asylum seeker’ means. Get them, in groups, to create a still image depicting the term ‘asylum seeker’.

Asylum Seeker / Refugee is someone outside the country of his or her nationality, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

Still Image

A group of performers create a living picture (which is still) to highlight a pivotal moment in a piece of theatre. The still image can be stand-alone or integrated into a play.

Ask the pupils to justify their images.

Main

Get the students to split into groups of three (Gul, Rustum and a director/assessor) and ask them to read through this extract from the play Earth is Hard, Heaven is Far.

GUL: I want peace for my country. For my children. For everyone. I love my country.

RUSTUM: Then why are you running away?

GUL: Because they imprisoned everyone in any way associated with the past. They beat us and tortured us. Said we were traitors. Collaborators. Western spies.

RUSTUM: So why are we giving up now? Saying take me back?

You don’t make sense. None of it makes sense. How was I so foolish to risk everything my family has worked for by getting mixed up with a headcase like you?

GUL: Because after running around, living in the dark, under the ground, clinging onto life like a wounded pig wallowing in mud, jumping at the sound of every siren, every cough and waiting to be arrested or shot at every turn - sleeping with one eye open - after all that, I now know that I would rather take my chances with the Taliban than go through any of this again.

RUSTUM: We are this close. I can almost smell the fish and chips. (Pause) Look as soon as we get into Dover we’ll get jobs, get set on our feet and then we can think about bringing our families over.

In groups of three, the pupils should attempt to stage the text. The director/assessor should guide the group, but also be able to offer a critique at the end of the session.

Use the director to level the performance, or ask the groups to perform and then hear feedback from the rest of the class.

The director might use these Assessment Criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They understand what an ‘asylum seeker’ is.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>They were able to plan and organise the drama.</td>
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<tr>
<td>They can concentrate and stay focused when performing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>They were able to consider the audience when performing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>They were loud enough for the audience to hear.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>They were able to give reasons for their suggestions.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Ask the students to create a still image, again depicting an asylum seeker or group of asylum seekers.

Ask the students to discuss the differences between their current images and the ones they created in the starter exercise.

**Extension Exercise**

Ask the students to identify why the character of Rustum wants to leave Afghanistan. Ask them if they have been in a situation where they have had no choice but to leave somewhere they love. This may be anywhere, possibly a primary school or a youth club.

Ask the students to get back into their original groups and create again their first still images representing ‘asylum seekers’. Ask the groups if they would now like to change their images based upon what they have learnt this session. Then ask the groups to incorporate these two images into their performance, demonstrating their learning.

**Exercise 2 - Understanding the dangers facing asylum seekers today.**

**Starter**

Ask each member of the group to write down on a piece of paper a problem that travelling without a passport or documents might have when attempting to get from one side of the world to the other. After they have all written their suspected obstacle, ask for a volunteer to play an illegal migrant who has no documentation.

Split the group into two teams, one team (Team A) that makes an active audience to the game (active by offering suggestions to the migrant) and one team (Team B) that blocks the migrant with their problems.

Team B should spread out across the room and act as a barrier to the illegal migrant. Every time our traveller meets someone, that person has to read out the problem written on their piece of paper. The migrant then needs to find a solution to each of these problems. The problem giver must only accept the solution if they feel that it is adequate.

Other members of the class in the active audience (Team A) can make suggestions if the migrant becomes stuck in one place.

Culture has various meanings but in this context we take it to mean the customs of a particular time or people.

**Extension Exercise**

Take a few scenarios that seemed to work well and ask two pupils to replay them with the traveller unable to speak, demonstrating the language barriers that asylum seekers may face.

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**Main**

Ask the group to consider this piece of text:

They both get into their separate hiding places. Gul binds some cloth together, puts it over his mouth and clamps his hands over the top. Following one last glance at Rustum, he nods his head, clasps his amulet and is entombed again. Rustum kisses his amulet and hides in the box.

LORRY DRIVER X: I know you’re in here! (He begins to hit the boxes with a crowbar).

LORRY DRIVER Y: I know you can hear me!

LORRY DRIVER X: No one’s here.

LORRY DRIVER Y: I heard voices.

LORRY DRIVER X: Voices? Where?

LORRY DRIVER Y: In my arse - where’d’ you think? In the bloody container.

LORRY DRIVER X: Maybe they -

LORRY DRIVER Y: Maybe you should pick up that crowbar.

LORRY DRIVER X: They’re in here - I can feel it.

LORRY DRIVER Y: Even if they’re here, what difference does it make? You gonna smash their head in with a crowbar?

LORRY DRIVER X: Now you’re talking.

LORRY DRIVER Y: There’s hundreds of boxes. We can’t check em all - we got deliveries.

Lorry Driver X Stops for a moment.

Look, why don’t you turn the temperature down. That’ll flush em out.

After the text has been read, ask the group to think about what it would be like to hide in a container whilst men look for you with crowbars. Ask the group to write these thoughts down in the form of a monologue.

**Monologue**

A speech made by one actor on the stage.
Ask the class to consider this Success Criteria when writing their monologue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Tick if you have achieved it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have written clearly and included an appropriate level of detail in my monologue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have written creatively, thinking about what the characters are feeling at this point in the play.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I studied the extract before and wrote as the characters may speak.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I used the two drivers scene in order to create a structure to my monologue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remembered to stick to a clear structure (Exposition (Drivers coming in), Action rising (the drivers looking for you), Climax (the drivers turning the temperature down), Falling (Drivers leave) and Resolution (what happens, you decide).)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I laid my text out like a script, so when I come to perform the piece it is easier to approach.</td>
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</table>

Ask the group to get into partners. In this partnership, the two students should swap monologues and perform each other’s. The partners can offer advice on the other’s monologue. Ask them to look at the Assessment Criteria in Exercise 1 to help them.

Exercise 3 - Empathising with asylum seekers today.

**Starter**

Go round the group and ask each of the students to describe briefly what they wish to achieve when they leave school. Go round again and ask the students what the barriers are to them achieving this goal.

**Main**

Ask the students to walk around the room, filling the space and not walking in a circle. Then ask them to begin to engage with other members of the group through eye contact. After they have achieved this, ask the students on their next encounter to explain their future goals. This should continue until they have shared their hopes and dreams with a substantial proportion of the group.

You then inform the students that due to a change in regime, they will be unable to reach their dreams. Ask a selection of the students what freedoms would have to be removed to prevent them from achieving their goals.

Ask the students to then continue walking around the room, but this time share on meetings the way this new lack of freedom makes them feel.

You are now going to ask the group to split.

Ask who in the group wishes to leave the country because of the new oppressive regime - ask them to stand to one side of the room. Inform them that if they do leave, there is a good chance that, if they are caught doing so, they will be executed. After escaping the new regime, if they find nowhere to settle, they may be sent back and persecuted for leaving their country. This may be punishable by execution.

The rest of the group, who decide to stay at home, should make their way to the other side of the room.

Split the class into smaller working groups made up of a mix of people who have decided to stay in the country and people who have decided to leave. Ask them, in these smaller groups, to improvise a short scene which shows when the asylum seekers leave.

- What do the families think?
- What are the reasons that the citizens of this country give for becoming asylum seekers?
- What do the families say in order to stop them, or do they encourage them?
- What are the asylum seekers’ plans?

Use these Success Criteria to help the drama:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Tick if you have achieved it</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am generous with others but also contribute to the improvisation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use a variety of ways to convey action, character, atmosphere and tension in my improvisation. I think about how I may use my voice and body to do this.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I attempt to improvise to some structure (I write some notes before I begin) and I remember not to lose track of the scene I am performing.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I make sure that the audience can hear everything I say by speaking clearly and with an appropriate volume.</td>
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**Extension questions**

- Do you understand why people are sometimes forced to flee their countries?
- Can you empathise with asylum seekers who come to Britain to seek refuge?
- What are your opinions on asylum seekers?
- Can you think of a similar situation, closer to home, where someone may be forced to escape their life?
- What is the personal cost of being an asylum seeker?
BRIT GRIT

Written by Hanzla Arif MacDonald
First Performed Monday 12th July 2010 at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry.

Brief Overview

Brit Grit was inspired by an interview with Hanzla Arif MacDonald’s grandmother who came from Pakistan to settle in Britain in the 1960s. What most struck MacDonald about the interview were his grandmother’s thoughts and feelings about what she felt made Britain so wonderful. So, he started to ask, what does it mean to be British in 2010? How do we define our identity? And how does the rest of the world view us?

Key Words

Community, Power, Jealousy

National Curriculum Links

Citizenship
Exploring the diverse national, regional, ethnic and religious cultures, groups and communities in the UK and the connections between them.

Objectives

Exercise 1 - Exploring ‘community’.

Know what the term ‘community’ entails.
Understand how we can be part of a community.
Learn how to create an argument through devised theatre using the opposing view points of Milada, from the play Brit Grit, and the view of Enoch Powell in his ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech (1968).

Exercise 2 - Understanding that people may have a different opinion of you internally to that which they show externally.

Know what the term ‘conscience corridor’ means.
Understand that people may have a different opinion of you internally than they show externally.
Learn how to add theatrical devices to a scene, such as ‘conscience corridor’.

Exercise 3 - Exploring social cohesion through drama.

Know what the term ‘cohesion’ means in the context of society.
Understand that we are all connected in some way.
Learn how to identify connections and cohesion through the medium of drama.

Brief Synopsis

Brit Grit starts sometime in the year 3970AD in the audition waiting room of a television talent contest, ‘Mrs Mostest Britishest’.

We find out from the judges that they are looking for someone to undertake a top secret mission in order to secure the nation’s safety. However this is no easy feat.

Detrimentum, the brains behind the contest, explains how they are living in a ‘broken society’ and how they have lost all sense of being British. So until now their search for ‘Mrs Mostest Britishest’ has been fruitless.

The last contestant enters. The final hope. After a tension filled performance, Milada, the Pork Pie Whisperer, is able to convince the judges that she is indeed sufficiently British. Milada is taken by Detrimentum to be informed of her mission. Detrimentum explains that she will need to travel back in time to find the first generation of her family to live in the UK.

He tells her that her relative will be marked out by the ‘black cloth of destiny’, and that she will be the key to discovering the ‘secret to British values’. Detrimentum gives Milada a pill which enables her to time travel. Sirleaf and Kleina, two unsuccessful candidates, who are jealous of Milada’s mission, grab onto her just before she swallows the pill, ensuring that they follow her on her journey back in time.

The action quickly moves to a street in the year 1968. There are two stalls, a Grocer’s and a florist’s whose name is Teddy. A young woman approaches the stall. Her name is Yasmin. She buys some vegetables, but accidentally drops a black shawl on the ground as she leaves. Milada arrives just at this moment, and immediately spies the shawl on the ground. Thinking this may be the ‘black cloth of destiny’, Milada enquires who the shawl belongs to. As Yasmin has already left, Milada goes to look for her, shawl in hand. Sirleaf and Kleina arrive at the market as she leaves. They become embroiled in a quarrel with Teddy and the Grocer in which the men threaten to call the police.

Detrimentum has created a way to communicate with Milada through the medium of Hologram. The pair catch up on the events so far and Detrimentum confirms that Milada is indeed in possession of the ‘black cloth of destiny’.

Milada heads off on her mission and it is not long before she encounters Yasmin. Yasmin and Milada speak about Yasmin’s heritage, where she has come from and what her family do. Milada finds that Yasmin is of Pakistani descent, and enjoys the sense of community she finds living in 1960s Britain.

We find out from the judges that they are looking for someone to undertake a top secret mission in order to secure the nation’s safety. However this is no easy feat.

Detrimentum, the brains behind the contest, explains how they are living in a ‘broken society’ and how they have lost all sense of being British. So until now their search for ‘Mrs Mostest Britishest’ has been fruitless.

The last contestant enters. The final hope. After a tension filled performance, Milada, the Pork Pie Whisperer, is able to convince the judges that she is indeed sufficiently British. Milada is taken by Detrimentum to be informed of her mission. Detrimentum explains that she will need to travel back in time to find the first generation of her family to live in the UK.

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Milada is struck by the importance of community and begins to get used to the idea of staying in the past. Yasmin invites Milada to live at her house.

At that moment the local VIP, whose arrival Teddy and the Grocer have been preparing for, is announced as Conservative MP Enoch Powell. As the blackout comes he begins to deliver his 'Rivers of Blood' speech.

**Exercise 1 - Exploring ‘community’**

**Starter**

Ask the group to consider the idea of ‘community’ and what it means to them. In smaller groups, ask them to create still images of what ‘community’ means in today’s society. After the groups have completed their images, ask the students to share their work one group at a time. The rest of the class should comment and attempt to decipher the images of ‘community’.

**Main**


Ask the class to read through this short extract of Powell’s speech:

A week or two ago I fell into conversation with a constituent, a middle-aged, quite ordinary working man employed in one of our nationalised industries.

After a sentence or two about the weather, he suddenly said: “If I had the money to go, I wouldn’t stay in this country.” I made some deprecatory reply to the effect that even this government wouldn’t last for ever; but he took no notice, and continued: “I have three children, all of them been through grammar school and two of them married now, with family. I shan’t be satisfied till I have seen them all settled overseas. In this country in 15 or 20 years’ time the black man will have the whip hand over the white man.”

I can already hear the chorus of execration. How dare I say such a horrible thing? How dare I stir up trouble and inflame feelings by repeating such a conversation? The answer is that I do not have the right not to do so. Here is a decent, ordinary fellow Englishman, who in broad daylight in my own town says to me, this Member of Parliament, that this country will not be worth living in for his children.

Ask the class to then consider Milada’s speech from Hanzla Arif MacDonald’s *Brit Grit*.

**MILADA:** I did learn what community is. Community is working together, even if that means working to apprehend two innocent women on completely false grounds. Community means welcoming new people and letting them turn to you for help because one day you’ll need to turn to them. Community means caring for one another. It doesn’t need the self interested, the power hungry. No, you kill it, and eat its friends.

**Split the group into two halves. Give one speech to each half. Ask them to consider their speech and what it means to them. Whichever speech they have, ask them to dramatise the text, creating a piece of theatre that symbolises the sentiment of the text, whether that is helping one another or fighting against one another.**

**Ask them to consider this Self Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand what the term ‘community’ means.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I rehearse scenes to improve them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use my imagination when creating drama.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I create interesting, well thought out characters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I put effort into the creative work and stay on task.</td>
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Once the dramatisations have been devised, watch the work back-to-back and discuss what community they would prefer to be a part of and why.

**Exercise 2 - Understanding that people may have a different opinion of you internally to that which they show externally.**

**Starter**

Ask the group to think about their own lives and the stresses and strains that are part of everyday living and growing. Ask the students to consider two people that have personally influenced their life. Get the students to write down what those two people might say about them if they had permission to speak freely.

**Main**

Read the extract below:

Sirleaf and Kleina are chasing Milada when they meet the Grocer and Teddy for the first time.

**SIRLEAF:** Where is she?

**GROCER:** Who?

**SIRLEAF:** The thief! She must have hurried along here a moment ago.

**GROCER:** Oh, we directed her to her friend’s house.

**SIRLEAF:** You directed her?

**KLEINA:** She has friends?

**SIRLEAF:** But she’s a thief.
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KLEINA: But she’s boring.
SIRLEAF: And you’re boring a hole in my head with your idiotic shouting. (Stares on Grocer) You have directed the thief of my prize money to her safety.
GROCER: Teddy, we’ve helped a thief escape! You know what we must do?
TEDDY: Yes, call the police.
SIRLEAF: Call the police?? Are you mad? They’re worse than the criminals.
KLEINA: You must be her accomplices.
GROCER: No we’re not, and we’ll prove it.
SIRLEAF: Oh yes how?
GROCER: Look, we’ll stop that woman and get her to return your money. We’re gentlemen and we’re community minded.
TEDDY: Yes, that’s us.
KLEINA: Community minded! How egotistical! Make our own plight all about you, why don’t you?
SIRLEAF: Community, that isn’t the England I know.

Once the extract has been read, ask the class to think about the characters that appear in the scene. Ask them to consider what those characters might say to each other if they could say anything without consequence.

Conscience Corridor
The students stand in two lines. One character from the play being explored walks down the middle. The students making up the two lines take on the roles of the other characters. The characters in the lines then tell the character walking through what they think of them. This should help cement and inform the relationships between characters.

Ask the class to stand in two lines and choose one person to take on a specific role from the extract above. The rest of the class must play the other characters in the scene. Ask the specific character to walk from one end of the line to the other whilst the class say what the other characters think of them. Discuss the difference between people’s opinions of others, and what they feel comfortable expressing.

Extension
This exercise may then be extended to develop the short opinion snippets into full monologues of character opinion. The students could then rehearse the scene and integrate the short monologues into the action, allowing the audience to see the private thinking of the characters.

Exercise 3 - Exploring social cohesion through drama.

Starter
Ask the students to stand in a circle. Choose one person to say a piece of information about themselves. This could be anything - where they were born? What their parents/guardians do? the street they live on? etc. After one person has said the information, every student takes it in turn to connect a piece of their life to the person in front of them, demonstrating how everyone is connected.

Main
Read the extract below. Ask the students to consider what elements of the scene touch on ‘cohesion’.

Cohesion is working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and the wider community.

This is the end of the play. After being sent back to the year 1968AD from the year 3970AD, Milada, Sirleaf and Kleina have found themselves stuck with Yasmin, a Grocer and a man called Teddy. They are forced to make friends with people who are from an entirely different time.

(The High Street. Milada, Sirleaf and Kleina are conversing)
MILADA: I’m sorry, it was Detrimentum. He’s power mad. We’re stuck here.
SIRLEAF: No going back home, where I was happy in myself.
KLEINA: But is it so bad here? Here, we can be more happy in ourselves. We can give life a go, enjoy the community. We’ve friends and even jobs.
SIRLEAF: Friends? Do you mean it?
KLEINA: Those gentlemen, so accommodating of strangers.
MILADA: Oh, yeah- friend.
SIRLEAF: Real friends. This is new.
KLEINA: We’ll tell Teddy and Grocer that the charges are dropped. An error of judgment.
SIRLEAF and Kleina go to speak to Teddy and Grocer. Enter Yasmin.
YASMIN: Milada, you can stay at our home.
MILADA: Oh thank you Yasmin.
Grocer and Teddy approach.
GROCER: Of course! I think this is a good place and a good time to be alive.
SIRLEAF: The tomatoes are coming fresh, and knocking the stale cauliflowers off the ledges.
KLEINA: The flowers are mixing with each other.
TEDDY: I wonder who that special guest was. I hope they like flowers.
GROCER: Probably no one important. But seeing as these ladies are part of the community now, I say we should celebrate.
MILADA: Yes because we've got each other. And it's brilliant.
YASMIN: Yes, brilliant.

They freeze.

Ask the students to consider the scene and think about the connections between the characters. Get them to consider any cultural links and then how disconnected these characters are. Begin the scene with the characters stood far apart. Every time the students identify the characters saying something that brings them closer as a community, the actors should step forward. Ask them to rehearse this scene with this idea in mind but attempt to integrate the steps forward into the blocking of the scene.

Ask the students to complete this Self Assessment and discuss their understanding.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>I understand that there are connections between every culture.</td>
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Extension Questions

- Would you prefer to live in a community that is culturally diverse?
- What would your ideal community look like?
- Do you think community is important?
- What does cohesion mean?
- What do you need to do in order to be part of a community that works?
PROJECTION: A girl’s feet are running through parched earth.

VOICE OVER: They say I have always had a fighting spirit. When I was still a girl, they held a ceremony in my village to find out what had happened to a child who had disappeared.

They wanted to call up her spirit and get it to talk. I was terrified of being possessed, because my mother and I were Christians. So I walked all the way to the Mission, which was a whole day away. They told me to bathe in holy water, and to pray throughout the ceremony. All of the other girls had spirits on them. I did not.

Onstage a girl is running also. It is the Young Angela. When she reaches her destination, she stops, washes herself with water from a small bottle, wraps a white cloth around her and waits nervously.

