

Production Project (HPTD5004)

By Ellie Reynolds
(2004007)

Memory of Water



Name	Location	Traits	Costume	Prop(s)	Role	Interesting Notes
Catherine	Bedroom	• 25 – 35 years old • Rebellious • Fashionable • Imaginative • Self-obsessed	• Layers of coats • ‘David Bowie’ inspired shoes • Funeral attire – mini skirt	• Carrier bags • Clothing • Joint • Bread knife • Sandwich • Glass • Camera • Phone • Watch	Protagonist – Youngest sister	• Always feels left out by her sisters even during her childhood • Has a romantic connection with Xavier
Vi	Bedroom	• 60 - 70 years old • Glamorous • Stylish • Emotionally absent mother – did not teach her daughters about becoming a woman.	• Green taffeta cocktail frock circa 1962, hair perfectly coiffed, matching earrings and necklace, clutch bag	• Cigarette • Lighter	Mother	• Divorced

Name	Location	Traits	Costume	Prop(s)	Role	Interesting Notes
Teresa	Bedroom	• Judgmental • Married to Frank • Caring • Anxious • Wants to be in control • Mother hen • Too much responsibility	• Everyday clothes (sweater and trousers) • Funeral clothes • Mothers dresses • Coat and gloves	• Bag • Electronic organizer • Photographs / Florist book • Black bin liners • Joint • Whisky / Glass • Watch • Phone • Pill bottle	Protagonist – Oldest sister	• Feels as though all responsibility for looking after their dying mother was left to her. • Knew about the death of Mary’s son. • Sells health supplements.
Frank	Bedroom	• Stressed • Frustrated • Short tempered	• Everyday clothes • Overcoat	• Suitcase • Watch • Plastic bags	Teresa’s Husband	• Does not enjoy selling supplements with Teresa, would rather open his own pub.

Name	Location	Traits	Costume	Prop(s)	Role	Interesting Notes
Mary	Bedroom	• Sarcastic • Intelligent • Serious • Mournful	• Everyday clothes (sweater and trousers) • Funeral clothes • Mothers dresses • Coat and gloves	• Breast pump • Glasses • Green tin with chrysanthemums • Rescue Remedy	Protagonist – Middle Sister	• Has interactions with her mother’s ghost. • Had a child at 14 that she gave up.
Mike	Bedroom	• Easy-going • Empathetic • Honest	• Everyday clothes • Overcoat • Towel	• Suitcase • Watch • Plastic bags	In a relationship with Mary	• His wife has ME. • Does not want children with Mary.

Act/Scene	Page Number	Who?	Where?	When?	Action	Visuals	Costume and Props
1/1	3 - 4	- Vi - Mary	Bedroom	1996	- We meet Vi and Mary for the first time. - Mary is lying on the bed whilst Vi inspects the state of the room. - Vi disappears, Mary is startled.	Bluish-green light reveals Vi, aged forty, sitting at a dressing-table, the drawer is open. She lights up a cigarette which a pool of light reveals the rest of the room in a dim, golden, unreal flow: a bedroom, dominated by a double bed which Mary lies in.	Vi wears a Green taffeta cocktail frock circa 1962, hair perfectly coiffed, matching earrings and necklace, clutch bag with cigarette and lighter
1/2	4 - 12	- Mary - Teresa	Bedroom	1996	- Teresa enters. - Mary and Teresa wait for Catherine to turn up to discuss funeral plans for their Mother. - Mary and Teresa both upset find themselves bickering.	N/A	- Portable alarm clock. - Pillow and Bed cover. - Medical books – Neurology. - Mary's phone. - Breast pump. - Ray-bans. - Whisky. - Teresa's watch.
1/3	12 - 30	- Mary - Teresa - Catherine	Bedroom	1996	- Catherine enters completely oblivious to the situation and brings the focus on herself. - The three sister discuss their memories of their childhood.	N/A	- Catherine wrapped in layers of coats and scarves, laden with carrier bags. - Whisky. - David Bowie inspired shoes. - Suitcase. - Paracetamol. - Rescue Remedy. - Teresa's bag. - Bundle of mail. - Various clothing from Catherine. - Wardrobe with mirror. - Bottle of pills. - Joint. - Envelope with card. - Electric Organiser. - Florist Photographs. - Phone. - Bread Knife. - Window.

Act / Scene	Who?	When?	Where?	Action	Visuals	Props / Costumes
1:4	Teresa Mary Catherine Mike	1996	Vi's Bedroom	A banging on the window turns out to Mike, who climbs in (through the window). After meeting Teresa and Catherine he has a conversation alone with Mary, who is convinced she is pregnant. Their conversation is interrupted by Teresa and Catherine who want to go through Vi's old clothes.	Vi's room with the characters interact with the window, door, bed (with covers), dressing table, wardrobe and mirror.	Props: - Sandwich - Joint x2 - Glass - Bed Covers - Objects on dressing table - Whisky - Phone - Black bin liners - Pile of clothes / from wardrobe: - Dresses - Hats - Sixties Cocktail dress - Wild pink dress (1963) - Gawdy floral dress - Shoes - Lipstick - Earring - Bags Costume: - Mike - Snow - Mike – Coat ('outer clothes) - Mike – Shoes - Vi - The Green taffeta dress
1:5	Teresa Mary Catherine Mike Frank Vi	1996	Vi's Bedroom	During all the laughter Frank walks in, tired and frustrated after traveling from Düsseldorf. Mike and Frank start to bond while the girls are in hysterics while trying on dresses. Catherine wants to take a picture where a younger version of Vi joins in.	The sisters interact with the mirror before huddling next to each other to get a picture.	Props: - Suitcase (Frank's) - Bag (Catherine's) - Camera (Catherine's) - Cigarette (Vi's) Clothes: - Frank – Overcoat - Frank – Watch
1:6	Mary Vi	1996	Vi's Bedroom	Mary asks her mother where the green tin with the chrysanthemums has gone, Vi tries to distract her and change the subject, asking about Mary's patient, talking about her youth and accuses Mary of always walking out on her and painting her in a bad light.	Vi starts to dance slightly seductive and sensuous, she also interacts with the pile of clothes.	Props: - Piles of dresses / clothes on the bed - Dress (Vi interaction) - Books - Black bags Clothes: - Mary – Jeans + Sweater

Scene	Who?	Where?	When?	Action	Visuals	Costume and Props
Act 2, Scene 2	- Catherine - Mary - Teresa - Frank - Mike	Bedroom	1996	- Catherine is upset after Xavier dumps her. - Teresa gets very drunk. - We find out that Mary had a child when she was very young.	The bedroom: large bed, dressing table with a drawer and matching wardrobe, pool of light, slightly old-fashioned interior, long diagonal crack in the wall and a bedside table. with lots of clothes spread out across the space from their previous session of trying things on. With the open suitcase and bags half emptied.	- Phone - Florist's book - Black plastic bags - Photo - Mike's clothes - Mike wrapped in a towel - Tin (green) from drawer - Whisky - Drinking glass - Wallet - Paper from wallet - Folded piece of paper - Mary's bag
Act 2, Scene 3	- Teresa - Catherine - Mary - Frank - Vi - Mike	Bedroom	1996	- The morning before the funeral. - Everyone gets ready to leave and take the coffin. - Vi appears and Mary talks to her about her lost child. - They leave fir the funeral.	Early next morning, the bedroom: large bed, dressing table with a drawer and matching wardrobe, pool of light, slightly old-fashioned interior, long diagonal crack in the wall and a bedside table. The coffin is there on a low trestle. There is a flurry if snow through the window after they leave.	- Phone - Teresa dressed for funeral - Catherine's watch - Mary dressed for funeral - The tin (green) - Vi has white hair - Envelope and cuttings inside tin - Tablets - Catherine wears a very short skirt - Frank's watch - Whisky bottle and glasses - All women have coats and gloves

Architecture, interior and furniture design were heavily influenced by the socio-economic environment. During the 1950s. The aftermath of World War two destroyed much of the industrial infrastructure. As a result, there was a shortage for furniture and many people made with what they had. As the economy started to recover, design started to change.

Scandinavian style was popular within late 1940 and 1950, it was known for it's simple, minimalist and functional style. Whilst in comparison, during the late 1950s and 1960s interior design followed the postmodern movements that were regarded to be reminiscent of Art Deco which led to more bold, colourful and geometric designs. Art, music and fashion were also revolutionised as pin up art, pop art and rock and roll all defined that era.

Within the bedroom warm toned woods like teak and walnut were common. Bedroom sets, matching pieces and vibrant scatter cushions would also be common. (Global Inspirations Design, n.d).

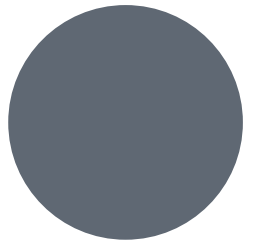
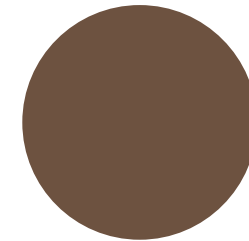
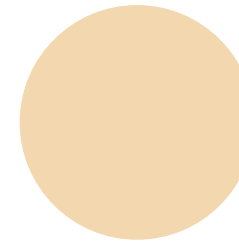
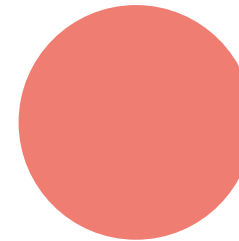
The research I have conducted will influence my design and mood boards for the play, in hopes to create an accurate representation of a 1950s/60s bedroom.

1950s / 60s Bedroom Research



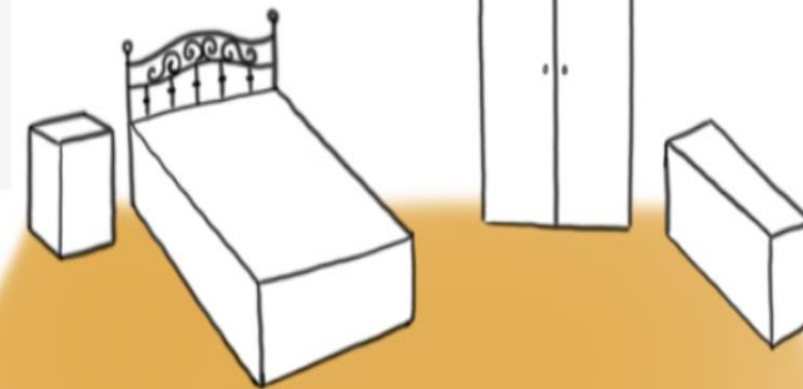
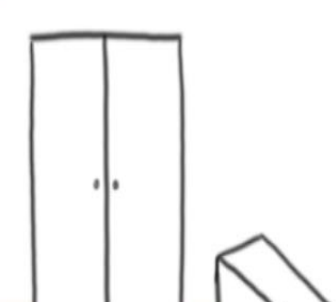
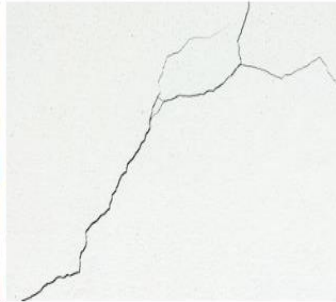
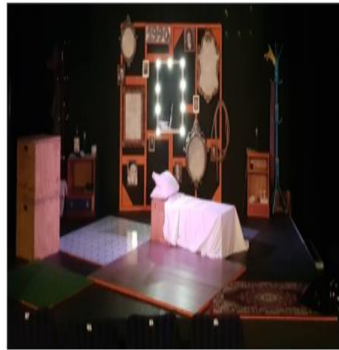
St Fagons – Primary Images

- When visiting St Fagons as part of my research, there was a 1950s inspired prefabricated house.
- Looking at these images I noted that there were a mix of contrasting colours and patterns, darker wood tone, simple forms and a feminine colour palette.
- I will take inspiration from the set dressing and overall look to create a mood board.



Bed frame and wardrobe sourced already

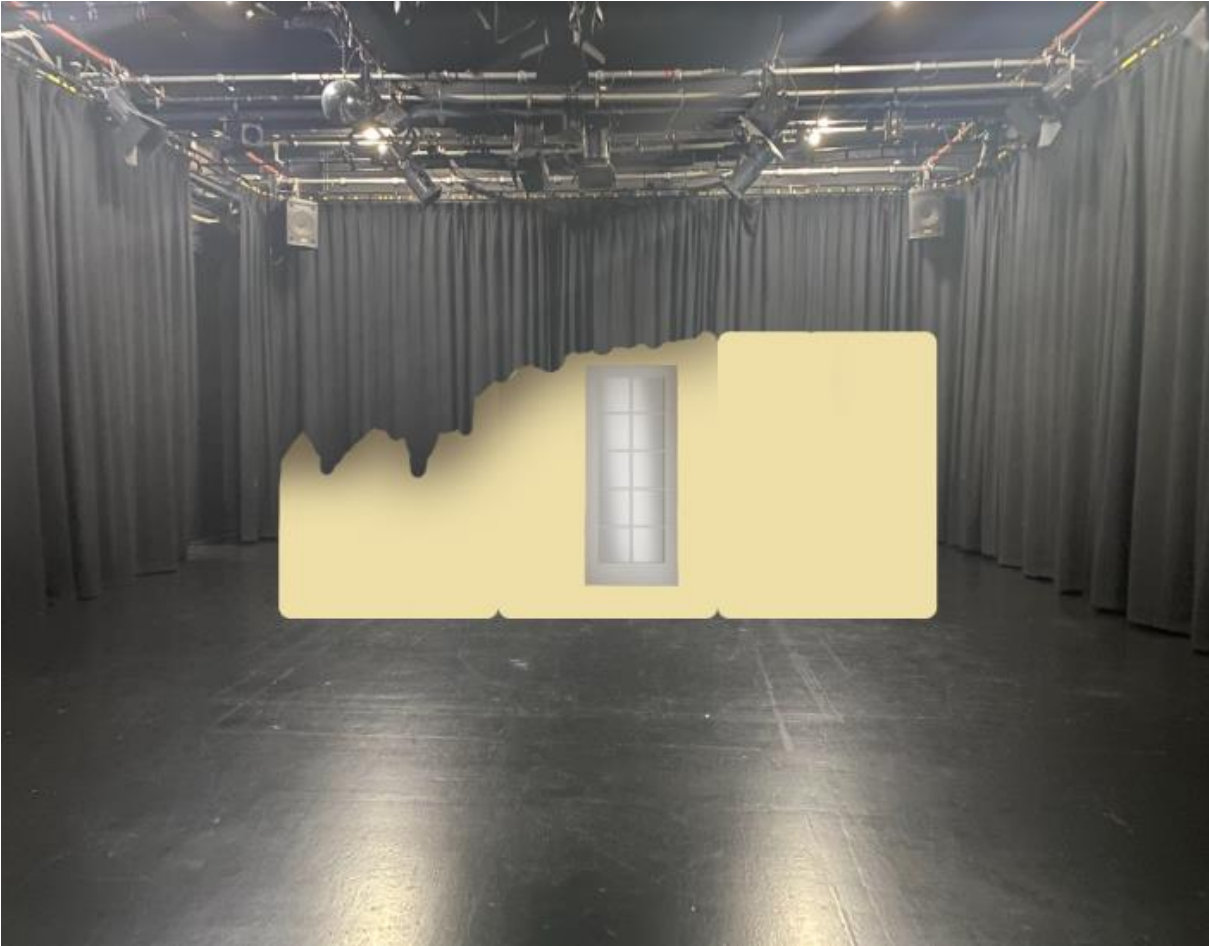
Set Design:



Feminine
yet
stylish

- Use lighting to focus and highlight key furniture – Such as the bed where most of main action occurs.
- Using furniture to create a sense of space and shape the walls.
- Ideas in order to incorporate the crack in the wall – possible use of projection
- Using set design and dressing to highlight key themes and feelings throughout the play.
- After discussing with the director, they were very keen on having a window within the set.

After presenting my initial idea to the director, I decided to focus more on including a window within my design. Using Photoshop I was able to draw these designs within the theatre space. Although I like both of these options, the director was interested in creating a more basic and minimal set.

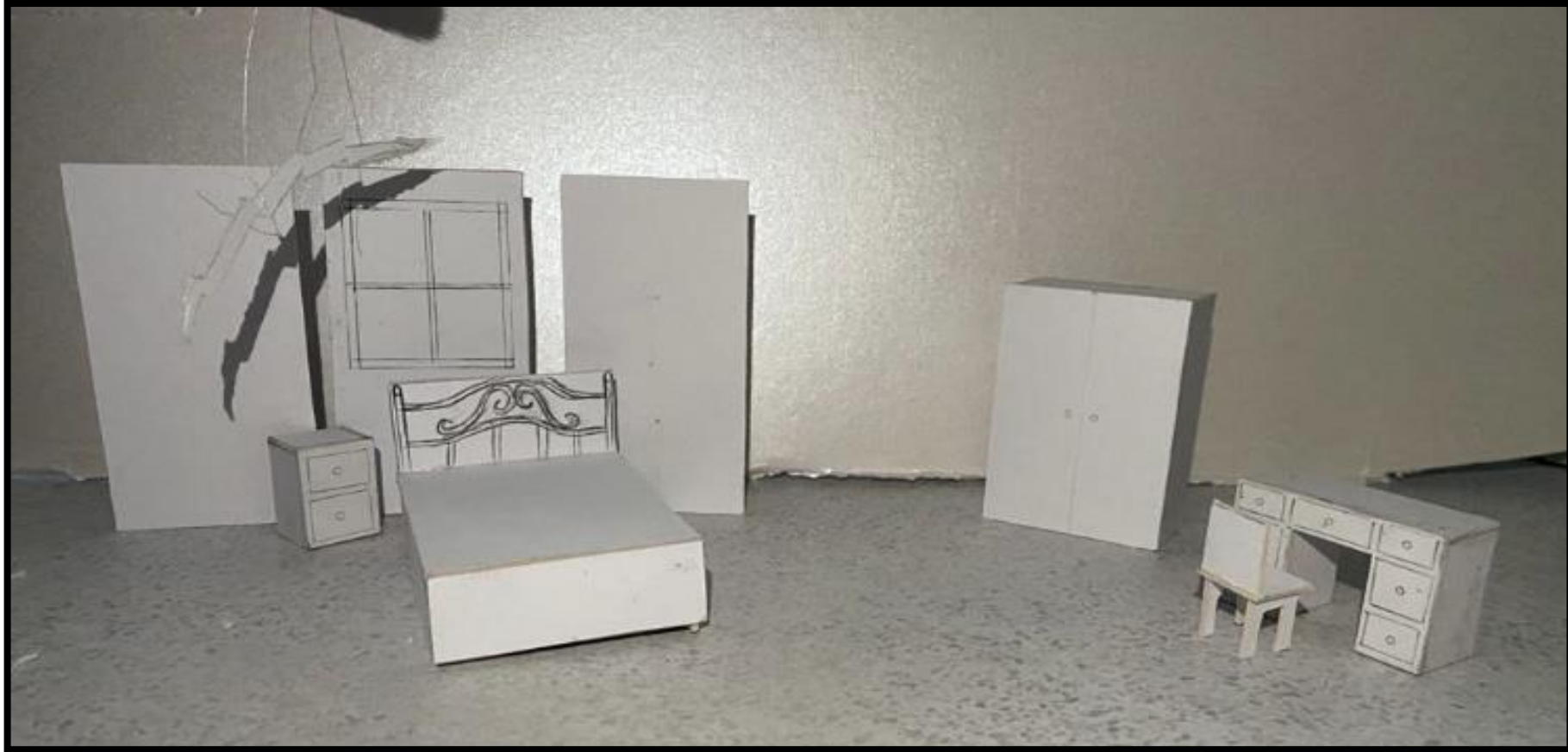


- Creating a jagged edge on the flats to represent the crack.



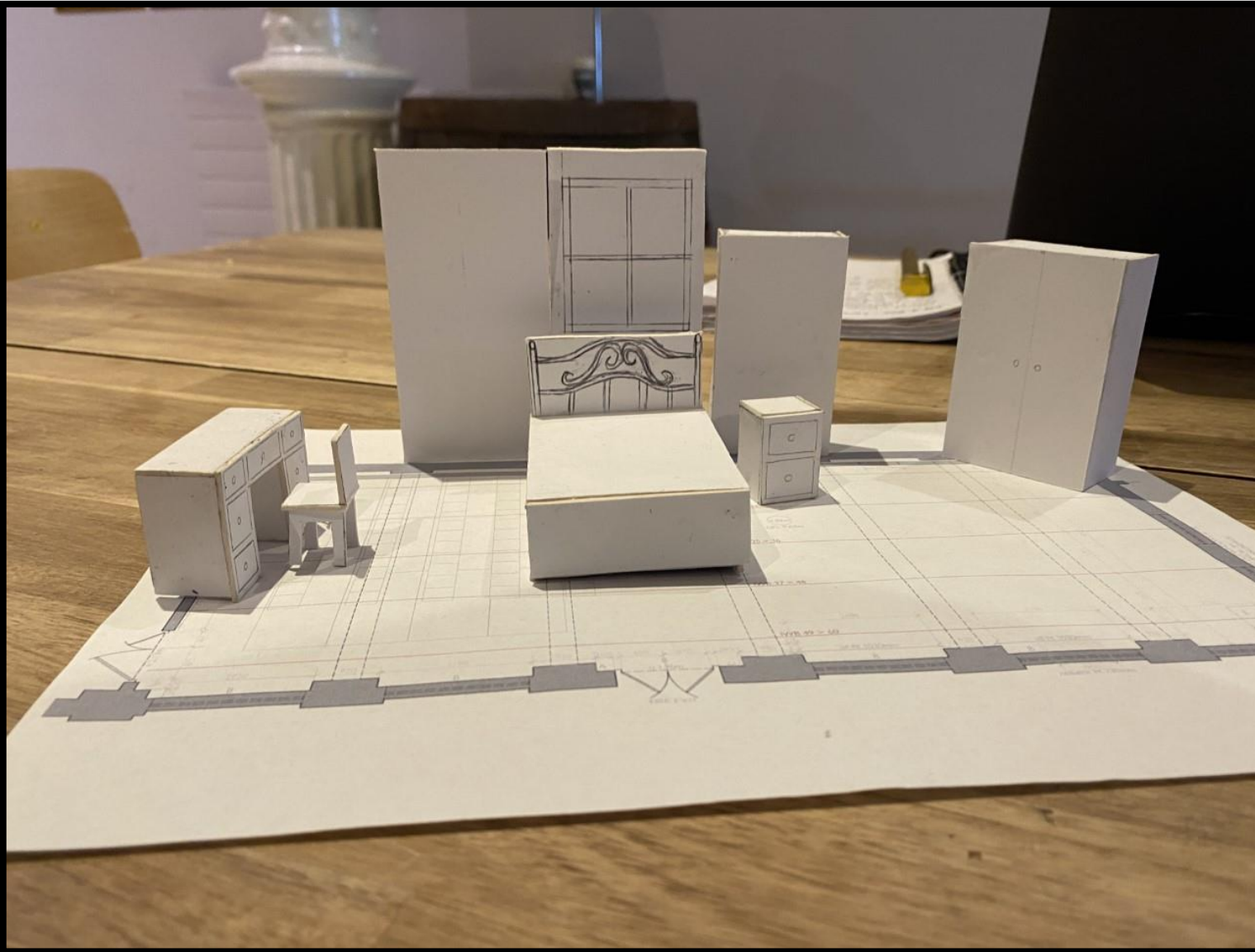
- Decorating the walls with pictures of memories – reference to the plays narrative.

Model Making



- During the previous design meeting we discussed ideas about the crack, and the director was interested in the idea of a suspended horizontal crack, which we had added separately to the flats.
- We have placed the flats upstage right as that is where the main entrance. This will allow the character Mike to climb out the window without being seen.
- When experimenting with lighting we found that the shape of the crack left an interesting shadow, I hope to further develop this idea.

Problem Solving: Layout options

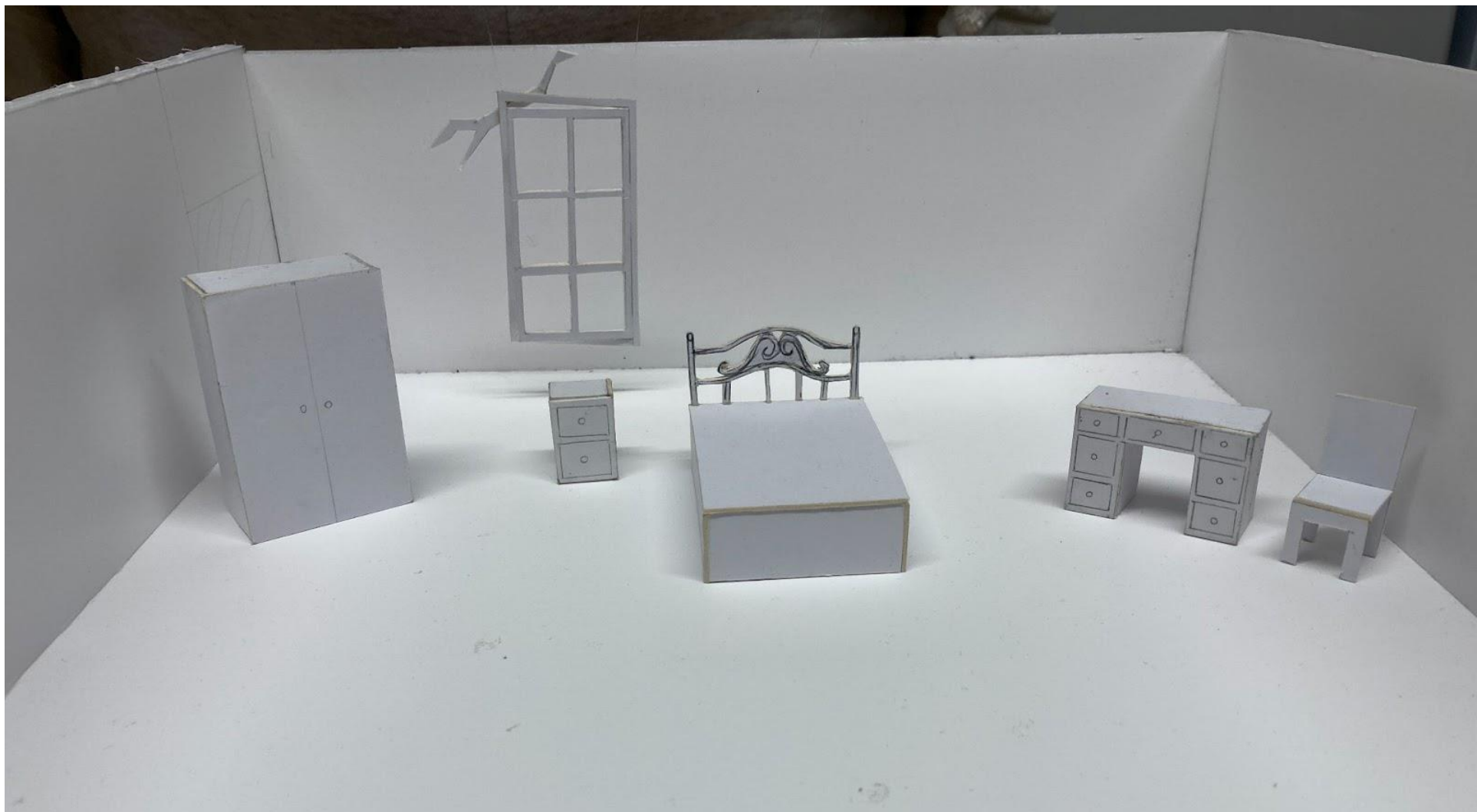


Notes from Director about White Card Model

- The director was interested in having the bed center stage.
- The director only wanted one window flat, however two additional return flats and weights are essential to provide support.
- All furniture must be placed at an angle due to sightlines.

To develop:

- The director would like to see the model furniture within the theatre space in order to visualize the set better.
- Consider painting the model furniture to gather a sense of the colour palette.



- Following the idea of the shadow work from our first white card model we decided to explore the idea of suspending both the crack and window as one piece.
- After presenting the model to the director, the decision was made to remove the crack completely.
- Curtain masking was mentioned in order to mask the entrance upstage left.
- The wardrobe and dressing table will swap places.

Masking Curtains

Although as the designer I will not be in charge of placing the masking curtain, I decided to research the types of masking to have a better understanding of the process. I must consider whether I will have to buy black serge fabric.