ENTER four more girls. They are clearly excited. Angela remains distant. The girls all sit down in a single line wrapped in pure white cloths. They are sitting with their legs as straight as possible except two girls who have crossed legs. An adult woman rushes on stage and uncrosses their legs then runs back out. One of the girls crosses her legs again so the woman runs on stage, hits her legs and makes them straight again.

Suddenly one of the girls cries out, gets up and begins to hop on one foot around the stage.

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Suddenly one of the girls cries out, gets up and begins to hop on one foot around the stage.
ANGELA 2: (Sighs) I was 14. My older sister became ill when she was pregnant. They tried to take her to the hospital, but she never made it because it takes up to two days to get there. The doctor operated on her and he saved the baby. So they took me to Harare to take care of the baby.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: And were you still 14 at this time? (He looks unconvinced)

ANGELA 2: The baby must be fed by milk that comes from the mother’s side of the family. So the mother’s side has to choose someone to look after the baby. There was no one else. So I stayed for three months. I would feed the baby and wash it and pet it when he cried. After three months, I went back to my village. (Immigration Officer checks his files to see if her story matches while Angela continues narrating). When I went back to the village, that’s when they told me that I was to be a full time mother to my sister’s children.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: How many children were there?

ANGELA 2: Two. I took my sister’s place – I became the wife to my sister’s husband. They killed two chickens for the ceremony and then I went there.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Were you in favour of the marriage?

ANGELA 2: No.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: So why didn’t you object to it? I take it that by ceremony you mean marriage?

ANGELA 2: Most of us girls did not fall in love the way you do here. You date, you are free to see whoever you like, but it was not like that for me. The grown-ups: they sit you down and say ‘I think you have got to that stage where you are mature enough to be able to cook and take care of a family.‘

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: So why didn’t they get you married to a different man?

ANGELA 2: Because when your sister dies, you marry her husband. He needed a wife. In Zimbabwe, every man needs a wife.

The immigration officer begins jotting things down. Angela looks at her for a while before staring into space.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Surely you could have gone back to your parents?

ANGELA 2: Even if I went to my parents, unless my husband said he didn’t want me anymore, they wouldn’t take me back. It’s an offence because then you are useless even to your own parents.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Uh-huh (writes something down again).

ANGELA 2: And then, one day, he beat me so much that I had my second period within the same month. (She points to a spot under her eye) See this scar? He gave it to me.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: And how did that happen?

Scene Two

Light goes up on the rest of the stage to a party in Angela 1’s house. The men are on the shady side of stage drinking alcohol and playing a board game. The women are on the sunny side of stage as they cook food for everyone. There is Zimbabwean music being played on an old radio and the children run around as they play. Occasionally, a woman would call out to a child for help or a man would swear at a child for disturbing the game.

Angela 1 serves her husband some more alcohol.

DAMBANYIKA: (Drunkenly holds onto to Angela 1’s wrist) My wife. A toast to my wife! (Cheer among the men) I tell all of you! I have the best wife in Tangwena. (Angela 1 smiles tightly) Look how she serves me. She kneels down with respect then she pours me my drink.

ANESU: (Kisses teeth) You have started again Dambyanka! Leave your poor wife alone. You’re embarrassing her.

DAMBANYIKA: Was I talking to you? (Addresses another man) Kudzai! Warn your wife eh! Was I talking to her?

KUDZAI: We all know how she is. Leave her alone.

ANESU: (Kisses teeth) Kudzai! My mouth is getting dry! (Angela 1 walks back to the gathering of women.)

ANGELA 2: (Calls out to child) Mesu! Mesu! Take this to your Uncle.

Mesu ignores her.

KUDZAI: Angela! Please! Refill my own cup too! Angela walks back to the gathering of women.

ANGELA 2: (Mesu ignores her) Angola! My mouth is getting dry! (Angela takes it to him herself and pours him a drink.) Put more! (She pours some more and spills some on the table. She wipes it with her cloth and walks away.) Thank you. Who is playing next?
ANESU: Food is ready!

Children and men cheer alike. They follow the food outside to eat. Angela and Mesu stay behind to clear up the cooking things. Dambanyika watches them. He stands behind Angela so that she doesn’t know he is there for a while.

DAMBANYIKA: You flirting with other men again? Again? (Angela refuses to look at him, instead she continues doing what she is doing). Who do you think you are eh? You never learn your lesson. (Angela turns to look at him).

ANGELA 1: Mesu! Go and eat your food. (Mesu runs inside)

DAMBANYIKA: Why do you never listen to me? Look at me when I’m talking to you! (Sighs)

ANGELA 1: Please. I didn’t look at him.

DAMBANYIKA: I said look at me when I’m talking to you! Why do you do this to me all the time?

ANGELA 1: (Tries to smile). I have eyes only for you. Only you.

DAMBANYIKA: I don’t want you looking at other men again. It stops! I can’t hear you? Do you understand!

ANGELA 1: Yes, yes I understand.

DAMBANYIKA: So you only have eyes for me? So they’re mine then? (Angela nods her head.) They’re mine.

Dambanyika continues to look around stage while repeating ‘They’re mine’. He walks over to lighted firewood on stage and picks it up.

ANGELA 1: What are you doing?

DAMBANYIKA: I don’t want you looking at other men again. It stops!

ANGELA 1: I wouldn’t! I don’t! Please Dambanyika!

DAMBANYIKA: Even if you don’t, you’ll still make them look at you. Well not anymore. You have to learn...you have to learn...it’s the only way!

A struggle ensues on stage as Dambanyika pins Angela down and tries to hit her eye with the lighted firewood. He doesn’t succeed but still manages to poke her just below the eye. Angela screams and Dambanyika startles as if waking from a dream. He exits stage.

Scene Three

PROJECTION: The projection on stage shows Angela bare feet walking through the Zimbabwean surroundings for 3 days.

Angela continues her story to the immigration officer.

ANGELA: I walked for three days and three nights and I didn’t know where I was going. I said to myself, ‘At least if I get to the farms owned by the white people, I would get a job the same day. Then I can send money to my mother to look after those kids.’ But it doesn’t work like that. See! They had enough people. I was as dirty as a wild animal. I was scared to ask for permission to sleep in other villages because once they heard there were people looking for me, they would tell. So I slept with the animals.

Scene Four

A church congregation is on stage singing. Enter Angela 1.

Everyone in church stares at her. She faints.

PREACHER: Give her space!

(Looks at Angela 1.) Who is she?

ONAI: How could we know who she is? She just walked in!

CONGREGATION 1: What are we going to do with her?

CONGREGATION: She looks like she’s dying.

PREACHER: (To no one in particular.) Get her some water! Onai! You should look after her.
ONAI: Why can’t she stay here?
PREACHER: A grown man taking care of a young woman himself?
ONAI: I can’t do it. I have enough patients already.
Angela slowly wakes up and tries to get up.
ONAI: Don’t get up. Where’s the water? (She gives Angela some water then gets her to lie back down.)
RANDOM PERSON: Onai! You’re the one who can best take care of her you know?
PREACHER: You’re worried about the money aren’t you? (laughs) The love of money is the root of all evil Onai. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness instead. 1st Timothy 6: 10-11.
ONAI: (Resignedly) OK. (Looks at Angela again.) She doesn’t look like she has a place to stay.
PREACHER: You’re looking for a new house keeper aren’t you?
ONAI: (Smiles.) I am.
Church congregation cheer and begin to sing Zimbabwean song again.
Onai helps Angela up and they walk to Onai’s house. There, Angela slowly recovers her strength.
She sheds her tattered clothes to show new clean ones underneath. She begins to work around the house where she makes mistakes and Onai shows her the correct way to do them.
Angela slowly begins smiling during all of this until she laughs and she joins in with the congregation singing on stage.
Angela in the Immigration Office is also watching this with the Immigration Officer and she has a big smile on her face as she moves her body to the music. The Immigration Officer watches and just jots things down again.

Scene Five

Angela and Onai are at the house doing some housework. Suddenly, the banging of a gate can be heard backstage.

DAMBANYIKA: (Offstage) Angela! Open the gate! Open the gate or I will burn this house down! When I catch you, I will break your legs so that you can’t run from me again.

ONAI: (Grabs Angela’s clothes) You’ve put me in danger! Who knows how many of his friends in Harare are ex-combatants? You thoughtless girl! (She jumps on stage in distress.)

DAMBANYIKA: Open the gate or I will burn you with this house!

PREACHER: Before you go, let us pray.

ANGELA: (Kneels) Please.

ONAI: (Zips suitcase) Have you packed everything?

ANGELA: (Confused) Yes.

Angela and Onai are about to leave but the preacher stops them.

PREACHER: Where am I going?

DAMBANYIKA: Open the gate! The preacher places his hand on Angela’s head and begins to pray.

DAMBANYIKA: Open the gate or I will break it down! (He hangs harder.) I will count to three Angela.

PREACHER: May the Lord be with you.

ANGELA: (Still confused) Where am I going?

DAMBANYIKA: One!

ONAI: Far away from your husband. (smiles) To London! You will stay with my sister. (She hands Angela a passport).

DAMBANYIKA: Two!

ANGELA: (Hugs Preacher) God bless you sir!

Exit Onai.
PREACHER: I can’t take the credit. My congregation gathered money together to get the passport and ticket.

ANGELA 1: God bless your congregation.

DAMBANYIKA: Three!

Onai comes back on stage. Grabs the suitcase and drags Angela 1 offstage with him.

Enter Dambanyika on stage, too late.

**Scene Six**

**PROJECTION:** Angela’s feet in ill-fitting shoes, wandering lost around an airport.

**ANGELA:** So I arrived in London to stay with Onai’s sister. The two of them couldn’t have been more different.

Enter Angela 1 with her suitcase. She is lost. Suddenly, the sound of heels clip-clopping. It is Onai’s sister. She grabs the suitcase from the tired and shivering Angela 1 who smiles at her. The sister takes Angela home and gives her some hard housework to do.

She exits stage with Angela 1’s suitcase. As Angela 1 works, different people come on stage and show her how to do various tasks. The more they come on, the harder the work she does becomes. During this time, there is a sad Shona song being sung/played.

The harder and faster Angela 1 works, the louder the song gets and the more miserable she gets. At its loudest, Angela 1 notices blood coming out of her nose and collapses. The song stops. The person on stage waiting to give her another job to do runs away and leaves her there.

**Scene Seven**

**DOCTOR:** Well, there’s only one explanation for your bleeding. (Pause) What’s wrong? What could be causing you all this stress?

**ANGELA 1:** I didn’t know stress can do all this. What can I do to stop it?

**DOCTOR:** Well, you’ll need a thorough examination and some intensive treatment over a longer period of time. But for what it’s worth, a lot of my patients say that walking is a good way of relieving stress in the short term.

**ANGELA 1:** Walking?

**DOCTOR:** Yes. It’s simple and it’s free.

**ANGELA 1:** I know all about walking.

**DOCTOR:** Good. Now tell me, how did you get that scar? (Points to scar under Angela’s eye)

**ANGELA 1:** I got it a long time ago.

**DOCTOR:** Am I right in assuming it’s from some sort of fire? (Angela nods) And... how did you get it?

Cuts to immigration office.

**ANGELA 1:** I told her my story. Everything I just told you.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** And she treated you?

**ANGELA 1:** No.

Cuts back to Doctor’s Surgery.

**DOCTOR:** (Hands Angela 1 a map and some money) Croydon. That’s where the Home Office is situated. Tell them everything you told me. Then you should be listed as an asylum seeker after they put you in their system. The next day, go to the GP and register. We need to receive a letter from the GP as quickly as possible.

Lights down on the hospital scene so that only the Immigration officer and Angela 2 are still on stage.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** (Closes his file.) Well your story matches the one you gave previously. Thank you very much. I’ve heard all I need to hear. You can go.

**ANGELA 1:** I can go? That’s it?

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** Yes. Thank you very much for coming in Ms. Munamato. (Goes to shake her hand)

**ANGELA 1:** But what about the decision?... I thought you were going to tell me today if...

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** I’m afraid it’s not as simple as all that, we can’t just take your word for it. We will have to do some more investigations.

**ANGELA 1:** What more is there to investigate?

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** I can’t just GIVE you a decision. We have to stick to procedure so we can be sure that when we do finally decide, we make the right choice. Now, I think we have got a pretty clear picture of...

**ANGELA 1:** No you haven’t.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER:** I beg your pardon?
ANGELA 2: You haven't got a clear picture at all. You have no idea of how my life has changed since I arrived here! You can't imagine what I'm going through now. Can you? Well?

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Ms. Munamato. We called you here today to give your account of how you came to be in England. Frankly, what happened after that will not affect the outcome of your case.

ANGELA 2: (Grabs folder) I'm not a case! I'm a human being! Just like you!

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Now that's enough Mrs…

OFFICER: These procedures are put in place to help us to help you and if they take time Ms. Munamato, it is because they are very thorough.

ANGELA 2: After Croydon they sent me from pillar to post. Finally they sent me here to Coventry. I was a broken person! I didn't know who I was. So I did as the doctor said and I walked. It was my only hope. Once, I walked all the way to the town centre without shoes. That's how crazy I was. That is what your procedures and processes were doing to me! Please don't do this to me again!

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: These procedures are put in place to help us to help you and if they take time Ms. Munamato, it is because they are very thorough.

ANGELA 2: I haven't talked to my people in over ten years. Ten years! I haven't talked to my mother since the day I left the village. I can't phone them, I can't write a letter, so where exactly do you want me to get this evidence from?

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Well in that case I think your best option is to volunteer to go back to Zimbabwe.

ANGELA 2: (Calmly) I told you the truth. I am not volunteering.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: If you can't settle in your village, surely you can settle somewhere else in your country?

ANGELA 2: I did settle somewhere else, I was in Harare and he still found me. The evidence you are looking for is in my hands. It's in the scars all over my body. Look! (Angela starts to make as if she's going to strip off in the office)

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Ms. Munamato! Stop it! What are you doing? This really doesn't help your case!

ANGELA 2: I'm showing you the evidence. See? It's here and here and here. It's in this scar on my face! What more do you need from me?

IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Once we have concluded our investigations. In the meantime, all I can say is: be patient.

The lights on the Immigration Officer go out leaving Angela 2 alone on stage still sitting in the same position she has been during the play.
Scene Eight
Enter Angela 2 and Elizabeth to her living room. There are toys scattered all over the floor.

ANGELA 2: I thought I told you to pack up these toys last night?
ELIZABETH: I will in a minute mum.
ANGELA 2: (Turns on the TV)
A news footage montage about Zimbabwe and the children left to fend for themselves because their parents have died of AIDS is heard on stage as Angela gets more and more agitated.

VOICE OVER: Zimbabwe is facing one of the worst HIV epidemics in the world, leaving many children orphaned. 10 years ago, there were hardly any children on the streets of Zimbabwe, now children are not only living on the streets, they are giving birth on the streets. A second generation of street children is growing up...

She finally turns the TV off when she hears the letterbox. She exits and comes back with a free newspaper and some leaflets. She sighs and contemplates turning the TV on but she doesn't because she can't bear the news.

ANGELA 2: Elizabeth! I'm not tidying up these toys for you!

Scene Nine
Enter Angela 2 to a still messy living room, carrying some post. She quickly skims the letters etc. and tosses them to one side when she realises there is nothing from the Home Office. Enter Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH: What's for tea mum? I'm starving.
ANGELA 2: How about a sandwich?
ELIZABETH: I already had one at school today.

ANGELA 2: (Walks to the fridge) I'll see what we have. There's pork chops, left over chicken roast, pasta and chips.
ELIZABETH: (Hugs a doll on the floor) Yeah, all my favourite food! I can't choose!

ANGELA 2: I'm not hungry Elizabeth. Come on! Choose something!
ELIZABETH: You never eat mum!
ANGELA 2: Maybe I'll have some toast later.
ELIZABETH: If I have pork chops, would you have some with me? (Elizabeth doesn’t reply) Would you mum? Would you?
ANGELA 2: (Shuts the fridge door forcefully) I told you! I'm not hungry! Now stop bothering me! You can have your tea and then tidy up your toys!
ELIZABETH: (Sulkily puts on the TV and ignores Angela).
Angela is about to strike Elizabeth, who suddenly screams out.

ELIZABETH: Mum, please no!

Angela stops at the last moment, and wakes as though from a trance and lets go of Elizabeth. Elizabeth remains where she is crying with Angela’s palm still raised as if to slap her.

ANGELA 2: Get out of my sight!

Elizabeth runs off stage crying. Angela paces around for a bit, kicks a toy then walks to a shelf and brings out the bible she took with her when leaving Zimbabwe. She looks at it for a while, slowly sighs then calls Elizabeth.

ANGELA: Elizabeth! Get your coat! We’re going for a walk.

Scene Eleven

Enter Elizabeth and Angela back from another day at school etc. The toys have now all been tidied away. Angela is carrying a bundle of letters she’s just picked up off the mat. Angela skims through the letters drops them in dejection and starts unpacking her bag.

Scene Twelve

Angela 2 is busy in the kitchen while Elizabeth does her homework.

ELIZABETH: Would you like some help?

ANGELA: No, thanks.

ELIZABETH: I don’t mind. It’s MY dinner.

ANGELA: Fine. Tell you what. If you finish your homework before I finish, you can help me. Any letters today?

ELIZABETH: No. (Laughs) You already checked yourself mum. Remember? Elizabeth goes back to doing her homework while Angela gently cries before pulling herself together.

ELIZABETH: Finished!

ANGELA 2: Let’s go for a walk ‘Lizabeth, before it gets dark.

ELIZABETH: But . . . dinner?

ANGELA 2: (Walking offstage already) It can wait.

Scene Thirteen

Elizabeth and Angela are tidying up the living room and kitchen. They soon finish.

ELIZABETH: I’m going upstairs to play with my toys.
TEDDY: You know, a wise person once said it is always better to talk first rather
than shouting and seeking the answer with your fists.

DOLL 1: That’s a very wise person.

DOLL 2: And if talking fails you can always go for a walk.

At this last comment Angela laughs and gives Elizabeth a playful hug. The post arrives.

ELIZABETH: I’ll get it! (Takes offstage then comes back skimming through the letters) Ah,
just one letter today I’m afraid Mum. What’s a Home Office mum?

Angela freezes.

DOLL 2: Mum? Are you alright? Mum!

ANGELA: Yes ... Yes. I’m fine.

ELIZABETH: Mum, do you need to go for a walk?

ANGELA: Yes .... let’s go for a walk.....to the park and then MacDonalda for lunch.

Angela 2 continues to stare at the letter.

ELIZABETH: Really?

ANGELA: Yes really. You’re a wonderful child - a blessing from God. (Controlling
herself from crying) I’ll even get some ice cream!

ELIZABETH: Woo-hoo!

They make to leave.

ELIZABETH: Mum. You didn’t open your letter.

ANGELA: It’ll still be there when we get back. It can wait.

Elizabeth and Angela 2 exit stage.

PROJECTION: Feet of Angela, walking with Elizabeth. Long shadows, sunny day.

THE END.
**MOJDOM@COVENTRY.CO.UK**
Written and devised by the Senior Youth Theatre, with Tracey Street

**The Company**
Jarek                     Dan Thomas
Mamo                      Kirsty McGee
The Priest                John Markowski
Ania                      Emily Baker
Rishu                     Neal Layton
Maciek                    Jay Stockley
Rudy                      Daniel Christie

Director      Tracey Street
Fight Director      Daniel Dickinson
Website projections /language advisor  Karol Kijak
Polish culture/language advisor   Nicholas Klein
Polish culture/language advisor   John Markowski

**Prologue**

**Setting the context - WWII history & the more recent joining of the EU**

**Music**

1st projection fades in:  Just after track begins

Fade in - 1st Sept 1939 Germany invaded Poland.

Fade in - 17th Sept 1939 Russia invaded Poland from the east.

Fade in - Hundreds of thousands of Poles were forcibly deported, killed or sent to death camps. Some managed to flee the country to join the fight to liberate their homeland Many were stationed at Baginton in Coventry.