Masking curtains are used to mask off areas of the stage. The size is usually determined by sight lines. The fabric used is typically velour (cotton or synthetic), serge or commando cloth.

There are three types of masking, which is the following:

Borders

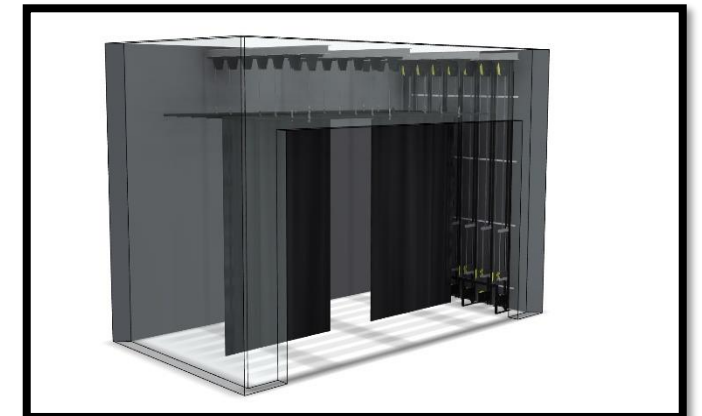
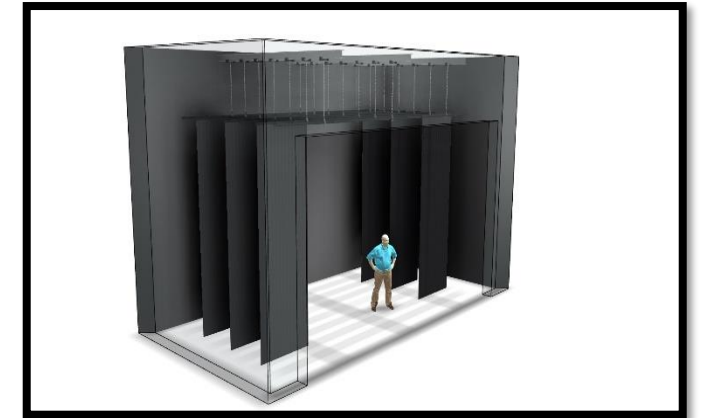
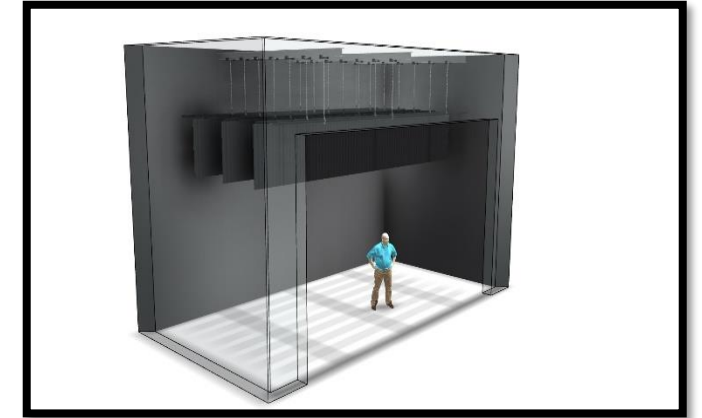
This layout will hide lights and other equipment above the stage. They are finished with tielines at the top and hang from the pipe battens.

Legs/Side Curtains

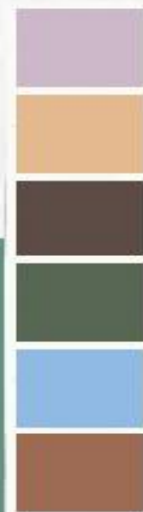
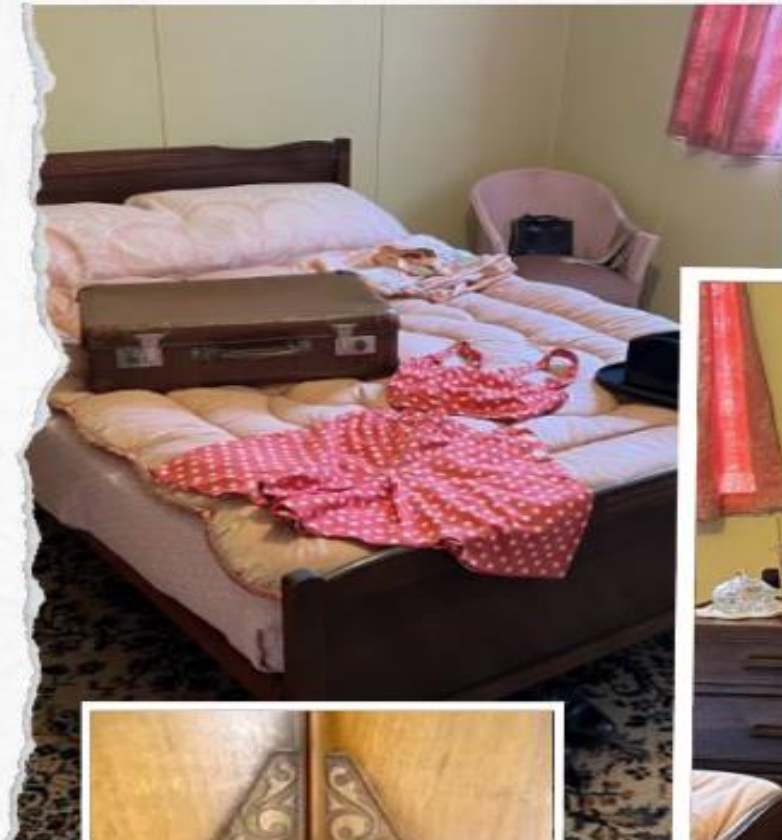
Side Curtains hide off-stage areas and create wings for entrances and side lights. They can be hung from a pipe batten or placed on hooks to hang from a traveller track.

Midstage – Travelers or Rear-Travelers

These are used as stage dividers to create a smaller stage space, often consisting of two panels with a centre overlap (IWeiss, n.d).



MOOD BOARD



- Mix of contrasting colours and patterns
- Darker wood tones
- Simple forms
- Feminine

Act One

Blackness. A pool of bluish-green light reveals Vi, aged around forty. She is sitting at a dressing-table. The drawer is open. She wears a green taffeta cocktail frock circa 1962. She is sexy, immaculately made up, her hair perfectly coiffed. She wears earrings and a matching necklace, and carries a clutch bag, from which she takes a cigarette and lighter. She lights up. The pool of light opens up to reveal the rest of the room in a dim, golden, unreal glow: a bedroom, dominated by a double bed in which Mary lies, wearing a pair of sunglasses. She watches Vi. The room is slightly old-fashioned, with dressing-table and matching wardrobe. Some clothes are draped over a chair. There is a long diagonal crack running across the wall behind the bed. An open suitcase lies on the floor, half unpacked, a half-full bottle of whisky and a pile of books on the bedside table.

Mary What do you want?

Vi Someone's been going through these drawers.

Mary Not me.

Vi What did you think you'd find?

Mary Nothing.

She closes the drawer and looks over to the bed.

Vi That crack's getting worse. Have you noticed anything about the view?

Mary No.

Vi It's closer.

Mary What is?

Vi The sea. Fifty yards closer. It'll take the house eventually. All gone without a trace. Nothing left. And all the life that happened here, drowned, sunk. As if it had never been.

Mary D'you remember a green tin box with chrysanthemums on it?

Costume: Vi



"Green taffeta cocktail frock circa 1962, hair perfectly coiffed, matching earrings and necklace, clutch bag with cigarette and lighter"

Taffeta is described as a fine lustrous silk or similar synthetic fabric with a crisp texture and is used mostly for evening gowns. Using this material will showcase Vi's luxurious and expensive taste. It also could be an indication of their social class, which will affect the interior design of the house.

"Coiffed hair" - very carefully arranged, full of volume and bounce (Collins Dictionary, n.d).

Safety regulations for smoking on stage

According to TheatreCrafts (n.d) smoking on stage is permitted if it is required for the artistic integrity and is subject to the following rules:

- The final decision is up to the local licensing authority such as the council.
- Smoking is not permitted in the rehearsal room.
- Cigarettes must not be smoked anywhere other than on stage and must be extinguished immediately when leaving the stage.

Vi No.

Mary It had papers in it. It's gone. Where is it?

Vi I've no idea.

Mary What have you done with it?

Vi *picks up some books from the bedside table and looks through the titles.*

Vi Head Injuries and Short-Term Changes in Neural Behaviour . . .
The Phenomenology of Memory . . . Peripheral Signalling of the Brain.

She puts them down.

Bloody hell, Mary. What's wrong with Georgette Heyer?

Go to black. Fade up bedside lamp. Vi has gone. Mary is lying prostrate. She stirs and gets out of bed, goes to the dressing-table, opens drawers, rifles through them. The phone rings.

Mary Hello? . . . What time is it? . . . I wouldn't be talking to you if I was, would I? I'd be unconscious . . . Where are you? . . . Jesus . . . you're what? So will you want me to pick you up from the station?

The door opens and Teresa comes in.

Teresa Oh . . .

Mary Hold on . . . (To Teresa.) It's not for you.

Teresa Who is it?

Mary (to caller) What? She's gone where? . . . OK, OK. I'll see you later. Are you sure you don't want me to pick you up –

She's cut off.

Hello? . . . Shit.

Teresa Who was that?

Mary A nuisance caller. We struck up a rapport.

Teresa He's not staying here, is he?

Mary Who?

Teresa I'm presuming it's your boyfriend.

Mary How much sleep have I had?

She picks up a portable alarm clock and peers at it.

Teresa How's his wife?

Mary Jesus. Two and a half hours.

She flops back on the pillows. Looks at Teresa.

Why are you looking so awake?

Teresa I've been up since quarter past five. Presumably he's leaving her at home, then.

Mary You've got that slight edge in your voice. Like a blunt saw.

Teresa I'm just asking –

Mary Of course he's bloody leaving her at home. She's gone to stay with her mother.

Teresa I thought she was ill.

Mary Maybe she went in an iron lung. Maybe she made a miracle recovery. I don't know. I didn't ask.

Teresa Where's he going to sleep?

Mary What?

Teresa You can't sleep with him in that bed.

Mary He's staying in a hotel.

Teresa I thought it might be something important.

Mary What?

Teresa The phone. Funeral directors or something.

Mary We've done all that. Can I go back to sleep?

Teresa And where's Catherine?

Mary She said she might stay over with someone.

Props

- Medical books – Neurology.
- Mary's phone.

Set Dressing

- Bedside lamp.
- Portable alarm clock

Using the image below as a reference, I was able to find similar alarm clocks on ebay for £10.

- Pillows on bed.

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Teresa Does she still have friends here?

Mary Probably. I don't know.

*She turns away, settles down, and shuts her eyes. **Teresa** watches her for a while.*

Teresa She could have phoned to say. Anything could have happened to her. It's still snowing.

Mary She's thirty-three, Teresa.

Teresa The roads are terrible.

Mary She'll get a taxi.

Teresa Probably just as well she didn't come home. She'd have probably drunk four bottles of cider and been brought home in a police car. And then she'd have been sick all over the television.

Mary She was thirteen when she did that.

Teresa She was lucky she didn't get electrocuted.

Mary It wasn't switched on.

Teresa Yes it was, I was watching it. It was The High Chaparral.

Mary No it wasn't. I wish you'd stop remembering things that didn't actually happen.

Teresa I was there. You weren't.

Mary *gives up trying to sleep. Sits up.*

Mary I was there.

Teresa That was the other time. The time when she ate the cannabis.

Mary That was me. I ate hash cookies.

Teresa It was Catherine.

Mary It was me.

Teresa I was there.

Mary So where was I?

Teresa Doing your homework probably. Dissecting frogs. Skinning live rabbits. Strangling cats. The usual.

Mary Teresa. I'd like to get another hour's sleep. I'm not in the mood, OK?

*She tries to settle down in the bed, and pulls something out that's causing her discomfort; a glass contraption with a rubber bulb at one end. She puts it on the bedside table and settles down again. **Teresa** picks it up.*

Teresa Oh, for God's sake . . . Is this what I think it is?

Mary I don't know. What d'you think it is?

Teresa A breast pump.

Mary I found it on top of the wardrobe. I think I'd like to have it.

Teresa Why?

Mary Because you've got the watch and the engagement ring.

Teresa For Lucy. Not for me. For Lucy.

Mary OK. So you want the breast pump. Have it.

Teresa I don't want it.

Mary Good. That's settled. Now let me go to sleep.

Teresa You can't just take things willy-nilly.

Mary You did.

Teresa Oh, I see. I see what this is about.

Mary *sits up.*

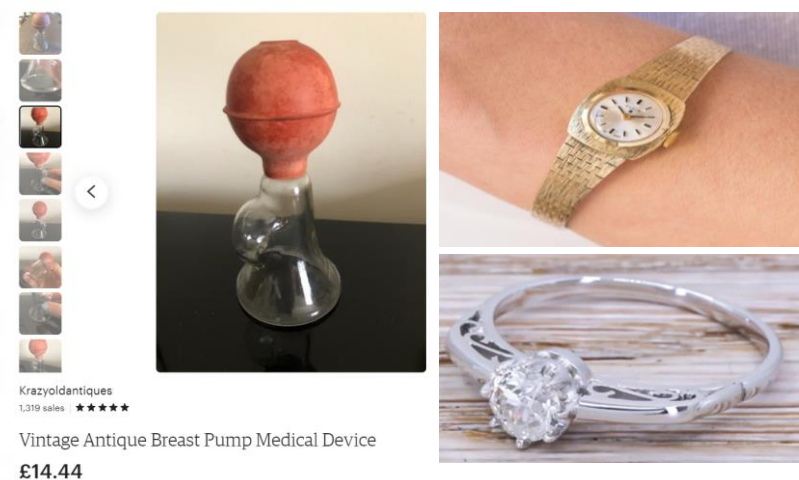
Mary It's not about anything, it's about me trying to get some sleep. For Christ's sake, Teresa, it's too early in the morning for this.

Mary *pulls the covers over her head. Silence. **Teresa** goes to the door, turns back.*

"The High Chaparral" - Western Tv show created in 1967.

Mary has decided to keep a breast pump, whilst Teresa has decided to keep Vi's watch and engagement ring.

The description of the breast pump indicates that it was made of glass and had a rubber bulb. I was able to find this device on Etsy for £15. According to my research, this type of breast pump was used up until the late 1970s (Texas Breast Feeding, 2019).



geometric and linear style

Teresa Could you keep off the phone, I'm waiting for Frank to ring and my mobile's recharging –

Mary If you take that phone to the funeral this time –

Teresa Oh, go to sleep.

Mary *sits up.*

Mary I'm surprised Dad didn't burst out of his coffin and punch you.

Teresa I didn't know it was in my bag.

Mary You could have turned it off. You didn't have to speak to them.

Teresa I didn't speak to them.

Mary You did. I heard you. You told them you were in a meeting.

Teresa You're imagining this. This is a completely false memory.

Mary All memories are false.

Teresa Mine aren't.

Mary Yours in particular.

Teresa Oh, I see, mine are all false but yours aren't.

Mary That's not what I said.

Teresa And what's with the Ray-Bans?

Mary *takes them off.*

Mary I couldn't sleep with the light on.

Teresa You could have turned it off.

Mary I was frightened of the dark.

Teresa When did this start?

Mary It's all right for you. You're not sleeping in her bed.

Teresa Oh, for goodness' sake.

Mary You grabbed the spare room pretty sharpish.

Teresa I was here first.

Mary Have the sheets been changed?

Teresa Yes.

Mary When?

Teresa What difference does it make?

Mary I don't like sleeping in her bed, that's all.

Teresa She didn't die in it.

Mary She was the last person in it. It's full of bits of skin and hair that belong to her –

Teresa Stop it –

Mary And it makes me feel uncomfortable –

Teresa What bits of skin and hair?

Mary You shed cells. They fall off when you're asleep. I found a toenail before.

Teresa Please.

Mary I thought I might keep it in a locket round my neck. Or maybe you'd like it –

Teresa Stop it, for goodness' sake.

She picks up a book from the bedside table.

You can't leave work alone for five minutes, can you, even at a time like this?

Mary I've a very sick patient.

Teresa You had a very sick mother.

Mary Don't start, Teresa.

Teresa Oh, she never complained. Because your job's important. I mean, doctors are second to God, whereas Frank and I only have a business to run, so obviously we could drop everything at a moment's notice.

Mary's sunglasses

- Mary is seen wearing ray-ban sunglasses within the start of the scene. When researching the price of original 1990s ray-ban sunglasses, I found that on average it would cost £50+. As we are dealing with a small budget, the cheapest option would be buying replicas from Amazon similar to the image below for less than £10.



[+8 colours/patterns](#)

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Classic Polarized Pilot Sunglasses for Men and Women UV400 Protection

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4.8 ★★★★★ 114

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£73.15 Used
Etsy - VintageStyle2018

wedding etiquette. Sudden Death Etiquette. Lesson One.
Breaking the news. Phrases to avoid include: guess what?

Teresa I was distraught, I wasn't thinking properly –

Mary I thought you'd won the lottery or something –

Teresa It's quite tricky for you, being nice, isn't it?

Mary Sorry. I forgot. How are you feeling?

Teresa *looks at her watch.*

Teresa I was expecting him to phone an hour ago.

Mary I'm not talking about Frank.

Teresa I don't know how I feel. Everything I eat tastes of salt.

Silence. She crosses the room and takes the whisky from Mary. She takes a swig and grimaces.

Salt. Everything tastes of it.

Hands it back. Sits on the bed.

The funeral director's got a plastic hand.

Mary God.

Pause.

What's it like?

Teresa Pink.

Mary What happened to his real one?

Teresa How should I know?

Mary Didn't you ask him?

Teresa It didn't seem appropriate.

Mary No. I suppose not.

Teresa He was showing us pictures of coffins.

Mary As they do.

"unscrews the whisky and takes a swig"



Within the play, *The Seed*, actors Tony Martin, Max Gillies and Sara Gleeson were seen drinking whisky, however, it was later revealed that it was either cold tea, apple juice or watered down coca-cola. Taking inspiration from this play, we could use a similar approach when Mary "*takes a swig*" by filling a bottle labelled as whisky with a fake drink inside.

Mary It's not my fault.

Silence.

Teresa Why do we always do this?

Mary What?

Teresa Why do we always argue?

Mary We don't argue, we bicker.

Teresa OK, why do we bicker?

Mary Because we don't get on.

Teresa Yes we do.

Mary Oh, have it your own way.

She unscrews the whisky and takes a swig. Teresa looks at her, aghast.

Teresa You haven't even got out of bed yet.

Mary It's the only way we're going to get through this.

*She offers it to **Teresa**, who shakes her head.*

Teresa D'you often have a drink in the morning?

Mary Of course I bloody don't, what d'you think I am?

Teresa Lots of doctors are alcoholics. It's the stress.

Mary Someone dies, you drink whisky. It's normal, it's a sedative, it's what normal people do at abnormal times.

She takes another swig. Silence.

OK. Let's be nice to each other.

Silence.

What do people usually talk about when their mother's just died?

Teresa I don't know. Funeral arrangements. What colour coffin. I've got a list somewhere.

Mary There should be a set form. Like those books on

Catherine (off) Hi!

Mary Oh God.

Teresa In here.

Catherine *bursts in, wrapped in layers of coats and scarves, laden with carrier bags. She divests herself as she speaks.*

Catherine God, it's bloody freezing out there. It's like *Scott of the Antarctic*, the cab was sliding all over the place and I had one of those drivers who kept saying, have you been shopping, are you going somewhere nice? And I said, yes, actually, a funeral. My mother's. I thought, that'll shut him up, but it turns out he knew her. I forgot what it's like up here. Everyone knows the butcher's daughter's husband's mother's cat. And he got all upset, we had to pull over, so anyway I invited him to the funeral. He's called Dougie. I bet he doesn't come. God, I've got this really weird pain at the very bottom of my stomach, here, look, just above my pubic bone. It keeps going sort of stab, twist, so either I've got some sort of cyst, but actually, God, I know what it is, I bet. I bet I'm ovulating. Isn't that amazing? I can actually feel the egg being released. Although, hang on, I don't think I'm due to ovulate. You can't ovulate twice in the same month, can you? It's not my appendix because I haven't got one. Fuck. It must be PMT. In which case I think I've got an ovarian cyst.

Silence.

Mary D'you want us to take you to hospital or shall I whip it out now on the kitchen table?

Catherine I'll be fine.

Mary Good, because I'm over the limit for either activity.

Catherine Oh brilliant, whisky.

She picks up the bottle and takes a slug.

Teresa Where've you been?

Catherine Shopping.

Teresa Shopping?

Catherine Well, you'd call it a displacement activity, but I call it shopping.

Teresa All night?

Catherine I went for a drink. I stayed with some friends.

Teresa What friends?

Catherine You don't know them. Oh God, there it goes again. Have you ever had this? Right here. Right at the bottom of your stomach?

Teresa No.

Catherine What d'you think it is?

Mary I've no idea.

Teresa We've been worried sick.

Catherine Look, just here –

*She takes **Mary's** hand and holds it against her groin.*

Mary Wind.

Catherine Do any of your patients actually survive?

Teresa You could have picked up a phone. I mean, where've you been?

Catherine Down the docks shagging sailors, what d'you think?

Mary I'd have come with you if I'd known.

Teresa It's just a bit insensitive –

Mary Yes it is. There's a time and a place for everything –

Teresa Disappearing, leaving us to deal with all this –

Catherine All what? D'you like my shoes? I can't stop buying shoes. I even like the smell of them. Honestly, it's just like an eating disorder except it's not it's just shoes although sometimes it's underwear. D'you ever get that, you have to

Catherine "wrapped in layers of coats and scarves, laden with carrier bags"



buy twenty pairs of knickers all at once, usually when you're a bit depressed –

Teresa You can't wear those for a funeral. You look like Gary Glitter.

Catherine I didn't buy them for the funeral.

Mary I remember them the first time round. They were horrible then.

Catherine I got them in a sale.

Mary Oh well. That's some consolation.

Catherine What's wrong with them?

Teresa I thought you didn't have any money.

Catherine Credit cards. What's wrong with them?

Teresa You said you were broke.

Catherine Oh, for God's sake, broke doesn't mean you can't buy things. I'm trying to cheer myself up, or is that not allowed? The minute I walk in the door I feel it in waves, the two of you waiting to pounce, looking for something to criticise. Christ, it's no wonder I've got low self-esteem.

Mary You have an ego the size of Asia Minor.

Catherine I'm just asking you to clarify your position *vis-à-vis* my shoes. I mean, quite obviously you don't like them, but why d'you always have to do this sneery superior thing? Why can't you just be straight and say you hate them?

Mary I hate them. Can I go back to sleep now?

Teresa I'm just wondering how you can afford to go out and buy all this stuff if you haven't got any money.

Mary She shoplifts.

Catherine Will someone tell me what I'm supposed to have done?

Mary It was a joke.

Catherine So all right, I know, Mum's dead –

Teresa There's no need to put it like that –

Catherine But you want me to sit down and cry about it and I can't.

Mary I don't. I want you to go away.

Catherine You always do this to me.

Mary I'm tired.

Catherine Some of the things you say to me are just, you know, not on. It's like I don't count. All my bloody life. And I'm not having it any more. I won't take it any more, OK?

Teresa Have you been taking drugs, Catherine?

Catherine Oh, for God's sake. I was in a really good mood till I walked in here.

Teresa Your mother's just died, how can you be in a good mood? Try and be a bit more sensitive –

Catherine No one's being sensitive to me.

Mary We fucking are!

Silence.

Catherine Did Xavier call?

Mary Who?

Catherine Xavier.

Mary I thought he was called Pepe?

Catherine You see, this is what you do to me. This permanent, constant, endless belittling.

Teresa He didn't call.

Catherine I'm about to marry him and you can't even get his name right.

Mary You're always about to marry people.



During the table read, we decided to change the reference of Gary Glitter to David Bowie.

I imagine that Catherine's shoes are crazy and include many geometric patterns and colours. This comment would also help us understand the type of clothing Catherine would wear as well.

Catherine What's that supposed to mean?

Mary And you never do.

Teresa Oh shut up, both of you.

Silence.

Catherine If I don't get some painkillers I'm going to die.

Mary There might be some paracetamol in my case.

Catherine Haven't you got anything more exotic?

Catherine goes to the suitcase.

Mary Not for you, no. They're in the pocket. Now, will you both go away and let me get some sleep?

Teresa Would anyone like some barley cup?

Catherine finds the paracetamol and takes a couple.

Catherine I'd rather drink my own urine.

Mary You may laugh.

Teresa I do not drink my own urine.

Mary Yet.

Catherine Haven't we got any ordinary tea?

Teresa That stuff in the kitchen's made from floor sweepings. You might as well drink liquid cancer.

Mary God, you do talk absolute shite sometimes.

Teresa Some people think that drinking your own urine –

Mary Yes I know. And they're all mad.

Teresa You're always so certain when it comes to things you know nothing about.

Mary You know bugger all about bugger all.

Teresa You've a completely closed mind, it infuriates me. You're so supercilious, you don't even listen –

Mary If God had meant you to ingest your own urine, he'd have rigged up a drinking-straw arrangement directly from your bladder. To save you the indignity of squatting over a teacup. Now, please, I just want an hour.

Teresa There are things to do.

Mary They can wait.

Catherine I'm going to have a hot bath and a joint. I can't stand this.

She goes.

Teresa So once again it's me. Everything falls to me.

Mary Go and have a lie-down, Teresa.

Teresa I can't bloody lie down, I can't sit still. I can't cope, I need some Rescue Remedy.

She goes out.

Mary I've got some beta blockers, they're much better –

Teresa (off) I get agitated. I get like this. I don't need drugs.

She comes back, carrying her bag, chanting.

Teresa Brown one and a half pounds of shin of beef in a heavy casserole. Remove and set aside. Sauté two medium onions in the casserole with two crushed cloves of garlic –

Mary What are you doing?

Teresa Recipes. I recite recipes. It's very soothing. I've tried meditation but my mind wanders. I think of all the phone calls I should be making instead of sitting there going 'om'. Carbonnade of beef seems to work best.

Mary You're a vegetarian.

Teresa I've tried it with nut loaf but it's not the same. And now I've got that salt taste in my mouth and I feel sick.

Mary Psychosomatic.

Teresa I know it's psychosomatic. I know it is, all right. I'd just like it to stop, that's all.

Props:

- Paracetamol
- Rescue Remedy
- Suitcase
- Teresa's bag

Rescue Remedy – a type of Bach flower remedy, developed in the 1920s and 1930s. It is believed that illnesses caused by negative emotions like stress and depression, could be improved with flower essences (Carly, 2022).

Questions to consider:

- Why would Mary take beta blocker? Is it due to stress from work?
- Why would Teresa take rescue remedy? I imagine with Teresa's business she is always making phone calls, being busy and looked after Vi with dementia.

Catherine comes in with a bundle of mail.

Catherine More fan mail.

Mary I thought you'd gone for a bath to soothe your cyst.

Catherine There's not enough water. So it's still sort of niggling, I wish it would stop –

She goes to her carrier bags and takes out various pieces of clothing. She opens the wardrobe door, holds them up against herself in front of the mirror.

I think it's stress. I mean, it's an incredibly stressful time, isn't it, and I always get things like this when I'm strung out. Last year I had this weird thing in my legs, like they were kind of restless or jumpy or something. Every time I tried to go to sleep they used to sort of twitch and hop. The doctor in Spain said it was quite common and I just needed to relax more, but I can't, I've got an incredibly fast metabolism and then I get that spasm thing in my stomach which is definitely stress-related, I'm sure it's irritable bowel syndrome. I mean, that starts up the minute I'm even a tiny bit tense, I notice it straight away because I'm very in touch with my body, I can sort of hear it speaking to me.

Pause.

Teresa I think I'm going mad.

Catherine Last night I dreamed I could do yogic flying. I bet that means something –

She tugs at the jacket.

I'm not sure about this, are you? I don't suit black, that's the problem.

Teresa As soon as the phone went I knew.

Catherine Can you wear trousers at a funeral?

Teresa I said to Frank, I can't answer it. We should never have left her at the hospital like that. We should have stayed.

Mary You weren't to know.

Teresa I'm not good with hospitals, I had to get away. Everyone in her ward looked like they'd already died, everyone was pale grey with a catheter.