**Cast run in, in semi darkness (some speaking in Polish / some in English)**

**MAN:** (With torch) Ok I saw you run in here, it would be better for you to give up, you're not supposed to be in here ... come out. I will find you, I know you are here. I am not playing games ... you need to come out NOW!

2nd projection fades in:

Fade in - In 2004 Poland joined the EU. Life in Poland is still hard. Many adventurous young Poles have left their homeland looking for new opportunities and a better life for themselves and their families. This is one person's story ... (Music and screen fades)

**MAN:** Who's there? I said who's there?

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**Scene 1**

**June 2005, Wroclaw Poland - Jarek, Rishu & Matjek.**

**Jarek's Bedroom**

The projection screen shows the phrase ‘Who’s there?’ repeated over and over - may change into the word ‘nobody’ repeated faster & faster & in bigger letters to a crescendo with the music - then cuts to black. Music cuts also. Lx on Jarek’s Bedroom.

Jarek wakes up startled (as if from a nightmare) this is accompanied by Rishu & Matjek hanging on his door straight after he has woken. They enter in a lively, boisterous mood.

**MATJEK:** OD Jarek! Jarek! Ti Lenyivi Huy (You lazy dick) (Light hearted friendly banter)

**RISHU:** You’ve not been around for two days, Gdie ti biwesh? (Where you been?)

**MATJEK:** Kurva yego match (Oh for fuck’s sake) wha’s up? You look like shit man

**JAREK:** Zamknee Ch She (Shut your mouth)...

**RISHU:** (Something about overdoing the partying)

**JAREK:** No I’ve been havin’ these weird dreams ...

**MATJEK:** (Some smart arse response about drug taking)

**RISHU:** (Sarcastically) Haha very funny... I got this... I didn’t get into Uni, I didn’t get in.

**JAREK:** ‘Thank you but no thanks’...

**RISHU:** Shkoda (That’s a shame)

**JAREK:** It’s all I want to do, you know? Computers, media, advertising... What chance do I have if I don’t go to Uni? You know what it’s like, without a degree you are no-one. I’m 22 and that’s it, dreams, plans, all gone. Occupation: ‘A Nobody’...

**MATJEK:** What are you going to do?

**JAREK:** Nie Viem (I don’t know), I didn’t have a back up plan...

**RISHU:** Well you’re not the only one with problems mate. I’m about to be laid off, I really need to earn some money.
MATJEK: Hey you think you’ve got problems. Kasia is scaring the life out of me; she’s starting to talk about getting married...

JAREK: But you’ve only known her for like two months...

MATJEK: Tell me about it

RISHU: I’m telling you you’ll be married by Xmas

MATJEK: No way, no woman is telling me what to do. I do what I want ok? And I’m NOT getting married.

JAREK: Yeah you put your foot down

MATJEK: I will (They aren’t convinced, they laugh at him) I will!

JAREK: You know what? We should just go somewhere, do something.

RISHU: Do what?

MATJEK: Go where?

JAREK: Anywhere, I don’t care! I’m so bored of Wroclaw! I’m not staying here to be treated like a nobody.

MATJEK: You know you’re right. We should just get out ...... there’s a whole world out there... just go! How about erm... Germany?

JAREK: Nie (No) (Rishu laughs)

RISHU: How about the UK?

MATJEK & JAREK: Tso? (What?)

RISHU: My brother’s in the UK...in a place called erm... Coventry...

JAREK: Where’s that?

MATJEK: Yes, let’s go to Coventry!

JAREK: What? You don’t even know where it is?

MATJEK: Look you want adventure right?

JAREK: Yeah, but I hadn’t thought about going so far away...

MATJEK: Look do you want to stay in Wroclaw, in a dead end job, with no money, being treated like a nobody for the rest of your life? Or do you want to go to Anglia and have the adventure of a lifetime! Come on! Let’s do this! Us three...

RISHU: We’ve got nothing to lose.

JAREK: Yeah, you know what? Fuck Wroclaw, let’s go to Coventry!

ALL: POLSKA – GIA!!!

Jarek and Mamo say goodbye, July 2005, Wroclaw, Poland.

Hallway of house. Jarek walks on with his bag(s).

MAMO: So you’re ready to go then?

JAREK: (Nods) Yes

MAMO: You know I don’t want you to go Jarek don’t you?

JAREK: I know Mamo, but I’ll be fine.

MAMO: I don’t understand why you have to go so far away, why can’t you just stay here in Poland, near your family?

JAREK: Because I don’t want to end up in a dead end job, that’s what will happen if I stay here. I want to do something with my life, I want to be somebody.

MAMO: You’ll always be somebody to me Jarek, you’re my son. And I know you have dreams, but ... I’m going to miss you...

JAREK: You don’t need to worry Mamo.

MAMO: You promise you will keep in touch, yes?

JAREK: (Joking) I will send you an email everyday

MAMO: No, you forget your computers Jarek, you phone me! I want to hear your voice!

JAREK: Ok Mamo, yes.

MAMO: And you make sure you keep out of trouble.

JAREK: I will I promise.

MAMO: And as soon as you get there you find the church and go to see the priest. (Very serious) And never forget Jarek, if you follow your faith, it will always keep you safe.

JAREK: I know. I have to go now Mamo, or I’ll miss my bus....

MAMO: God keep you safe Jarek. Kocham Ci (I love you) (She kisses & hugs him.)

JAREK: I love you too Mamo Bye.

MAMO: (As he goes) Be careful.
Scene 2

Wroclaw bus station – The coach journey – Arriving in Coventry.

Passengers are boarding the coach. Rishu is waiting... Jarek arrives. They greet each other.

RISHU: Oh Jarek you idiot over here!
JAREK: Where's Marjek?
RISHU: He hasn't told you? He's not coming.
JAREK: What? This was his idea!
RISHU: Kasia wouldn't let him.
JAREK: What?!
(Noise of exasperation)
I can't believe him! Well, you know what? It's not going to spoil our fun right?
RISHU: No it's not going to spoil our fun (Rishu winks at him).
JAREK: What?
(Rishu shows him the bottle of vodka that he has stashed in his bag)
Oh you beauty! / O ti holero! (Oh you cheeky sod!) (They get onto the coach).

DRIVER: Right, ladies & gentlemen, listen up. During our journey, there is...
No smoking, no drinking, no swearing, no singing, and no mess! Is that clear?
(Mumbles from the passengers)
Right, good. I'm glad we understand each other. Let's go...

Music, the drinking song. During the journey we see the boys breaking all of these rules, corrupting the other passengers and singing the drinking song.

Projection: This should highlight the places the coach travels through, either by showing names of cities as they pass through, or by showing their journey on a map (possibly with names too).

ALL: (As coach journey begins – cheer!) YEGEMI! (We're off!)
RISHU: Right I'm off (Squeezing past Jarek's seat).
JAREK: Where are you going?
RISHU: I'm not sitting on my ass for the next day & a half... we're meant to be having an adventure (To everyone on the coach) Right who's up for a party?

Passengers on coach cheer
JAREK: Oh no... Rishu, you're going to get us thrown off... No I'm not... Rishu...
RISHU: Come on... Hi I'm Rishu!
The rest of the action is improvised as the music fades up.

Music finishes.

DRIVER: Last stop Coventry! Everybody off!

JAREK: Hello Coventry! Pool Meadow Bus Station.
RISHU: 18 hours on a coach!
JAREK: I'm never coming on a bus again! Ostatni raz (This is the last time!).
RISHU: Know what? I'm starving. I'm going to find a shop, get something to eat.
JAREK: Hey get me something (Rishu goes to go ‘Ne’) Hey and something to drink (He goes to go again ‘Ne’) Hey, and use this funny coin, got 7 sides! (He chuckles & throws it to him).
RISHU: (Jokingly) I'm keeping this (He exits).

Girl walks past struggling with carrying her bags.

JAREK: Hey, hey, you want some help with that?
ANIA: No, it’s alright I’m ok thank you.
JAREK: Jestesh Spolski? (Hey, you’re Polish?)
ANIA: Tak.
JAREK: Ya trah yestem Jarek. (Yeah me too. Erm, I’m Jarek)
ANIA: Hi.
JAREK: Biwesh kedish f Coventry? (Have you been to Coventry before?)
ANIA: No mam coledzi tutay. (Yes, I have friends here)
JAREK: Me and my friend, - we’re here for a few months... we’re on a bit of an adventure.
ANIA: Yeah?
JAREK: Yeah, if you know Coventry, maybe you could show me around, erm sometime. If you’re free...
ANIA: Yeah maybe.
JAREK: Maybe you could call me,
ANIA: Oh well, maybe I could...
JAREK: Ok, here’s my number (Nervously fumbling for a pen & then something to write on & with) you got something to write on? (She looks for something, then offers her arm)
In Our Own Words – Immigration

JAREK: (Says last three numbers in Polish) Dwa, trzy, zero...
ANIA: Ok ... Jarek...
JAREK: Call me...
ANIA: Ok I might (She goes to go).
JAREK: Yake mash imye? (Hey, what's your name?)
ANIA: Ania...
JAREK: Ok, see you Ania...
ANIA: Pa (Bye) (She goes).

Rishu returns with food & drink and a ‘guide to Coventry’ & map.
RISHU: Ok, well I called my brother, he can't pick us up for three hours.
JAREK: Chi godginy?! (three hours?!)
RISHU: Yes. So what do we do now?
JAREK: I don't know.
RISHU: So where do we go?
JAREK: (Shrugs) I don't know.
RISHU: Why did I bring you?!?
JAREK: Erm ... I don't know.

Projection: Text fades in: Week three. At the (name of local pub)

Scene 3
The Local Pub

JAREK: I don't know if this is such a good idea Rishu.
RISHU: Jarek, we've been here for three weeks, we came here for an adventure yes? If we're just going to sit at home and talk to each other we could have saved ourselves a lot of money and a 28 hour bus journey!
JAREK: But what if they don't want to speak to us? People haven't exactly been rushing up to us wanting to be friends...
RISHU: Look, we know English yes? We'll just join in with a few conversations, how hard can it be, huh? Come on, we'll be fine (Indicates to go over to one of the groups).
ALEX: Allwight blud how's it hangin'?
LEE: Ah cool man, did you see the gunners match last night? They was bangin'.
ALEX: Ah yeah man van Perie's goal was sick. Mans made bear paper outta that game.
LEE: How much dosh you up man?
ALEX: 50 squid.
LEE: Top dollar man.
ALEX: Eatin dough.
LEE: Yeah, what you doin laterz?
ALEX: Jack mate.
LEE: Fancy repping our ends to another boozers?
ALEX: Nah man ran outta dough.
RISHU: What are they saying...?
JAREK: (Shrugs) I have no idea.

They move to the other group
HARPREET: (Laughing) Yeah, last night was so epic.
NAT: Classic/bloody.
JAMES: Immense, end of.
NAT: OMG You were off your face man.
JAMES: Hammered.
NAT: Defo.
HARPREET: Rolled into work two hours late this avo.
NAT: (Laughing) you're such a ledge.
HARPREET: That's how I roll.
ALL: LOL!

They all laugh
RISHU: (Pulling Jarek to one side) My English is pretty good yeah? (Jarek nods yes) I watch English movies, without the subtitles all the time, yes? (Jarek agrees) I’ve seen all of Clint Eastwood’s movies (Jarek agrees) THAT is NOT Clint Eastwood English!

JAREK: I think maybe we go home.

Jarek’s mobile phone rings – it’s his mam.

JAREK: Hello? Mamo! Hi how are you? Oh I’m... (Unconvincingly) I’m fine. No. Yeah Coventry’s ok. No it is, it’s just... things aren’t working out so good. We still don’t know anyone, except Rishu’s brother, we try and understand what people are saying but it’s hard to explain... it’s like they’re speaking in some kinda code... yes erm well, we don’t have much money left. (Making sure that Rishu can’t hear)

I don’t know Mamo, maybe I should come home... no I haven’t been to church, no not yet... I know Mamo I’m sorry. I’ll go tomorrow, just to introduce myself, yes I promise. Ok I’ll speak to you soon,

Music: Commotion as the cool party kids arrive.

I have to go now Mamo, kocham ci...

Music down under Rudy’s dialogue.

Commotion as the cool party kids arrive - we introduce them to the audience. They are lively and boisterous. They know the locals, they say hi & greet them, they announce a party at the weekend-Saturday. They invite everyone including Jarek & Rishu. Music volume up to cover Rudy & party kids exit.

Jarek’s mobile phone rings – it’s Ania.  Music back down under dialogue.

JAREK: Hello? Ania! Yes I remember, from the bus station right? How are you? Yeah we’re having a great time. Show me around? I’d love that. Well, what are you doing now are you free? Ok we could meet at Starbucks, yes? – That’s the coffee place, across from the statue of the naked lady on the horse. Ok, I’ll see you there. Oh and there’s a party this weekend, you want to come? (He finishes the phone call) Amazing!

RISHU: The naked Lady on the horse? You idiot!

Jarek goes to meet the priest - The Polish Centre.

An informal office / store room The Priest is just finishing a conversation and saying goodbye to a couple of people - Jarek enters and coughs to get attention.

PRIEST (KSIADZ): Ah, what have we here? (Polish) A new face!

JAREK: Dzienc doby (Hello)

KSIADZ: Hello, and you are....?

JAREK: Jarek

KSIADZ: Welcome to the Polish centre Jarek... and to our Polish community.

JAREK: Thank you.

KSIADZ: And when did you arrive in Coventry?

JAREK: Three weeks ago...

KSIADZ: Three weeks? That’s a long time for you to find your way here.

JAREK: I meant to come, I just didn’t get round to it I guess but I’ve come to introduce myself.

KSIADZ: Have you been to church in that time?

JAREK: Err... no I didn’t...

KSIADZ: You didn’t get round to it? You know some people would think that was a little bit ‘improper’ don’t you think? We may not be in Poland Jarek but we still take our faith very seriously. We didn’t come here to run away from it.

JAREK: No that’s not...

KSIADZ: There are right ways & wrong ways of doing things... I would have expected you to have come here sooner... (There is an awkward silence) Still, you’re here now... (Quick pace) How old are you Jarek?

JAREK: 22.

KSIADZ: And where are you from?

JAREK: Wroclaw.

KSIADZ: You came by yourself ?

JAREK: No I came with a friend, (priest looks expectantly) he will come later...

KSIADZ: Where are you living?

JAREK: My friend’s house in Foleshill.

KSIADZ: And what brings you to Coventry Jarek?

JAREK: I just wanted to leave Poland for a few months, you know, travel, see new places, look for opportunities...

KSIADZ: So what’s your plan? You have a plan?

JAREK: Well no we just came...

KSIADZ: You have money?

JAREK: Well not really, not much left...
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| Education Pack & Scripts |

Scene 4

Party Heaven

Projection of many people dancing.

MC Introduces everyone to the party. Music and dancing begins - We see Jarek, Ania & Rishu arrive.

They are greeted by the Party crowd, after a short while, Music and dancing fades under scene:

Jarek and Ania - Running downstage laughing.

JAREK: These last few weeks have been amazing, you know that?

ANIA: Yeah, they’ve been fun...

JAREK: Yeah...

ANIA: What? What is it?

JAREK: Just you, you’re amazing.

ANIA: (Teasing him) Everything’s ‘amazing’ to you.

JAREK: No but you are. You’re beautiful. (They kiss) I can’t believe I’m with you.

ANIA: Only because I phoned you Mister!

JAREK: (Laughing) I know.

ANIA: I have something I have to tell you.

JAREK: What? (A little worried) What is it?

ANIA: (Cheekily) Well, I hope you appreciate that I’ve had to totally lower my standards to be with you and it’s totally trashing my street cred... (She runs off laughing, he chases after her).

Music and Dancing returns - Lee gives Jarek drugs & walks off.

Jarek walks over to Polish centre. Music and dancing fades out.

Polish centre – Jarek and priest – ‘I’ve had complaints’

(Polish centre) Jarek is sitting at the priests computer trying to fix it. He is holding a small bag of drugs that he has just been given at the party, the priest walks in quietly, unnoticed by Jarek, the priest sees what is in Jarek’s hand.

KSIADZ: Jarek... How’s that computer coming along?

Startled he tries to hide the bag out of sight, the priest pretends he hasn’t seen this. Jarek tries to keep the bag hidden throughout the scene until he gets chance to put the bag in his jacket pocket which is on the back of his chair.

JAREK: OK, it’s doing fine I’m working on it right now.

KSIADZ: I’d like to talk to you... There have been complaints.

JAREK: What about?

KSIADZ: I hear you got into an argument with a customer the other night (Jarek reacts)

He started it...

JAREK: He was shouting at me, saying that I don’t know how to ‘behave’. Saying that all ‘young Poles’ are interested in is money & themselves and that I should go back to Poland. What is that?!

KSIADZ: Was that all? He said you called him an ‘ignorant, closed minded idiot who is stuck in the past’. Is that true? Is that what you think?

KSIADZ: What was it about?

JAREK: He was shouting at me, saying that I don’t know how to ‘behave’. Saying that all ‘young Poles’ are interested in is money & themselves and that I should go back to Poland. What is that?!

KSIADZ: Was that all? He said you called him an ‘ignorant, closed minded idiot who is stuck in the past’. Is that true? Is that what you think?
JAREK: I was just trying to explain to him that I think that maybe the community needs to be more open minded, move forward, change with the times. As much as you may not like me saying this a lot of young Poles don’t look to the church anymore... that’s why they don’t come to the Polish centre.

KSIADZ: Mr Gronowski has been here a long time. This community means a lot to him and to a lot of people here. It is their family and it upsets them.

JAREK: (Interrupting) We live in the 21st century. Some of us don’t want such a closed community that is tied to the church, living in the past, and tied to the old ways of doing things.

KSIADZ: It’s the way things are done Jarek...

JAREK: But our country is changing, the world is changing and the church is not...

KSIADZ: But your past is important. It’s your culture, your identity, it’s part of who you are and you can’t run away from that.

JAREK: I’m not running away, I’m just choosing a different path. My own way. I want more freedom. I love our community but I don’t want to be tied to the church!

KSIADZ: No one is tied to it Jarek.

JAREK: I feel tied, I feel suffocated.

KSIADZ: Shall I tell you what I see?

JAREK: picks up the bag and quickly puts it into his coat pocket whilst the priest has turned to pick something up off his desk.

KSIADZ: Poland is changing yes but in some ways not for the better. People are busy, they have less time for each other. We are in danger of losing everything we stand for. That’s why it is important to preserve the old ways of doing things. We must not forget who we are and where we are from. A nation that loses it’s memory ceases to exist. The older generation understands this.

JAREK: But it’s old thinking. There are different ways of doing everything... things need to change.

KSIADZ: Yes they do but with the church at the centre. It is a compass, (this is a warning to him) it gives you direction, a clear sense of right & wrong. Jarek there are many temptations out there in the world, if you fall into their trap it only leads one way. (slight pause) You have something you want to tell me Jarek? (meaning the drugs in the coat pocket).

JAREK: I have to go...

KSIADZ: You forgot your coat.

JAREK: (Taking the jacket) Thank you.

Music and dancing returns

Ania and Jarek - Slow down

Jarek and Rishu are messing about, getting more drunk.

Jarek falls onto the floor in fits of laughter. Rishu cheers, and laughing goes off to get a drink. Ania is worried that Jarek is over doing it and starting to go off the rails.

Music and dancing fades under scene

ANIA: Jarek, Jarek...

JAREK: (Laughing drunkenly) Hello!

ANIA: (Laughing) Hi! Come on, let’s get you up one, two, three.

She fails to get him up. Both laughing she crouches down to speak to him, she pulls him up to a sitting position.

ANIA: Look I know you’re having a good time ok? But I’m just thinking that maybe you should slow down a bit yes? Maybe you’ve had enough to drink...

Seriously Jarek, you don’t have to party ALL of the time. Look I’m not trying to be a nag, it’s just the whole drinking thing, I watched my dad go down this road, I can’t watch you do that too. I’m sorry , it sounds stupid...

JAREK: (Alarmed that she is getting upset) No. No shhh... I’ll slow down, I’ll slow down I promise (He kisses her) I promise ok?

He falls over onto the floor again, in a fit of giggles

ANIA: Rishu, help him up will you? (Rishu, drunk himself, finds the situation very funny -Ania is not impressed).

Yeah, it’s hilarious. (Rishu gets him up) Rishu look, you need to talk to him, this is too much... He’s going to kill himself.

Music and dancing returns

Alex puts shades on Jarek - Jarek enters Polish centre room. Music and dancing fades out

Jarek turns up for work, hungover and very late

Polish centre

Jarek arrives with shades on, looking seriously the worse for wear. The priest is sitting waiting at the computer

KSIADZ: You’re late.
JAREK: Yeah I know, sorry.
KSIADZ: That’s the second time this week.
JAREK: Ok I’m here now.
KSIADZ: Have you been drinking?
JAREK: What?
KSIADZ: I can smell it. There is a time for work and a time for play.
JAREK: I’m here for work.
KSIADZ: Look at the state of you. You’re a disgrace.
JAREK: OK...
KSIADZ: You think you’re going to work like that?
JAREK: Ok you’re telling me off, I get it...
KSIADZ: I’m telling you to come to work.
JAREK: I am at work!
KSIADZ: On time!

Tension - Awkward pause

JAREK: Can we start now?
KSIADZ: I already started...the red needs to go into the room next door, the white divided into large & small and counted. OK? (He goes to computer as Jarek is sorting) So how many boxes do we have altogether?
JAREK: Six.
KSIADZ: I thought I counted eight, there should be eight.
JAREK: Oh yes, eight sorry (He continues to sort).
KSIADZ: Yes, eight (Tuts or grumbles) four of them should be red, four should be white, that makes eight. Jarek noisily drops the box on the table)... I had a phone call from your mother earlier.

Tension - Awkward pause

JAREK: I’ve just been busy ok?
KSIADZ: She was worried. I shouldn’t be the one having to reassure her.
JAREK: Ok, I’ll call her (He is about to leave through the door).
KSIADZ: Those are white!
JAREK: What?
KSIADZ: Those are white!
JAREK: Yes you said to put the white next door.
KSIADZ: I said the red to go next door!
JAREK: I’m doing the best I can ok?!
KSIADZ: You are no use to me like this, you have responsibilities here Jarek.
JAREK: Yes I know I’m not stupid,
KSIADZ: I didn’t say that you were...
JAREK: I can handle my responsibilities.
JAREK: Just stop judging me. Just... just don’t tell me what to do ok?
KSIADZ: I gave you an opportunity...
JAREK: I know that.
KSIADZ: It’s serving your community.
JAREK: Oh no one cares! I’m just the guy who serves the drinks behind the bar ok?
KSIADZ: I’ve seen boys like you before. You leave Poland, you go crazy. If you live life at a hundred miles an hour, without thinking, without caring, it’s only a matter of time before you crash.
JAREK: You think you have the answers to everything.
KSIADZ: I think that you are better than this.
JAREK: You know nothing about me.
KSIADZ: And I think that you are ungrateful.
JAREK: I am not ungrateful. I work really hard when I’m here.
KSIADZ: You do.
JAREK: I work behind the bar, do odd jobs, run errands. I put up with insults from people who don’t want me working here just because I am new. Oh and how’s that computer doing by the way? I did fix it for you after all...

KSIADZ: The issue is your lack of discipline...

JAREK: I do everything that I am asked to do!

KSIADZ: Except turn up on time!

JAREK: I don’t need this.

KSIADZ: Where are you going?

JAREK: I don’t need any of you. I’ll find another job. I quit.

Music and dancing returns.

Argument with Ania.

Jarek, very drunk, comes outside [of the party] Ania follows him out, they are arguing. Music and Dancing fades under scene.

JAREK: Get off me! I’m fine. Zostaf Mie! (Leave me alone!)

ANIA: I’m not going anywhere. I’m getting you a taxi. You need to go home...

JAREK: Look if you want to go, go...

ANIA: I’m not leaving you here like this! Have you seen the state you’re in?

JAREK: I’m going back in...

ANIA: No you’re not!

JAREK: You can’t stop me!

ANIA: You’re being an idiot!

JAREK: Look I’ll do what I want ok? I’m sick of people telling me what to do & how to live my life. It’s all bullshit! I’m not in Poland! I’m in Coventry and I’ll live here how I want.

ANIA: You said all this would stop Jarek, you said all this would change

JAREK: All what?

ANIA: All this! You promised me!

JAREK: You just want to stop me having fun… I don’t know why I even bring you…

ANIA: (Exasperated) You know what? I don’t care any more. Go out with Rishu and get pissed every night! Drink as much as you like, take as many drugs as you like! But if you know what? Just stay away from me...

JAREK: Ania, no come back please. Ania, I’m sorry. Please come back, I’m really sorry! (Ania can ad lib throughout Jarek trying to stop her) (She leaves) FUCK!

Scene 5

Crash! Street Fight.

Rishu is trying to help Jarek walk home. Night.

JAREK: You know what Rishu? We don’t need anyone. I don’t need Ania, the priest, Matjek or Mamo telling me what to do. But you Rishu, you’re amazing...

RISHU: I know...

JAREK: People just don’t like the fact that we’re happy huh?

RISHU: Only thing we need is alcohol.

JAREK: And drugs!...

RISHU: And more alcohol!

They laugh drunkenly.

JAREK: It’s just the two of us Rishu, against the world! Polska Gia!

His rushes to vomit violently.

Three Cov Lads arrive they steal Rishu’s hat. Jarek tries to get it back. A fight ensues which is broken up by the arrival of the police.

Police Siren - Cov lads and Rishu leg it, Jarek gets caught restrained to the ground and is arrested. All ad lib throughout. Policeman has Jarek on floor and is shouting at him to keep still. Fade scene.

Outside the police station.

Ania meets Jarek outside of the police station. He is given his belongings back by police - Policeman tells him he’s free to go, tells him to clear off and doesn’t want to see his face again. Police exit. Jarek leaves Police station. Ania appears.

JAREK: (Seeing Ania) What are you doing here?

ANIA: Where else would I be? So what happened?

JAREK: I don’t want to talk about it. (Feels pressured to continue) Me and Rishu got jumped.

ANIA: How come you ended up here? (He shrugs) Why are you doing this to yourself Jarek? I don’t get it.

JAREK: (He sits dejectedly) I dunno. Maybe I don’t belong here. Maybe I should just go home. Back to Poland.
ANIA: So you’re just going to give up? That’s so typical of you. As soon as things get a little bit difficult you just run away.

JAREK: But without you what have I got to stay for?... And it’s not like I have a job or anything... What else is there to do?

ANIA: (She sits next to him) Make something of yourself?

JAREK: Like what? Who’s going to have me? What use am I to anyone?

ANIA: You need to stop listening to the critics and start believing in yourself Jarek. You are not a nobody. You’re a good person, you’re smart, passionate, you have great ideas... and you’re unbelievably stubborn sometimes too! So don’t quit. What happened to your dreams? Computers, media, advertising... Do one thing for me huh? Be amazing.

She kisses him and exits.

Final meeting with the priest - Polish centre

Jarek knocks on priest’s door.

KSIADE: Jarek, this is a surprise.

JAREK: Hello. How are things?

KSIADE: OK.

JAREK: You alright?

KSIADE: I’m fine.

JAREK: How’s the place been without me?

KSIADE: It’s been OK. It misses you sometimes... they ask about you, Jarek.

JAREK: Really?

KSIADE: People do care Jarek.

JAREK: How’s the computer?

KSIADE: It’s still working, although we could do with someone who knows how to use it as well as you do.

JAREK: It’s not that difficult, most young people know how to use them. How’s the bar going?

KSIADE: It’s busy.

JAREK: You erm... need anyone to work?

KSIADE: What’s changed?

JAREK: I’ve learnt a few things, I know what I need to do, I know what’s important, what my priorities are... I want to work here, work hard here... before... I made mistakes, I should apologise, I’m sorry

KSIADE: If you had come here when you first arrived in Coventry we could maybe have saved you a lot of heartache and trouble hmm?

JAREK: Maybe... there needs to be a way of helping young people as soon as they arrive. A way for them to get the help and information they need...

KSIADE: How can you reach so many young people, all at the same time? It’s not possible Jarek. You could spread the word... YOU could help people to not make the same mistakes huh?

JAREK: (Realising) Yes, yes I can, I can do that... It’s so obvious! I have an idea!

KSIADE: What idea?

JAREK: It’s simple! It’s amazing!

KSIADE: What is it?

JAREK: You’ll see!

He rushes out excitedly.

KSIADE: (As Jarek rushes out) Where are you going? I’ll see you at six!

Scene Six

Redemption – the Website - Set in streets of Cov

Lee walks on stage, Nat walks on stage, Alex walks on stage - Jarek standing on upstage suitcase.

JAREK: Welcome to Coventry! Welcome to my website for the Polish Community! Everything you need to know for living in Coventry is here.

LUKAS: Lukas from Lublin, my company’s relocated me here, I need to know how to open a bank account.

Jarek responds - telling where to find the relevant info on his website. - Short & sweet answers.

ZOSHA: Zosha from Poznan. I’m new in Coventry, I’m looking for the Polish centre, where do I find it?

Jarek responds - They begin entering faster.

VOYTEK: Voytek from Helmno. I’ve come to live with my uncle, I’m looking for friends...

Jarek responds - They begin entering faster.
ANIA: Ania from Gdansk. I'm looking to find a job, what's the best way?

Jarek responds

ADAM: Adam from Krakow. I'm new to Coventry, I'm looking for fun things to do, where do I go?

Jarek responds

MATEJK: Matejek from Wroclaw I'm looking for you, you idiot!

JAREK: What are you doing here?

JAY: I made it to Coventry! I dumped my girlfriend!

JAREK: Where are you? I'll come to get you...

TOMEK: Tomek from Bidgosht, coming to study in Coventry, how do I find accommodation near to the Uni?

Jarek responds

LEWON: Lewon from Elblong, I'm trying to find my sister.

Jarek responds

RENI: Renia from Gdynia, here to be with my boyfriend I'm meeting him by the Cathedral how do I get there?

Jarek responds

They then all start asking questions together, Jarek is trying to answer them all (it's not a negative thing, he's enjoying the challenge). As it gets to a crescendo (music volume rising) music & lights cut.

Back to the surprise party.

The dark empty room from the beginning.

We are back in the darkness of the opening, with the man with the torch.

MAN (JAREK): Hello, I know you are in here. I saw you run in. You have to come out now. You need to come out!

Lights up.

ALL: Cheer! Surprise!

Projection: Coventry July 2010 Surprise party.

It is July 2010 and we are at a surprise celebration for Jarek it's his birthday/name day. They all celebrate with him, hugs, kisses, drinks, laughs etc.

(General thanks and expression of amazement & saying hello to friends) Wow guys, I don't know what to say!

ALEX: We just wanted to thank you.

NAT: We wanted to tell you we think you're awesome.

ADAM: Yeah Happy Birthday man!

ANIA: I know you could do it, you're amazing!

All laugh.

RISHU: Let's get the drinks in!

All cheer.

Freeze in tableau or continue action as scene fades to black.

THE END.

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LOST AND FOUND
Written & devised by Acting up with Orla O’Connor and Lisa Byrne

The Company
Breda (Irish descent mid 40s)        Leanne Kirk
Sean (Her brother)                  Ben Patefield
Keira (Her daughter, 17)           Monica Wairimu
Sarah (Keira’s Friend)             Lola Johnson
Emma (Keira’s Friend)              Eloise Martin
Rich (Keira’s Friend)              Thomas Smith
Kerrie (Keira’s Friend)             Eloise Martin
Liam (Keira cousins, Sean’s daughter) Neal Layton
Breda’s Mother                      Orla O’Connor
Dancers                             Freeman Irish Dancers
Directors                           Orla O’Connor and Lisa Byrne
Choreographer                       Jade Falconer

Scene 1
Breda is getting ready for St Patrick’s Day celebrations. She has a big Guinness hat on and is pinning a shamrock badge to her top. ‘Irish rover’ is playing on the radio. There is a knock on the door, she opens it and her brother Sean is standing there.

BREDA: What are you doing here?
SEAN: We need to talk.

Scene 2
St Patrick’s Day parade, there is music, dancing and drinking. Stage right, there are Irish dancers. People are crowding round. Keira and her friends are trying to find a good place to stand to see the dancing. They push their way to the front. The dance ends and the crowd spread out. The parade that started down stage shows people walking past holding signs, which display the different counties of Ireland.

They push their way to the front. The dance ends and the crowd spread out. The parade that started down stage shows people walking past holding signs, which display the different counties of Ireland on.

EMMA: That was well good.
SARAH: Yeah man, did you see how fast their feet were going? Not sure about the hairdos though, the poodle look ain’t working for me
KEIRA: It’s traditional. (To Sarah) Like your hair all that.
SARAH: Look over there!

Keira and Sarah look.
KEIRA: No don’t make it obvious.
RICH: You told us to look.
KEIRA: Oh it’s Daz, so what.
KEIRA: Yeah so what man, I’m well over him (She does a little strut) he don’t know what he is missing.
SARAH: Yeah!
Daz waves at them.
RICH: He’s waving at us.
KEIRA: The cheek of it.
SARAH: Do you want me to give him a slap?
KEIRA: No, chill.
EMMA: Lets crack open the cans.
KEIRA: Good idea. (She takes out three cans of Guinness and hands them out)
SARAH: Guinness, it’s what you drink on paddy’s day. Its good for you, puts hairs on your chest.
SARAH: Err, I don’t want hairs on my chest.
KEIRA: It’s a saying (They open the cans) Slainte!
ALL: Slainte!

They all drink. Keira’s friends don’t like the drink and it shows on their faces. Keira’s phone beeps. She takes it out and reads out the text.

KEIRA: It’s my mum, she’s wondering where I am.
SARAH: What sort of stuff will be going on at the party?
KEIRA: Loads man, you’ll love it. Lots of drinking, dancing and singing. There’ll be some bacon and cabbage as well. Plus... That fit lad from next door will be there. (She winks at them)
RICH: Well if there is a fit lad there we’d better hurry.
SARAH: Shut it Rich.
RICH: Come on, let's go.

They start to leave.

SARAH: Will there be other drinks?

KEIRA: Yeah, why?

SARAH: This stuff is rank.

EMMA: Is this what you drink when you go to Ireland?

KEIRA: Yeah that's what everybody drinks in Ireland.

RICH: What part of Ireland do you go to?

Keira shrugs her shoulders.

SARAH: You don't know?

EMMA: Have you actually been?

KEIRA: As good as.

SARAH: What does that mean?

EMMA: Have you or haven't you?

KEIRA: No, but...

RICH: Really, why not?

KEIRA: I don't know why, it's just my Mum has never wanted to go over.

Exit.

Scene 3

Keira and her friends enter her quiet house, there is no party. Her mum and uncle are sitting at the kitchen table having a cup of tea; Breda's deflated hat is in the middle of the table. Keira looks at Sean with some recognition but is unsure who he is.

KEIRA: What's going on?

BREDA: You remember your uncle Sean don't you?

KEIRA: What's going on?

BREDA: You remember your uncle Sean don't you?

KEIRA: Erm...yeah.

BREDA: Hang on Keira, it's for a few months.

KEIRA: So, what's up?

BREDA: We are going to go to Ireland tomorrow.

KEIRA: Are you joking?

BREDA: Yes, it's for a few months.

KEIRA: Are you joking?

BREDA: No, we...

KEIRA: (Interrupting) How are ya Keira? You've grown since the last time I saw ya.

KEIRA: Hiya, I should hope I've grown. I was five the last time you saw me.

BREDA: You're going to Ireland, I take it.

KEIRA: Oh what! Why?

BREDA: Sorry guys, there is no party this year.

SARAH: What? No party. What is she on about?

KEIRA: No hang on, we want to have a party, we came back early on purpose.

BREDA: Now is not the time for a party.

KEIRA: We can talk later mum.

BREDA: Some other time Keira, but not now. Sorry but you all need to go now.

KEIRA: We can talk later mum.

BREDA: Sorry but you all need to go now.

KEIRA: We can talk later mum.

BREDA: Some other time Keira, but not now. Sorry but you all need to go now.

KEIRA: What does that mean?

EMMA: You are looking forward to drooling all over that lad from next door.

SARAH: Owe I was looking forward to this party. Proper Irish and all that.

EMMA: You were looking forward to drooling all over that lad from next door.

SARAH: Damn Right.

RICH: We're going to listen to Keira's Mum and let go. Besides it's not all bad....

SARAH: ...why isn't it?

RICH: ...at least we don't have to drink any more Guinness!

SARAH: Give us a call Keira (They exit).

KEIRA: (Calling after them) Yeah I will. I'll Facebook you later. (She looks at her mum) So, what's up?

BREDA: (Pause) We are going to go to Ireland tomorrow.

KEIRA: (Looking at her mum) Oh, wicked.

SARAH: Really? Oh wicked.

BREDA: We are going to go to Ireland tomorrow.

KEIRA: I can't go for that long. What about college? And I've got so much planned for the Easter holidays.

BREDA: Sorry we have to go until... until,

KEIRA: Louise's 18th is in a few weeks and I've got a date next week.
BREDÁ: Look it's your granddad. He's not well and your Uncle Sean can't cope on his own. (She takes Keira's hand) I want us to help look after him.

KEIRA: What's wrong with him?

Breda looks at Sean.

SEAN: It's his chest, it's gotten weak.

BREDÁ: You could go to college in Limerick

KEIRA: Mum, I don't want to do that.

BREDÁ: I really want you to come with me, I can't do this without you and besides I'd miss you if you stayed here on your own.

Keira looks at her mum for a moment.

KEIRA: Ah man, alright. But you're going to have to talk to college for me.

BREDÁ: I will. Thank you love, you've always wanted to see Ireland and now is your chance.

Scene 4

Movement sequence representing the journey back to Ireland. Keira and Breda are sitting on the plane. We can hear the usual “please fasten your seat belts, we will be arriving into Shannon in one hour”. Breda starts to look really uncomfortable.

KEIRA: Are you alright Mum?

BREDÁ: It's very hot, I feel sick.

Breda stands up and walks up stage. Movement sequence begins. Keira and Breda travel with a red suitcase.

Scene 5

Breda is in the living room. Her dad is asleep in his armchair, in the same place as when she left 17 years before.

BREDÁ: I love that smell. (Breathe it in) Burning turf. The smell of a real fire. You don't get that in England. In England it's all gas or electric. It was one of the things I always missed about this place. (Pause) God, this room seems so much smaller now, or am I just that much bigger now?

(Breda approaches Bill. She stares at him for a moment)

A few more grey hairs and a few more wrinkles perhaps...

(She takes his hand, raises it to her face and press it against her cheek.)

You silly old fool

(Bill slowly sits. He stares at Breda for a moment, trying to take it in. He reaches out and holds her face, just to make sure that she is real).

BILL: Breda, Breda is that really you?

BREDÁ: Hi Da.

(They hug).

BILL: What are you...?

BREDÁ: [She interrupts him] Sean came to see me.

BILL: Ah, I might have known he'd have something to do with it.

BREDÁ: He's worried about you Da. I'm worried about ya.

BILL: Ah, you haven't been worried about me in 17 years.

BREDÁ: Just because I haven't been here doesn't mean to say I've stopped caring about you ya silly old fecker, there's never a day gone by...}

BILL: (He interrupts her) Hey, watch your tongue young lady.

BREDÁ: So Sean tells me you're not being doing so good.

BILL: Yer never too young for a good hiding.

BREDÁ: Yer not doing so good.

BILL: Ah, what does he know? I'm grand.

KEIRA: (Off) Mum, Mum! Where shall I put these bags?

Bill looks at Breda, a moment of panic fills Breda before she bravely composes herself again.

BILL: She's here?

BREDÁ: Keira love, this is your Granddad. Dad, meet Keira, your granddaughter.
Bill looks at Keira and acknowledges her only with a nod and a grunt.

BILL: I suppose the two of you will be wanting to stay here then?