Mary is opening the mail. Reads.

Mary 'With deepest sympathy on your sad loss, Mimi.' Who's Mimi?

Teresa When Frank spoke to them they said, 'She's worse, you'd better get up to the hospital.' I took the phone and said, 'She's dead, isn't she, you don't phone at three in the morning unless someone's dead.' And then, this is the awful bit, I put the phone down, and the thing I wanted to do more than anything else was have sex, which is sick, I know, that's what Frank said afterwards. I know I should have phoned you two, but I had this idea, this flicker she might not be dead, even though I knew she was really, but they wouldn't tell me over the phone, and I'd have woken you up, and what would the point be anyway, you were miles away –

Mary It's OK. Stop worrying about it –

Teresa That's why I didn't phone straight away. Mimi used to live three doors down.

Catherine Can I borrow a skirt from someone?

Teresa I keep going over and over it –

Catherine Is anyone listening to me?

Mary Oh, shut up and sit down. Your cyst might burst.

Teresa And the doctor was about twelve, and embarrassed. Eventually we had to say it for him. He kept fiddling with his pen and giving us a rundown of everything that had happened, until eventually Frank said, 'Are you trying to tell us she's not coming back? Are you trying to tell us she's dead?' And he said, 'More or less, yes.' And I said, 'What d'you mean, more or less? She's either dead or she isn't, you can't be a bit dead, for God's sake.' And then I looked at my feet and I was wearing odd shoes. A black one and a brown one. Not even vaguely similar. So I started to laugh and I couldn't stop.

Props/Set Dressing

- Bundle of mail
- Various Clothing from Catherine carrier bags, black jacket.
- Wardrobe must have mirror inside

Catherine

- In denial about her Mother's death.
- Comes across as self-observed, however is this Catherine's way of dealing with grief differently in comparison to her sisters?
- Possibly feeling left out



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They had to give me a sedative. Frank was shocked. They're not like us, his family, they've got Italian blood. Someone dies, they cry. They don't get confused and laugh.

Catherine All I want to know is, can I borrow a skirt?

Mary Oh shut up, Catherine, for Christ's sake!

Catherine If I could get an answer out of anyone, I would –

Mary Yes, you can borrow a fucking skirt!

Silence. **Teresa** goes to her bag and takes out a bottle of pills. She takes two.

Catherine What are they?

Teresa Nerve tablets. Have one, for heaven's sake. Have six. Have the lot. They're completely organic, no chemicals.

Catherine I like chemicals.

Teresa (emptying her bag on to the bed) All right, don't then. I've got a list somewhere. Things to sort out.

Mary Do it later, Teresa.

Teresa I can't. I can't sit still. I have to do it now.

Mary You're a useless advertisement for the health food industry.

Teresa Supplements. We do health supplements. Remedies. How many times do I have to tell you? You do this deliberately, you wilfully misinterpret what we do because you think it's funny or something, and actually I'm getting bored with it.

Catherine You're making me incredibly tense, both of you.

Teresa We're making you tense? Good God, you haven't stopped since you came in. Jumping around all over the place like you're on speed, which, thinking about it, you probably are, blahing on about your ovaries and your restless legs and your PMT. I don't give a toss about your insides. Has anyone seen my electronic organiser?

They look vaguely round the room. Silence.

Mary What does it look like?

Teresa I had it a minute ago, I had it –

Teresa throws her bag down. *Silence.* **Catherine** offers her the joint.

Catherine D'you want some of this?

Teresa No, thank you.

Mary Maybe you should.

Catherine It's completely organic. We grew it in the garden.

Teresa takes a reluctant puff. Then another. *Silence.*

Catherine You know when you went to the hospital. When she was dead.

Teresa Mmmm . . . ?

Catherine Did you see her?

Teresa Who?

Catherine Mum.

Teresa Of course I did.

Catherine How did she look?

Teresa Asleep. She just looked asleep.

Catherine takes the joint back.

Catherine Oh good.

Silence.

Teresa It's got the list on it. My organiser's got the list on it.

Catherine opens an envelope and reads a card.

Catherine 'My thoughts are with you at this sad time. Your mother was a wonder woman. Norman Pearson.'
Norman Pearson?

Props

- Bottle of pills
- Teresa bag, emptied on bed – include papers with lists and other miscellaneous.
- Joint
- Envelope with card – “My thoughts are with you at this sad time”.

When researching my options for creating a fake joint, I first considered an option that the actors could smoke which led me to Honey Rose products. These are herbal smoking mixtures which can be rolled as a joint, however after speaking with the director, Sara note that she had used this product before and did not like it due to the smell it creates and it does not taste nice for the actors. Therefore, we agreed to buy a fake cigarette prop and wrap with paper



Catherine She thought I was the menopause.

Mary Who told you that?

Catherine She did. She had the cat put down without telling me. She shut me in a cupboard. She said it was an accident but it wasn't.

Mary When did she do all this?

Catherine I never had the right shoes. She wouldn't let me visit you in hospital when you had an exploding appendix. She did it deliberately. She excluded me from everything. She made me stay in the shop after closing time and count nails.

Mary When I think of our childhood, we went on a lot of bike rides and it was always sunny.

Teresa Well, it was for you. You couldn't put a foot wrong.

Catherine When I think of it, it was always pissing down. And what bike? I never had one.

Teresa I'm sure you came to the beach with us, I remember it –

Catherine The only time I went to the beach, it was with you and you left me there. You forgot me. You didn't remember till you got home and Mum said, 'Where's Catherine?'

Teresa That was Mary. She was too young, she was being a pain and showing off in Esperanto, so we ran away and left her. With no bus fare and the tide coming in.

Catherine It was me!

Mary No it wasn't. It was me.

Catherine So how come I remember it?

Mary Because I told you about it and you appropriated it because it fits. If it was horrible, it must have happened to you. And she didn't have the cat put down, it just died.

Teresa It got run over by a combine harvester actually.

Catherine I don't remember any of this.

Teresa The amount of chemicals you've had through your system, I'm surprised you can remember anything at all.

Catherine You did leave me at the beach. Someone left me at the beach. I remember it vividly. I've got a brilliant memory. I remember everything.

Teresa You've forgotten Lucy's birthday every year since she was born –

Mary You'd go mad if you remembered everything. What would be the point? Your head would burst. There's an illness actually, a sort of incontinent memory syndrome, where you recall everything, absolutely everything, in hideous detail, and it's not a blessing, it's an affliction. There's no light and shade, no difference between the trivial and the vital, no editing system whatsoever.

She looks at Catherine.

Actually, Catherine, maybe you should come in for a few tests.

Catherine You're doing it again!

Teresa *has spied something under the bed. She picks it up: her electronic organiser.*

Teresa I've found it. I've found my list.

She consults her gadget.

Insurance – undertakers 10.30, bridge rolls – I think there's just the flowers left –

Catherine Do we have to do this now?

Teresa It won't get done on its own. If it was up to you two, she'd have to cremate herself –

Mary All right, all right –

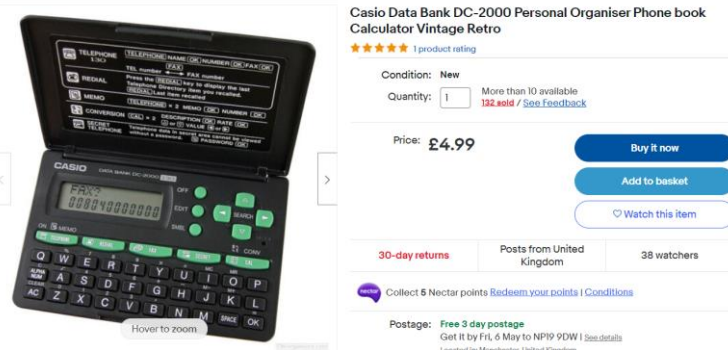
Teresa Because while you were doing Spanish dancing with Pepe in Fuengirola –

Prop:

- Electric organiser

An electric organizer is a pocket-sized computer used for storing and retrieving information such as addresses and appointments.

https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/183709872307?mkevt=1&mkcid=1&mkrid=710-53481-19255-0&campid=5338827328&toolid=10029&customid=183709872307_1&_trkparms=ispr%3D1&amdata=enc%3A1SHxHU10zTCKiXFwouheKkg33



Catherine His name's Xavier and I've never been to Fuengirola in my life –

Teresa I was watching her fall apart. Twenty miles here, twenty miles back. Three times a week.

Catherine I spoke to her a week ago. She wasn't that bad. She said she was off to the hairdressers.

Teresa Oh, for goodness' sake, she was mad as a snake. And I'm the one who dealt with it all.

Mary I'm sure when they publish a new edition of *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* they'll devote a chapter entirely to you.

Teresa Every month something else went, another wire worked itself loose. Not big things, little things. She used to put her glasses in the oven. 'What day is it?' she'd say, and I'd say, 'Wednesday,' and she'd say 'Why?' 'Well, it just is. Because yesterday was Tuesday.' And she'd say, 'There was a woman here with a plastic bucket. Who is she?' 'Elaine. You know Elaine. Your home help.' And then she'd look at me and we'd start all over again. 'What day is it?' I mean, she wasn't even that old.

Silence. She takes some sheets of photographs from her bag.

Anyway. I got these photos from the florist. There's a number under each picture, so if you just give me the number of the wreath you want, I can phone in the order.

*She hands the photos to **Mary**, who gives them a cursory glance.*

Mary I'll have the one in the shape of a football.

Teresa I'm just trying to keep things in a neutral gear, that's all.

Mary Choosing flowers for your mother's funeral is not what I'd call a neutral activity.

*The phone rings. **Teresa** and **Mary** both make a grab for it. **Mary** wins.*

Mary Hello? . . . Hello?

Catherine Is it Xavier?

Mary Hello?

Teresa Give it to me.

Mary There's just a crackling sound. Hello, can you hear me?

Teresa grabs the receiver.

Teresa Frank?

Catherine It'll be Xavier.

Mary grabs it back.

Mary Mike?

The line goes dead. She puts the receiver down. Silence.

It's like waiting for the relief of Mafeking.

Silence.

Catherine Does anyone want a sandwich?

Mary gets out of bed and rifles through her suitcase for clothes.

Catherine begins to go.

Catherine I went to this brilliant funeral in Madrid –
She goes out.

Mary Brilliant. You went to a brilliant funeral.

Catherine (off) He was a friend of Xavier's who fell off a roof and at the party afterwards they had little bowls of cocaine –

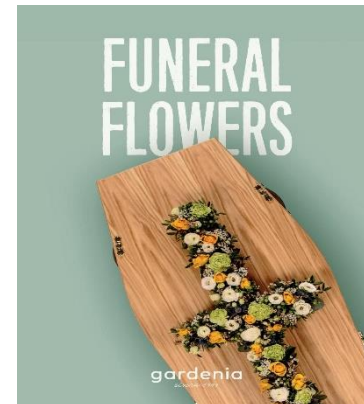
Mary Oh, what a good idea. That'll go down well with the St Vincent de Paul Society.

Catherine (off) And they dyed his poodle black. Just for the funeral. It was washable dye so it wasn't cruel, but anyway, it was raining and God, you should have seen the state of the carpets afterwards. So that was a bit of a disaster, but later on there was a firework display and he went up in a rocket.

Props:

- Sheets of photographs – from florist
- Teresa's bag
- Phone
- Suitcase

Inspiration



Mary Who?

Catherine (off) The person who was dead. Not the poodle.

Mary We're not doing that to Mum.

Catherine reappears in the doorway carrying a bread knife.

Catherine I'm just saying that funerals don't have to be depressing. They can be quite happy.

Mary Farcical even.

Catherine Scrambled eggs. That's what I want. I bet we haven't got any eggs –

Exit Catherine.

Mary I keep having dreams about her.

Teresa Who?

Mary Mum.

Teresa opens a card.

Teresa Thank God. I thought you meant Catherine. It's bad enough having her in the same house without dreaming about her as well.

Mary She's about fortyish and she's always wearing that green taffeta dress.

Teresa 'With deepest sympathy from Winnie and the boys. Sorry we won't be able to make the funeral due to a hip replacement op.'

Mary I've never heard of any of these people, have you? And there's this smell in the dream.

Teresa Can you dream smells?

Mary I think so.

Teresa I can't.

Mary It was that perfume she used to wear. In a tiny bottle, she got it in Woolworths, and on Saturday night when she

leaned over to say good night, she smelt of cigarettes and face powder and something alcoholic, and this perfume.

Teresa Phul Nana.

Mary Phul Nana . . . that was it . . . the whole room smelt of it.

Teresa She always said, if you don't wear perfume you'll never find a man.

Mary You'll never get a boyfriend.

Teresa And then, frankly –

Mary Unless you're a nun.

Teresa You might as well cut your throat with the bread knife.

Mary I don't know how she managed to give birth to three daughters and then send us out into the world so badly equipped. She'd have sent us up K2 in slingbags. With matching handbags.

Teresa She must have taught us something, otherwise we'd all be dead.

Pause.

Did she ever mention sex to you?

Mary *gives her a withering look.*

Teresa No, I suppose not.

Mary I found a box of sanitary towels in her wardrobe once. I was nine. I said, 'What are these?' I mean, I knew they were something bad, but I was desperate, I dared myself to ask. I was thinking all sorts of things. She snatched the box off me and said, 'Put that back. It's a home perm kit.'

There is a banging noise at the window.

Teresa What was that?

Mary There's something at the window . . .

Props:

- Bread knife
- Card

Vi Character Analysis:

- Mary quotes "*I don't know how she managed to give birth to three daughters and then send us out into the world so badly equipped*". This suggests that maybe Vi was an absent mother and the three sisters all agree that they could have had more support during their childhood.



Things to consider:
All cards should be in Welsh.

Teresa Hello . . . ?

The sound comes again.

Oh God, it's like *Wuthering Heights*.

Mary Someone wants to come in.

Teresa Well, open the window.

Mary You do it.

Teresa Oh, for goodness' sake –

She goes to the window and opens it, screams.

Mike Sorry . . .

Mary Mike . . . Oh Jesus . . . Teresa, this is Mike . . .

Teresa Hello.

Mike I've been ringing the doorbell.

Teresa It's broken.

Mike Yes.

Pause.

I'd like to come in, if that's not too much trouble. Otherwise, you know, I could just stand here and die, apparently it's a nice way to go, freezing, you don't feel a thing, you just drift off into oblivion –

Mary Oh God, yes, sorry, I'll open the door –

Mike For Christ's sake –

He climbs in through the window, covered in snow.

Mary How long have you been there?

Mike Hours.

Mary Sorry. Here, give me your coat.

Teresa We thought you were Heathcliff. At the window.

Mike Drink. I need a drink.

Mary *(taking off his outer clothes)* Heathcliff wasn't at the window. He was inside. It was Cathy trying to get in.

Mike Sorry?

Teresa Are you sure?

Catherine *appears, eating a sandwich and smoking another joint. She has a glass in her hand.*

Catherine Who's this?

Mary Mike, this is Catherine. Catherine, this is Mike.

He tries to smile.

Mike Sorry, can't speak. Frozen.

Catherine Mike the married boyfriend Mike?

Mary *fetches the whisky.*

Teresa Would you like a cup of tea?

Catherine You don't look a bit like you do on the television. You're quite small really, aren't you?

Mike People say this to me all the time, but I'm not actually.

Catherine Mind you, you'd never think Robert Redford was only five foot five, would you?

Mary *snatches the glass from Catherine.*

Mary Give me that.

Fills it and gives it to Mike.

Catherine They always do this to me. So, how tall are you?

Mike I'm five eleven.

Catherine Don't be ridiculous, I don't believe you.

Teresa *hisses at her.*

Teresa Catherine . . .

Set Design:

- Window: Mike climbs through the window, must be big and sturdy to support. It was made clear by Sara that this action is important and must be included.

Props/Costume:

- Mike covered in snow – Dirty down sprayed on clothing?
- Sandwich – real or fake prop?
- Joint
- Glass
- Whisky

Dirty Down Special Frost/Snow 400 ml Can



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1	

A light spray from the Frost/Snow can will give a gentle frost effect but a harder spray creates thick frost or snow.

Mike I'm not a mind-reader. You never showed the slightest sign. You never even hinted.

Pause.

Mary I thought you'd leave me.

Mike You thought I'd leave you?

Mary I thought you'd leave me if I said I wanted a child.

*The door opens and **Teresa** comes in carrying a lot of black bin liners.*

Teresa You're going to hate me for this – oh, for goodness' sake.

Mary and **Mike** spring apart. **Mary** gets up.

Mary We were just talking.

Mike gets out of bed.

Mike Look, fully dressed –

Catherine comes in with another joint.

Catherine Oh God, have you two been in bed? That's disgusting.

Mary What? Look, Mike and I are trying to have a conversation –

Teresa We have to sort out her clothes.

Catherine Why do we have to do it now?

Teresa is already taking clothes out of the wardrobe.

Teresa A friend of mine's sending a truck to Zimbabwe and I promised I'd have them ready this afternoon.

Mary She's not even in her grave yet, and apart from that –

Teresa If we wait until after the funeral, I'll get left with it all.

Mary Teresa, listen –

Teresa No. You listen. If it wasn't for me, nothing would

ever get done. She'd be lying on the floor stoned out of her brains, you'd be having it off in our dead mother's bed and I'd be holding the fort –

Catherine St Teresa of Avila –

Teresa Somebody has to be practical! Somebody has to be in charge, you two can live in chaos but I can't –

Catherine What chaos?

She is rifling through the clothing, holding frocks up in front of herself.

What's this made of, d'you think? Is it silk?

Mike Maybe I should, you know –

Mary Don't even think about it –

Mike Fine.

Mary I'm in shock, I still can't believe you –

Teresa The sooner we get this over with the better. Right. I've worked it out. We divide it into two lots. Crap and good stuff.

Catherine The crap we send to the poor bastards in Zimbabwe –

Teresa The crap we take to the dump.

Catherine I quite like this. Can I have it?

*She holds up a dress in front of her and hands the joint to **Teresa**, who puffs at it absent-mindedly as she sorts through the clothes.*

Mike Um, what would you like me to do?

Mary I don't know. Hang yourself.

She picks up the whisky and takes a slug.

Mike D'you think you should be drinking? I mean –

Mary Just lie down and die, will you?

Teresa Mike, you take these bags. This one for rubbish, this one for good stuff. We'll hand it to you, you pack it.

Props:

- Black bin liners
- Joint
- Clothes out of wardrobe – 1950s inspired clothing, To find these items I will have to look in Charity shops mostly.
- Frocks – possibly silk
- Whisky



Mike Right. OK. This one rubbish, this one good stuff . . .

Teresa *takes another armful from the wardrobe and throws it on the bed. **Mary** stands stricken, staring at it. **Catherine** is posing in mirrors, holding up frocks.*

Teresa Oh, for goodness' sake, Mary. I know it's not a very nice job, but it has to be done.

Mary OK, OK.

*She picks up some clothes dispiritedly. **Catherine** picks up a gaudy floral number.*

Catherine God, d'you remember this? What a mistake.

She dances round with the dress in front of her.

Teresa I think that can go in the crap pile.

Catherine They might like it in Zimbabwe.

Teresa She wore that terrible hat with it, d'you remember?

Catherine *scrabbles through the pile. She picks up a hat.*

Catherine Here it is, here it is –

Teresa *begins to giggle. She takes another puff of the joint.*

Mary Is this what you add up to? A wardrobe full of tat and three pelican children?

Teresa Oh dear, I do feel light-headed . . . have some of this, Mary, it's all so much easier . . . pure thingy . . .

Catherine Grass.

Teresa Exactly, no chemicals.

*She takes one more draw and hands the joint to **Mary**. **Catherine** has put the hat on, and is draping the dress around her.*

Teresa Cousin June's wedding. 1969.

Catherine It was horrible even then. D'you remember we didn't want to sit next to her in church.

Mary Give it to me. (*Takes it, hands it to **Mike**.)* This is for the rubbish.

Mike Are you sure? Maybe we should have another bag for kind of in-betweens.

Catherine *snatches the dress back.*

Catherine No, no it's you, Mary, it's perfect –

*She holds it against **Mary** who throws it aside. **Mike** puts it in the rubbish. **Teresa** yells.*

Teresa Aargh, look at this –

She pulls out a sixties cocktail frock from the pile on the bed.

Catherine *doubles up with laughter.*

Teresa She can't have worn this, surely.

Catherine She did, I remember it, oh God, give it here.

She takes the dress and begins to struggle out of her clothes.

Mary Catherine, for Christ's sake –

Catherine I'm wearing underwear. Anyway, he's a doctor, stop being such a pain –

*There is a great cry of triumph from **Teresa**, who has been rooting around in the pile.*

Teresa Yes!

She brings out a wild pink dress, circa 1963.

This was her Alma Cogan phase. Which I think, on reflection, I prefer to the crimplene phase that followed it.

Mary Teresa, are we sorting out these clothes or not because I've got better things to do at the moment?

Teresa I mean, what was crimplene, was it a sort of by-product of Formica?

She is holding the dress up against her in front of the mirror.

Mary Oh, this is ridiculous –

Props/Costume:

- Gaudy floral number - extravagantly bright or showy, typically so as to be tasteless.
- 1969 Wedding Hat
- Sixties Cocktail Frock
- Wild Pink dress 1963



Teresa Actually, margarine, you know, is a by-product of plastic. Or is it petrol?

Catherine *has got the dress on, and a hat.*

Catherine What d'you think? Is it me?

Teresa *laughs with stoned hysteria. Even Mike laughs.*

Mary And I don't know why you're laughing –

The room is in chaos. Catherine and Teresa are unstoppable now.

Catherine *is trying on shoes, hats, lipstick. Earrings, anything.*

Teresa Turn away, Mike, turn away –

She goes behind the wardrobe door.

Mary I give up. Give that to me.

She takes the rubbish sack from Mike and starts to stuff clothing into it.

Mary Who did it?

Mike What?

Mary The operation. Who did the operation?

Mike Charlie Morgan. Why?

She starts to laugh.

Mary Charlie Morgan?

Catherine Who's Charlie Morgan? Oh, look, I've found a hairpiece from before the Boer War. Look at this –

Mike Is there a problem with that?

Mary No, no, no. Honestly.

Teresa *emerges from behind the wardrobe door, looks in the mirror.*

Teresa Oh God, what do I look like?

Mike So what's funny?

Mary Charlie-whoops-I've-made-a-bit-of-a-hash-of-this-Morgan.

Mike Oh, for God's sake, that's a slanderous rumour, he's OK.

Mary He's in a clinic at the moment. Drying out.

Mike He did me years ago. He was steady as a rock.

Mary You didn't notice an overpowering smell of aftershave?

Mike Christ. He wasn't drinking it, was he?

Teresa *(scrabbling around in the bottom of the wardrobe)* Where're those pink shoes?

Mary He's about to be struck off –

Catherine Oh, look at this –

Mary Gross professional negligence, I think it was –

Catherine Mary, this is you –

She holds out the green dress which Vi wore at the beginning of Act One.

Teresa Oh, put it on –

Mike Are you sure?

Mary Give me some of that joint, Catherine – positive –

Teresa D'you think I need a handbag with this?

Mary I can't believe you went to Charlie Morgan. Did he give you a special price or something?

Mary *takes the dress and starts to struggle into it, giggling.*

Mike Are you making this up?

Catherine Go for it, Mary!

Mary Performing microsurgery when he was so drunk he had double vision.

Mike I think you're exaggerating a bit –

Mary I am not –

Catherine You need bigger hair. Big, crispy hair.

Props/Costume:

- Shoes
- Hats
- Lipsticks
- Earrings
- Rubbish sack
- Vi's Green Taffeta Dress

Pinks and Red coloured Lipstick



Vintage Jewelry Styles - 1960s



Earrings had gemstones, rhinestones, and the feminine styles of the 1950s were still very popular. The Mod fashion era also brought bright coloured plastics and resins earrings (Alyssum, n.d).

Teresa Yes, you see, you didn't get shiny hair in those days, did you? Honestly, all that hairspray, think of the carcinogens. Now, d'you think this bag or this –

She holds up two. **Mary** has got the frock on now.

Mary There. What d'you think?

Catherine You look dead like Mum.

Momentary silence, before they realise, then screeches of appalled laughter.

Teresa and **Catherine** roll on the bed, clutch their sides. Wild, stoned hysteria, etc. **Mary** joins in. The door opens and **Frank** comes in, in his overcoat, carrying a suitcase.

Frank What the fuck . . . ?

Silence.

Teresa Frank . . .

Frank What are you doing?

Mary We're sorting out Mum's clothes . . .

Pause.

Catherine D'you think we're sick?

Frank looks at his watch.

Frank It's taken me fourteen hours to get here from Düsseldorf. I spent six of those sitting next to a woman from Carlisle who runs a puppet theatre for the deaf. She'd maroon hair and drank an entire bottle of gin while telling me about her alcoholic father who once bit the head off a chicken. She was wearing a dress that looked like a candlewick bedspread and she'd been on a course in Cologne learning mime and North African devil dancing. I thought, take me back to sanity. And I walk in on this. Pan's bloody People.

Silence. The women suppress their hysteria.

Mike I'm Mike. Hi.

Frank How d'you do. And then I got diverted to East Midlands.

Mike Goodness.

Frank What is it with this country? It's too hot, it's too cold, there's leaves on the line, it's the wrong sort of snow –

Catherine Frank, chill out, have some drugs –

They all begin to giggle uncontrollably.

Frank How long have they been like this?

Mike I think it's the grief, you know . . .

The women get more hysterical. They hold on to each other and look at themselves in the mirror. They scream with laughter.

Mary Oh God, what do we look like.

Catherine Where's my camera, where's my camera?

She goes to her bag and scrabbles around. Pulls out a camera.

Teresa Oh yes, we've got to have a photo –

Frank Don't be ridiculous –

Catherine Frank, you take it –

She hands it to him. They all chant together like a football mob.

All Photo, photo, photo –

Frank OK, OK . . .

The women chant and pose and laugh hysterically.

Christ, they're a handful when they all get together. They just gang up, you'll get used to it . . . all right, all right, pull yourselves together . . . Where d'you want to be . . . ?

They all line up in front of the bed, linking arms and staggering and pushing each other.

Mary OK, OK, smile everyone!

Catherine I want to be in the middle!

*They arrange and rearrange themselves. **Frank** takes a photo. A flash. Freeze frame: the women smiling in a row, arms linked. We realise there's a fourth person in the line-up: **Vi**, smiling, cigarette held aloft, in her green taffeta dress.*

Props/Costume:

- Frank's overcoat and suitcase
- Frank's watch
- Catherine's bag
- Catherine's camera



Vi's Green Taffeta Dress

- As this image is being taken we see Mary and Vi wearing the same dress, therefore we must ensure to buy two.

Act Two

Scene One

Lights up on stage exactly as before. **Vi** and **Mary** are alone. **Vi** gives her a long look.

Vi You look ridiculous in that.

Mary The tin with the chrysanthemums on it. The one you don't remember. Where is it?

Vi I told you. I've no idea.

Mary What have you done with it?

Vi You need a bit of colour on your face. You were always pasty.

Mary Don't change the subject. Where's the tin?

Pause.

Vi Have you tried the shed?

Mary No.

Vi It might be in the shed.

Mary I'll look then.

Vi Although it might not. It's been years since I saw that tin. It had toffees in it originally. From Torquay. I'd have liked to have gone there. They have palm trees. I've never seen a palm tree in real life. I expect you've seen dozens. You're probably sick to death of palm trees.

Mary pulls on jeans and sweaters.

Vi I do wish you'd wear something a bit more feminine occasionally.

Mary Apparently I look ridiculous. I'm going to look for the tin.

Set Dressing:

- Exact same, clothing still on floor etc.

Mary Costume:

- Still wearing Vi's green taffeta dress
- Changes into jeans and sweaters. –*"I do wish you'd wear something a bit more feminine occasionally"* Suggesting Mary's clothing is very casual.



There was a preference for oversized and loose silhouettes during the 90s and therefore flared jeans were highly favored (Brewer, n.d)

Brewer, T. (n.d) *90's fashion for women: 1990s clothing, outfit and trends*. Available at: <https://www.thetrendspotter.net/90s-fashion-for-women/> (Accessed: 8 May 2022).

Frank *puts the bags down.*

Frank For Christ's sake, Teresa, I've only just thawed out.

Catherine Mike's never met her either and no one's complaining about him coming –

Teresa OK, OK, so what did he say?

Catherine Nothing. He said he'd phone back as soon as he knew what was happening. That's what he said. Stop interrogating me, OK?

Mary I'll have number seventeen B.

*She hands the book back to **Teresa**.*

Teresa (*looking at the photo*) She was allergic to lilies of the valley, choose something else –

Mary She's hardly going to start sneezing at her own funeral, is she?

*She takes the look again. **Frank** grapples with the bags, one of which bursts open.*

Frank Oh, for fuck's sake!

Mike *comes in wrapped in a towel, clutching his clothes. He looks at the assembled crowd.*

Teresa Sorry, Mike, d'you want to get dressed?

Mike No, no, I'm fine really, don't mind me.

Catherine I bet you've used all the water –

Mary (*handing the florist's book to **Teresa***) Twenty-seven A, not a lily in sight, absolutely no chance of impetigo, hives, or nervous eczema for either mourners or deceased. Catherine, you choose and then could you all leave us in peace for five minutes?

Catherine Why are you always trying to get rid of me?

Teresa Oh, don't start, Catherine. Choose your wreath, for heaven's sake –

She tries to give her the book.

Catherine No, I always get this, 'Bugger off, Catherine, we don't want you here,' well, what am I supposed to do? Teresa's got Frank, you've got him, and what am I supposed to do on my own? I don't want to sit in the living-room on my own while everyone else has smoochy secret conversations, it's not fair, not at a time like this, but if that's what you want –

She gets into the wardrobe and shuts the door.

Frank Have you ever thought of laying off the drugs for a while, Catherine?

Catherine Who asked you?

The phone rings. She dives out of the wardrobe and grabs it.

Hello? Xavier . . . God, how are you, where've you been? Did you get my . . . Oh, right . . . Oh . . . What? . . . Oh. Well, couldn't you . . .

Long pause. She listens.

I don't think we should . . . maybe we should talk about this when I get back . . . OK, bye.

She puts the phone down. They all look at her. Awkward silence.

He can't come.

Teresa Because of the flood?

Catherine The what? Oh, no, well, yes, lots of things. Anyway, he's not coming.

Silence.

Mike Are you all right?

Catherine Yeah. Yeah. He said he'd ring back later.

She gets up.

So. What is there still to do? Shall we sort the drawers out? There's all the jewellery and stuff –

Props:

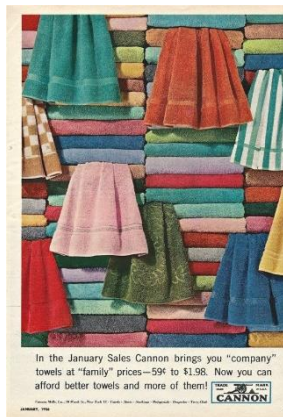
- Black bags filled – one bursts
- Florist book
- Phone

Costume:

- Mike wrapped in towel, clutching his clothes

“Catherine gets into the wardrobe and shuts the door”

- When sourcing a wardrobe we need to ensure it is secure enough. In addition, we could consider placing weights or supports as a safety measure.



Colourful towel to match bedroom colour pallet and add comedic value.

Frank . . .

Frank What?

Teresa I've had far too much to drink . . .

Go to black.

Scene Three

Same room, early next morning. The coffin is there on a low trestle.

Teresa *is dressed for the funeral, talking on the phone.* **Catherine** *is sitting in her dressing gown, staring at the coffin.*

Teresa So when you say 'even later', you mean what? . . . I see . . . No, of course . . . I understand . . . Could you ring as soon as – thank you . . . Bye . . .

She looks at Catherine, looks at her watch.

They must be snowed in.

Catherine Who?

Teresa The men who carry the coffin. Funeral operatives, he calls them. They still haven't shown up for work. He's trying to find some replacements. I wish I knew what he meant. I mean, we don't want amateurs doing it. It's supposed to be dignified. You can't just get anyone in.

Catherine *says nothing. She's staring at the coffin.*

Teresa Why don't you get dressed, or are you thinking of going like that?

Catherine It's tiny, isn't it?

Teresa *locks.*

Teresa She was only small.

Catherine Not as small as that.

Teresa She must have been. They don't fold them up.

Pause.

Catherine D'you think they make them to measure?

Teresa I suppose they must.

Catherine I suppose so. Yeah. I mean babies' coffins are tiny, aren't they? They're about this big.

Teresa They'd have to be. Otherwise they'd rattle around.

Catherine Mmmmm . . . Unless you used loads of bubble wrap.

Teresa If you want to look at her, you just have to undo a little screw at the top. They gave me a wee screwdriver.

Silence.

I don't want to, do you?

Catherine Not really, no.

Pause. She turns away from the coffin.

I'm so depressed. I can't change my flight.

Teresa Forget him. He's a bastard.

Catherine How do you know?

Teresa You've never had a boyfriend who isn't. You don't go about it the right way.

Catherine There was that nice Swiss one. He was all right. Did you ever meet him? He was gorgeous, I felt just like Heidi.

Teresa I knew Frank was the right man for me straight away. Because I chose him. I got forty-seven replies. I whittled them down and chose the most compatible.

Catherine Yeah, but the thing is . . .

Teresa What?

Catherine At the end of the day you still landed up with Frank.

Teresa We're very, very happy actually. We're a perfect match. Because we went about it in the right way –

Props/Costume:

- Coffin on low trestle
- Teresa dressed for funeral
- Teresa on Phone
- Catherine in dressing gown
- Catherine Watch

All three sisters wearing a variety of clothing in black for the funeral.



Tussle gets more violent.

Mary Give me the bloody tin!

They fight. Teresa manages to hang on. She sits down with the tin.

Teresa, what the fuck is this about?!

Teresa Nothing. Nothing. I'll tell you later –

Mary Tell me now.

Teresa I can't.

Pause.

Mary It's about Patrick, isn't it?

Teresa *looks stricken. Pause.*

Teresa There're some cuttings in here about him.
Newspaper cuttings.

Mary You know where he is?

Pause.

Where is he?

Pause.

Teresa He's dead.

Silence.

I'm sorry. I wanted to tell you. I would have. I would have.
I'm sorry. I told Mum, but she said no, and then . . . I mean,
and then it was . . . I mean, the moment had passed –

Silence.

Mary What happened to him?

Teresa Some cliffs gave way. Just outside Whitby. Him and
another boy. Father Michael told us.

Frank (off) Teresa! What's happened to my trousers?

Teresa I meant to tell you, but when? When could we have
told you?

Mary When it happened! Why didn't you tell me when it
happened?

Teresa (offering her the tin, gently) They're in an envelope
marked medical cards. The cuttings.

Frank (off) Teresa!

Mary Go to him. Don't let him come in here.

Teresa Mary, I'm sorry –

Mary Go.

*She goes. The lighting changes to the bluish-green glow. Faint sound of big
band music in the distance. **Vi** appears in the open doorway. Her hair is
now completely white. She looks at the coffin.*

Vi Open the box.

*She goes over to the coffin. **Mary** says nothing.*

It's open. Look.

She lifts the top section of the lid and looks.

A bloody old woman. I don't recognise her. A bloody old
woman in green eyeshadow. Green. They call this dignity,
apparently. Green frosted eyeshadow.

She shuts the lid. Closes her eyes and sways gently to the music.

I just want one last dance before I go . . .

Mary *watches her for a while. Empties the stuff out of the tin. Finds the
envelope, takes out cuttings, looks at them in bewilderment.*

Mary Nineteen eighty . . . Nineteen eighty . . . Why didn't
you tell me?

Vi *stops dancing. Pause.*

Vi It seemed right at the time. You were doing your finals.

Silence.

Mary I've been waiting for him all these years. I've been
waiting for him to turn up and claim me.

Props:

- Green Tin
- Coffin
- Envelope
- Newspaper cuttings

Vi

- Hair now white – Could use
white face makeup and
brush through hair.

Mary

- Patrick – son who died 1980.
Was kept a secret from Mary
by her Sister and Mother.



Forgiving someone's just like throwing a switch.

Mary Is it?

Vi It's just a decision. And afterwards you're free.

Pause.

I've done it.

Mary Have you?

Vi I forgave your father. And now I'll forgive you. But it's time I went.

She goes to the mirror and looks at herself.

Yes. I think it is.

Mary Mum. Don't go just yet –

Vi *gives her one last look before she goes. Mary puts her head in her hands and cries. Teresa and Frank, come in.*

Teresa Frank, get the Rescue Remedy.

Frank She needs a bloody drink.

Teresa *takes hold of her.*

Teresa Mary, pull yourself together, you've got a funeral to go to. Frank, she needs Rescue Remedy, now –

Frank *goes out.*

Mary I'm past rescuing –

Teresa Take some of these –

She tries to give her some tablets.

Mary What are they?

Teresa Aconite, it's just a matter of –

Mary It's not just a matter of anything, it's my life! Stop trying to make it little and solvable, stop trying to sort it out with vitamin pills!

Teresa They're not vitamin pills –

Mary There's no cure.

Frank *comes in with Mike. Mike goes to her.*

Frank Rescue Remedy. Duty-free vodka. Take your pick.

Mike Are you all right?

Mary I'm tired, I didn't sleep.

Frank I read somewhere the other day that if you eat a whole lettuce before you go to bed, it has pretty much the same effect as a Mogadon.

Mary Well, I'm torn now. I don't know whether to have a Caesar salad or cut my throat.

*She takes the Rescue Remedy from **Frank**, and downs the lot.*

Teresa No, no, you just need a few drops –

Mary There you are, I feel better already. Suddenly life makes sense, suddenly my mother's not dead, I am actually pregnant, in fact it's triplets. Suddenly there is meaning where there was none before. Suddenly I'm Princess Michael of fucking Kent.

She sits down, exhausted. Silence.

Teresa Pregnant?

Mary A fantasy.

Mike Sorry?

Mary I thought I was pregnant, but I'm not. It was a phantom. You obviously caught Charlie Morgan on a good day.

Teresa *(desperately)* Oh, why don't you two have a baby? Why don't you? Leave your wife and have a baby with Mary –

*The door opens and **Catherine** appears, in a very short skirt.*

Catherine Hi. What d'you think?

They look at her in confusion.



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Props:

- Rescue Remedy – As Mary “*Downs the lot*” due to health and safety we will have to empty the contents of the bottle and fill with water.
- Tablets – Aconite
- Catherine wearing **very short skirt** for the funeral.

Frank You can get do-it-yourself coffins now, apparently. Made of cardboard.

Mary Oh, good.

Mike Something to do in the long winter evenings. Build your own coffin.

*Sound of a car horn from outside. **Mary** goes to the window.*

Mary That'll be him.

Mike Right. OK. Shall we, er . . . Frank?

Frank God. Right. I'll take this end, shall I?

He takes one end of the coffin.

Mike Keep your back straight –

They lift.

Frank I'll go backwards, or would you rather?

Mike No, no, I'm fine – can someone hold the door?

Teresa *does so. They manoeuvre the coffin. Catherine starts to laugh madly.*

Catherine Poor Mum. Even her funeral's a cock-up.

Mike Pull her round to the right a bit – the right –

Frank Mind that bit of carpet – whoops, nearly . . . that's it . . .

They go out.

(Off) To me, to me –

The women pull on coats and gloves, etc.

Mary Just check your phone's not in your bag, will you?

Teresa I've checked.

Catherine I look ridiculous, don't I?

Mary You don't. You look fine.

Catherine I didn't hate her really.

Mary I know that. We all know that. She didn't hate you either.

Pause.

Catherine D'you remember, when Dad was out sometimes, she used to get us up in the middle of the night and give us crisps and ice-cream soda?

Mary And she'd have a Dubonnet and lemonade. God, I'd forgotten about that.

Teresa She called it a girls' night in.

Catherine We were all sleepy in our pyjamas, and she'd put on Nat King Cole.

Pause.

Mary She must have been lonely. I never thought of that.

Silence.

Catherine I put a hip flask in my bag in case we need it.

Teresa I think I'll pass on that, if you don't mind.

Mary Got tissues?

Teresa Yes.

Frank and Mike *come in.*

Frank Are we set?

Teresa I think so. Shall we go, then? Are we ready?

Mary You go on ahead. I'll be out in a minute.

Teresa Come with us, Catherine. Come on.

Frank, Teresa and Catherine *go out. Teresa with her arm around Catherine. Silence. Mary and Mike look at each other.*

Mary I think maybe that French guy was right.

Mike Sorry?

Props

- Window
- Coffin (Frank and Mike carry out)
- Carpet
- Coats, Gloves etc



Mary The one who said water was like magnetic tape. My mother's the ghost in the machine. She goes through us like wine through water. Whether we like it or not. Nothing ends entirely.

Mike What are you going to do?

Mary Can you live a rich life without a child?

Mike You know you can.

Pause.

Mary Yes. I suppose so.

Pause.

I'm going to ask you something, Mike. I'm going to ask it once and I'll never ask it again. Leave your wife and come with me.

Pause.

Mike I think . . . I don't think we should talk about this now. Maybe we should talk about it after the funeral . . .

Mary I'm not asking you to talk about it. Take your chance, Mike.

Pause.

Mike *(almost a whisper)* Maybe afterwards we could . . .

She goes to the window. He looks at her helplessly. She looks out of the window.

Mary This snow's never going to stop. Everything frozen in its tracks. Everything cancelled.

Teresa *(off)* Mary!

Mary I've hated winter all my life. Ice on the windows, dark at three in the afternoon. Sea fret freezing the hairs in your nostrils. I've hated the stasis, the waiting for spring.

Teresa *(off)* Mary!

She turns to Mike.

Mike What are you going to do?

Mary Learn to love the cold.

They go out. As they leave, the lights dim to gold and blue. The curtains billow into the room and a flurry of snow drifts in. Nat King Cole plays faintly in the distance.

Fade down lights.

Lighting Inspiration

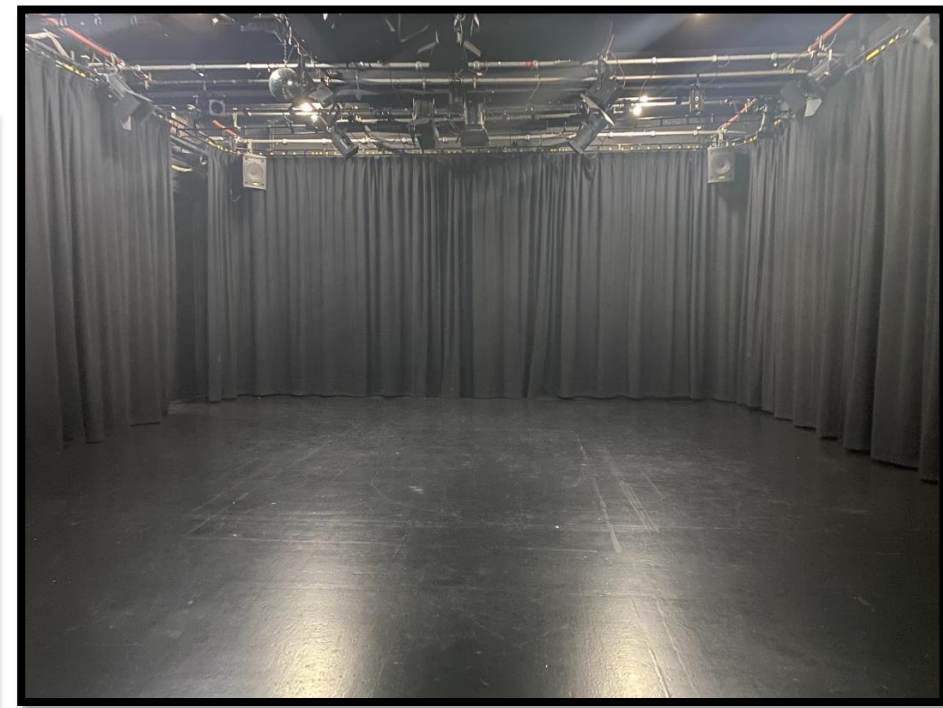
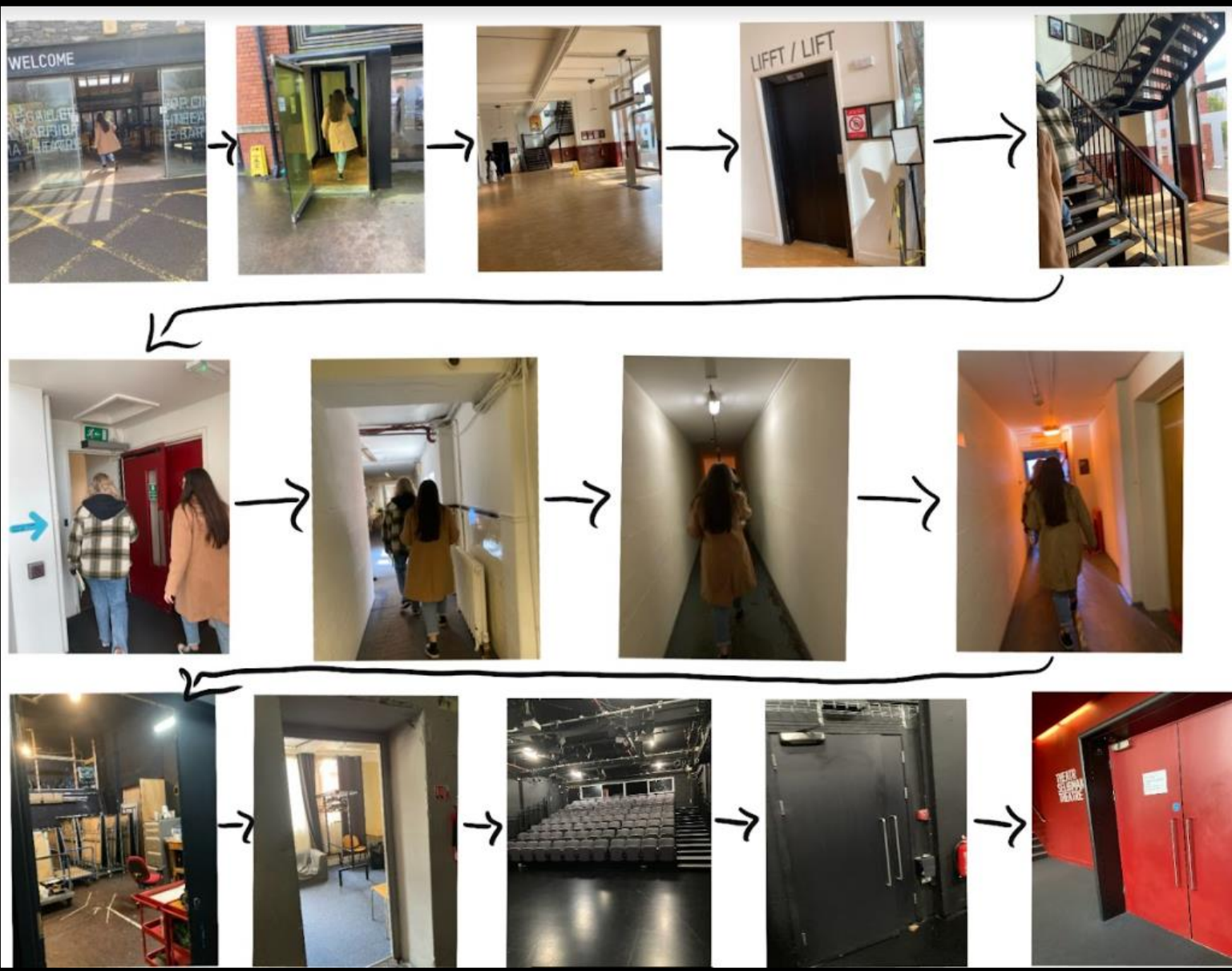


Picnic at James Madison University

“Snow drifts in” - Curtains fill the room and snow drifts in.

- Artificial white "flakes" of confetti or shredded plastic are used to create fake snow as it does not melt and remains consistent (Theatre Effects, n.d). This could be a possible idea to discuss with the director.
- Nat King Cole was an American musician who first came to prominence as a jazz pianist (Biography, 2021).

Venue Recce – The Chapter



Black Box Theatre style

- A black box theatre style will allow us to be fully flexibility within the design.
- Things to consider when completing venue recce is the exits and entrances and how they might affect the scale of the set.

Created by Lleucu to show the directions from start to finish

Sourcing: Celtic Prop Hire

From: [elliereynolds2002](#)
Sent: 11 April 2022 12:50
To: enquiries@celticprophire.co.uk
Subject: Enquiry about props

Hello,

Do you have any matching dressing tables and wardrobes, preferably in a 1960s style?

Many thanks,
Ellie

Hi Ellie

We don't have matching wardrobes and dressing tables, I'm afraid, but do we have some that are similar in era and style to each other. If there isn't a good match for a particular wardrobe, you could consider using a chest of drawers instead of a dressing table, and put a free-standing dressing table mirror on it.

I've attached some photos as examples; if you see anything among this selection that you'd like us to reserve and quote for you, please let me know. If nothing is suitable you could send us reference photos and we'll have a look through to see what else we have that is closest to what you're looking for.

Alternatively, you'd be very welcome to visit the warehouse and choose directly from our stock – you can mix and match as you like. We have appointments available most days (except Good Friday and Easter Monday) between 9am and 4:30pm (we close at 5pm). Just give us a call to arrange a convenient date and time.

I hope this is useful as a starter, and hope to hear from you soon

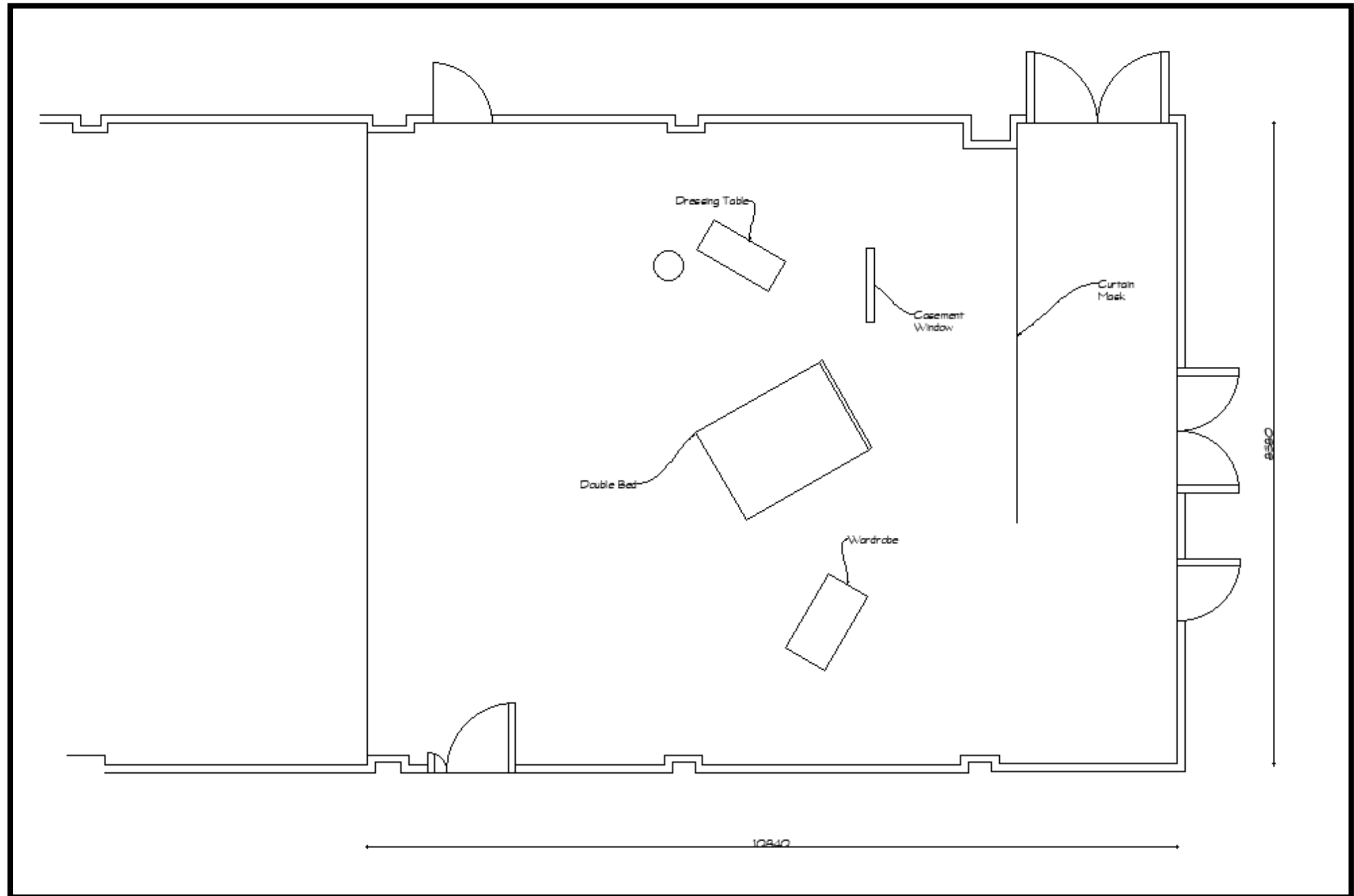
Best wishes

Ruth

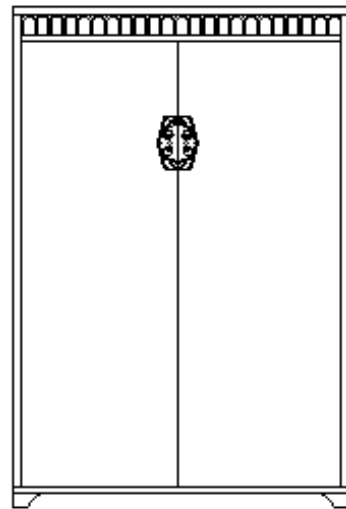
I decided to contact Celtic Prop Hire to enquire about matching wardrobes and dressing tables for Memory of Water. Unfortunately, they did not have matching furniture. They did supply images of furniture of a similar era (1960s) and style to each other. In my opinion the image circled is the best option as for wardrobes. I will continue searching for the furniture but will keep in contact with Celtic Prop Hire in the event I can not find anything else.



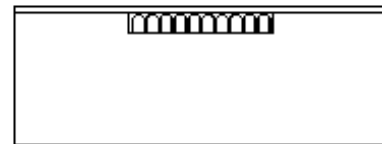
Autocad drawing of the final stage layout.