Breda approaches Keira to try to shoo her out of the room.

BREDA: Keira, just do as I asked.

BILL: You'll be hard pushed in that old room, it's full of junk.

BREDA: We'll make do. Can you believe the taxi cost us 25 euro Da?

BILL: Ah those foreigners will rob every penny you have sure, you should have walked. There's no Irishmen driving cabs anymore. Nowadays there seems there's more foreigners in Ireland than Irish. But sure, you'd know all about that wouldn't you Bred?

KEIRA: Mum?

BREDA: Keira, just take those bags up will you!

Keira exits.

Scene 6

Keira is walking up towards the pub with Breda and Sean. Sean's children Liam and Kerrie are sat outside.

LIAM: How ya da?

SEAN: Alright son, do you remember yer Auntie Breda?

BREDA: Ah, sure he was only this high when I saw this fella last, running around in nappies you were.

LIAM: How're ya?

SEAN: And you've never met Kerrie

BREDA: No, but I've heard an awful lot about you.

KERRIE: (Hiya Breda) Nice to meet you.

SEAN: And this is your cousin Keira

LIAM: At last, we've heard so much about ya.

BREDA: You two look the image of your father.

KERRIE: Oh thanks.

BREDA: Ah ya know what I mean.

SEAN: Anyway, Breda and I need to talk, so we'll be inside quenching the thirst.

Sean and Breda enter pub.

KERRIE: Again? All they seem to do is talk.

KERRIE: So how's it going looking after granddad?

KEIRA: Oh, it's... it's really good. It's good to have met him at last.

Liam and Kerrie look at each other puzzled and then look at Keira.

LIAM: Are we talking about the same grandda here?

KERRIE: I think the older he gets, the grumpier he gets.

LIAM: Sure he nearly bit me head off me the other week for something and nothing.

KERRIE: I know what ya mean. He's so old fashioned. He is always going on about the way I dress. (Does an impression of Bill) Ah sure what have ya come dressed as today? It's called fashion grand da!

KEIRA: No it's more than that, I think he doesn't like me. He doesn't talk to me or even look at me.

Liam and Kerrie look at each other knowingly. Keira notices.

KEIRA: What? Do you know something? Is it mum?

KERRIE: Liam!

LIAM: Ah she's not stupid. Granddad has a problem with who your dad is.

KERRIE: Liam! Shut up will ya!

LIAM: Don't take it the wrong way like, but grandda hated that your mam was seeing a... well yer know.
KEIRA: A black guy?

KERRIE: Did Auntie Bred never tell you why she ran away to England?

KEIRA: Well…

KERRIE: He wasn’t exactly over the moon that his only daughter was pregnant and unwed but apparently when he found out who had gotten his precious Bred pregnant, well…

KEIRA: What was the big deal?

LIAM: They had a big row one night and yer ma packed a bag and left and that was the last time they saw each other… until now of course.

KERRIE: Shit, I can’t believe yer mam never said.

KEIRA: (Embarrassed) She…err…She did, yeah. I just never put two and two together, that’s all.

Anyways what do you do for fun around here?

LIAM: There’s not much to do.

KERRIE: Unless you can drive, then you can drive into the city.

KEIRA: It’s beautiful here.

LIAM: Yeah, but that was when we were kids. Now, bar winding up the farmers, unless you go into the city, there’s not a great deal to do anymore.

KEIRA: So we end up bored, sitting in the same pub as our da.

LIAM: You two must be ace dancers.

KEIRA: Fishing? Really?

KERRIE: Yeah, but that was when we were kids. Now, bar winding up the farmers, unless you go into the city, there’s not a great deal to do anymore.

LIAM: You two must be ace dancers.

KEIRA: Huh?

KERRIE: (Starting to laugh) Do you think we do Irish dancing?

KEIRA: Don’t you?

LIAM: No! Just cuz we’re Irish doesn’t mean we do Irish dancing.

KEIRA: Ok whatever. (Pause) I’m learning to play the boran.

LIAM: Oh Jesus.

Keira and Liam are laughing

KEIRA: What? What’s so funny?

KERRIE: She’s a true plastic Paddy this one.

KEIRA: You being funny?

LIAM: No, you’ve grand, it’s just we live in Ireland, we are Ireland, we don’t need to do all that.

KERRIE: Is that where that swagger comes from, too much Irish dancing practice has sent you walking lopsided.

KEIRA: What swagger?

Kerrie impersonates the way that Keira walked over to them.

KEIRA: (Shrugging her shoulders) Whatever, if you’re just gonna take the piss I’m going (She goes to leave).

LIAM: Ah, don’t go.

KERRIE: I’m sorry, look we’re only messing with ya.

LIAM: Sure come in and have a drink with us.

Liam and Kerrie stand up to enter the pub. Keira stands for a moment and waits.

LIAM: Don’t tell me, you’ll have a pint of Guinness with a sprig of shamrock in it?

KERRIE: Ah sure stop will ya.

After Kerrie and Liam exit into the pub, Keira decides to go back to the granddads instead. She initially walks away with the same swagger, but gradually begins to walk normally.

Scene 7

Bill is sitting in his chair reading the paper. Keira enters. She stands for a moment with her fists clenched staring at him.

KEIRA: You stupid, twisted old man.

(Bill looks up)

So you don’t like me because of who my dad is hey? Well tough there is nothing your grumpiness or rudeness can do to change the fact that I am your granddaughter.

We have the same blood! Do you think I want to be here?

BILL: Do you think I want you here?

KEIRA: We are here to help you. If my mum and me hadn’t come over, you would be rotting away in that chair.

BILL: Do you think I want you here?

KEIRA: We are here to help you. If my mum and me hadn’t come over, you would be rotting away in that chair.

BILL: Don’t speak to me like this.

KEIRA: Why not! You need to know what a small-minded horrible old man you are!
Breda enters.

BREDA: Keira, stop it.

KEIRA: Mum, he is unbelievable. Why didn't you tell me he was a racist? Hey? You knew he hated me.

BREDA: No, I didn't want to.

KEIRA: (Interrupting) Tell me the truth?

BREDA: I... I didn't want... oh Keira love its...

Bill turns up the TV.

KEIRA: Turn that off, I'm talking to you (She grabs the TV remote and throws it at him).

BREDA: Just stop! (Breda grabs Keira) Get out! Get out!

KEIRA: What? Your sticking up for him after all he has done?

BREDA: Go!

Keira storms out.

BILL: She's trouble that one...

BREDA: Dad! Just leave it!

BILL: It's in the blood.

Scene 8

Keira is up in her room crying and is angrily packing her bag. She throws clothes into her bag until she runs out of energy and crumbles.

Scene 9

Bill is sitting in his chair trying to light his fag but the lighter won't work. Breda and Sean are sat a little away from him. They are talking in hushed tones.

BREDA: It would do for what he needs I suppose.

SEAN: Breda, you said yourself, it's not working. No-one can say that you didn't try.

BREDA: We could look into home support.

BILL: Do either of you have a light?

SEAN: (Ignoring Bill) Home help will coat.

BREDA: We don't have time to move him.

BILL: Do ya have a light?

SEAN: I think it'd be for the best, under the circumstances.

BILL: A match or something?

BREDA: I thought... oh I don't know what I thought... I've got Keira to think of now. I could cope with the silence but after what happened the other day.

SEAN: It's not a good situation for anyone.

BILL: (Raising across to Breda with his fag in his hand) Bred, light this off the fire for me. Oi Bred.

BREDA: No Dad, you shouldn't be smoking anyway.

BILL: God dam and blast it woman! Don't tell me what to do in my own house.

SEAN: Calm down dad.

BILL: Oh feck off Sean you need to remember whose house you're in too.

BREDA: Dad, please... there's no need...

BILL: Oh Jesus Christ Breda will you shut up! (Mimicking Breda) Dad, please, please da....what! Do you think I like this situation any more than you?

There's no response from either Breda or Sean - they just look at him a bit bemused and shocked.

BILL: How do you think I feel listening to the pair of you talking about me as if I'm not here? Like a couple of vultures plotting to have me taken off to some godforsaken place.

SEAN: We are talking about what's best for you.

BILL: Well I know what's best for me. Not you two, me.

BREDA: What do you want?

BILL: To stay put and for one of you lumps to get off the sofa and light this fag for me.

Sean jumps up and gets a lighter out of his pocket. He reaches over to light Bills fag.

BREDA: I'm going to put dinner on. Will you have some Sean?

BILL: What's for dinner Breda?

BREDA: Spag boll.
BILL: Ahh, I hate foreign food.

BREdA: Well that's all there is da so it will have to do. God forbid that for just once in your life you would open your mind to new experiences.

Breda Exits

Scene 9A

Upstairs in her room Keira starts to sing Mo Ghile Mear. As she does, see are Bill in his chair. He stands up to listen to the singing coming from upstairs. When Keira finishes the song, Bill goes over to a photo of his late wife. He takes the picture and goes to sit back in his chair, holding the frame.

Scene 10

Keira returns to the house with some food shopping, it is just she and her granddad in the house. She is unpacking some of the bags.

Bill joins her in the kitchen. Keira ignores him and continues packing away the shopping. She puts the kettle on.

BILL: I'll have one of those if it's going.

Keira begrudgingly gets another cup.

BILL: I heard you…the other night…singing.

KEIRA: What? I can't sing now?

BILL: No, no…I don't…ah Jesus. You have a lovely voice.

KEIRA: Oh.

BILL: Your…er…your grandmother used to sing that song.

KEIRA: Did she?

BILL: Ah she had a good set of lungs your grandma. Bit like yourself.

KEIRA: Mum sung it to me when I was little.

BILL: It's been a long time since I've heard it. Too long. Thank you.

Keira turns back to face him

KEIRA: Oh.

BILL: Your…er…your grandmother used to sing that song.

KEIRA: Did she?

BILL: Ah she had a good set of lungs your grandma. Bit like yourself.

KEIRA: Mum sung it to me when I was little.

BILL: It’s been a long time since I’ve heard it. Too long. Thank you.

Keira turns round to face him

KEIRA: What?…oh it doesn't matter.

BILL: No go on. Say what’s on your mind…you normally do.

KEIRA: Well, was grandma like? I’ve always wondered, about her and you. It’s just Mum never talked about any of you here. Now I know why, but I’d like to know.

BILL: Your grandmother was more like you than I ever thought possible.

KEIRA: Oh?

BILL: She knew how to put me in me place and how to keep me there an’ all.

KEIRA: (Laughing) Really?

BILL: Oh ay! The only one who could. She had a bloody gob on her… but what came out of it made sense.

KEIRA: Sounds like a top lady!

BILL: Ay, the best! She’d have loved you.

KEIRA: Really?

BILL: Your mam has raised you well.

KEIRA: You really think that, even after what happened the other day?

BILL: Ah, sure you’re right I am a grumpy old fecker, ‘stuck in my ways’ as your mammy might say. I… well… I kind of messed up big time where your mam and you were concerned. I should have just let things be.

KEIRA: Well it’s never too late to make amends.

BILL: It’s true enough I suppose. That’s something else you’re grandma used to say.

KEIRA: I wish I’d met her.

(Buff) I’m glad I’ve had a chance to meet you though.

BILL: Well... Is that kettle boiled yet? Jesus a man could die o’ thirst in this house.

KEIRA: Oh, yeah sorry granddad. Oh and er… I got you these. (Keira takes out a packet of fags and a lighter and gives them to Bill) Just don’t tell mum.

BILL: I’m a grown man, and I want to smoke. They shouldn’t be telling me what to do.

KEIRA: I know how it feels not to be listened to, and that’s not fair.

BILL: Yeah, well when it comes to ignoring the feelings of the ones you love, they could hand out gold medals for that in our family. I’m afraid we’re all a bit guilty on that front.

KEIRA: Yeah, well I’m sick of it.

BILL: So is that it then, are you going to leave?

KEIRA: I don’t know.
BILL: Well your bag's been packed and in the hall for a few days now.
KEIRA: You’re the only one who’s noticed. Mum hasn’t got a clue. She’s so preoccupied the whole time. I don’t know what’s wrong with her. I don’t think it’d make any difference to her if I went or stayed.
BILL: I’d make a difference to me.
Keira smiles at him and raises her mug.
KEIRA: Slainte.
BILL: Slainte.

Scene 11
Bill is sitting in his chair watching the racing Breda comes in and puts his dinner on the table beside him. As she walks out Bill grabs her hand.
BILL: She is a credit to you.
BREDA: Thank you.
BILL: I wish I had seen her grow up.
BREDA: Yeah?
BILL: You being here again… well its made the place feel… your mother would never have let you go.
BREDA: It was my choice to move.
BILL: But I didn’t give you any other.
BREDA: Look, your granddad has mellowed in old age, and you didn’t exactly think he was a pussycat when you first walked in here did you? Well believe me, he was a lot worse back then. If he had got his hands on me when I was pregnant he would have made my life hell. There’d have been constant digs about how I had disappointed him. I dread to think what he would have done to your dad if he had got hold of him, I wouldn’t have been allow to keep you!
KEIRA: Really?
BREDA: (She nods) When your granddad first found out I was seeing your dad, who worked on the buildings with your Uncle Sean, he drove down there and threatened him, told him to keep his dirty hands off me. Luckily Sean was there at the time and calmed the situation down. Keira you have to remember I was only 19 when I had you, moving to England gave me freedom.
KEIRA: I actually meant the part about keeping me.
BREDA: Oh.
KEIRA: I didn’t know things were that bad.
BREDA: And that’s exactly the way I wanted it. I didn’t want you to know about those things.
KEIRA: But what about you?
BREDA: Look, all of that was a long time ago. Ireland has changed a lot since then and so has this town and so has your grand dad.
KEIRA: Why did you pick Coventry?
BREDA: What?
KEIRA: Out of all the places in England you could have moved to, you pick Coventry?
BREDA: (She laughs) It’s not that bad is it?
KEIRA: (Gives her mum a wide eyes look) Na its not.
BREDA: You know the day I stepped of the train in Cov it was really cold and wet. I remember thinking I’d never seen so much concrete. It was all so grey. I nearly stepped back on the train to go back home, but something made me stay.
KEIRA: Why didn’t you stay with my dad. Then you could have both stayed here... with me?
BREDA: Oh love, you know, your dad was only here for a short time, he had to go back home. Marriage and settling down together wasn’t an option.
KEIRA: Yeah I know.
BREDA: But your dad and me had some cracking times here.
KEIRA: Ok! Save those stories for your mates. They laugh.
BREDA: Mum, if granddad was so nasty why did you come back?
KEIRA: Oh... Mum... I had no idea... are you sure?... the doctors, you know, they make mistakes.
BREDA shakes her head, clearly quite upset.
KEIRA: Mum, if granddad was so nasty why did you come back?
BREDA: I know love. I’m sorry for you too, you both seem to be getting on so well recently.
KEIRA: Oh... Mum... I had no idea... are you sure?... the doctors, you know, they make mistakes.
BREDA: I’m sorry I’ve not been there for you love. It’s just all of this... it’s all been a bit much all at once.
KEIRA: You should have told me. I could have helped you.
BREDA: You are helping. I’ve not seen him this happy since... well since your grandmother was alive.

**Scene 13**
The family are sitting in the living room. Granddad’s chair is empty. There is silence. Sean, Breda and Kerrie are sitting on the sofa, Liam is sitting on the floor. They all have drinks in their hands. Keira is standing behind Bill’s chair.

SEAN: *‘Was a lovely service (Pause) Flowers were lovely. Miss O’Brien made a great job of them (Pause) Weather was... He is interrupted by Keira singing. She sings on her own for a moment, then Liam joins in followed by Kerrie, Breda and Sean.*

End when finished song.

**Scene 14**
Breda is packing up her dad’s belongings Keira is sitting looking at photos.

KEIRA: (Looking at photo) Aww Mum, I found another one of you when you were a little girl. (She shows Breda)
BREDA: I must be about 5 in that photo, it’s outside this house just after da had finished building it.
KEIRA: Does this feel like home to you?
BREDA: Not really, I used to always think of it as home, but now that I’m here I see that it isn’t my home anymore.
KEIRA: So Cov is your home now?
BREDA: Well it’s where all my stuff is, so yes, I’d say it is.
KEIRA: Well it’s the only place I know as home.
BREDA: So shall we go back?
KEIRA: Yeah, But Mum, can we come back again soon?
BREDA: Of course, we will visit here again.
KEIRA: But not before we visit my dad in the Caribbean, then I will really know my roots.

**Scene 15**
Movement on the sea returning to England. Keira and her mum are travelling across the sea. The sea carries them both with their red bag across to England. Choppy sea to echo the emotional journey they have had in Ireland. In this scene we will also see people from different decades and cultures travelling with Keira and Breda to show how many people have travelled to England for hundreds of years, and how Keira and Breda’s story is just one of many.

**THE END.**
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LOOK WID YU EYE
By Daniel ‘Milidee’ Christie

The Company

Young Winston  Daniel Christie
Young Wendy  Karem Thompson
Shirley  Yolande Thompson
Tilly  Shamnice Cooper
Margo  Jessica Williams
Margaret  Tabitha Christie
June  Ellina Maganga
Deirdre/ Head Nurse  Natlite Redder
Tony/ Paul  Ben Patsfield
Gwen  Vanessa Williams
Cheryl  Laura Bryers
Shirley  Sophie Booth
Barkley  Jack Broom
Other parts played by  Persis Djan
Rachel Djan
Claude Daku-Hunter
Buth Mudhai
Hazel Oppong
Jeanette Mudhai
Lola Johnson

Director  Leon Phillips
Assistant Director  Liam Kelly
Dramaturg  Olfa Animashawun

Scene One

A bed and breakfast/flat reception area. It is Thursday evening in late ’50s Coventry. Deirdre and her husband Tony own the dusty, cluttered, over-decorated little place with damp-stained wallpaper. But there is a big picture of the queen on one of the walls.

Toni is offstage banging something with a hammer. He is repairing floorboards in the office behind the desk. Bright and cheerful, Deirdre is in charge of the reception desk. Something about how she uses her body and pronounces her words gives us the blatant impression she believes she is somewhat posh.

Deirdre tries to make herself look busy as a new customer arrives.

Enter Winston, fresh from Jamaica with a grip (suitcase) in each hand. He approaches the desk, tired and weary. He is angry, grumbling to his shirt collar in frustration.

WINSTON:  The bloody cheek!

Deirdre’s face drops into disappointment when she realises her new customer is black.
WINSTON: I have money man! Put me up! Just one night!

TONY: Get out!

WINSTON: Look at how many black man and hirish man need room! Look how much money you a miss!

TONY: I don't want your money mate! You heard, Shove off!

WINSTON: Winston Stands stunned.

WINSTON: Well... Jesus, pardon and forgive my talk. But this is bullshit!

Winston exits, slamming the door behind him. Letting in another strong audible gust of wind, as he leaves disappointed.

**Scene Two**

Outside in a bus shelter.

It is audibly windy, so Winston raises his jacket collar and repositions his pork pie hat. He isn’t happy at all.

Winston walks along the road grumbling to himself. Wendy approaches walking in the opposite direction. They are ready to collide any second. Wendy is flicking through some freshly developed photographs laughing and smiling to herself, blissfully distracted. Winston angrily shivers up the path looking at his feet.

The bad weather symbolically stops.

Winston and Wendy crash into each other at the bus shelter. Wendy’s photographs drop on the floor.

WENdY: Oh no!

Wendy begins to pick up her photos.

WINSTON: Chuh! Come out the way man!

WENdY: Excuse me?

WINSTON: Jesus Christ! Why won’t you darkies learn?!

WENdY: Was you looking where you was going sir?

Winston takes a deep breath.

WINSTON: Mind where you walking bloody woman!

WENdY: Was you looking where you was going sir?

WINSTON: I’m sorry. Forgive me.

WENdY: It’s OK.

Winston begins to help Wendy pick up her photos.
WINSTON: I tell you sister me meet some real hoggish people today you know! Put me in a bad mood.

WENDY: It's fine. Thankyou for helping me. And at least you have manners to apologise.