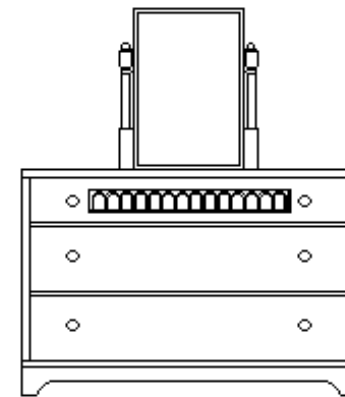
Wardrobe



Headboard



Dressing Table



Côf Y Dwr

Title
Furniture Drawing

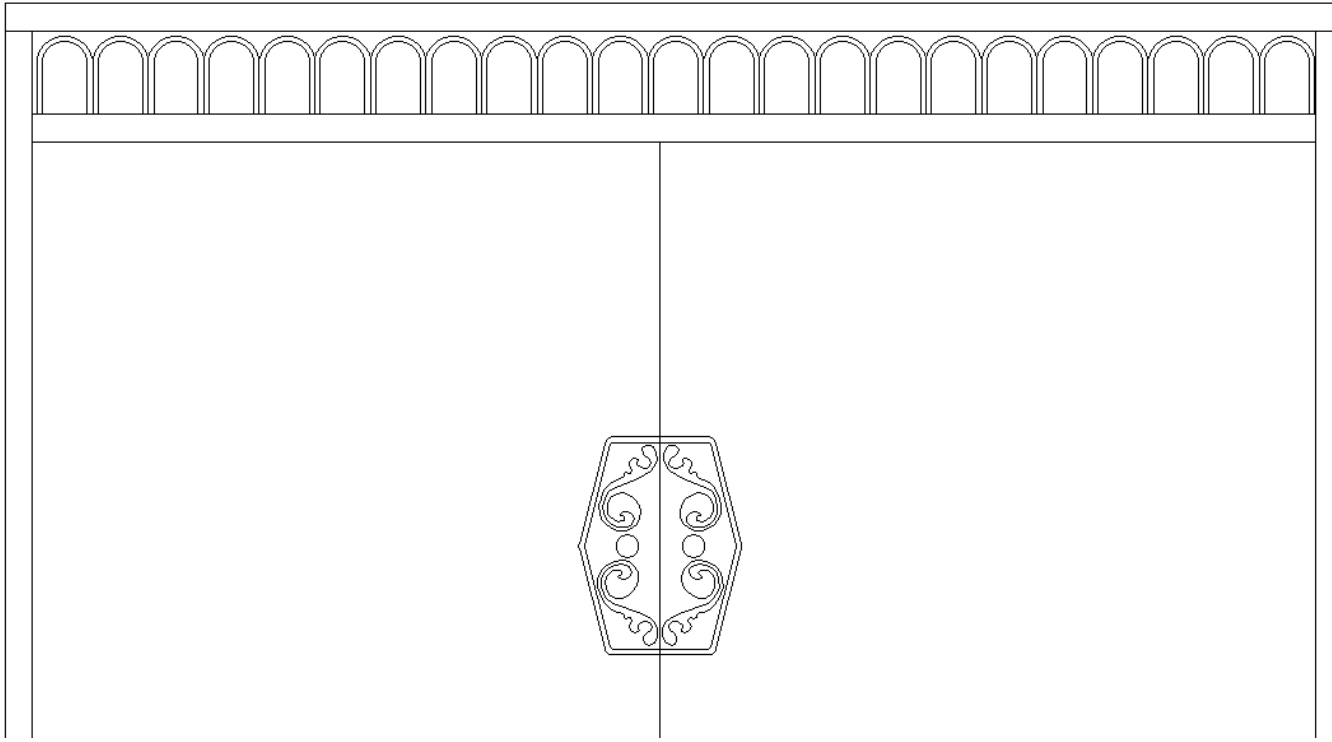
Location
The Chapter

Director
Sara Lloyd

Designer
Ellie Reynolds

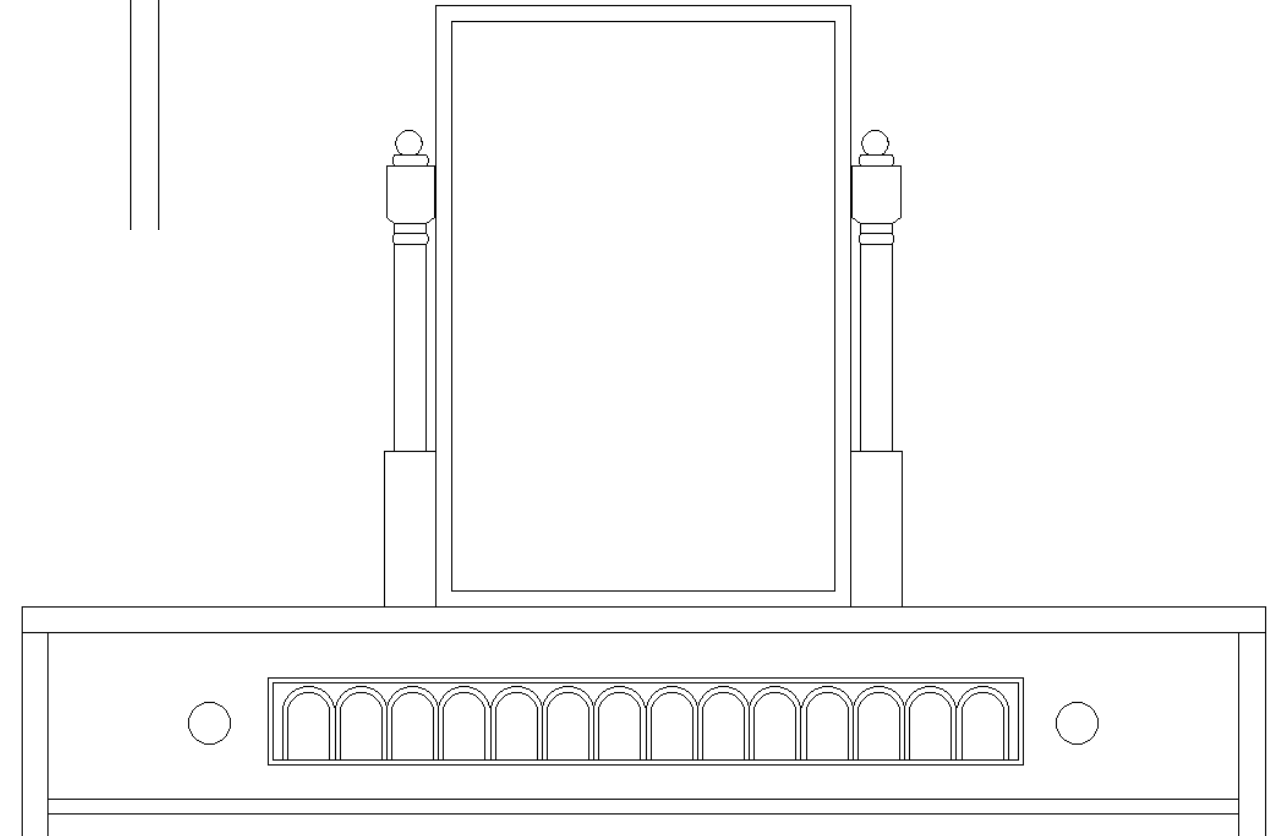
Drawing Number 1

Date Drawn 16/05/2022

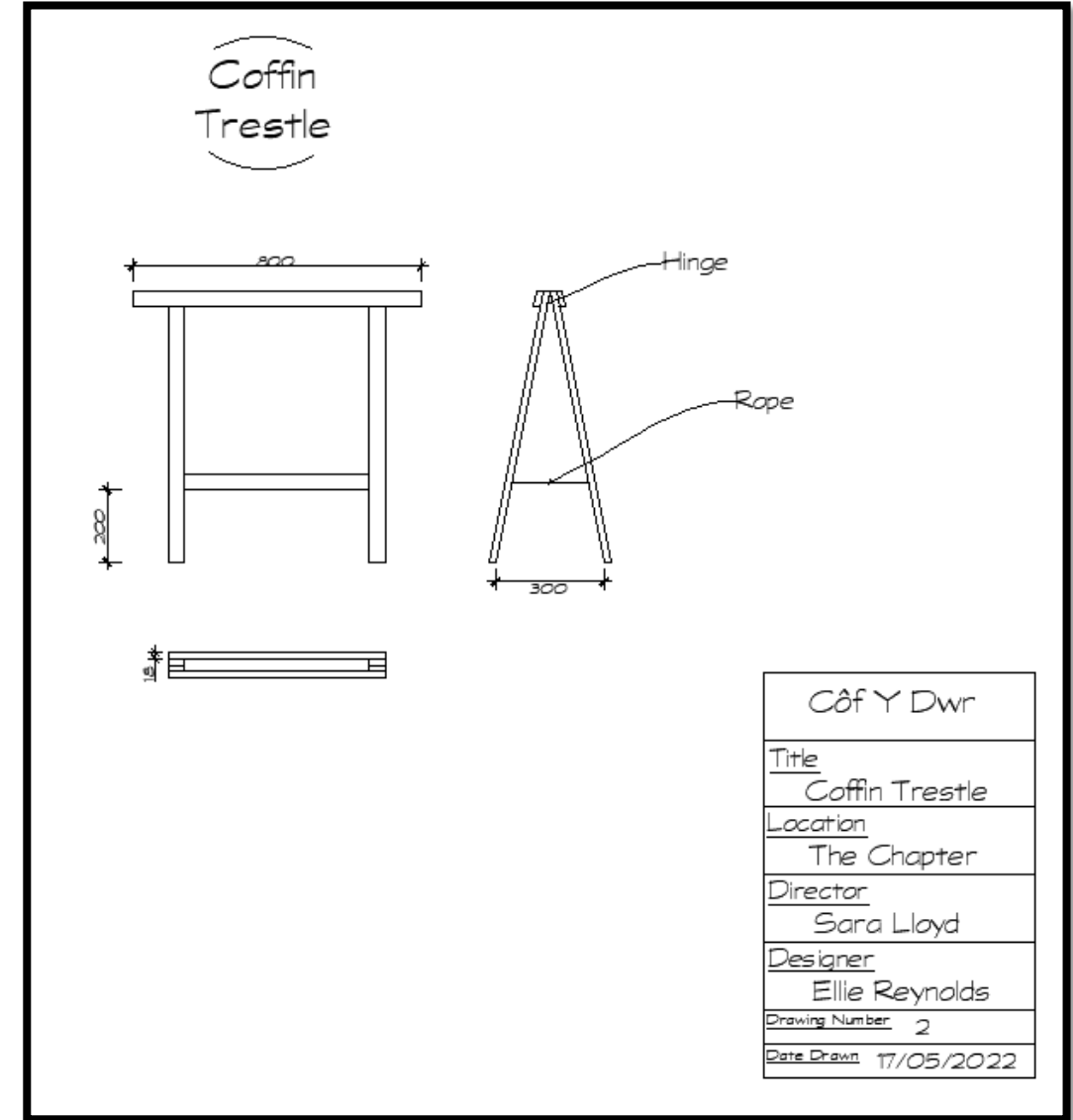
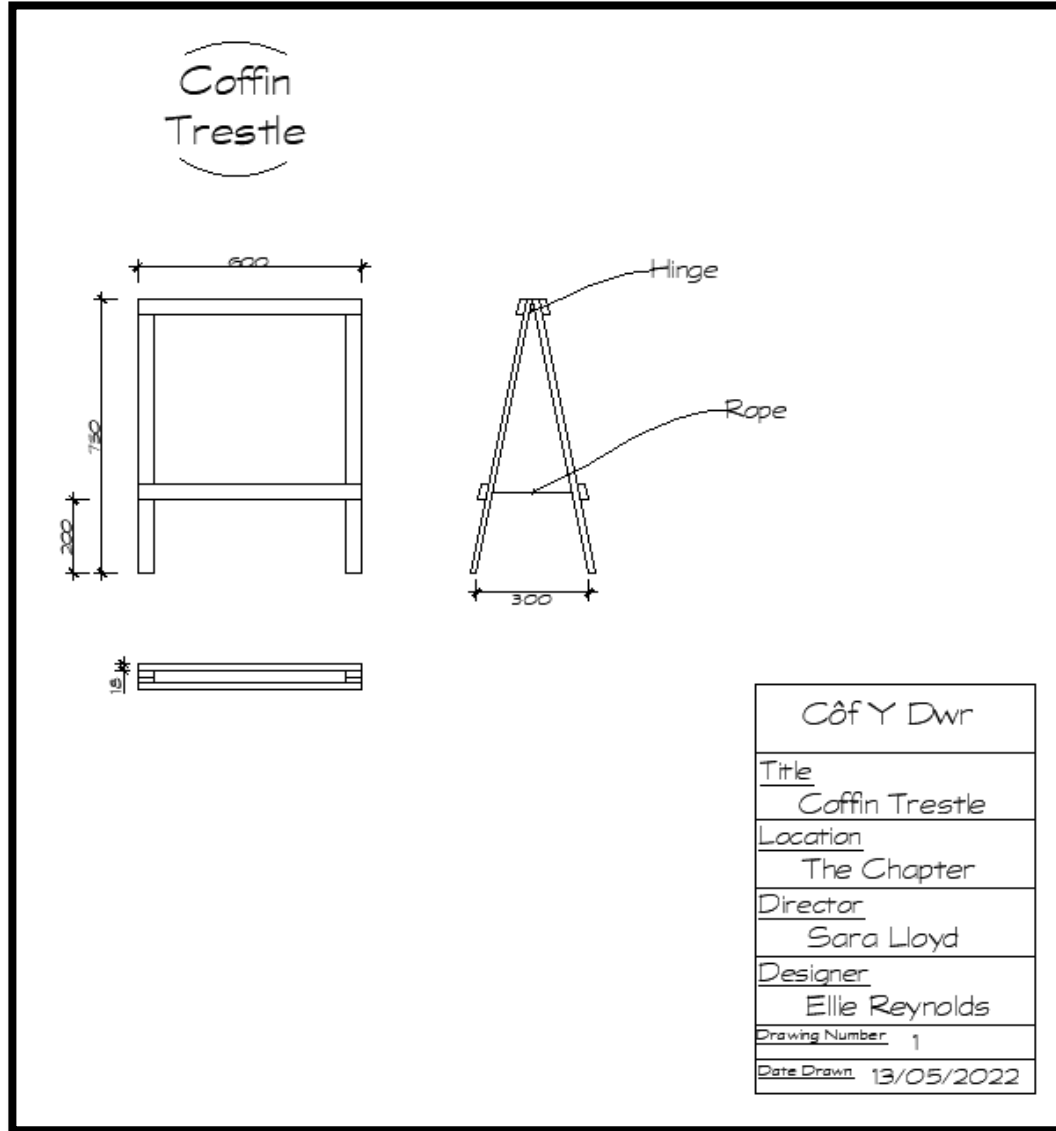


I decided to challenge myself by drawing the furniture bought for Memory of Water in AutoCAD. The most difficult part was creating the French curves on the wardrobe.

To push this drawing further, in the future I would consider printing these drawings in scale and placing them within our scale model.



Prop: Coffin Trestle



- Before committing to building my own coffin trestles, I considered options of hiring from celtic prop hire. However they do not supply wooden ones.

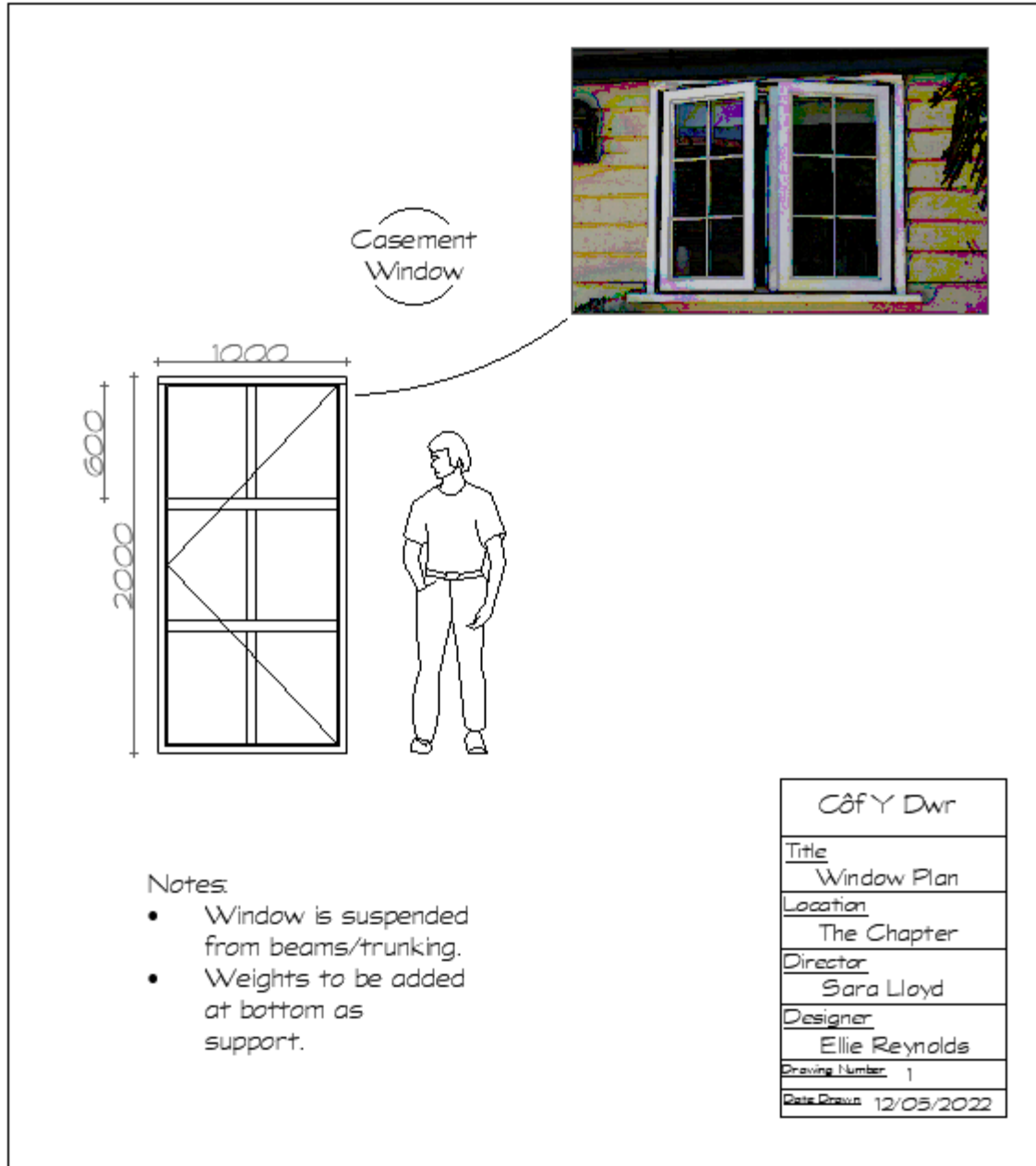


- The coffin trestles are a key design element as they will be holding a coffin on stage.

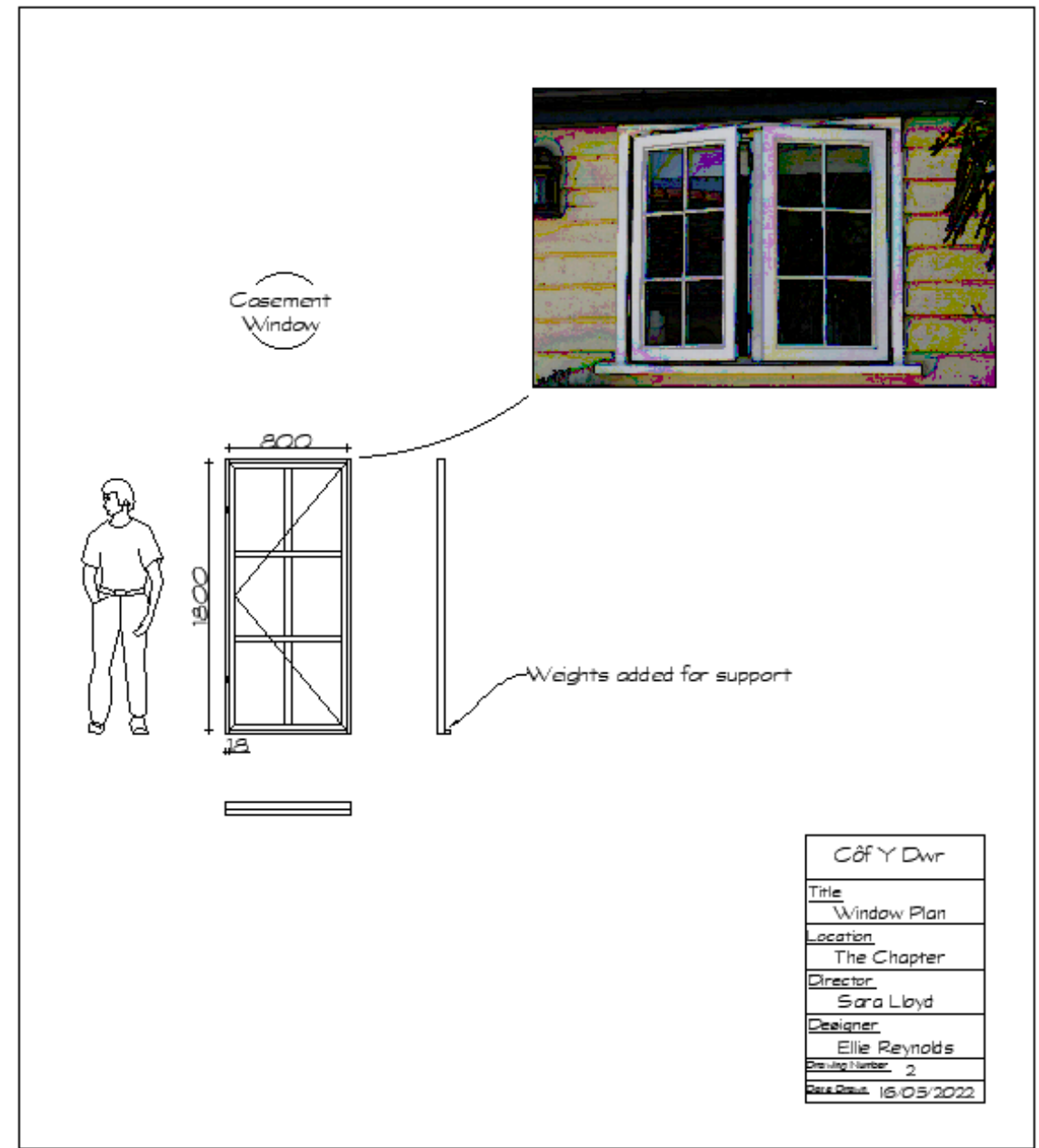


- Stained with dark wood stain to match the furniture better.
- Trestles had to be cut down to allow for actor to reach over coffin.
- Was secure enough to hold the coffin's weight and was the correct width.
- Actors could easily handle the trestles and place on stage safely.
- For the future, I would consider matching the colour with the coffin, however under certain light the difference in colour was not noticeable.

AutoCAD Drawing: Window

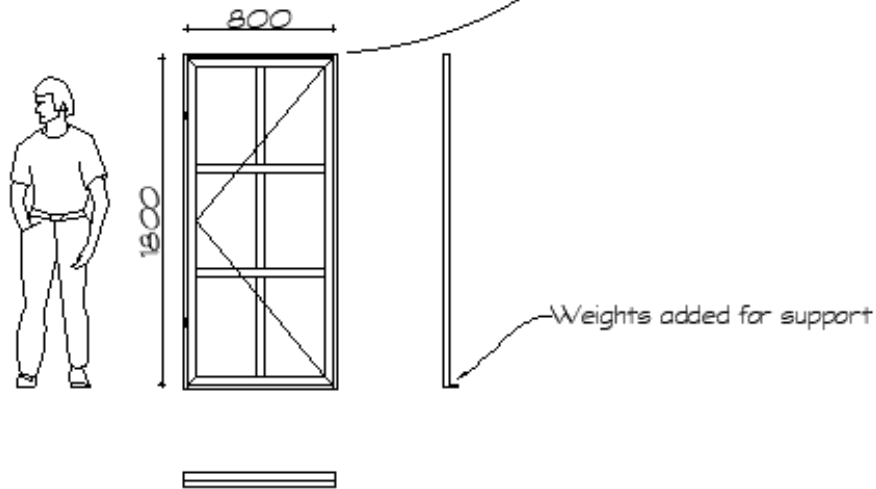


Drawing No. 1



Drawing No. 2

Casement Window



Notes:

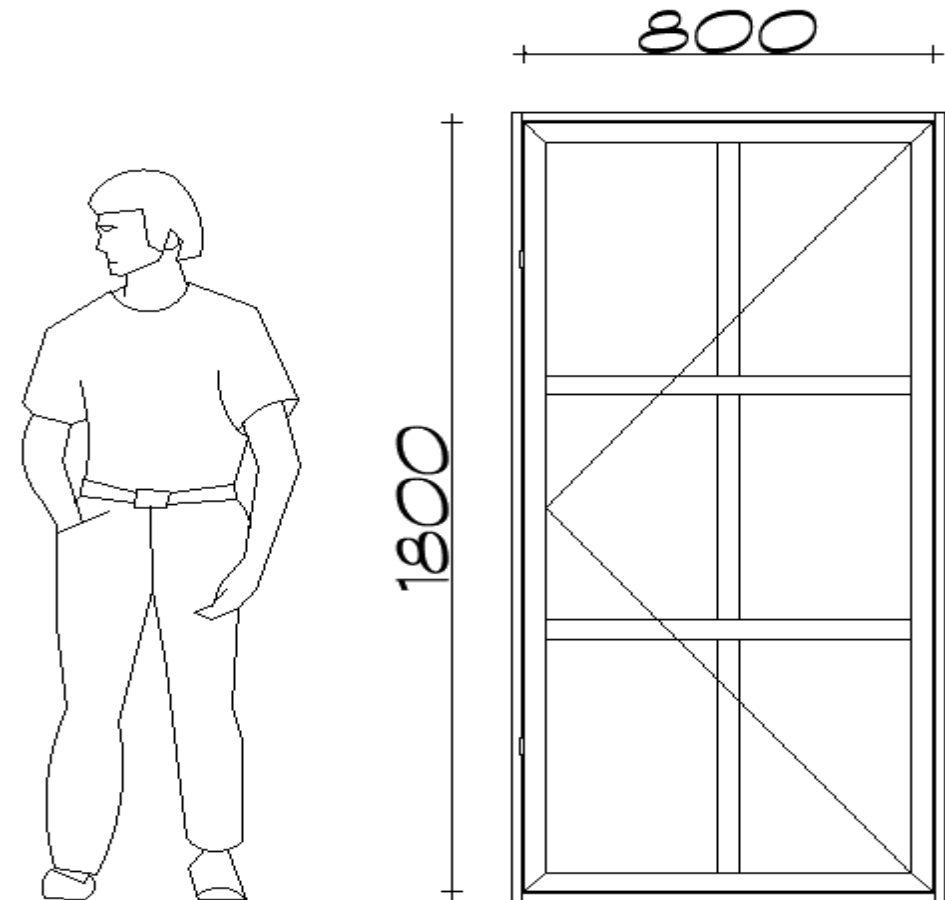
- Window is suspended from beams/trunking.
- 5mm gap around edge of window.

CôFY Dwr
Title
Window Plan
Location
The Chapter
Director
Sara Lloyd
Designer
Ellie Reynolds
Drawing Number
3
Date Drawn
18/05/2022

Final CAD Drawing No.3

Key changes:

- Made the window itself 1800mm x 800mm not the frame.
- Included a 5mm gap around edge of window to allow it to open and close smoothly.







- To secure the window, Nick (Production Manager) added scaffolding and drilled the bottom edge to the treads.
- I added black surge fabric to hide the treads and supporting weights.
- Painted the window an off-white to finish.