As Wendy and Winston are recovering the photos they hardly look at each other. They are just being polite strangers.

WINSTON: You take these photographs?

WENDY: Yes. I want to be a photographer.

WINSTON: You can work camera?

WENDY: Of course, see my pictures them here?


WENDY: Thank you.


WENDY: Where are you coming from?


WENDY: OK. Well I'm from Ochi Rios.

WINSTON: I see. How long you been here?

WENDY: Two years and a half now.

Winston relaxes a little. They stand, photos fully recovered.

Wendy takes a decent look at Winston. There is a moment between them, as Wendy's heart finally flutters.

Wendy looks into the audience with astonishment. She fancies him.

WINSTON: So what is your name?

WENDY: My name is Wendy. Wendy Williams.

Wendy and Winston shake hands and Winston reluctantly begins to relax and smile.

WINSTON: I'm not usually so rough. It's just the long travelling, and the poor reception mi have since me reach.

WENDY: You'll learn to cope. Welcome to Coventry.

WINSTON: Me no feel very welcome... until now that is. My name's Brown, Winston Brown.

WENDY: Pleased to meet you, Mr. Brown. So you find a place to stop?

WINSTON: Me just get run out of one place where them rent room. A white man come out with a hammer fi me!

WENDY: Lord Jesus! You no have no family or friends inna England?

WINSTON: I don't have any family. My mother dead four months now and mi friends did come here before but me no know where fi find them.

WENDY: Oh, mi sorry to hear that. What will you do?

WINSTON: What must I do?

WENDY: I can ask if you can come and stay with me and my friends if you like.

WINSTON: You and your friends? I don't know. Them have space fi me?

WENDY: Yeman! And a spare matress, and sheet.

WINSTON: OK then, yes. I would be grateful. Thank God me find a friendly face man. God bless you.

WENDY: Don't worry I'll look after you. Show you around and things. Come.

They exit.

Scene Three

We are now at a flat where Wendy lives. There are five girls in the cramped shared room each with her own mattress. The girls are Tilly, Margo, Margaret, and June. Making Wendy the fifth person.

The girls are sat on their beds talking, drinking rum and laughing. Reminiscing about growing up in the West Indies. There is a record player playing ska music quietly in the background.

MARGO: You think me ramp? Mi mudda did beat me from port to port but me never business! It was worth it.

The girls laugh.

TILLY: But I bet you never do it again.

MARGARET: Who? This one. You don't know she! She badbreed!

MARGO: Life fi live man! To the full!

MARGARET: Is true you know!

TILLY: Look how she a drink off the rum so.

The girls giggle.

The girls quiet down as they hear Wendy laughing off stage in the corridor.
Tilly runs to the door to peek outside.

TILLY: Wendy have a man with her!

Tilly hurries back to her bed as the girls gasp and wonder.

JUNE: A man? Wendy come with a man? Wha him look like?!

TILLY: Me never see him good. Just pretty up youself.

JUNE: Fi wha!? Me no look man.

Wendy knocks and pokes her head around the bedroom door.

WENDY: Unnu decent?

MARGO: Everybody is fine.

Wendy enters smiling; Winston politely stays back until addressed.

WENDY: Winston just reach England and he needs a place to stay. I said he can stop with us till him find somewhere else.

There is a moment of quiet concern between the girls.

MARGO: Are you a dirty man?

WENDY: What kind of foolish questions you asking Margo?

MARGO: Wendy, is just us girls in here. You can't just let any and any man come and stop without question.

JUNE: True. He could be a thief, murderer, anything!

MARGO: Exactly!

WINSTON: Good evening everybody.

The girls look at each other approving Wendy's taste in men.

THE GIRLS: Good evening Mr. Brown.

WINSTON: Please, just call me Winston

WENDY: Winston just reach England and he needs a place to stay. I said he can stop with us till him find somewhere else.

There is a moment of quiet concern between the girls.

MARGO: Are you a dirty man?

WINSTON: Hold on now ladies, I am a god fearing man, raised in a Baptist church and I'm not married.

JUNE: That's all I care about. Not for my sake of course.

MARGARET: Always a look man.

June kisses her teeth at the girls laugh.

WENDY: Are you girls happy now?

The girls laugh.

WINSTON: Thank you all very much!

Wendy puts a mattress leant against the wall on the floor, and begins to make a bed for Winston, Margo rushes to help.

MARGO: (suggestively) we will keep an eye pan him.

WINSTON: But you never tell me is pure woman you live with.

WENDY: What? You would rather sleep pan road side?

WINSTON: I guess not.

WENDY: Put your bags inna that corner there and stop your foolishness. If you are is Christian you must can restrain your urges.

MARGO: You better restrain yours.

WINSTON: What you mean urges?

WENDY: It doesn't matter.

Margo puts on a record.

TILLY: You want a likkle rum Winston?

WINSTON: I don't drink alcholic drinks. Thank you.

MARGO: You don't drink? Well Wendy. Look like you have a friend you can stay sober with at last.

The girls laugh.

The girls begin to dance and enjoy themselves, laughing and joking and involving our Winston and the lights fade.
Scene Four

It is the next day in the flat and everybody has gone out apart from Winston who is still sleeping.

Wendy walks in as she goes about her chores and takes an adoring look at Winston who is sleeping cute like a baby.

Winston bolts upright awake, yawns and stretches. Wendy is surprised by Winston’s awakening and starts fussing and tidying trying to make herself look busy.

WINSTON: Morning. Where’s everybody gone?

WENDY: Oh! Morning Winston. They all gone to work!

WINSTON: You know where I can find work?

WENDY: I’ll help you find work on Monday when I’m off work.

WINSTON: What do you do?

WENDY: I’m a nurse.

WINSTON: A nurse? Well. That is something good isn’t it! You look like you would suit being a nurse.

WENDY: Oh, thank you.

WINSTON: What time is it?

WENDY: Is nearly twelve.

WINSTON: Nearly twelve!? How come nobody wake me? I must look lazy bad!

WENDY: Stop the noise Winston. You have to rest. You no must tired? Look at all the travelling you been doin? Everybody just left you asleep.

WINSTON: I had a good rest.

Winston stands up in his vest and briefs.

WENDY: Lord!

Wendy turns away coyly.

WINSTON: Lord Jesus me sorry!

Wendy giggles shyly.

Wendy turns back around and continues fixing up the room.

Winston quickly tries to cover up in his quilt. He reaches into his suitcase for his toiletry bag, a towel and some fresh clothes.

WINSTON: Me a go get dressed.

WENDY: Alright.

Winston drops the quilt and hurries off to the bathroom off stage.

WENDY: Lord Jesus! Lead me not into temptation!

Wendy goes about packing away Winston’s bed (Which at the moment is simply a mattress). Suddenly, as Wendy stoops down where Winston’s mattress is, she picks up a photograph.

WENDY: What’s this?

Winston returns from the bathroom.

WINSTON: Me forget mi toothbrush inna mi bag.

WENDY: Is your photograph this?

Winston takes the photo to inspect it.

WINSTON: Yeah man! She name Shirley Thomas. You ever see her?

WENDY: No.

WINSTON: Well, she is the reason why I travelled to England.

WENDY: I see. (Beat) She is very beautiful. Is she your wife?

WINSTON: No. Me tell you me never marry.

WENDY: But is she you waan marry?

WINSTON: Yes. From long time me know her. From when we was young.

Wendy continues her chores as Winston speaks. She doesn’t want to look at him.

WINSTON: She a me friend from school days. We did always play together. Then she come a England with her older sister.

WENDY: I see. When last you speak to her?

WINSTON: A year back. She come England must be two years now. She did write me a few times but I guess it’s hard, me hear England and Coventry is a busy, busy place. (Pause) Hey, maybe you can help me find her.

WENDY: Oh I don’t know

WINSTON: Come man! Please. You know Coventry better than I.

WENDY: I suppose. If that’s what you want my friend, if that would make you happy.

Winston smiles and hugs Wendy squeezing her in delight.
WINSTON: Thank you, Friend.

Winston gives Wendy the photo. Wendy puts the photo in her pocket.

Winston makes a dash for the bathroom.

Wendy kisses her teeth.

**Scene Five**

We are in the hospital where Wendy works. It’s an evening shift. She is on duty with another black female nurse named Gwendalyn. They bumble into each other by the reception sorting files and begin to talk.

GWEN: You alright Wendy?

WENDY: Yeah me cool.

GWEN: You look sad over something. Wargwaan?

WENDY: Me just feel love-sick.

GWEN: Wendy stop worrying. You will find love. Just tek time.

WENDY: Here Gwendalyn. You ever see this woman before?

Wendy shows Gwen the picture of Shirley.

GWEN: Ok. That’s Shirley Thomas. Mi see her in one bar every Saturday.

WENDY: Really!? She a drunkard?

GWEN: No! She a work in there. Nice young woman still.

WENDY: So I hear.

Wendy shows Gwen the picture of Shirley.

GWEN: Ok. That’s Shirley Thomas. Mi see her in one bar every Saturday.

WENDY: Really!? She a drunkard?

GWEN: No! She a work in there. Nice young woman still.

WENDY: So I hear.

**Scene Six**

We are back at the flat. Winston is having a good laugh with the girls as Wendy arrives home tired and frustrated.

Everybody greets her as she comes through the door and kicks off her shoes.

JUNE: What’s wrong Wendy? How was work?

WENDY: Bloody foolish woman!

MARGO: Who?

WENDY: The head nurse. Always have me and one sister a clear out bed-pan! What she take this thing for?

WINSTON: What’s a bed pan?

WENDY: A little bowl for them patients who can’t leave them bed and go a toilet. Nastyness!

WINSTON: Shame. I did find a job today!

Wendy is suddenly excited.

WENDY: Did you? That’s wonderful! Where?

Some of the girls notice Wendy’s upbeat reaction and look at each other with childish giggles.

MARGARET: The Jaguar car factory over in Radford.

WENDY: Oh! Well done. So you will be making cars?

Winston laughs.

WINSTON: Is so me think. Me turn up ready fi work pan car, the manager hand me broom. But. Its better than nothing.

WENDY: Its ridiculous! What happened to the streets paved with gold? The good work and money? The use of the English education, which was caned into us from birth?

JUNE: Educated slaves! We do all the jobs which them don’t want to do. And we wouldn’t do them either if it wasn’t desperate. But they are necessary jobs!

Margo puts on an upbeat ska record.

MARGO: Stop the noise now. You have to start somewhere. Things must get better!

MARGARET: We should celebrate Winston’s first job in England.

TILLY: Yeah you’re right!

MARGO: Life fi live man!

MARGARET: She love how white people drink and party.

MARGO: What you a talk bout? Them love how me drink and party!

TILLY: Come now Winston, let’s go!

Winston looks for Wendy’s approval.

WENDY: Yeah, we deserve it.
WINSTON: Alright come. But I don't drink Margo me tell you.
The girls cheer for Winston and scatter to get ready.

Scene Seven

We are in a bar. Winston and the girls are at a table.
Margo and Margaret return to the table with drinks for Winston and the girls.

MARGO: Here we are.
They share out the drinks and everybody has a sip. Winston has a glass of what seems to be orange juice. Little does he know it's laced with alcohol.

WINSTON: This orange juice tastes funny.

WENdY: How?

WINSTON: I don't know. Its nice though.

Margo and Margaret giggle slyly.

A ska song begins.

WINSTON: Its hot in here man.

WENdY: Don't you have a cold drink? Drink up Winston!

Winston downs his glass quickly.

MARGO: Yes Winston!

MARGARET: Come mek we dance!

The girls (without Margo and Wendy) get up and move to the dance floor off stage.

WINSTON: Get me another one of them orange juices, them nice you see?

Winston gives Margo some money, and she goes to buy Winston another spiked orange juice laughing to herself quietly. When she returns and Winston necks the glass again.

WINSTON: How come you don't go and dance?

WENdY: I don't mind sitting here with you Winston.

Margo can sense some tension.

CHERYL: Wendy how are you darling?

WENdY: I'm good. Cheryl this is Winston Brown.

WINSTON: Good evening.

SHIRLEY: He yours?

WENdY: Winston? Oh no he's our friend.

CHERYL: She spotted him from the other side of the room.

SHIRLEY: Very handsome aren't you Winston?

WINSTON: Well I...

Tilly comes over to the table.

WINSTON: Winnie these are my work friends Cheryl, and Shirley.

WENdY: Shirley? What a common name!

SHIRLEY: Pardon?

WINSTON: I come to England searching for a woman named Shirley. Is so she mean.

SHIRLEY: Ooh is that right? Well here i am!

They laugh politely

WINSTON: Well...

SHIRLEY: Come dance with me!

WINSTON: Make me just get another orange juice.

MARGO: Here have some of mine!

WINSTON: (Uncomfortable but polite) Thank you.

Winston downs the drink, and Shirley drags him away.

CHERYL: I'm going to dance too. Come Tilly.
Cheryl and Tilly move towards the dance floor.

WENDY: Tilly!

Tilly turns back, Cheryl continues onto the dance floor.

TILLY: Wargwaan wendy?

WENDY: Why you haffi bring that gyal over here?

TILLY: Who Cheryl?

WENDY: No man, that bloody Shirley!

TILLY: What’s wrong?

WENDY: Never mind. Go long bout you business!

Tilly walks away with a confused look on her face. Wendy is vexed and slumps back down in her seat.

The whole time watching Shirley and Winston on the dance floor (which is offstage).

Scene Eight

A few minutes later, a different song is playing and some of the other girls have joined Wendy back at the table. Wendy’s eyes are still fixed on the dancefloor where Shirley and Winston are still dancing together.

CHERYL: (To Wendy) Your man’s got some fine moves. Shirley’s having a great time.

WENDY: He’s no my man and those two ought to know better, making a show of themselves for all to see.

JUNE: Well Shirley’s not complaining, and Winston’s grinning like the cat that got the cream!

All the girls laugh, Wendy just glares.

TILLY: Who wants another drink? (Everyone says ‘yes please’ except for Wendy)

WENDY: No thank you, and if you ask me you should all slow down a bit and show a lot more restraint and a little less leg.

TILLY: Who do you think… Tilly is about to have a go at Wendy but she is interrupted by the return of Shirley and Winston from the dancefloor. Winston is feeling a little dizzy and is propping himself up against Shirley, who is well happy. Shirley necks her drink and fans herself with her purse.

SHIRLEY: (To Tilly in slightly hushed tone) He’s gorgeous.

Winston and Shirley exit back to the dancefloor with Shirley laughing and giggling. The other girls join in with the laughter too.

Wendy takes a moment to compose herself and then gathers up her things and stands up.

WENDY: Goodnight everybody.

MARGO: But what about Winston?

Wendy just gives the girl a look, as if to say what about him?

WENDY: Goodnight.

Wendy exits in the opposite direction to the dancefloor.

Scene Nine

Winston awakes in the flat with a splitting headache. He sits up feebly and stretches.

Winston: Lord have mercy.

Wendy enters the room. She ignores Winston as she begins to make her bed.

WENDY: Good morning Winston.

Winston: I feel terrible.

WENDY: That’s what you get for drinking so much.

Winston: Drink? How you mean drink?

WENDY: Don’t play foolish man!

Winston: But I don’t drink!

WENDY: Oh please!!

Winston: How could I drink? You seen me is only orange juice me get!
Wendy realises.

WENdY: Margo! That bloody woman put alcohol inna you drink!

WINSTON: Why would she do that?

WENVY: Because she love joke too much!

WINSTON: Well, I wouldn’t worry, I had a good time.

WENVY: You pig!

WINSTON: Hold on! What did I do so bad?

WENVY: You don’t remember the likkle blonde girl you vanished with?

Winston thinks for a moment, then gives into crushing guilt as a flashback of last night’s escapades return to haunt him.

WINSTON: Yes. I remember. But we never do nothing. Is she did take me outside. And is me did run back in! When me run back in unnu gone!

WENVY: You’re just a man, aren’t you?! Typical man!

WINSTON: Wendy. You know is Shirley me want. Now no matter how drunk I was I know myself, and I would never go too far.

Wendy stays quiet for a while still frustrated.

WENVY: Well the real Shirley can deal with you soon enough. Then you can put a stop to this nonsense.

WINSTON: You hear something?

WENVY: Well… erm. I asked a friend, and she says she knows Shirley.

WINSTON: For real!? WENVY: For real. She recognised the picture instant.

WINSTON: Well, where is she?

WENVY: I’ll take you to her after work. I’ll get Gwen to come because she knows her.

WINSTON: Oh, wendy! Thank you so much!

Winston tries to stand, but is dizzy so he stays put.

WINSTON: Me love you man! You know me love you don’t it? You look after me good!

WENVY: Thanxyou. Me just trying to do the right thing.

Wendy goes to the kitchen.

Winston punches the air the best he can in excitement.

WINSTON: Thank you Jesus!

Scene Ten

Winston, Wendy, and Gwen arrive at the bar Shirley Thomas works in.

WENDY: How do you feel?

WINSTON: Nervous. Excited.

GWEN: Well your wait is over. See your Shirley there.

Shirley is at the bar rocking to the music on the jukebox, serving drinks.

Winston becomes excited and begins sorting his clothes out. His eyes are wide, his smile is wider, he can barely contain his excitement.

WINSTON: Oh yes!

Winston hugs andsqueeze Wendy and Gwen together.

WINSTON: Oh thank you! Thank you both very much! (Sniff)

WENDY: It’s alright Winston. Glad I could help you find happiness.

GWEN: Now go on. Go talk to her.

Winston smiles, and walks over to Shirley looking back nervously to Wendy and Gwen who urge him on supportively.

Winston finally leans against the bar.

Shirley stoops down to put glasses back under the bar.

WINSTON: Shirley Thomas?

SHIRLEY: Who’s this?

Shirley stands up, and is blown away by Winston’s familiar smile.

SHIRLEY: Winston?

WINSTON: Yeah man!

SHIRLEY: Oh Winston!

Shirley hugs Winston over the bar tight.

SHIRLEY: Oh my life, I’ve missed you so much. How did you find me?

WINSTON: I made a friend called Wendy when I came over, she helped me find you.
SHIRLEY: For real? What a nice thing to do.
WENDY: Well. There we go.
GWEN: Don’t worry. You did the right thing.
WENDY: Let’s just leave.
GWEN: Come dear.
WENDY: Can I stop with you tonight Gwen?
GWEN: Of course man! Come.

Wendy and Gwen leave.

There is a young white waitress serving (Angie), who comes back to the bar to collect more drinks.

SHIRLEY: Angie. Take over a moment please.
ANGIE: OK.
SHIRLEY: Come Winston!

She leads Winston to a table.

Winston and Shirley are sat at a table in the centre of the stage speaking.

SHIRLEY: I’m so glad to see you Winston!
WINSTON: No more than me. I came to see how you were keeping.
SHIRLEY: I’m keeping wonderfully. Me have a man now Winston can you believe?.
WINSTON: Say what?
SHIRLEY: Yes! Six months now. He’s such a lovely man, him called Steven. You must meet him! And this is his place.
WINSTON: You have a white man?
SHIRLEY: I know. Not expected but love is a mystery. Not everybody likes it. The things some people say! But we’re so happy.
WINSTON: Wow. Well, congratulations.

Winston is sore, but well composed.

SHIRLEY: You know I still think pon our younger days man.
WINSTON: No more than me. Remember when we said we would get married?
SHIRLEY: I know! We did have a play wedding and all them tings. Precious memories.

Scene Eleven

Wendy and Gwen are at the flat. Wendy pulls some clothes from her bedside drawer in a tantrum and begins packing the clothes into a grip. She is crying.

GWEN: Wendy, how you expect him to know how you feel if you never talk!?
WENdY: After all the things I’ve done for him! If he can’t see then he’s blind!
GWEN: But you know how him stay! He is genuinely a nice man! He will just see it as you being genuinely nice.
WENdY: I should have left him innu the bus shelter.
GWEN: You don’t mean that.
WENdY: I do or else I wouldn’t feel the way I feel now! I can’t be here when he comes home.
GWEN: Stop! Slow down. Talk with me properly before you rush.