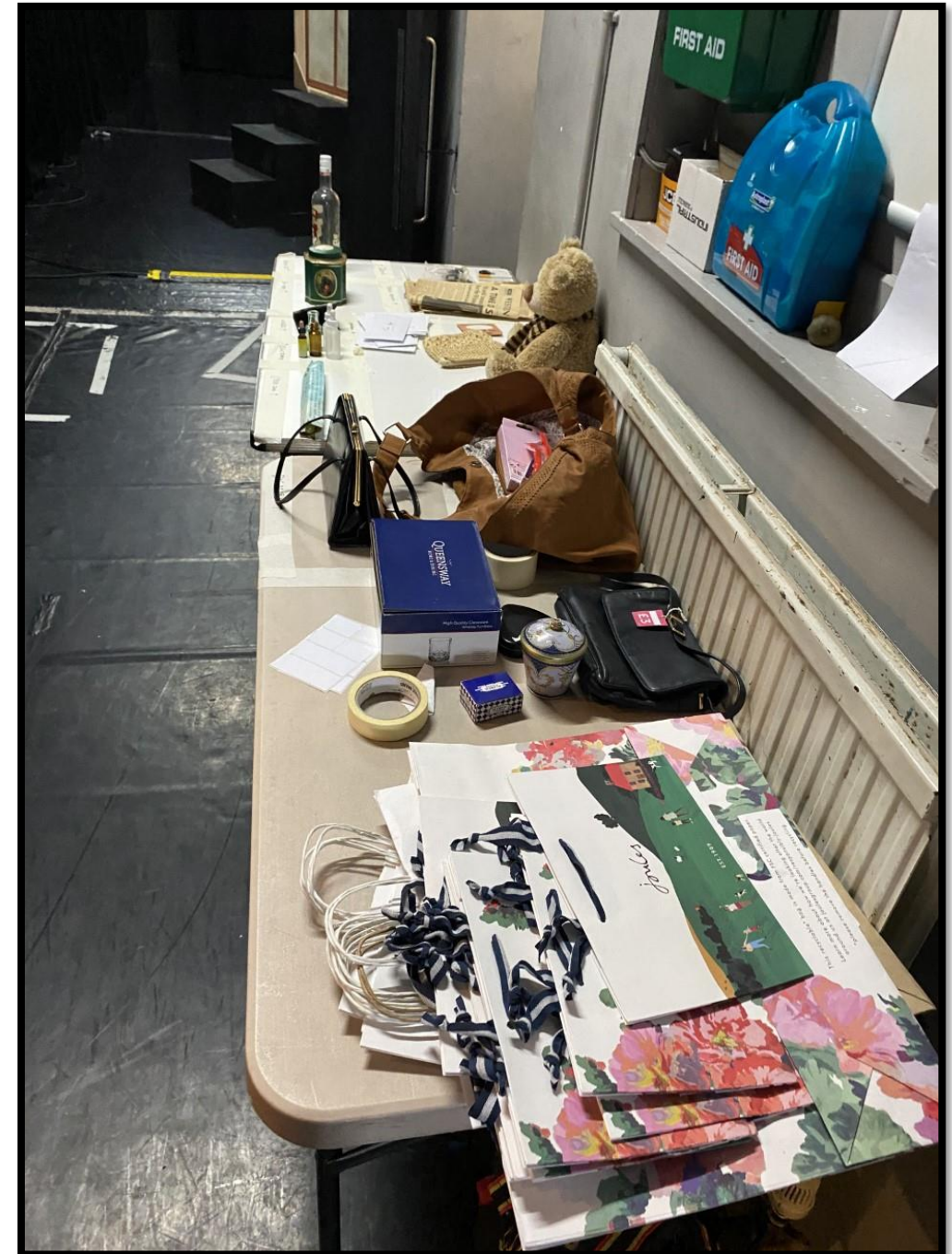
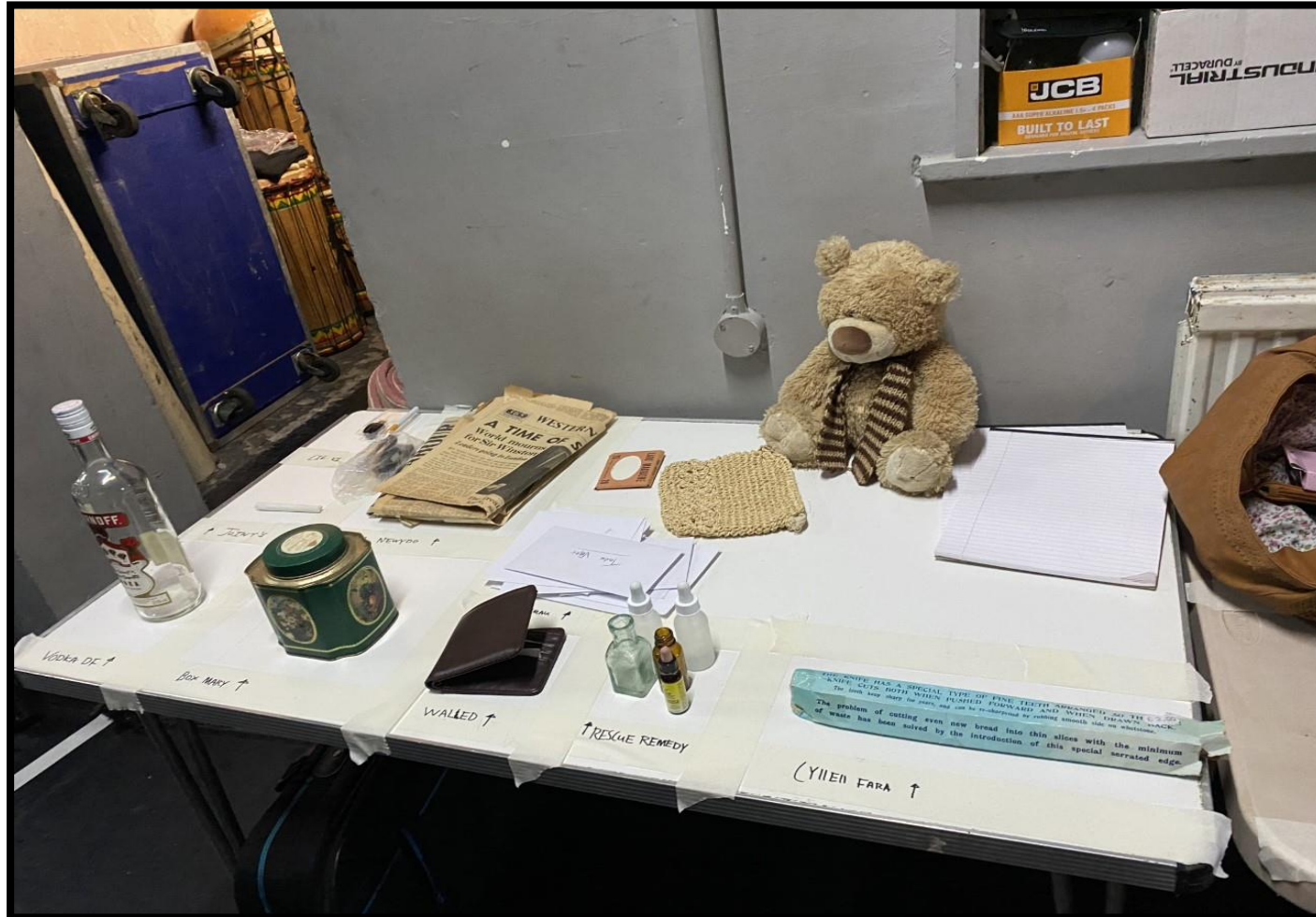
Set Dressing

- When dressing the set I made sure that actors knew where key props were placed.
- Taking images of the dressing during Tech rehearsal allowed me to make sure that it was placed the exact same.



Props Table

- Marking out a space for each prop and labelling clearly.
- No issues arose with how the props table was laid out therefore it was successful and understood by everyone.
- After each rehearsal, props were placed back by actors and myself.



Final Costumes



Mary - Pyjamas



Catherine



Mike



Frank



Vi



Teresa



Frank - Funeral



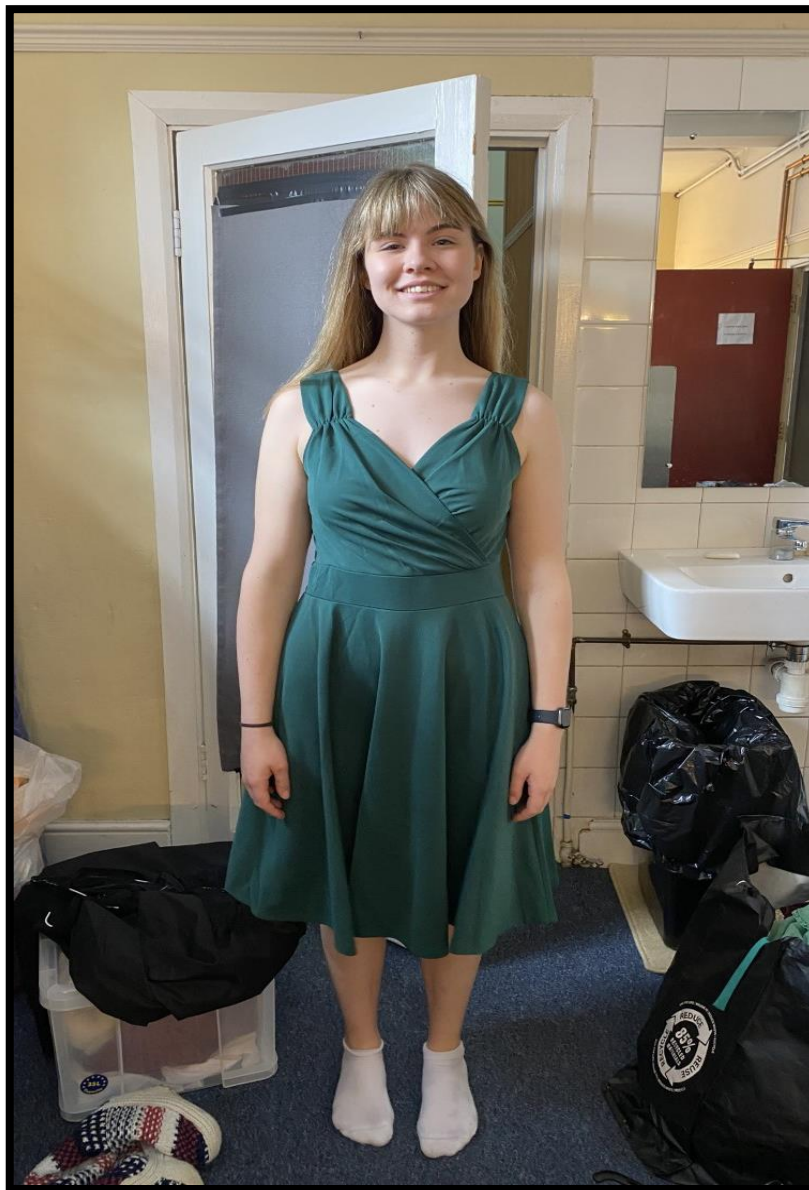
Mary



Catherine - Pyjamas



Mary - Funeral



Mary – Vi Dress



Teresa - Funeral









Evaluation: Memory of Water

What have I learnt?

Working on Memory of Water I have learnt the following:

- How to manage tech week independently.
- Problem solving during a fast-paced environment and whilst under pressure.
- How to work with different characters and personalities.
- How to work alongside actors and proper etiquette.
- Setting a props table for the first time, working closely with the stage manager.
- Collaboration within a design team.
- Value of watching rehearsals

What influenced me?

St Fagons was my key research for my mood board and overall colour palette for the play as it was the most accurate primary resource that was available to me. I also took inspiration from various late 1950s / 60s bedroom magazines and look books.

Was I able to communicate a feeling, mood, or message?

Given the role of the set designer for this play I believe I was able to communicate the following feelings through set dressing: grief, denial, love, curiosity and sentiment.

What are my strengths and weaknesses?

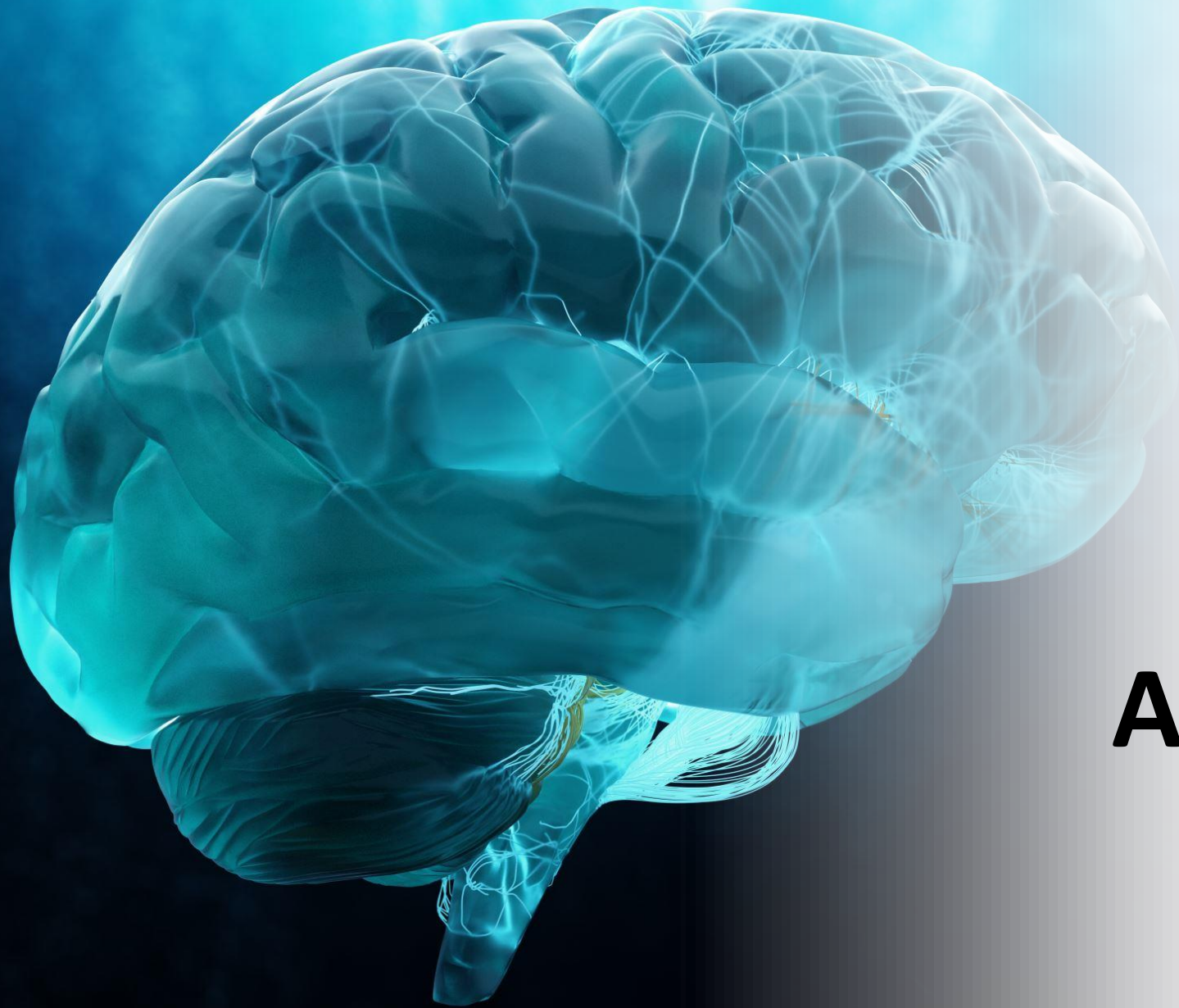
Strengths:

- Having initiative.
- Thinking ahead.
- Working under pressure with multiple commitments.

Weakness:

What problems did I encounter and how did I solve them?

- Actors missing a prop – When watching rehearsals, I realised that a prop (electronic organizer) was missing, knowing this was a key prop I problem solved by contacting sellers on Facebook marketplace to get one ASAP however I was unsuccessful and had to find a similar looking item (a black tin) instead. Although not accurate, I believe it worked well.
- Coffin trestles were too difficult for actors to move – Due to this I had to consider other options that could be wheeled quickly. I worked closely with Nick to solve this by sourcing a trolley from Celtic Prop.
- The bed bought made actors feel uncomfortable due to not being as safe – I learned how to use a ratchet strap to hold it together and worked with Nick and Eilir to add more supports. If I had more time, I would have considered buying a new frame.



A New Brain

Song	Who	Where	When	Props / Costume	Action
Prologue	- Homeless Woman - Gordon - Rhoda - Mr.Bungee	Gordon’s Studio	Present Day	- Piano - Notepad - Pen	Gordon is frustrated as he tries creating a song for Mr. Bungee. He suddenly feels unwell and collapses.
911 Emergency / So Many Songs	- Hospital Staff - Doctor - Rhoda - Richard - Nancy D - The Ministers - Gordon	Hospital	Present Day	- Hospital bed - Medical screen - Ensemble in scrubs	Gordon is rushed into hospital, Rhoda is being questioned by hospital staff.
Heart and Music	- The Ministers - Gordon - Rhoda - Homeless Woman - Mother - Roger - Richard - Doctor - Nancy D	Hospital	Present Day	- Hospital bed - Stethoscope - Sunglasses - Ensemble in scrubs	Gordon is surrounded by his family and friends in the hospital bed.
Mother’s Gonna Make Things Fine	- Mother - Gordon	Hospital	Present Day	Mimi’s sunglasses	Mimi tries to stay positive which in turn is a stage of grief – denial.

Song	Who	Where	When	Props / Costume	Action
Trouble in His Brain	• Mother • Doctor • Rhoda • Gordon	Hospital	Present Day	• Hospital bed • Pager • Stethoscope • Coffee Cup	The Doctor explains Gordons situation to Mimi.
Be Polite to Everybody	• Gordon • Mother • Mr. Bungee	Hospital	Present Day	• N/A	Gordon is frustrated with Mr. Bungee and wants him to leave.
I'd Rather be Sailing	• Roger • Gordon	Hospital – Possible Dream	Present Day	• N/A	Gordon imagines Roger dressed as a sailor. Gordon has fears that Roger will be fine without him.

Song	Who	Where	When	Props / Costume	Action
Gordons Law of Genetics	- Gordon - Richard - Doctor - Nancy D - The Ministers - Homeless Woman - Rhoda	Hospital	Present Day	Bibles	The ensemble sing about Gordon and his Father.
And They're Off	- The Ministers - Gordon - Rhoda - Homeless Woman - Mother - Roger - Richard - Doctor - Nancy D	Hospital	Present Day	- Hospital bed - Stethoscope - Sunglasses - Ensemble in scrubs	Gordon is surrounded by his family and friends in the hospital bed.
Roger Arrives	- Roger - Mother - Rhoda - Gordon	Hospital	Present Day	Hospital bed	Roger arrives and Mother and Rhoda leave them be.

Song	Who	Where	When	Props / Costume	Action
Poor Unsuccessful and Fat	- The Ministers - Richard - Gordon - Mr Bungee	Hospital	Present Day	- Rear Window - Sponge - Bowl	Richard washes Gordon as he sings.
Cuttyhunk	- Nancy D - Gordon - Richard - Doctor - Mother - Roger	Hospital - MRI	Present Day	- MRI - Camera - Rear Window - MRI Image	Gordon is places into the MRI and tries to relax but struggles.
Invitation to Sleep in Your Arms	- Rhoda - Gordon - Roger - Mother	Hospital	Present Day	Cell phone	Roger tries to convince Gordon to let him sleep in the same bed for one night. Rhoda begs Gordon to write a song for Mr.Bungee.

Song	Who	Where	When	Props / Costume	Action
Change	Homeless Woman	Outside Hospital	Present Day	N/A	Homeless Woman asks for change, no the money kind.
Yes	- Gordon - Richard - The Ministers - Nancy D - Doctor - Mr. Bungee	Hospital	Present Day	- Wheelchair - Electric Piano - Directors chair - Camera	Gordon auditions his song for Richard. Bungee performs the finished Yes Song.
In the Middle of the Room (Pt.1)	- Gordon - Mimi - Richard	Hospital	Present day	- Wheelchair - Cell phone	Gordon and his Mother worry that he will die as they speak over the phone. Richard comes to help.
Throw it Out	Mimi	Gordon's studio	Present day	- Coke cans - Books - Boxes	Mimi is gathering Gordon's stuff. She blames his books for damaging his brain.

Song	Who	Where	When	Props / Costume	Action
In the Middle of the Room (Pt.2)	Gordon	Hospital	Present Day	- Wheelchair - Hospital Bed	Gordon is feeling anxious about going in for his operation not knowing if he will live or die.
A Really Lousy Day in the Universe	- Roger - Homeless Woman	Outside Hospital	Present Day	N/A	Roger and the Homeless Lady sing of their sadness. Roger fears as Gordon has not awoken yet.
Brain Dead	- Gordon - Roger	Hospital	Present Day	Bandages	Gordon wrapped in bandages fears he is brain dead. Roger enters stage and they dance together.

Song	Who	Where	When	Props / Costume	Action
Whenever I Dream	- Hospital Staff - Doctor - Rhoda - Richard - Nancy D - The Ministers - Gordon	Hospital	Present Day	- Hospital bed - Medical screen - Ensemble in scrubs	Gordon is rushed into hospital, Rhoda is being questioned by hospital staff.
Eating Myself Up Alive	- Richard - Homeless Woman - Doctor - Ministers - Nandy D - Gordon	Hospital	Present Day	N/A	Richard sings about eating.
The Music Still Plays On	- Mother - Gordon	N/A	Present Day	Piano	The Mother watches Gordon playing on the piano and she sings about

The collage consists of eight photographs arranged around a central image. The central image is a large hall with a stage and pews, surrounded by smaller images of a dressing room, a hallway, a lounge, a storage area, a stage side view, a stage floor, a stage with people, and a stage with a table. Arrows indicate a sequence or relationship between the images.

- Top Left:** A doorway with a sign that reads "THE LOFT Dressing Rooms".
- Top Center:** A hallway with a long white counter and a person standing in the background.
- Top Right:** A lounge area with a blue sofa and a wooden floor.
- Right:** A storage area with blue shelving units and various items.
- Bottom Right:** A stage floor with a black mat and a person walking.
- Bottom Center:** A stage with a black backdrop and a person walking.
- Bottom Left:** A stage with a black backdrop and a person walking.
- Left:** A doorway with a sign that reads "The Loft Dressing Rooms".

When walking around the stage it is important to be aware of possible sight lines, lighting and space.

Whilst visiting both venues we also noted areas where actors and a stage managers prop table can be located.

Props List

Props Item	Song	Script Page	Description/Notes		Character Location	Make	Buy	Source
Piano	Prologue	7 - 11			Apartment			
Notepad	Prologue	7 - 11	Gordan scribbling lyrics inside		Apartment			
Bungee Hand Puppet	Prologue	7 - 11						
Hand Puppets	Prologue	7 - 11	4 Frog Puppets		Apartment			
Stretcher	911 Emergency	11						
Hospital Bed	911 Emergency	11 - 13	Wheeled by Hospital Staff		Hospital			
Medical screens	911 Emergency	13	Hiding Hospital bed		Hospital			
Sunglasses	Heart and Music	14 - 17	Worn at the end by everyone		Hospital			
Dr Pager	Trouble In His Brain	17 - 18	Pager rings and is read by Dr.		Hospital			
Dr Stethoscope	Trouble In His Brain	17 - 18	Dr's significant prop		Hospital			
3 Coffees	Trouble In His Brain	17 - 18	Mimi entering with coffee					
Mimi sunglasses	Mother's Gonna Make Things Fine	18 - 20	Mimis significant prop					
Hospital Bed	I'd Rather Be Sailing	21 - 22	Gordan in bed		Hospital			
2 Compass	I'd Rather Be Sailing	21 - 22						
Clipboard	Family History	22	Nancy clipboard		Hospital			
Pen	Family History	22	Checking things off clipboard		Hospital			
Wheelchair	Family History	22	Used by Gordan		Hospital			
Bibles	Gordo's Law of Genetics	22 - 26	Held by ensemble					
Masks of Dad	And They're Off	27 - 29	Cardboard masks of Gordan					
Hospital Bed	Roger Arrives	30 - 31	Gordan asleep in bed		Hospital			
Dollar Bill	Roger Arrives	30	Roger hands to Homeless Woman		Outside Hospital			
Big Patch	Roger Arrives	30 - 31	On Gordans forehead		Hospital Hallway			
Hospital Bed	Just Go	32 - 33	Roger gets in bed with Gordan					
Hospital Bed	Poor, Unsuccessful and Fat	34 - 36	Gordan in bed		Hospital			
Bowl	Poor, Unsuccessful and Fat	34 - 36	Richard washes Gordan		Hospital			
Sponges	Poor, Unsuccessful and Fat	34 - 36	Sponges for ensemble					
Balloons	Poor, Unsuccessful and Fat	34- 36	Richard stuffed with balloons by ensemble		Hospital			
Stainless Steel Trolley	Poor, Unsuccessful and Fat	34 - 36	With two shelves					
Single Use Plastic Aprons	Poor, Unsuccessful and Fat	34 - 36	Blue					
Clipboard	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40	Nancy's prop		Hospital			
3x LED Swim Ring	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40						
Bucket and Spade	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40						
Suncream	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40						

Arm Bands	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40	Adult				
Fold-out sun tanning tray	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40					
Danielle Steel Book	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40					
Mojito Glass	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40	1 Mojito/Cocktail glass				
Straw	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40					
Umbrella/Cocktail Stirrer	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40					
Small Dumbells	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40					
8x Swim Caps	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40	Flowery design				
7x Beach Towels	Sitting Becalmed in the Lee of Cuttyhunk	36 - 40	2m in length				
Wheelchair	Craniotomy	40 - 41	Gordan in wheelchair		Hospital		
Pen	Craniotomy	40 - 41	To sign Nancy's clipboard		Hospital		
Cell Phone	Invitation to Sleep in my Arms	42	Rhoda's cell phone		Hospital		
Wheelchair	Yes	45 - 48	Richard wheels Gordan on stage		Hospital		
Electric Piano	Yes	45 - 48	Children's electric piano - from children's hospital		Hospital		
Wheelchair	In the Middle of the Room P1	48 - 50	Gordan alone onstage				
Mimi Cell phone	In the Middle of the Room P1	48 - 50	Mimi calls Gordan				
Coke can	Throw It Out	50 - 53	Placed everywhere		Gordan Apartment		
Books	Throw It Out	50 - 53	Books piled high		Gordan Apartment		
Book Pages	Throw It Out	50 - 53	Flying pages/scattered everywhere		Gordan Apartment		
Box	Throw It Out	51 - 53	Mimi placing books in boxes		Gordan Apartment		
Hospital Bed	In the Middle of the Room P2	53 - 54	Gordan lying on bed		Hospital		
Spineboard	In the Middle of the Room P2	54	Gordon moved from bed to spineboard		Hospital		
Hospital Bed	Brain Dead	56	Moved back to bed				
Bandages	Brain Dead	56	Gordan's head wrapped in bandages				
Red Velvet Drapes	Brain Dead		Placed above Door Frame				
Dinner Table and 2 Chairs	Brain Dead		Restaurant style				
Serving Platter	Brain Dead		Carried by ensamble with strange things under lids	Frog heads, brain			
Strap On	Whenever I Dream	59	Worn by Rhoda				
Sex Paddle	Whenever I Dream	59					
Sponges	Eating Myself Up Alive	60 - 62	Richard or Ensamble wiping lipstick of Rhoda				
Balloons	Eating Myself Up Alive	60 - 62	Richard stuffed with balloons				
Needle	Eating Myself Up Alive		Something small but sharp to pop the balloons				

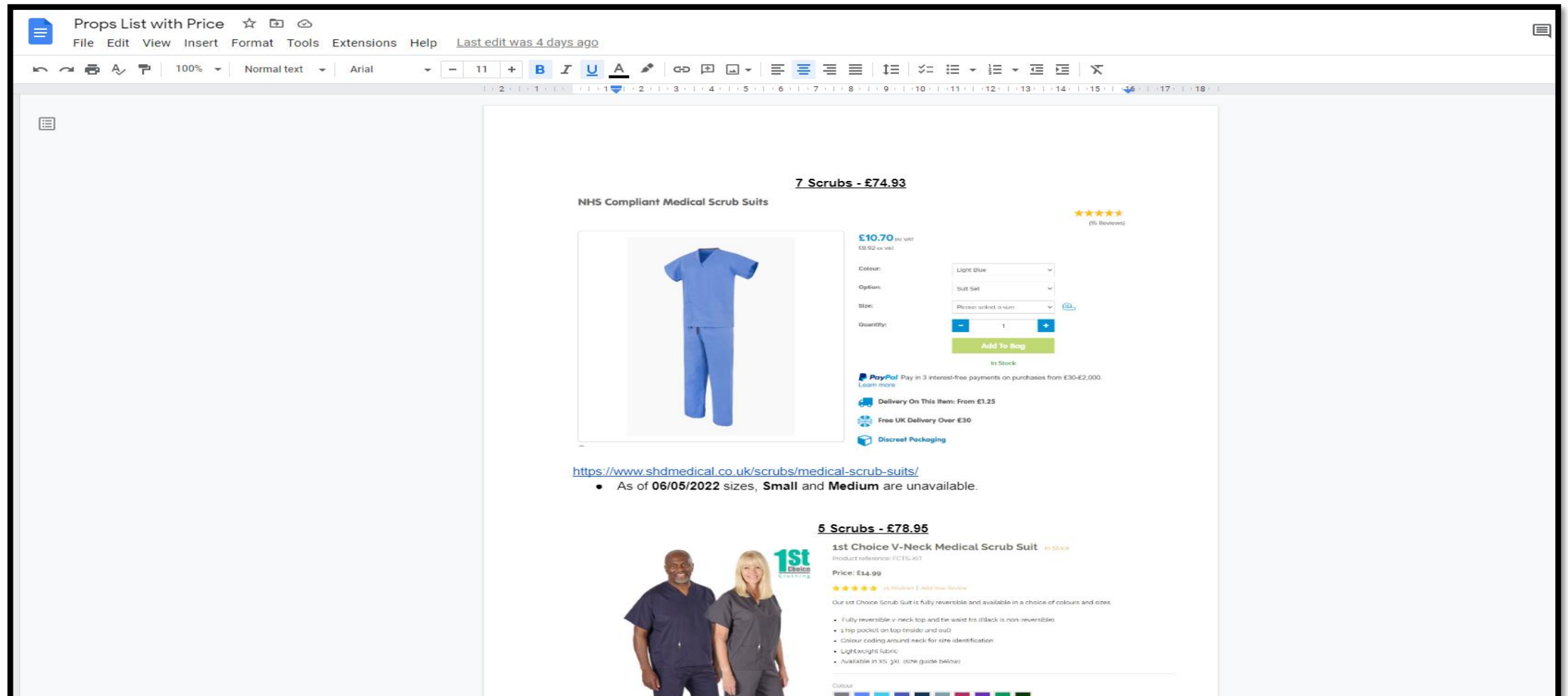
Hospital Bed	Don't Give In	64 - 66	Gordan in coma on bed					
Fabric Organs			Dissecting Bungee					
Dollar Bills	Homeless Lady's Revenge	71	Roger handing Homeless Woman money		Outside Hospital			
Piano	I Feel So Much Spring	74 - 76	Gordan playing piano					
Sunglasses	I Feel So Much Spring	76 - 76	Significant Prop: Mimi					
Bible	I Feel So Much Spring	77 - 76	Significant Prop: The Nuns					
Sponges	I Feel So Much Spring	78 - 76	Significant Prop: Richard					
Frog Puppet	I Feel So Much Spring	80 - 76	Significant Prop: Bungee					

I created a props list to know exactly what props are needed for each song, whether it is being made or sourced and for any additional notes. Creating this props list will allow the design team to keep organised and be on the same page throughout the whole process. As the props list is an on going document I have uploaded it to a shared Google Drive which can be accessed by all relevant crew, due to being a shared system it also allows for the document to be updated in real time. By ensuring this document is updated regularly it can be printed off and placed near the props table as a checklist and reminder during production week.

Initially when I made the props list there were items that I was unsure with, therefore I shared the document with the Director to gather more information and to have an update about props that are being added or removed.

Creating a Props List with Pricing

After reviewing the props list with the Director, I started to research all props and gather information about cost which will later inform my budget estimate. When researching props I decided to include the average price to forecast my budget and set expectations.



The screenshot shows a Google Docs document titled "Props List with Price" with a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Tools, Extensions, Help) and a toolbar. The document content includes two product listings for medical scrubs.

7 Scrubs - £74.93

NHS Compliant Medical Scrub Suits



£10.70 inc VAT
£8.92 ex VAT

Colour: Light Blue
Options: Suit Set
Size: Please select a size
Quantity: 1
Add to Shop
In Stock

PayPal Pay in 3 interest-free payments on purchases from £30-£2,000.
Delivery On This Item: From £1.25
Free UK Delivery Over £30
Discreet Packaging

<https://www.shdmedical.co.uk/scrubs/medical-scrub-suits/>

- As of 06/05/2022 sizes, **Small** and **Medium** are unavailable.

5 Scrubs - £78.95

1st Choice V-Neck Medical Scrub Suit In Stock

Product reference: FC15-KIT

Price: £14.99

★★★★★ (15 Reviews) 1 Add New Review

Our 1st Choice Scrub Suit is fully reversible and available in a choice of colours and sizes.

- Fully reversible v-neck top and tie waist trousers (black is non-reversible)
- 1 hip pocket on top (inside and out)
- Colour coding around neck for size identification
- Lightweight fabric
- Available in 3XL (size guide below)

Colour: 

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OJMP-ukZJg3vnpNGfthQEd8XWeYwM3-7zt63d3cYdtE/edit?usp=sharing>

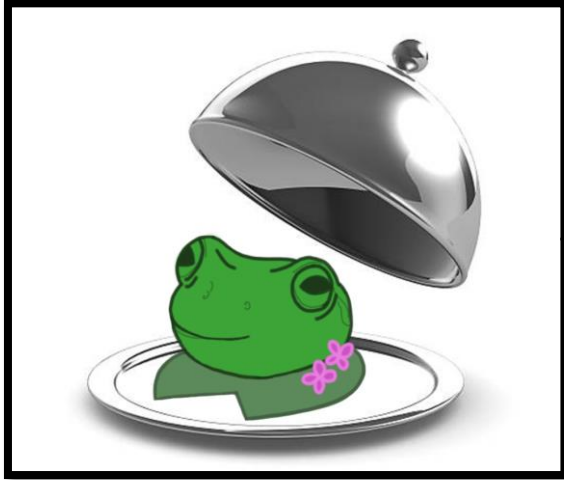
Budget Estimate

A New Brain - Budget Estimate .xlsx ☆									
File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Help									
100% £ 0.00 123 Arial 20 B I A									
A1:C1 A New Brain									
1	A New Brain				Show Venue: The Gate				
2	Show Dates: 26th - 27th May 2022								
3									
4	Department				Totals				
5									
6	Construction	Budget	£100.00						
7		Spent	£47.88						
8		Remaining	£0.00						
9									
10	Props	Budget	£800.00						
11		Spent	£477.73						
12		Remaining	£322.27						
13									
14	Costume	Budget	£350.00						
15		Spent	£178.17						
16		Remaining	£171.83						
17									
18	Lighting/Sound	Budget	£40.00						
19		Spent	£40.00						
20		Remaining	£0.00						
21									
22	Scenic Art	Budget							
23		Spent	£0.00						
24		Remaining	£0.00						
25									
26	Travel	Budget	£112.00						
27		Spent	£112.00						
28		Remaining	£0.00						
29									
30									

A New Brain		Departmental Budget Sheets						
				Department:	Props			
				Budget:	£800.00			

Making Props

“Frog Head on a Serving Platter” – The Director wanted items on platters, therefore I designed this concept which Beth then created.



“Face Mask of Gordons Father” – Considered options of buying from website but when comparing the cost it was cheaper to make ourselves. I photoshopped a picture of actor Dan who plays Gordon, then placed the wooden sticks to support.





- Reused Hollywood flats from previous module to save money.
- Created 3 additional flats for supports / return flats.
- Painted all flats grey with added sand for texture.
- Two window flats with handles on both sides.
- Added a window jamb so that can only be opened one way.

PROLOGUE

(In the REAR WINDOW is a smaller window in a wall with a wall clock. On the ledge of the window are piles of books.)

Lights up on GORDON working at the piano.)

GORDON.

FROGS HAVE SO MUCH SPRING WITHIN THEM.
JUMP, FROG, JUMP,
JUMP SO HIGH YOU SPLIT YOUR TIGHTS.
(To himself.) That bites. That bites. (He scratches out some lyrics on his notepad. Sings as if he's making the lyrics up on the spot.)
FROGS HAVE SO MUCH SPRING WITHIN THEM,
JUMP, FROG, JUMP,
LILY PADS ARE YOUR NEXT STOP — *(Thinks.)*
KERPLOP — *(Thinks.)*
YOU MISSED THE LILY PAD. *(Screams.)*
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING?
WHO'M I FOOLING?
WRITING SONGS FOR FRO-O-OGS.
THOSE NASTY GNATS.
THEY'RE NATURE'S LITTLE ACROBATS
I HATE THEM MORE THAN KITTY CATS.
Ugh. *(Just sings anything. Stops playing, fairly disgusted at this inane song. A clock chime goes off, ringing twice.)* Lunch with Rhoda! To be continued.

(GORDON exits.

A HOMELESS WOMAN enters from right. GORDON crosses her on his way to lunch.)

HOMELESS WOMAN *(To GORDON)*

HEY, MISTER. *(To audience)*
PENNIES OR NICKELS OR DIMES.
WE LIVE IN PERILOUS TIMES.

HOMELESS WOMAN. Could you spare some change?

8 A NEW BRAIN

GORDON. Sorry, not today.

HOMELESS WOMAN. If not today, when?
PENNIES OR NICKELS OR DIMES.

(HOMELESS WOMAN exits. REAR WINDOW: ferns. GORDON arrives at a restaurant table where he greets his best friend RHODA.)

GORDON.

SORRY I'M LATE, RHODA.

RHODA. Ach, you're always late.

GORDON.

I WAS WORKING ON THE "SPRING SONG."
IS HE ANGRY
THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE
THE "SPRING SONG" YET?
I BET.

RHODA.

NO, HE'S ANGRY THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE THE "YES SONG."

GORDON.

I HATE THE "YES SONG."

I HATE THE "SPRING SONG."

I HATE MR. BUNGEE AND THIS JOB.

IT'S SO SAD

WORKING ON MR. BUNGEE'S LILY PAD.

(The WAITRESS had entered earlier and heard the whole conversation.)

WAITRESS. You work for Mr. Bungee? I love that show!

THE SPECIALS TODAY

THOUGH NOT MANY,

ARE ESPECIALLY GOOD.

FIRST THE FISH OF THE DAY:

CALAMARI

WHICH ISN'T A FISH

BUT LIVES IN THE SEA,

AS SET IN THE DISH

IT HAPPENS TO BE

THE FISH OF THE DAY.

Okay.

PLUS THERE'S THE ZITI

WITH A SAUCE THAT'S MEATY.

IT'S FUN —

GORDON and RHODA. *(Amused by nothing.)* Fun.

A NEW BRAIN

9

WAITRESS.

AND THERE'S A LOT

AND THAT'S THE SPECIALS.

(As if she had just auditioned.) Thank you.

GORDON. Well, I'll have the ziti and a diet coke.

RHODA. And I'll have the goat cheese salad — no cheese.

GORDON. Yeah, yeah. Thank you.

RHODA. So what's going on with you anyway?

GORDON.

HE'S TAKING UP THE BRUNT OF MY TIME.

RHODA. It's called a job.

GORDON.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO WRITE MY REAL STUFF.

BUT I FEEL STUFF ...

RHODA.

YOU'RE A MESS!

GORDON.

I CAN'T EXPRESS

WHAT I MEAN TO CONVEY.

SO, OF COURSE, I DIDN'T

WRITE ENOUGH TODAY.

RHODA.

IF YOU DON'T KEEP WRITING

YOU'LL BE SHOWN THE DOOR

YOU KNOW MR. BUNGEE HATES YOU.

GORDON.

I HATE MR. BUNGEE.

RHODA.

I THINK HE HATES YOU MORE.

GORDON.

WHY DOES MR. BUNGEE HATE ME?

RHODA.

FIRST OFF,

YOU'VE GOTTA FINISH A SONG.

YOU SCOFF.

BUT DAMMIT WRITE THE "SPRING SONG."

WRITE THE "YES SONG."

DON'T LET YOU CAREER

GO TO THE DOGS.

GORDON.

AS YOU CAN TELL

I DON'T WRITE WELL

FOR FROGS.

10

A NEW BRAIN

(Enter MR. BUNGEE dressed as a giant frog, which is what he plays on the television show.)

GORDON. Oh, my God, Rhoda. I feel like I'm having hallucinations.

RHODA. What are you talking about?

GORDON. He's not here right now, is he?

MR. BUNGEE.

MR. BUNGEE IS AQUATIC.

AND DESPOTIC.

MR. BUNGEE'S OCEANIC.

AND SATANIC.

MR. BUNGEE'S SAID TO BE TYRANNICAL AT TIMES.

AND MR. BUNGEE ALWAYS RHYMES.

WAITRESS. *(Carrying their order)*

I LOVE MR. BUNGEE.

YES INDEEDEE.

HERE'S YOUR ZITI.

I LOVE MR. BUNGEE WHEN HE

MAKES HIS SCENES.

MR. BUNGEE. Whee!

I LOVE MR. BUN—

DID SOMEONE ORDER SCALOPPINI?

I LOVE MR. BUNGEE.

HERE'S YOUR DIET COKE.

AND HERE'S YOUR GREENS.

(Quietly she exits.)

I LOVE MR. BUNGEE.

I LOVE MR. BUNGEE.

RHODA.

FIRST WRITE YOU SONG, THEN NEXT

YOU'LL WRITE THE EPIC

MR. BUNGEE. Oh, sure.

FIRST, KID'S TV, THEN NEXT

BROADWAY SHOWS.

MR. BUNGEE. Ha!

IT'S A ROCKY ROAD FROM LILY PAD

TO WHERE YOU WANT TO GET TO, DEAR,

BUT RHODA ALWAYS KNOWS.

MR. BUNGEE. Him? A
Broadway show? I don't think so!

(MR. BUNGEE exits.)

GORDON.

INSIDE ME I FEEL WASHED UP AND THROUGH.

A NEW BRAIN

11

RHODA. Oh, come on, Gordon.
GORDON.
WRITING THIS SHIT'S KILLED MY TALENT.
RHODA. That's not true.
GORDON.
AND WHATEVER'S LEFT TO KILL
THEN BUNGEE WILL
GRIND THAT DOWN TO SQUAT.
I USED TO BE —
RHODA.
YOU'RE STILL —
GORDON.
I WAS —
RHODA.
I DON'T AGREE.
GORDON.
I ONCE WAS — BUT I'M NOT!
RHODA. Hey.
GORDON. NOT, I tell you.
RHODA. Hey, sit down.
GORDON. Oh my — (*GORDON is holding his head.*)
SOMETHING IS WRONG.
RHODA. Gordon, are you okay?
GORDON.
SOMETHING IS WRONG.
RHODA. Gordon, you're scaring me.
GORDON. Something is very, very, very wrong.

(*He falls face first into the food.*)

RHODA. Gordon! Gordon!

(*A stretcher is wheeled in by HOSPITAL STAFF. During this, DOC-TORS may do a sternum rub as they call his name, look into his eyes, check his blood pressure, check for stiff neck, an EKG, a CAT scan.*)

HOSPITAL STAFF.
911 EMERGENCY
TAKE HIM DOWN TO NYU.
STROKE'S A POSSIBILITY.
RHODA. (*Trying not to be hysterical*)
I SHOULD TRY TO LOCATE ROGER.
DOCTOR.
LIFT HIM CAREFULLY ON ONE-TWO-THREE.

12

A NEW BRAIN

ALL.
AND UP!
(*They lift him up.*)

RICHARD.
CHECK THE PULSE AND WATCH HIS EYES.
NANCY D.
CALL THE DEPARTMENT OF NEUROLOGY.
RHODA.
I SHOULD TRY TO LOCATE HIS MOTHER.

ALL.
SOMEBODY TRY TO LOCATE HIS MOTHER!

RICHARD.
WHEN WAS HE LAST SEEN EATING?
RHODA. (*Dissembling, crying*)
I DON'T KNOW.
NANCY D.
HYSTERIC'S ARE SELF DEFEATING.
DONTCHA KNOW?
DOCTOR.
PRESENCE OF BLEEDING.
ALL.
WHERE THIS . .
DOCTOR.
WHOLE MESS IS LEADING . . .
ALL.
WE CANNOT SAY FOR SURE YET.
MINISTER.
IS THE IV SECURE YET?
RHODA.
ROGER'S SAILING NEAR MARTHA'S VINEYARD.
NANCY D. Patient's name?
RHODA. Gordon Schwinn.
NANCY D. Are you next of kin?
RHODA. I wish. We work together. He's gay.
NANCY D. Is he HIV?
RHODA. I can't be absolutely sure but I don't think so. No. The answer is no. I think.

(*Singing begins again.*)

NANCY D.
FIRST THE BLOOD TESTS
THEN EKG.

A NEW BRAIN

13

STAFF.
AND THEN:
NANCY D.
GET A CAT SCAN, WATCH HIS EYES.
STAFF.
AND THEN:
NANCY D.
CALL THE DEPARTMENT OF NEUROLOGY.
RHODA.
I SHOULD TRY TO CANCEL MY THERAPY.
STAFF.
AND THEN:
RHODA.
I SHOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH HIS MOTHER.
STAFF.
AND THEN:
RHODA.
I SHOULD TRY TO LOCATE ROGER.

(*As they are working on a body the audience thinks is GORDON, GORDON emerges from behind the closed medical screens.*)

GORDON.
ALL THE SONGS I NEVER WROTE
FIZZLE AND REMAIN.
ALL THE SONGS I DID NOT START.
ALL THE RHYMES I NEVER MADE.
ALL THE STORIES I DELAYED
IN TELLING
ARE WELLING UP
INSIDE MY BRAIN.
I SHOULD EXPLAIN
I HAVE SO MANY SONGS.
I HAVE SO MANY SONGS.
I HAVE SO MANY SONGS.

BE POLITE TO EVERYONE

(*Where GORDON sees and responds to MR. BUNGEE, and his MOTHER thinks GORDON is talking to her.*)

MR. BUNGEE. Let's try to grow up before we die, huh?
BE POLITE TO EVERYBODY.
EVERYBODY EXCEPT ALL YOUR NEAREST AND YOUR DEAREST.
THEY LOVE TOO MUCH AND EARN YOUR SPITE.
SO NEVER BE POLITE.
MOTHER. Okay, you want me to go? I'll go?
GORDON. Oh, great.
MR. BUNGEE.
BE POLITE TO THE MAILMAN.
BE POLITE TO THE BULLDOG DOWN THE STREET
BE POLITE TO THE MAN WHO SELLS SHOES
WHEN HE MEASURES YOUR FEET.
BE POLITE ALWAYS.
GORDON. You know, nobody invited you here.
MOTHER. What?
MR. BUNGEE.
TO ATHLETES IN HALLWAYS.
GORDON. Sorry, Mother — I didn't mean you.
MR. BUNGEE.
ALWAYS BE POLITE.
MOTHER. You're rude sometimes.
MR. BUNGEE.
BE POLITE.
MOTHER. You're rude to me.
MR. BUNGEE.
BE POLITE.
MOTHER. And you're rude to Roger, too.
MR. BUNGEE.
BE POLITE.
MOTHER. And by the way, honey, where is Roger?
GORDON. Where do you think?
BOTH. Sailing.

(*They look at each other and shrug.*)

A NEW BRAIN

21

GORDON. Goyim.
MOTHER. Roger will be here — as soon as he knows. Good-night, Sweetheart. Get some rest.
(*GORDON leans back in his bed and imagines ROGER, dressed like a sailor. ROGER enters and sings:*)

ROGER ARRIVES

(TABLEAU: in the room. GORDON is asleep. RHODA and MOTHER at his side. Outside the hospital: the HOMELESS WOMAN waits. ROGER passes her, looking great.)

HOMELESS WOMAN. (*As ROGER passes*)
HEY MISTER. HEY YOU.
PLEASE CAN YOU SPARE ME SOME CHANGE, SIR?
ROGER. Have a dollar.

(He reaches into his pocket and goes to hand her the bill.)

HOMELESS WOMAN.
I asked for change. Change is what I want.

(She ignores the bill and walks away; he shrugs his head and continues. He stops in the hallway. GORDON wears a big patch on his forehead.)

RHODA. (*Exuberant, but in a whisper*)
ROGER HAS ARRIVED!
MOTHER. Hallelujah!
RHODA.
ROGER HAS ARRIVED!
IN A SUIT
LOOKING FIT.
MOTHER.
ROGER'S ALWAYS DAMNED APPROPRIATE.
RHODA.
GIVE HIM YOUR FEAR,
ROGER IS HERE.

ROGER. *(Softly)*
ROGER HAS ARRIVED.
GORDON. *(Waking)*
WHAT THE FUCK TOOK YOU SO LONG?

ROGER.
NO WIND.
GORDON.
NO WIND. (*Laughing*)
ROGER. Sorry I wasn't here.
GORDON. Hey, it's not like you left *after* you found out. Did you?

ROGER. If I could do that, I'd be a lot more interesting. Rhoda, how bad is it?
RHODA. They still don't know. They have to take another picture.
MOTHER. (*Proud of her medical knowledge*) MRI.
ROGER. Mr. Claustrophobia grows up.

GORDON.
I NEED A NEW BRAIN.
ROGER.
THAT'S NOT A CRIME.
GORDON.
AND I NEED A NEW BODY.
ROGER.
WELL, THAT'LL TAKE TIME.

RHODA and MOTHER. (*Echo*)
HE NEEDS A NEW BRAIN.

RHODA. Listen to Roger.

I NEED A NEW BRA-A-A-A-A-A-AIN
WHO WILL I BE? **MOTHER.** You'll still be you.
AM I INSANE? **ALL.** Yes.
I NEED A NEW BRAIAIAIAIAIAIAIAIN
WILL I BE THE SAME OLD ME?

ROGER. You look good.
MOTHER. He looks pale.
RHODA. He looks better.
ROGER. (*To MOTHER and RHODA*)
GO GET DINNER.
MOTHER.
WE'RE NOT HUNGRY.
ROGER.
ROGER HAS ARRIVED.

(As RHODA and MOTHER kiss both of them goodbye)

MOTHER. (To GORDON and ROGER)
NOW WE'RE HUNGRY. (To RHODA)
AREN'T WE HUNGRY?
RHODA. I'm hungry.

(RHODA and MOTHER leave.)

ROGER. (*To ROGER*)
LEAN BACK.
RELAX.
RESUME ATTACKS.
AND SLEEP.

POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND FAT

(MUSIC for "POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL, AND FAT" begins. MINISTER enters.)

MINISTER.
SCHWINN: IS THAT GERMAN PROTESTANT?
GORDON.
SCHWINN IS GERMAN JEWISH.
MINISTER.
OH WELL, THE LORD IS KIND AND ALL-KNOWING.
GORDON.
THANK YOU FOR COMING.
THANK YOU FOR GOING.

(The MINISTER leaves.)

RICHARD. Time for your sponge bath.
GORDON. Must I?
RICHARD. Honey, I don't want to be here, either. (*Washes*
GORDON as he sings)
POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND FAT.
WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT I WOULD END LIKE THAT?
SURELY IN NO TIME
YOU'LL BE BACK TO NORMAL
IN YOUR EVENING FORMAL.
I'LL BE POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL
POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND FAT.
AND GETTING OLDER.

PLUS, HAVE YOU NOTICED I SWEAT?
I HAVE A LIST OF THINGS I REGRET.
DON'T TELL THIS STORY TO LITTLE CHILDREN.
'CAUSE IT'S GONNA SCARE THEM,
HOW I'M POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL,
POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND FAT.
AND GETTING OLDER.
GETTING GRAYER.
STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE,
'CAUSE IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE
HELL, IT'S JUST MORE OF THE SAME.
GORDON.
WELL....

RICHARD.
HELP ME, I'M A PLAYER.
WHO'LL NEVER MAKE IT.
I WON'T MAKE IT.
I WON'T MAKE IT.
GORDON.
NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO
RICHARD.
ONCE I WAS PRACTIC'LY THIN.
NOW I CAN EAT LIKE I'M RIN TIN TIN.
SOON YOU'LL BE BACK HOME — A SUCCESS IN TRAINING.
I'LL BE HERE COMPLAINING
THAT I'M POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL,
POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND FAT.
AND GETTING OLDER.
GORDON.
I AM NOT SUCCESSFUL

GORDON.
I AM NOT SUCCESSFUL
I AM NOT SO DAMN
SUCCESSFUL.

BUNGEE.
 BET YOUR TUSH YOU'RE UNSUCCESSFUL.
 DON'T MEAN TO MAKE THIS MORE STRESSFUL.
 THAT IT'S ALREADY BECOME.
 BUT YOU'RE POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND DUMB.
 POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND DUMB AND UNTALENTED.

GORDON. Ugh.

BUNGEE.
 POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND DUMB
 AND UNTALENTED.
 POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND DUMB
 AND UNTALENTED.

GORDON.
 POOR, UNSUCCESSFUL AND DUMB
 AND UNTALENTED.

GORDON.
 SHUT UP!

GORDON.
SHUT UP!

SITTING BECALMED IN THE LEE OF CUTTYHUNK		A NEW BRAIN		39
(An MRI is wheeled in. Everyone but NANCY D. helps GORDON onto the sliding piece, then slide him into the MRI.)				
NANCY D. HELLO! HOORAY! GET UP! HOORAY! TODAY IS NOT A GOOD DAY. BECAUSE TODAY IS MRI DAY. MRI DAY'S THE DAY YOU FEEL THEY BURY YOU ALIVE. I JIVE.				
THE SHAPE, THE FEEL. AN AIRTIGHT SEAL. TODAY IS NOT A GOOD DAY.				
GORDON. Help! NANCY D. Now relax and try not to move. RICHARD. It only takes forty-five minutes. DOCTOR. You might not want to open your eyes. MOTHER. Think calm thoughts. ROGER. Think sailing. GORDON. Sailing.				
ROGER, GORDON, DOCTOR, MINISTER, HOMELESS WOMAN, RICHARD, MOTHER, RHODA, NANCY D. SITTING BECALMED				
A NEW BRAIN		37		
IN THE LEE OF CUTTYHUNK WAITING FOR THE WIND TO BLOW. WAILING FOR THE WIND TO CARRY US SOMEWHERE, SOMEHOW. SITTING BECALMED.				
(A camera in the MRI begins capturing GORDON's face. The image is displayed in the rear WINDOW.)				
ALL. IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE OF CUTTYHUNK. HEY! HEY! HEY! HEY! HEY! GORDON. THIS IS YOUR IDEA OF A VACATION. WHAT A GOOD IDEA FOR RECREATION. AT LEAST IT'S SUNNY IN NEWPORT. AT LEAST IT'S SUNNY ON CAPE COD AT LEAST IT'S SUNNY IN NANTUCKET. OH, YEAH, FUCK IT. I HATE THE SUN.				
ALL. AT LEAST IT'S		AT LEAST IT'S		
ALL. AT LEAST IT'S		AT LEAST IT'S		
BUT WE ARE SITTING BECALMED IN THE LEE OF CUTTYHUNK. HOTTER THAN A PREGNANT COW. WAITING FOR THE WIND TO CARRY US SOMEWHERE, SOMEHOW. SITTING BECALMED IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE OF GORDON and RHODA. CUTTYHUNK.				
ALL OTHERS. CUTTYHUNK. CUTTYHUNK.				
WHEW!				
HEY! HEY! HEY! HEY! HEY!				
HEY! HEY! HEY! HEY! HEY!				
38		A NEW BRAIN		
GORDON. LIFE IS SHORT SAILING IS LOOOOOOOOOOONG. ANYONE GOT A NEWSPAPER? ALL. SITTING IN THE LEE OF CUTTYHUNK. GORDON. ANYONE GOT A CROSSWORD PUZZLE? ALL. SITTING IN THE LEE OF CUTTYHUNK. GORDON. ANYONE GOT AN ANYTHING? ALL BUT ROGER. SITTING IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE IN THE —				
ROGER. WOULD IT KILL YOU TO TRY TO ENJOY THIS A LITTLE BIT? THIS IS MY FAVORITE THING IN THE WORLD. WHY ARE YOU SUCH AN ASS? GORDON. CAPTAIN, CAN WE USE GAS? ALL. NO! NO. NO. . . . GORDON. (To ROGER) WHEN YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU'RE RIGHT.				
ALL BUT GORDON. COULDN'T YOU TRY TO ENJOY THIS A LITTLE BIT? THIS IS OUR FAVORITE THING IN THE WORLD!		GORDON. AND YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M SUCH A JERK-OFF. Right.		
ROGER. WAIT, I HEAR IT. RHODA. WAIT, IT'S COMING. ALL. WAIT. I FEEL THE WIND.				
WHOOSH. . . .				
WHOOSH. . . .				
I THINK WE'RE MOVING! I THINK WE'RE MOVING! NOT BECALMED!				
GORDON. COULD THAT BE A METAPHOR? ALL. CUTTYHUNK IS IN OUR PAST. GORDON. GETTING SOMEWHERE AT LAST IS A SIGN OF THINGS IMPROVING. ALL. NOT BECALMED! IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE, IN THE LEE OF RHODA, RICHARD, DOCTOR, NANCY D. CUTTYHUNK.				
NANCY D. We got the picture. RICHARD. That wasn't so bad, was it?				
RHODA, RICHARD, DOCTOR, NANCY D.		ROGER, MOTHER, HOME- LESS WOMAN, MINISTER. HEY! HEY! HEY! HEY!		
IN THE LEE OF CUT CUT CUTTYHUNK.		HEY!		
GORDON, NANCY RICHARD. CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK CUTTYHUNK ALL. HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY!		MOTHER, ROGER. CUTTYHUNK. HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY HEY		
MINISTER, HOME- LESS WOMAN. CUTTYHUNK.				
(The MRI procedure is finished. The DOCTOR and others gather				

around the image.)

CRANIOTOMY

(GORDON is in a wheelchair. The DOCTOR is checking x-rays, then sings.)