Wendy calms down and sits down.
Scene Twelve

Winston is in another bar. He has been walking around feeling broken. The bar is deserted, just the white bar keep and his mate Paul. Winston realises he’s the only black person in the room, and seems unsure as he steps in.

BARKEEP: What can I get you mate?

WINSTON: An orange juice please.

BARKEEP: Come on lad! Have a man’s drink!

WINSTON: It’s fine.

Just as the barkeep goes off to serve the drink Winston changes his mind.

WINSTON: Wait... give me a beer instead.

BARKEEP: Are you ok mate?

WINSTON: Fine.

PAUL: You from Jamaica?

WINSTON: Yes.

BARKEEP: A lot of you lot coming over right now. It’s good to see.

WINSTON: Is it really?

PAUL: Yeah it is mate. A lot of people moan about immigrants, and say nasty things but that’s ignorant.

BARKEEP: Yeah, I agree. I don’t feel it’s my place to judge anybody. And I’m sure people will change after a while. Once people realise what the Irish and the blacks have to offer. Like the cooking! I went to a church event, and there was this black lady there. She made some yellow stuff, with saltfish all fried up. Absolutely gorgeous.

PAUL: Not a drinker are you?

Winston sips his pint and winces at the bitterness. He then looks aside. Still feeling glum.

PAUL: You not drinking your pint there lad?

WINSTON: Huh? Oh, yes the drink.

Winston signs his pint and winces at the bitterness. He then looks aside. Still feeling glum.

PAUL: True. You’re a prick, ain’t ya Barry.

They laugh.
WINSTON: I will see you again.

BARKEEP: Anytime mate. Tell all your friends, they can come here for a drink any time. Black, Irish, but no dogs.

They laugh again as Winston leaves.

Winston exits.

Scene Thirteen

Winston has rushed all the way back to the flat. Wendy and Gwen are sitting on the bed talking. Gwen has Wendy under her arm rocking her like a mother consoling her heartbroken child.

GWEN: Can you see now Winston?

WINSTON: Clear as day.

WENdY: What about Shirley?

WINSTON: The Shirley I knew is just a memory, and the Shirley I met tonight forgot about me a long time ago.

WENDY: So now she's out of the picture, you want me?

WINSTON: I should have seen what you were doing.

Winston kneels down beside her, and wipes her tears. He signals to Gwen and Gwen lets her go. Winston takes her in his arms.

GWEN: Oh, I think I left something in the hallway. I'll be back in a minute.

Gwen exits.

WINSTON: I'm so sorry Wendy.

WENdY: I'm sorry too. So what happens now?

Winston digs into his breast pocket, and unravels a wedding ring.

WINSTON: This ring belonged to my mother. I had planned to come to England and find my wife. And give it to her. And I have to stick to that plan.

Wendy smiles she can't believe what's happening.

WINSTON: Wendy Williams. Will you be my wife?

WENdY: Yes Winston Brown!

Winston places the ring on her finger. They hug tight and Wendy cries. Winston beams.

WENdY: (Shouting) Gwen! Come back in ya!!

THE END.

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EARTH IS HARD, HEAVEN IS FAR

Written by Ahmed Khan

The Company
Gul Harpreet Jhutty
Rustum Balvinder Gill
Lorry Drivers Jack Broom
Ben Patefield
Director Jonathan Morris
Dramaturg Ola Animashaun

Morning, in the back of a freight container.
Large boxes are scattered in the container. The ship sounds its horn - the journey begins. The noise slowly dies down to a silence. Gul bursts out of his box gasping for air. He’s accompanied by Rustum who we realise has been restraining him in the box the whole time.

GUL:
(Whispering) I can’t go on.

RUSTUM:
We’re almost there.

GUL:
I can’t…

RUSTUM:
It’s the final leg of the journey, don’t give in now.

GUL:
I can’t go back in there!

RUSTUM:
Shhh – Someone might hear you.

GUL:
I don’t care! I......

Gul panics, he starts to hyperventilate. Rustum grabs Gul’s head, they are face to face.

RUSTUM:
Breathe. (Breathing)

GUL:
No! I can’t…. I’m suffocating! I can’t…

Gul tries to pull away, Rustum clings tightly to Gul. Eventually Gul begins to copy Rustum’s breathing pattern.

RUSTUM:
That’s it. Slowly. Follow me. You’re ok… that’s it. Just breathe, in and out, yeah, that’s it, good, keep going.

Gul breathes on his own, closing his eyes he calms down. Gul nods at rustum almost smiling. Both men slump against their box.

Beat.

Suddenly Rustum starts to bark – playfully, quite quietly at first gradually getting louder.

RUSTUM:
Woof.

GUL:
(no response)

RUSTUM:
Woof, Woof…you remember eh?

GUL:
Yes of course I remember …how could anyone forget?

Then Rustum and Gul both start miming eating dog food from a can as they cast their minds back to the time they spent camped outside the perimeter fence of a lorry compound in Greece, just outside Athens.

Rustum stops eating his food and then leans over to Gul to see how much he has left in his can.

RUSTUM:
That’s it, that’s enough give the rest to me.

GUL:
Just two more mouthfuls…

Rustum snatches the can from Gul before he can eat anymore.

RUSTUM:
No. I need it. We need it. Right where’s the bag, I’m going to put it with the rest? Besides, it’s for dogs not for men.

GUL:
Yes, but men like us are desperate and hungry.

RUSTUM:
Precisely why we need this to work.

Suddenly the two men get up and move to another part of the stage.

Gul turns into a border guard with Rustum as his guard dog.

GUARD:
Hey! Afghani! My dog here is hungry! You wanna take a chance and let him take a big bite outta your juicy Afghan ass? Hey Afghani, you hear me?!

Rustum, as a dog, starts barking wildly and threateningly.

GUARD:
Hey Afghani, he can smell you from here. You want me to let him off the leash… he’s hungry? See if you can run as fast as him on an empty stomach!

Rustum stops being the dog and becomes himself – tired and hungry – he approaches the barbed wire fence which separates him from the guard.

GUARD:
Hey Afghani, so you’re feeling brave eh?....pew, what’s that smell, when did you last wash? Afghani…..phew…that’s enough don’t come any closer or you’ll kill us all! You live like dogs and stink like pigs. (He waves his hand in front of his nose and makes wretching noises)

RUSTUM:
Your dogs hungry eh?

GUARD:
What’s that you say? You’re stinking up the air so much it’s to driving my dog wild and I can’t hear you above the noise of his barking!!
RuSTuM: I said, if your dog is hungry we must give him something to eat.

At this point Rustum mimes taking out chunks of dog food from a bag beneath his coat and chucking it over the fence and in the direction of the dog and the guard.

The guard mimics being hit in the face with dog food.

GUARD: What the…? (He tries some of the meat by gingerly licking it off his fingers)

GUARD: Fucking… dog food…you animals!

Rustum keeps miming chucking the dog food from his side of the fence.

GUARD: Hey, stop that, I said stop it you morons. You’re driving my dog crazy.

Rustum becomes the dog again and ‘goes crazy’ running after and eating the chunks of meat. The Guard and Rustum mime the dog straining at the leash as it tries to eat more and more of the flying food. The Guard gets increasingly agitated trying to keep his dog under control - eventually the dog breaks free of its leash and runs off in search of some food that’s been thrown quite a distance from the fence - the Guard gives chase after his dog.

GUARD: Hey come back, you dumb mutt. What the fuck! Stupid, stupid! Afghani, I’ll fuck you up for this! Exits in pursuit of his dog.

Gul and Rustum become themselves again. Rustum mimes helping Gul up, onto and then over the fence. Gul then offers his hand to Rustum and helps him over the fence.

GU: Quick hurry before the guard comes back.

They both mime helping other ‘invisible’ refugees over the fence.

RuSTuM: Come on you guys move it! Once you’re inside the main compound find an open lorry and lie low.

GU: (Getting up to go and tapping Rustum on the shoulders) Ok, that’s enough. This will have to be the last one. He’s coming back.

Gul and Rustum become themselves again. Rustum mimes chucking the dog food from his side of the fence.

GUARD: Hey, stop that, I said stop it you morons. You’re driving my dog crazy.

Rustum becomes the dog again and ‘goes crazy’ running after and eating the chunks of meat. The Guard and Rustum mime the dog straining at the leash as it tries to eat more and more of the flying food. The Guard gets increasingly agitated trying to keep his dog under control - eventually the dog breaks free of its leash and runs off in search of some food that’s been thrown quite a distance from the fence - the Guard gives chase after his dog.

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Gul and Rustum become themselves again. Rustum mimes helping Gul up, onto and then over the fence. Gul then offers his hand to Rustum and helps him over the fence.

GU: Hey, don’t worry it’s fine. Besides, drink up, I’ve been saving it for a special occasion.

Rustum gingerly takes another sip.

GU: (smiling) I promise you it’s fine.

RuSTuM: So what’s the occasion.

GU: When we get there. They open the lorry, they’ll find me. Right here.

RuSTuM: No!

GU: Yes! I’m going home. So let’s celebrate. Our final journey together.

RuSTuM: But you can’t. You can’t give yourself up, not now. Not after all we’ve been through.

GU: Yes I can and I must. You can’t go back in that box. Precisely because of what we’ve been through.

RuSTuM: I can’t let you take that risk.

GU: I’m sorry but you have no choice.
Rustum becomes himself again.

Rustum: And six hours later. (He picks Gul up in a fireman's lift and carries Gul around the space as though climbing the mountain)

Gul: Rustum put me down my friend. You go on without me. You'll never make it like this. Just leave me while you still have the chance.

Rustum: Shut up. You paid for our passage and now we will complete this journey together. And stop talking to me as you're making me use up valuable strength.

Rustum keeps marching up the mountain with Gul on his back as Gul narrates.

Gul: I still can't believe we made it. When we were goin' up, I remember seeing the Karachi guys resting near a boulder grabbing their necks, I thought they were just tired but that's when they threw up. They were so skinny and yellow like battered cigarettes. They didn't stand a chance.

They swap over and Gul starts to carry Rustum and Rustum narrates.

Rustum: You hadn't have done the last hour we wouldn't have made it. How you didn't drop I'll never know. You should have seen your face...you're eyes were half closed, you had dried spit all over your lips, sweating like a dog – Like you had rabies.

Gul: I don't know where I found the strength, just kept thinking of my daughter. Besides, the agent didn't wait for those who dropped, so it wasn't an option.

Gul puts Rustum back on the ground and they embrace, marking reaching their destination.

Rustum: The earth is hard, the heavens far.

Pause.

Back in the present time in the lorry.

Rustum: I know it's hard, believe me I do. But, I know if they find you, then that means they find me too. I've got my whole family relying on me - I can't let them down.

Gul: That box.

Rustum: Listen to me, my whole house worked so I could get here, dad would work in the fields til' there was no light left, his back is crippled because of me. My sisters cooked, cleaned and sewed for everyone in our village to give me this chance. Me. I was the chosen one, out four brothers, my parents chose me. And you know why? Because they believed if anyone can make it then its Rustum, he's never failed at anything.

Do you know how long my family have been dreaming about this? When I was 16 I used to hear 'em, after long, exhausting hours I'd hear dad say “Don't worry one day we'll get enough so Rustum can get into the UK, then he can send some money back home, Insha' Allah.”

And I can't let them down, not when they've saved their whole lives for me. $7,000 that's what I owe them.
RUSTUM: We are this close. I can almost smell the fish and chips. (Pause) Look as soon as we get into Dover we’ll get jobs, get set on our feet and then we can think about bringing our families over.

GUL: (Shakes his head) Rustom… I...

Gul puts his head down in shame. Rustom stares at Gul in anticipation turning to anger. Rustom crawls back to his hiding place. Gul stands and begins to walk with his hands in his pockets. He feels something poking him, he takes out the photograph from his pocket.

GUL: Afghanistan...

Gul begins to narrate and draw the landscape on the sides of the container.

The heart of Khorassan, 600 miles of mountainous beauty. Everyone wants you, but man wasn’t made to tie a rope around the Hindu Kush. If I ever see you again I promise to kiss your feet, rub your sand in my face.

Rustum hears Gul and is furious at first, thinking he is making too much noise.

RUSTUM: Can you see it? One day when I’m gone you’ll have to look after the -

RUSTUM: [Rising to paint the picture] Fields, the golden fields of wheat, all hugging each other. Remember, the fields are one big family.

GUL: [Tajik] All we want is to live; we just want to live... go to a Pashtun... Tajik.

RUSTUM: Summertime… light everywhere… the cliffs smiling, melting their faces... it’s heaven on earth.

GUL: All we want is to live; we just want to live... go to a Pashtun...
GUl: Uzbek.

RUSTUM: Turcoman.

GUl: Khirghiz house… we’re all the same, you’re not a guest, the house is yours.

RUSTUM: Serve you cha, tell you stories of old… Mahmud Ghazna, recite Jami, make you feel at home. I’m so tired…

Gul and Rustum look to each other.

Rustum: You know the first thing I’m gonna do when we get there?

GUl: What?

RUSTUM: I'm gonna do sajdah (prostrate) to Allah.

GUl: You've always been sure.

RUSTUM: We have a real chance…we can finally give our families a good life.

GUl: Do you really think we can?

RUSTUM: I know it.

GUl: No more hiding.

RUSTUM: Yes.

GUl: Fearing they’ll take me.

RUSTUM: No more fear.

GUl: Having the chance to really…

RUSTUM: A chance to live.

GUl: A chance to breathe.

RUSTUM: A real life.

Rustum and Gul hug.

RUSTUM: When we get there first thing you should do…is take a bath.

Gul looks at rustum sternly for a second – they both laugh.

GUl: We need to work hard though.

RUSTUM: Always.

GUl: Working hard for our families.

RUSTUM: Everything for our families.

GUl: Until…

RUSTUM: One day we can…

RUSTUM: See our families again.

Rustum and gul look to each other. Pausing.

GUl: Insha’Allah [by the will of God].

RUSTUM: Insha’Allah [by the will of God].

Then, without discussing it further, they both get back into their separate hiding places. Gul binds some cloth together and puts it over his mouth. He clamps his hand over his mouth, has one last glance at Rustum, nods his head, closes his eyes and is entombed again.

Rustum kisses his amulet and hides in his box.

The transit noise fades in again. Suddenly the lights turn red and two lorry drivers burst into the container.

LORRY DRIVER X: I know you’re in here!

He begins to hit the boxes with a crow bar.

LORRY DRIVER X: I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME!

LORRY DRIVER Y: No one’s here.

LORRY DRIVER X: I heard voices.

LORRY DRIVER Y: Voices? Where?

LORRY DRIVER X: In my arse – where’d you think? In the bloody container.

LORRY DRIVER Y: Maybe they –

LORRY DRIVER X: (pointing crowbar) Maybe you should pick up that crowbar.

LORRY DRIVER Y: They’re in here, I can feel it.

Both men hit the boxes with their crowbars and open up a couple of boxes. They are centimetres away from discovering Gul.

LORRY DRIVER X: There’s no one here.

LORRY DRIVER Y: Keep goin’.

LORRY DRIVER X: Even if they’re here what difference does it make. You gonna smash their head in with a crowbar?
In Our Own Words – Immigration

LORRY DRIVER X: Now you’re talking.

LORRY DRIVER Y: There’s hundreds of boxes we can’t check em all - We got deliveries.

Lorry Driver X steps for a second.

LORRY DRIVER Y: Look why don’t you turn the temperature down that’ll flush em out.

LORRY DRIVER X: You are a creative bastard aren’t ya? See I knew there was a reason why I hired ya.

The drivers leave the stage, the transit continues chugging.

THE END.

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Act 1

Scene 1

The waiting room of an audition process. Milada, Kleina and Sirleaf are anxiously pacing up and down.

Enter a pompous Mr Detrimentum.

DETRIMENTUM: Next contestant, number 9,794 and 5/8ths.

SIRLEAF: That’s me!

KLEINA: Erm… excuse me, Mr…?

DETRIMENTUM: Lord Detrimentum.

KLEINA: Mr Lord Detrimentum, I believe I’ve been missed out.

DETRIMENTUM: What number please?

KLEINA: 9,794 and 3/10ths. And three comes before five.

DETRIMENTUM: Quite right, sincerest apologies. You, Madam, are next.

SIRLEAF: Uh-hem. I believe I am indeed next. Ten comes after eight.

DETRIMENTUM: Quite right again. You, Madam, are next.

KLEINA: I appeal.

DETRIMENTUM: Excuse me, Madam, but what are you doing?
**KLEINA:** I am appealing.

**DETRIMENTUM:** That, Madam, I am afraid to say, you are not! Look, this is terribly sticky. A side of effect of broken Britain, I am afraid. You may both follow me and have done with it.

**SIRLEAF & KLEINA:** Both of us?

**DETRIMENTUM:** Yes, you’ll have to audition simultaneously.

**SIRLEAF:** ‘Simultaneously’. The very word is so absolutely divisive.

*Blackout.*

**Scene 2**

This scene should be devised. It involves Kleina and Sirleaf performing their audition piece for the show ‘Mrs Mostest Britishest’. Their act does not impress the judges – their feedback should also be devised. *(Please see DVD for original improvisation)*

**Scene 3**

Kleina and Sirleaf exit the stage, leaving the judges on a break.

**JUDGE 1:** That was contestant number 9, 794 and 3/10ths.

**DEVASTATIO:** And contestant number 9, 794 and 7/8ths.

**MORBUS:** Which means… *(The judge consults a document)*. I don’t believe it. That’s it. Contestant number 9, 795 is next.

**DEVASTATIO:** Hurrah an integer!

**MORBUS:** No, there were only 9, 795 contestants for the show. She’s the last one.

**DEVASTATIO:** Hurrah an end!

**MORBUS:** Oh no the end!

**DEVASTATIO:** What’s the problem? Get happy guys. No more no hopers, no more utter trash and downright dross! We can finally go home and get on with our…..oh no!

**MORBUS:** Exactly.

**PERNICIUM:** It can’t be. We’ve been sitting here for over a year, and the most talented woman we’ve seen has been a woman who almost broke the record for the number of Dickensian wigs she wore on her head.

**DEVASTATIO:** So we’ve got to send her?

**MORBUS:** Don’t be preposterous, she couldn’t keep three wigs on her head for more than 16 seconds – she couldn’t possibly conduct a nation saving mission on behalf of Her Majesty’s Secret Service if her life depended on it!

**PERNICIUM:** And unfortunately for all of us, our lives do depend on it. We’re doomed! We’ll have to tell Queen Chantell-Brap the 47th, this project has been…a failure.

**MORBUS:** And have her feed our brains to the corgis. No chance.

**PERNICIUM:** But we’ve no one to send.

**DEVASTATIO:** But we only need to find one! One woman, with enough talent, nous and roots to travel to the past, find her ancestor, and give us the answer which will save the country from imminent economic obliteration.

**MORBUS:** Wait. Let’s not panic, there’s still one contestant left.

**PERNICIUM:** Oh right, and what are the chances of her actually being the one we’re looking for?

**DEVASTATIO:** Er precisely 1 in 9,795. Anyway, what choice do we have? Besides…. She might be good.

**PERNICIUM:** Good! Good at what? At snorkling in a sea of frogs croaking the national anthem? At recalling the names of streets in Morpeth? At interpreting the post-Freudian symbolism of the Union Jack through Morris Dancing?

**DEVASTATIO:** Well, yes. But, Her Majesty can’t be completely angry with us. It was Lord Detrimentum’s idea. And what a stupid idea it was too. If he wanted to recruit someone to save the country, to travel back in time and learn what made Britain Great, why on earth did he have to pretend he was running a talent show?

**DETRIMENTUM:** *(Having arrived unnoticed.)* Because, Britain is…

**DEVASTATIO:** Yes, we know, Britain is broken. You keep banging on about it. You’ve been almost as bad as the National Youth Hammer orchestra.

**DETRIMENTUM:** That’s because it is true. Britain really is broken. We’ve lost all sense of identity. We don’t know what it is to be British any more. That’s why those damned Chinese, Indians and Welsh are about to topple us.

**PERNICIUM:** Don’t mention the Welsh.

**DETRIMENTUM:** Of course not. I’m speaking strictly confidentially as a member of Her Majesty’s Uncivil Service. Our destruction occurred one morning when we all woke up and forgot what it was to be British.
Scene 5

The part of this scene should be devised. It involves Milada auditioning with an inanimate partner. However, the judges decide she is the real star of the show and must decide to either lose the partner and risk their personal relationship, or to leave the competition. (Please see DVD for original improvisation)

MILADA: I've decided to come back alone. And no, I don't want you to put me through because of my journey. But I once had a dream to perform a piece with my pie. That dream ended, and this is a poem I am going to recite as my audition which is adapted to that experience of loss and pain.

PERNICIUM: Loss and pain! How enthralling. She's my favourite already.

PERNICIUM: See recites a verse of 'Pokeman'.

She finishes.

MORBUS: Oh what a journey! Oh what a story!

PERNICIUM: How emotional, it brought botox to my eyes!

DEVASTATIO: I think I feel something. The doctors were wrong. I'm sure I have a heart! What else could make me want to hug you?

DETRIMENTUM: I've never seen anything quite so brilliantly British. Yes, you're enough. And you've won!

Sirleaf and Kleina poke their heads around the door.

MILADA: I've won! I can't believe it! They said mediocrity was the only way to achieve anything in this society: I've proved them wrong; I'm going to be a celebrity on less than mediocrity!

DETRIMENTUM leads her off stage and Sirleaf and Kleina sneak on stage. Blackout.

Scene 6

Detrimentum appears in the waiting room and calls Milada. She leaves Sirleaf and Kleina fretting about their failure.

SIRLEAF: It isn't fair. Why should she be able to audition alone, when we had to share our audition?

KLEINA: I hate to share. Too often it involves other people, which is very crowding.

SIRLEAF: We'll keep a close eye on that woman. And make sure she doesn't get away. I'm sure once we've presented our case, she'll be more than willing to share the money and the stage.

KLEINA: I love to share. It is so cosmopolitan. But what if she doesn't want to?

SIRLEAF: Then we'll have to present our case again and again in her face until she does!

KLEINA: Of course we will, violence doesn't solve anything except for the really important things.

SIRLEAF: Exactly, and this prize means everything to me. We'll sneak in and grab her as she leaves!
DETREMENTUM: Oh she was only joking, wicked sense of humour. Wicked. What was that? Oh, she'll be very sorry, I'm sure. Good bye. Did you say good bye. Oh you’re waving. How regal.

I'm afraid to say, Milada. Her Majesty Queen Chantelle Brap the 47th is very sorry, but Britain is sort of broken, and there will be no variety show.

MILADA: No variety show. How dreadful! I need to win. TV’s my life. And all because Britain is broken!

DETREMENTUM: I'm afraid so. Once we were great. Now, no one's working, no one's thinking and no one knows who they are, ever since our values became mixed up following the paradoxical coalition government of - but we don't speak of that. British values have been forgotten. We need a woman, because of the medical implications, to travel back in time. To find her earliest relative, who will be marked out by the black cloth of destiny. And to find out from her the secret of British values. Help us find ourselves Milada.

MILADA: But all I wanted was to be a wealthy celebrity.

DETREMENTUM: And you will be. You'll come back as the saviour of Britain. The prize money is still there to be given, and the fame.

MILADA: A wealthy celebrity. And all I have to do is ask a woman with some cloth a few posy questions. Ha! Let me go a-time travelling.

DETREMENTUM: He gives her a pill. Just take this with that bubbly, and as they never say anywhere north of the Humber, cheers!

JUDGES: Breached! Breached! Lord Detrimentum!

Alarms are sounding. Sirleaf and Kleina are chased by the judges. They rush past Detrimentum, knocking him over as he stands in their way. Oblivious, Milada is taking the pill.

SIRLEAF & KLEINA: (Screaming). It's not fair. I want to win.

TEDDY: They bore him barefaced on the bier,
Hey non nony, nony, hey nony,
And on his grave rained many a tear-
Fare you well my dove.

There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. And there's
pansies, that's for thoughts. There's fennel for you,
and columbines.

As the names of these flowers are uttered, flowers are thrown from the florist stall to Mr Grocer's left. Teddy emerges from the stall holding a loudspeaker in his hand.

TEDDY: Hello, Grocer, did you hear that?

GROCER: Yes, Teddy I did. I think they heard that in blooming Vietnam! What do you think you’re playing at?

TEDDY: Marketing.

GROCER: Marketing means standing in a market, telling customers what they can buy.

TEDDY: Not any more; it means shaping selling technique-ing.

GROCER: And how is spouting gibberish through a machine “technique-ing”. All it's doing is giving me a headache.

TEDDY: Gibberish, Grocer? I'm not going to pretend that that didn't hurt. I only wanted to show you what I'd learned about marketing to boost our business.

There's a pause as both parties feel a little injured. Grocer starts his sales pitch once more.

GROCER: Leeks, leeks available. So hurry up, I either want a customer or Plumber. Leeks. Lee-

Teddy starts his own sales pitch up again.

TEDDY: There's no use for you; and here's some for me. And will he not come again? Come on Grocer, have a go on my loudspeaker. I insist.

Grocer reluctantly takes the loudspeaker.

Act 2

Scene 1

A High Street in 1968. Two stalls are on stage, a grocery stall and a florist's.

GROCER: Leeks, leeks, get your leeks!-

Mr Grocer is interrupted by an ominous voice amplified by a loudspeaker. He is so taken by surprise that he falls over, drops the vegetables and cowers.

TEDDY: They bore him barefaced on the bier,
Hey non nony, nony, hey nony,
And on his grave rained many a tear-
Fare you well my dove.

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Grocer reluctantly takes the loudspeaker.
GROCER: Onions (he pauses feeling self-conscious) Onions, only...

Yasmin enters and heads straight for Mr Grocer

GROCER: Hello, how can I help? (realising he is speaking to her through the loudspeaker he drops it on the floor) I'm sorry. How can I help?

YASMIN: One pound of onion, please.

GROCER: Certainly. Anything else? Mrs?

YASMIN: It's Yasmin.

GROCER: What a beautiful name. Well Yasmin, can't I tempt you with some lovely leeks?

YASMIN: Leeks? No thank you.

GROCER: What's wrong with leeks?

YASMIN: Nothing. I just prefer to use vegetables that taste of something.

GROCER: My word. We really are living in extraordinary times. Food with taste. How exotic!

Meanwhile, Teddy bends down to pick up the loudspeaker. Grocer finishes his line and Yasmin turns into Teddy, falling over him. A black shawl falls from her shoulders. Grocer catches her outstretched arm.

GROCER: I've got you madam.

YASMIN: I'm sorry.

Teddy is wimpishly rubbing his back.

GROCER: Oh heavens no. It should be Teddy apologising for tripping up somebody new to these parts, and a lady too, Teddy!

TEDDY: Oh, I am sorry. Please take this flower, it's the least I can do.

Teddy hands over a flower and is thanked. Milada tumbles onto the stage, out of the characters’ sight. She spots the black cloth beside Yasmin’s foot. Yasmin leaves.

MILADA: Does this belong to that woman?

TEDDY: It does, she must have dropped it. I’ll give it to her next time she comes.

MILADA: No way, I’ll do it. Where has she gone?

GROCER: She lives in the last house of this road. Just go straight up.

MILADA: Money and fame and money here I come

She hurries off stage.
GROCER: Why, 1968!

SIRLEAF: 1968? I don’t believe it.

TEDDY: What odd questions!

GROCER: Don’t make personal comments Teddy. It isn’t polite and we don’t want to upset them. I’m Mr. Grocer.

TEDDY: I’m Teddy, how do you do?

GROCER: Come on Teddy, that’s enough of the civilities. We’re a thief to catch. Let’s go!

Hurrying off stage they bump into a smart looking hotel worker, Giles.

GROCER: Mr Giles, we are most terribly sorry.

They help him up.

GILES: Grocer, Edward, what do you think you’re playing at? We need to get going with a swift order. We’ve a guest speaker coming in a few hours and the press’ll be coming. So the hotel needs flower arrangements in the foyer, and leeks and potatoes for the soups. Got it?

TEDDY: Yes, Mr Giles.

GILES: Got it?

GROCER: Yes, Mr Giles.

GILES: Well get a move on, we can’t have tradesmen and foreigners clogging the place up.

Giles exits with a swagger.

KLEINA & How dare - (They are restrained by Grocer and Teddy).

SIRLEAF: Don’t worry, we’ll sort this out. You heard him Teddy. Best get that van loaded, and quick.

KLEINA: ‘Ludicrous’. What a ridiculous word. Not like ‘police’ and ‘prison’. They’re properly real and daunting, as you’re about to find out.

GROCER: Ah, no need for that. Look, what we’ll do is this. We’ll arrange the flowers or deliver the veg. Then we’ll catch her.

SIRLEAF: If you’ll hurry up and catch our woman, get going with the delivery. (To Kleina). I’ll get the short one moving, you sort out the...

TEDDY: Tall…?

SIRLEAF: Simple one.

Sirleaf follows Grocer into his stall, and Kleina gives Teddy a shove. Black out.

Scene 2

Yasmin hangs out the washing in her back garden. Milada arrives then looks puzzled.

MILADA: Working! I’m not so sure she’s any relative of mine after all. This can’t be the cloth of destiny.

She drops the shawl. The stage lights flicker and flash. Detrimentum appears.

dETRIMENTuM: Milada. It’s Detrimentum here.

MILADA: Mr Detrimentum. Is that really you?

dETRIMENTuM: No, I can’t time travel. Something about the pill and male genetics. I’m sending you a hologram.

MILADA: A hologram. How exciting. What does it say?

dETRIMENTuM: How’s the mission going?

MILADA: Not very well.

dETRIMENTuM: But the mission has to go well. Two time stowaways have added a complication. Time is rather of the essence, if we are going to mend Br-

MILADA: Broken Britain? Anyway, forget stowaways. The problem is: I’m not sure this is the right person.

dETRIMENTuM: What’s that? Right there.

MILADA: My foot.

dETRIMENTuM: No, next to your foot.
MILADA: My shoe.
DETRIMENTUM: Don't get smart with me. The last person to do that was my Maths teacher.
MILADA: And what happened to him?
DETRIMENTUM: He was forced to live the rest of his life as... a maths teacher.
MILADA: How cruel! I would hate to be a maths teacher. The irony would be that you'd always know exactly how many days of your life you'd wasted being a maths teacher.
DETRIMENTUM: Precisely. But I know what that is. It's the black cloth of destiny. I'd know it anywhere. Anywhere.
MILADA: What about if it was in a six storey furniture store crafted like a labyrinth with confusing one way lifts and misdirectional corridors, full of other black cloths?
DETRIMENTUM: Yes, even in IKEA. Now hurry up, or you'll be stuck here.
MILADA: Stuck?
DETRIMENTUM: Didn't I mention it? Well, if I kept count of the things I didn't mention I would be shocked into eternal muteness, which would complicate the matter. Concentrate on the mission at hand. Extract from her the secret of Britishness.
MILADA: But I'm not sure she is my ancestor. She's... working. Everyone knows that workophobia is a genetically transferred disease. Take the royal family for instance.
DETRIMENTUM: Working? Rubbish, it must be hallucinogenic side effect of travel. You must be seeing things.
MILADA: Don't tell me I'm seeing things. You sound like my psychiatrist. But ask any optician, and you'll learn how few things I do see.
DETRIMENTUM: So you're stubborn.
MILADA: Yes I am. I'm as stubborn as a parrot... which happens to be in a very stubborn mood.
DETRIMENTUM: A parrot! Well then, I can't trust you alone. History has taught us that anything simultaneously blue and yellow is heading for a disaster... I'll feed you the questions, you ask them, she answers and we're done. Celebrity Saviours of Britain, corgis hungry, and a lot of money... for us both. Approach her.
MILADA: Oh, wait. I'm only a neighbour relatively speaking. I'm a relative neighbourly speaking.
DETRIMENTUM: Don't confuse the girl with innate contradictions, you're not a coalition government for heaven's sake... Just ask about her past.
MILADA: Yasmin, please tell me about your life before you came here.
YASMIN: I came from Pakistan. Karachi to be precise. Oh, you should have been there Milada. It was all swirls and spice; shalwars and rice. My mother mixed, deep over a pot, seething, swirling colours into smells and a taste. Oh! and don't let me forget that sound of the roti, leaping between each of her hands like a fish writhing.
DETRIMENTUM: But why did she come here? What was there in Britain?
MILADA: Yasmin, why did you come from Pakistan to Britain?
YASMIN: My husband came to work.
MILADA: Oh, there she goes again. With her work. And what is your husband's work?
YASMIN: Packing.
MILADA: He's a disco dancer!
YASMIN: No, a kitchen porter. He's in Britain to work, driving the economy forward.
DETRIMENTUM: They arrived in Britain and grafted. I've read something about this: graft and grit. I think it was. But why did they graft and grit?
MILADA: Why did your husband come over here to bath and slip?
DETRIMENTUM: Graft and grit you idiot girl!
MILADA: Don't shout at me. Old English is my weakest subject. Yasmin, why would your husband graft and grit? It's much easier to do very little you know.
YASMIN: Not in the right community; where everyone works for a greater country and for each other.
DETRIMENTUM: Community? I haven't heard anything about a community since I read about an ancient theatre situated not far from this very spot. Unfortunately, two men's insistence on cutting money to front line arts... but don't let me get distracted. I want to know more about the community.
MILADA: What do you mean by a community of workers?
YASMIN: I can show you my husband working as a kitchen porter in his community of workers. I'm going along anyway, I'm allowed to listen from the kitchen to a very important speaker who's coming.
YASMIN: Brilliant. I love important speakers so long as I've someone else to speak over them with. And you'll be there, and your husband.
DETREMENTUM: In a kitchen? That’s a no go area for me. I can’t hologram within buildings. Well, you’ll have to learn about ‘community’ and report back. But hurry up, if it’s not done by the end of today, you’ll be trapped.

MILADA: I wouldn’t like to be trapped. It’s so unflattering.

Scene 3

A hotel reception. Giles is waiting behind the counter. Enter Grocer and Sirleaf carrying a crate of groceries.

GILES: Grocer, finally! Wait here while I speak to the chef. And try not to look too untidy, (Giles exits. The crate is put down).

GROCER: Who does he think he is? Looking down his nose at me. Who is it that makes this country great? Is it some suited high brow? Or is it the sort a person what a grocer is? We’re at the heart of the nation; selling the products, cheaply and fairly. Cheering them all up in the process. Picking them up when they fall. Honouring them if they’re wronged. Welcoming them if they’re new.

SIRLEAF: All his lot seem to do is think they’re entitled to trampling on them if they fall, ignoring them if they’re wronged and sending them away if they’re new.

GROCER: But it’s his sort that run the country. His orders keep me living.

SIRLEAF: Not forever, surely?

GROCER: I don’t know about that. But it’ll get worse before it gets better. What with all this Marketing and the like. Forgetting about people and products; shouting abstract messages through big horrid metal things. We’ll be forgotten, and then, our Giles will have won.

SIRLEAF: Can’t you change things Grocer? You make your own fate; that’s how I live my life.

GROCER: Not me. I’m just a lonely bachelor with some spuds to sell. What this country needs is fresh ideas, bubbling inside fresh blood, with fresh voices. Oh, there I go with my freshes! Fresh tomatoes and all by the sounds of it.

SIRLEAF: Teddy and Kleina also enter through the main entrance trapping Milada and Yasmin. Grocer, Sirleaf and Kleina try to restrain Milada and Yasmin. Eventually, Milada is held by the women and Yasmin by the men.

KLEINA: How did you zap us to the past? What happened? Why am I being nicer? How do we get back?

SIRLEAF: We want a share of that prize money. And a chance on the Royal Variety Show. We’re at the heart of the nation; selling the products, cheaply and fairly. Cheering them all up in the process. Picking them up when they fall. Honouring them if they’re wronged. Welcoming them if they’re new.

SIRLEAF: Community. Don’t try and fool us with out-dated ideals.
KLEINA: The community died thousands of years ago. In the years leading up to the disastrous government... well I forget which year, but it all started when Britain abandoned their community for self-promotion and ignorance.

SIRLEAF: Of course, she knows that, she's just playing dumb.

GROcer: Now we've restrained the thief and accomplice. Off to the police station!

They head towards the door, but run into Giles.

GILES: What are you playing at? I won't stand this noise. Clear off now. Or you can forget about the money.

MILADA: I won't go quietly while I'm still being restrained.

GILES: Well, release the girl - we can't have the press walking in on her screaming. Our very important speaker will be disgusted. Go on, release any captives.

GROcer: But Giles -

GILES: Do it. (The girls are released). Now get out. Or I'll terminate our dealings forever more, and watch you slide into the rotten fruit.

Scene 5

Yasmin's back garden. Detrimentum is on stage. Milada and Yasmin enter dejected.

DETRIMENTUM: Well? Time's almost run out. What did the speaker have to say?

MILADA: We didn't have time to hear the speaker.

DETRIMENTUM: What about the husband? Husbands usually have plenty to say, especially to other women.

MILADA: We didn't meet the husband.

DETRIMENTUM: So, you failed. Like you failed with the pork pie! Who, might I add, tasted rather delicious.

MILADA: Oh, the insufferable pain claws through my life blood like peas through gravy. You monster!

DETRIMENTUM: Don't get all emotional, you're a failure. And as a hungry man once said, friends tend to get eaten.

MILADA: I am not a failure. I did learn what community is. Community is working together, even if that means working to apprehend two innocent women on completely false grounds. Community means welcoming new people and letting them turn to you for help because one day you'll need to turn to them. Community means caring for one another. And community doesn't need the likes of you or Giles to work. It doesn't need the self-interested, the power hungry. No, you kill it, and eat its friends.

DETRIMENTUM: Well, if community won't have me, I won't have it. I'll return to future Britain, to my position of power, and enjoy it while it lasts. And if the Queen has any other barmy ideas about how to save the nation, then I'll migrate to Wales, and enjoy the economic boom they are experiencing there. For sure, they always keep their borders open for immigrants. It'll be a fine life. But, you, you're trapped.

Act 3

The Highstreet. Milada, Sirleaf and Kleina are conversing. Teddy and Grocer are watching closely.

SIRLEAF: So we're trapped. No way back. No celebrity status. No money. Brilliant.

MILADA: I'm sorry, it was Detrimentum. He's power mad. We're stuck here.

SIRLEAF: I'm sorry, it was Detrimentum. He's power mad. We're stuck here.

MILADA: We didn't meet the husband.

SIRLEAF: I'm sorry, it was Detrimentum. He's power mad. We're stuck here.

KLEINA: We'll tell Teddy and Grocer that the charges are dropped. An error of judgement.

Sirleaf and Kleina go to speak to Teddy and Grocer. Enter Yasmin.

YASMIN: Milada, you can stay at our home.

MILADA: Oh thank you Yasmin.

Grocer and Teddy approach.

GROcer: I believe we owe you an apology. Something to do with an error of judgement. Will you forgive us and be our dear friend?

MILADA: Of course! I think this is a good place and a good time to be alive.

SIRLEAF: The tomatoes are coming fresh, and knocking the stale cauliflowers off the ledges.

KLEINA: The flowers are mixing with each other.

TEDDY: I wonder who that special guest was. I hope they liked our flowers.
GROVER: Probably no one more important. But seeing as these ladies are part of the community now. I say we should celebrate.

MILADA: Yes, because we’ve got each other. And it’ll be brilliant.

YASMIN: Yes, brilliant.

They freeze. An intercom sounds with Giles’ voice.

GILES: And it is my pleasure to hand over now to our guest speaker, local Conservative MP, Enoch Powell.

The beginning of Powell’s ‘Rivers of Blood’ Speech plays.

Speech fades.

Blackout.

THE END.

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Belgrade Community & Education Company

For more information on the projects we work on please contact on 024 76 846 741 or email on communityadmin@belgrade.co.uk

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