DOCTOR. (Looking at the MRI)
SON OF A GUN, I SEE IT.
YOUR BLOOD VESSEL'S PINCHED AND COI-LED.
GORDO, NOW I HAVE
A NAME FOR WHAT YOU HAVE;
AND YOUR DESIGNATION.

Add NANCY D.
ARTERIAL VENOUS MALFORMATION.

GORDON. And that is?
NANCY D. Arterial venous malformation. Just something you
were born with.
VEINS IN THE BRAINS ARE LIKE BALLOONS
FILLED WITH WATER.
SOMETIMES THEY BURST.
IF WORSE COMES TO WORST,
WHICH UNFORTUNATELY YOURS DID.

DOCTOR.
CRANIOTOMY
IS INDICATED.
CRANIOTOMY
THAT IS WHAT YOU NEED.
YOU MUST RELY ON ME,
I'M VERY HIGHLY RATED.
AD CRANIOTOMY
IS HOW I'D PROCEED.
RIGHT?

NANCY D.
RIGHT.

DOCTOR.
RIGHT?

GORDON.
WELL —
NANCY D. We should tell him.

DOCTOR.
IF I'M NOT EXACT
I MAY CRUSH THE MOTOR TRACT

NANCY D.
SO THE BAD NEWS IS:
YOU MAY NEVER RUN OR HIKE
OR RIDE A BIKE.
EVEN WORSE NEWS IS:
YOU MAY SIMPLY DIE.

DOCTOR. Of course, it's entirely your decision.
MINISTER.
IT'S A HIGH-RISK OPERATION.
HE CAN'T GUARANTEE SUCCESS.

DOCTOR. I wish I could.
MINISTER,
BUT YOU REALLY HAVE NO OPTIONS
SO THE ONLY ANSWER, MORE OR LESS,
IS ABSOLUTELY YES.
HE CAN'T GUARANTEE SUCCESS.
DOCTOR. No one can.
MINISTER.
BUT YOU REALLY HAVE NO OPTIONS
SO THE ONLY ANSWER, MORE OR LESS,
IS ABSOLUTELY YES.
ABSOLUTELY YES.
DOCTOR.
AND NOW I HAVE TO GO.
MY KIDS AND I
HAVE TICKETS TO CHICAGO.
WELL? (Waits for GORDON to sign. GORDON signs.)
GOOD.
DOCTOR, NANCY D., MINISTER. (Exiting)
SO CRANIOTOMY TOMORROW.

42

INVITATION TO SLEEP IN MY ARMS

RHODA. Now that we know what the problem is. We're gonna get it fixed. At least we know it's not cancer. Anyway, you'll be home in no time.

GORDON.
TOMORROW,
THEY'LL STRAP ME DOWN ON A BED
AND REMOVE THE TOP OF MY HEAD,
WHICH IS WHY I DON'T THINK
THAT NOW'S THE RIGHT TIME

GORDON.
TO HAVE TOO MUCH HOPE.
I MAY BE A DOPE,
BUT I DON'T THINK SO,
I DON'T THINK SO.
NO, I DON'T THINK SO.

ROGER.
WOULD YOU EVER
CONSIDER
LYING CLOSE TO ME TONIGHT?
FORGET YOUR WRITING.
I'M INVITING YOU TO SLEEP IN MY ARMS.
MAYBE WE'LL LAUGH TOO LOUD
MAYBE WE'LL DANCE AND YOU WILL SING.
MAYBE WE'LL SMILE AT ALL THE PLEASURES
SEX AND EATING OFTEN BRING.
MAYBE WE'LL SAY NO WORDS.
JUST SAYING NOTHING IS SUBLIME.
MAYBE WE'LL READ A BOOK YOU ALWAYS MEANT TO
READ
FOR WHICH YOU HADN'T FOUND THE TIME.

(RHODA's cell phone rings.)

RHODA. Hello? *(She hm-hm's a little.)*
EXCUSE ME,
BUT BUNGEE'S CALLING TO STATE
HOW, THOUGH HE KNOWS YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEDATE,
BUT TOMORROW AT TEN,
HE NEEDS THE "YES SONG."

GORDON. Fuck him.

RHODA.
HE SAID NO MATTER WHAT,
HE'S GOING TO REHEARSE THE "YES SONG."
GORDON. He'll wait.

RHODA.
HE SAID HIS SON, "MR. MUSIC,"
WROTE A VERSE OF THE "YES SONG"
HE'S GOING TO USE
IF YOUR SONG ISN'T FINISHED.

TONIGHT, THEN,
JUST DISREGARD WHAT HE SAID,

A NEW BRAIN

ROGER.
FORGET THE WRITING,
I'M INVITING YOU

TO SLEEP IN MY ARMS.
AND IF YOU SNORE,

I'LL LET YOU SNORE.

MAYBE THERE'S MORE

MAYBE THERE'S MORE.

ROGER.
MAYBE WE'LL SAY
NO WORDS

JUST SAYING
NOTHING
IS SUBLIME
MAYBE WE'LL
READ A BOOK
YOU ALWAYS MEANT
TO READ.

A NEW BRAIN

GORDON.
I'D LOVE TO LOVE,
BUT NEED TO WRITE.
I GET DISTRACTED
SO DAMN EASILY.

THERE ARE OTHER NIGHTS
I'LL HAVE
TO SLEEP IN YOUR ARMS.
I SHOULD'VE DONE
WHAT I MEANT TO DO.
I COULD'VE BEEN
WHAT I MEANT TO BE.
I COULD'VE WRITTEN
THE SCORE TO OUR LIVES —
OR A SYMPHONY.
A SIMPLE SYMPHONY.

RHODA.
I'M JUST AFRAID

THAT YOU'LL LOSE
THIS JOB
'CAUSE BUNGEE'S
BUNGEE
YOU'LL LOSE THIS JOB

YOU NEED THIS JOB.

GORDON. Look, it's my decision, okay.

MOTHER.
NOBODY ASKED MY OPINION, BUT:
WHY DON'T YOU TELL HIM
HIS WAS THE BEST INVITATION? *(To others)*
WHY IS HE MAKING SUCH A SCENE. *(To GORDON)*

44

A NEW BRAIN

MOTHER.
WHILE YOU SIT DISCUSSING WHAT YOU'VE GOTTA DISCUSS,
I'M OFF TO *YOUR* PLACE FOR A DATE
WITH MR. CLEAN,
I LOVE HIM.

LIE WITH THE MAN!
WHADDAYA, STUPID?
GO AND FLY WITH THE MAN —
AT LEAST TONIGHT GO FLY,
WHILE I
DEPART IN HOPE
AND NOT IN SORROW. *(Kissing all of them goodbye)*
GOODBYE, MY LOVES, GOODBYE.
OPERATION TOMORROW.

(She exits with RHODA. GORDON sings to ROGER.)

GORDON.
TONIGHT, THOUGH
MAY BE MY VERY LAST CHANCE
TO WRITE A SOMETHING I COULD BE REMEMBERED BY . . .
IT MAY NOT BE A GREAT SONG.
BUT IT COULD BE MY LAST SONG
AND I HOPE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND
IF I SIMPLY KISS YOUR HAND.
AND SAY GOODNIGHT.

(ROGER slowly kisses GORDON goodnight, then leaves.)

CHANGE <i>(The HOMELESS WOMAN enters in the audience. The MUSIC begins and she's asking for change.)</i> HOMELESS WOMAN. Hey, can you spare some change? How about you? Spare some change? Can you spare some change? Thanks, big spender. PENNIES OR NICKELS OR DIMES. WE LIVE IN PERILOUS TIMES.	46 A NEW BRAIN RICHARD. <i>(Trying to be supportive)</i> Go on. GORDON. NO IS A BAD WORD. RICHARD. You're tellin' me. GORDON. THE PREFERRED WORD IN ANY KIND OF SITUATION IS YES, I CAN. OH, YES, I'D LIKE TO DO THAT. YES, THE WORLD'S INCREASINGLY ABSURD. YES YES YES IS A GOOD WORD YES YES YES IS A VERY SPECIAL WORD. <i>(To RICHARD.)</i> IT WILL BE SUNG, I GUARANTEE IT. YOU'RE GONNA SEE IT ON TV. IT WILL BE SUNG. <i>(On the other side of the stage, BUNGEE is walking in followed by the DOCTOR with a director's chair, nurse NANCY D. as script girl and the MINISTER <u>photographing</u> the whole thing.)</i> GORDON. YES IS A GOOD WORD. NO IS A BAD WORD. THE PREFERRED WORD IN ANY KIND OF SITUATION ... <i>(The director's chair unintentionally hits BUNGEE. He explodes.)</i> BUNGEE. Don't touch me. YES I WILL DO THAT YES I WILL GO THERE YES I WILL LIVE A GOOD AND TRUE LIFE YES I'LL SURVIVE WHATEVER YOU THROW AT ME. YES THE WORLD IS GRAND. WHEN THERE'S A MOMENT, GRAB IT AND SHAKE IT TAKE IT	GORDON, NANCY D., MINISTER, DOCTOR. YES I'LL BE FEARLESS YES I'LL BE HONEST YES I WILL LIVE MY LIFE WITH EMOTION YES I HAVE COURAGE YES AND DEVOTION YES I WILL SURVIVE BUNGEE. YES IS THE WORD THAT OPENS THE DOOR TOO BEING MOST ALIVE. YES THERE'S JOY YES THERE'S LOVE YES THERE'S SING YES I ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO SING. YES YES YES IS A GOOD WORD BUNGEE. YES YES YES IS A VERY SPECIAL WORD. EXCEPT WHEN A STRANGER SAYS GET INTO MY CAR, SAY NO.	BUNGEE. What is this nonsense about virginity? This is a goddamn children's show. I never know what you're writing about, Schwinn. I want a song: Yes, I will do my homework. Yes, I will work in the garden. Yes, I will go with my grandparents ... to Israel. Instead I get this nonsense about someone Who loses their virginity to <i>(disbelievingly)</i> those with Whom they have no "affinity." A-ffin-i-ty? This is a Goddamn children's show. Look, you're sick, you're in the hospital, You got this brain thing. But you know what: I'm gonna get my son to write the song. Where's my son? Where's my son? Where's my son? GORDON, NANCY D., MINISTER, DOCTOR. AH. AH. AH. YES. YES. YES. YES. YES YES YES. YES YES YES GORDON, NANCY D., MINISTER, DOCTOR. YES YES YES IS A VERY SPECIAL WORD. EVERYBODY. NO!
A NEW BRAIN I DON'T ASK YOU TO TREAT ME NICE. I'M NOT ASKING FOR PLEASANT CONVERSATION. I'M NOT ASKING FOR PARADISE. ALL I'M ASKING FOR IS CHANGE. HATE ME BUT DON'T KICK MY SHINS. I'M WHERE YOUR KINDNESS BEGINS. PLEASE, FOLKS, DO NO SPEND TIME WITH ME. I WON'T ASK YOU TO TREAT ME LIKE YOUR MOTHER. I'M NOT ASKING FOR SYMPATHY. ALL I'M ASKING FOR IS CHANGE. CHANGE THE GOVERNMENT, KILL THE MAYOR. IT'S NOT FA-IR HOW LIVES EVAPORATE. CHANGE THE SYSTEM THAT MADE US WHAT WE ARE. I DON'T ASK FOR HUGS. JUST NEED MONEY TO BUY MORE DRUGS. AND IF YOU FOLKS PAY, I'LL GO AWAY. PEOPLE WALK BY ME WITH GLEE. I AM WHAT THEY'LL NEVER BE. I DON'T ASK YOU TO TIP YOUR HAT. I DON'T ASK THAT YOU NOTICE WHAT I'M WEARING. I COULD CARE LESS FOR THINGS LIKE THAT. ALL I'M ASKING FOR IS CHANGE. CHANGE. CHANGE. CHANGE. PENNIES OR NICKELS OR DIMES. WE LIVE IN PERILOUS TIMES. YES <i>(RICHARD wheels GORDON onto stage. GORDON is playing a little electric piano, auditioning his song for RICHARD.)</i> GORDON. And so, boys and girls, before I hop back to my lily pad, I leave you with one last thought: YES IS A GOOD WORD.	45 A NEW BRAIN GORDON. YES IS A GOOD WORD. NO IS A BAD WORD. THE PREFERRED WORD IN ANY KIND OF SITUATION ... <i>(The director's chair unintentionally hits BUNGEE. He explodes.)</i> BUNGEE. Don't touch me. YES I WILL DO THAT YES I WILL GO THERE YES I WILL LIVE A GOOD AND TRUE LIFE YES I'LL SURVIVE WHATEVER YOU THROW AT ME. YES THE WORLD IS GRAND. WHEN THERE'S A MOMENT, GRAB IT AND SHAKE IT TAKE IT A NEW BRAIN IN YOUR HAND. YES I WILL YES I CAN YES I MIGHT YES I WILL PUT UP AND HONEST FIGHT. <i>(BUNGEE seems very happy with the song. In the next verse, the health care professionals all start to sing back-up, like The Supremes, joined by GORDON.)</i>	48 BUNGEE. <i>(Getting angrier)</i> OR WHEN SOMEONE SAYS WOULD YOU LIKE TO LOSE YOUR VIRGINITY? SOMEONE WITH WHOM YOU HAVE NO AFFINITY. SAY NO NO NO NO! <i>(Shouting)</i> NO NO NO NO NO! A NEW BRAIN EVERYBODY. NO NO NO NO! CHORUS. <i>(Underneath)</i> YES IS A GOOD WORD. NO IS A BAD WORD. THE PREFERRED WORD IN ANY KIND OF SITUATION WOULD BE: <i>(Fade out.)</i>	BUNGEE. What is this nonsense about virginity? This is a goddamn children's show. I never know what you're writing about, Schwinn. I want a song: Yes, I will do my homework. Yes, I will work in the garden. Yes, I will go with my grandparents ... to Israel. Instead I get this nonsense about someone Who loses their virginity to <i>(disbelievingly)</i> those with Whom they have no "affinity." A-ffin-i-ty? This is a Goddamn children's show. Look, you're sick, you're in the hospital, You got this brain thing. But you know what: I'm gonna get my son to write the song. Where's my son? Where's my son? Where's my son? GORDON, NANCY D., MINISTER, DOCTOR. AH. AH. AH. YES. YES. YES. YES. YES YES YES. YES YES YES GORDON, NANCY D., MINISTER, DOCTOR. YES YES YES IS A VERY SPECIAL WORD. EVERYBODY. NO! EVERYBODY. NO NO NO NO! CHORUS. <i>(Underneath)</i> YES IS A GOOD WORD. NO IS A BAD WORD. THE PREFERRED WORD IN ANY KIND OF SITUATION WOULD BE: <i>(Fade out.)</i>

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM	
(GORDON is alone onstage in his <u>wheelchair.</u>)	
GORDON. HERE I SIT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM. I DON'T THROW A FIT AND I DON'T START CRYING.	
A NEW BRAIN	49
NURSES FLIT AS THEY FIDDLE IN THE ROOM. IT'S A DAMN CHARADE THAT I CAN'T ABIDE. FROGGY CAME. FROGGY WENT. I RESENT HIS APPEARANCE. SPLICING VEINS. TRICKY SHIT. THAT IS WHAT HE SAID. FACT REMAINS: I COULD SOON BE DEAD. IN THE MIDDLE OF MY GLOOM, IN THE MIDDLE OF MY FRIGHT. IN THE MIDDLE OF MY ROOM, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. (On the other side of the stage, his MOTHER sings.)	
	MOTHER. HERE IS STAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM AND I'M WAITING FOR A CAR AND I'M WAITING FOR A SHOT (Yells.) Nurse please! TO COME ALONG AND KILL ME. PEOPLE ASK WHY I'M STANDING IN THE ROAD I AM SITTING IN THE ROOM AND I SAY, "BECAUSE . . . I'M AFRAID WITH WHAT I GOT I AM FRIGHTENED HE WILL DIE." I'LL DIE. KILL ME PLEASE STRAIGHT AHEAD MAKE ME DEAD GET IT OVER WITH.
	KILL ME PLEASE STRAIGHT AHEAD MAKE ME DEAD GET IT OVER WITH.

50	A NEW BRAIN
(MOTHER calls GORDON from her <u>cellular phone.</u> The phone rings in his hospital room. He picks it up.)	
MOTHER. I just called to tell you everything is going to be alright. GORDON. Ma, you sound foolish. MOTHER. MOTHER WILL PROTECT. MOTHER'S GONNA FIX THINGS: ANYTHING THAT'S WRECKED MOTHER'S GONNA MAKE THEM FINE. GORDON. MOTHER PLEASE, SAY GOODBYE, MA, A HEART TO HEART. WHEN I DIE, YOU CAN'T FALL APART. MOTHER. WHAT A STUPID THING TO SAY! RATHER STAB ME WITH A KNIFE! WHAT AN IGNORANT DISPLAY IN THE MIDDLE OF YOUR LIFE! THE MIDDLE OF YOUR . . . IN THE MIDDLE OF YOUR . . . GORDON. It's not in the middle of my life, mother. I'm dying. MOTHER. I will see you tomorrow. (She disconnects. RICHARD enters.) RICHARD. I AM THE NICE NURSE. IF I CAN HELP YOU PLEASE LET ME HELP YOU. GORDON. RICHARD . . .	

(MOTHER at GORDON's studio, Coke cans are everywhere, books

A NEW BRAIN

51

are piled high. She's putting books in boxes.)

MOTHER.

CLEAN AND POLISH.
MOP AND GLO
HIS STUDIO
TILL ALL IS GLEAMING.
FIRMLY, I'LL DEMOLISH
ANY SORT OF MAYHEM IN THIS PLACE.
AH – AH
O GOD
WHAT A MESS.
BOOKS SCATTERED ALL OVER.
I DON'T WANT TO GUESS
HOW LONG HE'LL LIVE
OR IF HE'LL LIVE.

HE BETTER LIVE.

STUPID BOOKS.
ALL HIS READING . . .
HIS BRAIN'S BLEEDING —
I KNOW WHY.
'CAUSE OF BOOKS.
THE HAVE MADE HIS BRAIN EXPLODE.

DAMN THESE BOOKS.
SO MUCH FLOTSAM.
I COULD PLOTZ, AM
I DISTRESSED? (YOU BETCHA)
WHO'D HAVE GUESSED
BOOKS WOULD MAKE HIS BRAIN EXPLODE?

BOOK CALLED "MOTHER COURAGE"
ALWAYS ABOUT MOTHERS.
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS?
FATHERS AND THE BROTHERS?
THROW IT OUT.

HERE'S "A MOTHER'S KISSES."
ALWAYS IT'S THE MISSUS.
NEVER IT'S THE TATEH.
LITERARY *SCHMATA*.
THROW IT OUT.

MOTHER.

IF I DON'T THROW OUT THE BOOKS,
I WILL THROW MYSELF OUT THE WINDOW.

ASSHOLE.
YESSIR, HE'S AN ASSHOLE.
HOW CAN BE JUST SIT THERE
THINKING HE WILL DIE.

ASSHOLE.
WHERE'S HIS FIGHT AND VIGOR?
THIS THEN IS MY RIGOR-
OUS REPLY.

BOOK BY NORMAN MAILER.
TOUGH GUY.
THROW IT OUT.
EGOTISTIC JEW.
"HOW TO MEET A SAILOR."
GOOD SON.
THROW IT OUT.
WHAT'S A MOM TO DO?

"SEARCH FOR WARREN HARDING."
WHO'S HE?
SHOW HIM OUT.
I JUST KEEP DISCARDING.
YOU'LL SEE —
THROW IT OUT.
AND YOU'LL COME THROUGH.
WHERE'S WHAT YOU DO.
THROW IT OUT.

I TRUST
HE WON'T SEE ME CRYING.
I'LL KEEP ON DENYING
WHAT'S BECOMING CLEAR.
IT'S JUST —
EVEN THOUGH HE'S DYING
HE WILL SEE ME LAUGH AND JOKE AND SNEER.

THROWING OUT IS PETTY
WHICH I MUST ADMIT,
BUT IT'S DEEPLY FELT.

STILL I'M GETTING READY.
TO DEAL WITH THE SHIT
I'VE BEEN LATELY DEALT.

BYE BYE GOES HIS TROLLOPE!
BYE-BYE!
LIFE SURE PACKS A WALLOP
WHICH I WON'T DENY!
BUT WE'LL COME THROUGH.
HERE'S WHAT WE'LL DO:
THROW IT OUT.

LONG LIVE WHAT'S MINE.
SCREW ALL OF GERTRUDE STEIN.
THROW.
THROW.
THROW.
THROW.
THROW IT OUT!

(GORDON is lying on his hospital bed.)

GORDON.

HERE I LIE
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT,
AND I HAVE TO TRY
TO NOT THINK I'M DYING.

NURSES SIGH
AS THEY WELCOME IN THE LIGHT,
AND I ASK THEM WHY
THEY'RE NOT BEING MEAN.

SIX-FIFTEEN,
QUARTER OF;
I SEND LOVE
EVERY WHICH WAY.

EIGHT O'CLOCK,
HALF PAST NINE,
SURGERY'S DELAYED.

54

A NEW BRAIN

GORDON.

I RECLINE.
NOT A BIT DISMAYED.

IN THE MIDDLE OF MY BRAIN,
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SKY,
I WOULD LIKE TO ENTERTAIN,
BUT I'LL MERELY SAY GOODBYE.

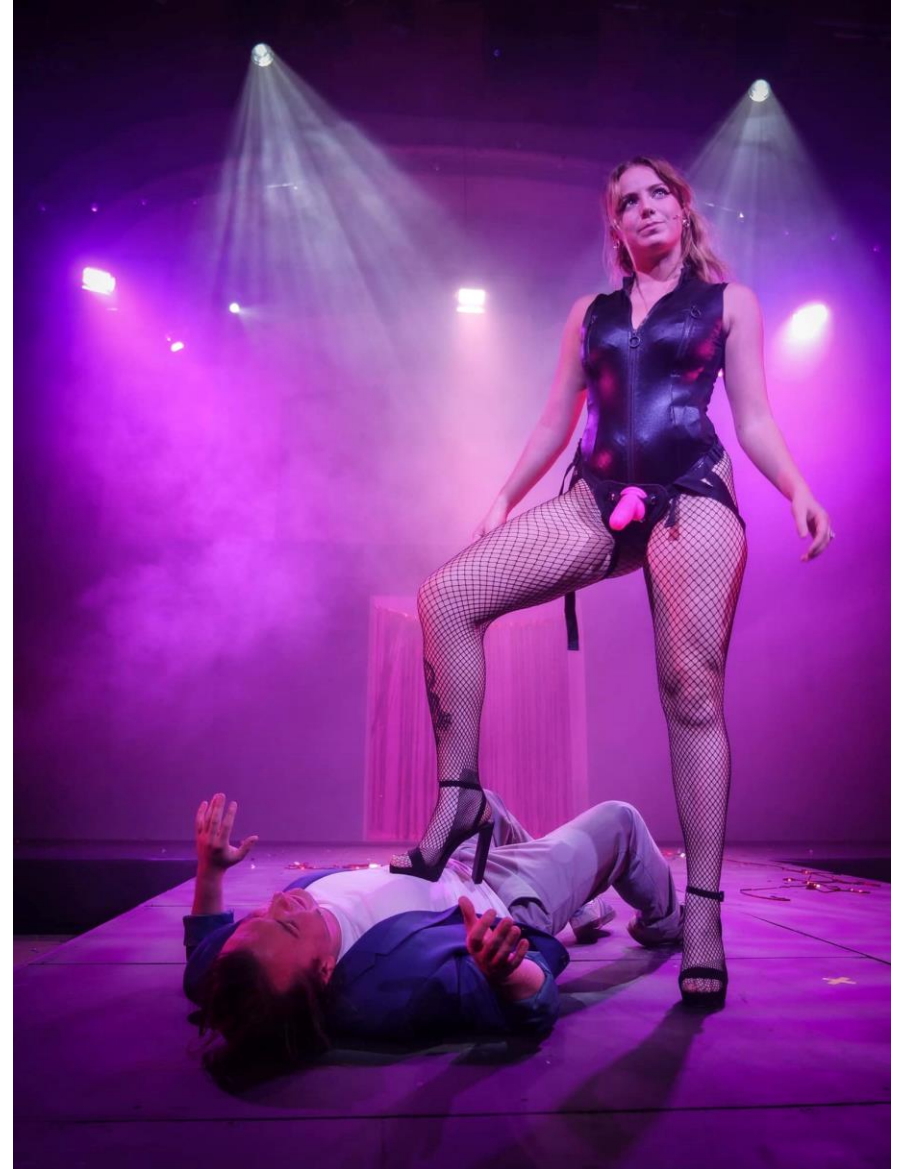
(During the MUSIC ORDERLIES transfer GORDON from the bed to
a gurney and wheel him from the room.)

A REALLY LOUSY DAY IN THE UNIVERSE		BRAIN DEAD		I THOUGHT IF I COULD FINISH A SONG OR FIVE, I'D BE BRAIN DEAD BUT ALIVE.	
(In the rear <u>WINDOW</u> , buildings change to street level. The HOME- LESS WOMAN starts on the stairs in the theatre and speaks to ROGER onstage. She quickly moves onstage.)		(The beginning of the coma dream sequence; in the rear <u>WINDOW</u> is a mockup of GORDON lying in bed with his hair wrapped in bandages. He appears on the stage with his hair wrapped as in the mockup.)		(More tango. GORDON dances ROGER near to the wings. The DANCE changes into a Greek step dance with the entire cast fol- lowing ROGER in a line, hands above their heads, stepping smartly.)	
HOMELESS WOMAN. HEY! MISTER. HEY YOU! WHAT ARE YOU LOOKIN' SO SAD FOR?		GORDON. BRAIN DEAD. THAT'S WHAT I AM, LYING HERE. I'M BRAIN DEAD. WHAT A MESS I GOT US INTO. BRAIN DEAD. EVERYBODY'S SETTING OF ALARMS.		GORDON. LAST SCENE: EV'RYBODY'S DANCING. I TAKE CODEINE. LOVERS START ROMANCING. THERE'S A BRIGHT GREEN THING BETWEEN YOUR TEETH, DEAR. PLEASE DON'T SMILE.	
ROGER. NOTHING, REALLY NOTHING. ABSOLUTELY NOTHING. HOW ABOUT SOME MONEY?		BABY, MAYBE, LIFT MY HEAD.		WAITER — LATER, PLEASE WE'RE FIGHTING.	
HOMELESS WOMAN. I CAN'T REFUSE I NEED NEW SHOES. AND SOME PANTS. I NEED ROMANCE. WHAT ABOUT YOU?		I SEE I JUST PULLED A DOOZIE. DON'T ASK: WHY ME? ROGER, PASS THE UZI. AS THE M.D. LIFTS ME IN HIS CRUISY CHISELED ARMS.		CRASH! BANG! AT THIS SPEED IT'S STIMULATING. CRASH! BANG! I'M OUT HERE HALLUCINATING.	
ROGER. TONIGHT AFTER EIGHT LONG HOURS HE APPEARED. IT WAS WORSE THAN THE DOCTORS HAD FEARED. AND THEN THE DOCTOR SAID:		BRAIN DEAD. STUPID AND THOUGHTLESS IS WHAT I AM. 'CAUSE I'M BRAIN DEAD AND GOD DAMN.			
I HOPED BY NOW HE'D BE AWAKE AT LEAST I THOUGHT HE'D BE AWAKE . . .		(ROGER enters and they dance a tango during the next verse.)		GORDON. CRASH! BANG! ACTUALLY I'M GOING OUT IN STYLE. THAT SAID: PLEASE SOMEONE KILL ME IF I SURVIVE, 'CAUSE I'M BRAIN DEAD AND A	
A NEW BRAIN		A NEW BRAIN		57	
MY MISTAKE. THEN I PRODDED HIM AND POKED HIM. AND HIS MOTHER STARTED CRYING. AND THEN RHODA STARTED YELLING AT THE NURSE. IT WAS A REALLY LOUSY DAY IN THE UNIVERSE.		AND I'M BRAIN DEAD. YOU DESERVE AN EXPLANATION. BRAIN DEAD. SITTING IN THIS RESTAURANT TONIGHT.		(RHODA sits on GORDON's lap like she's a puppet. He's a bad ven- triloquist mouthing the words as RHODA sings along.)	
HOMELESS WOMAN. YOU LOVE HIM. TOO BAD. WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING SURPRISED FOR.		WAITER — LATER. PLEASE WE'RE TALKING. ROGER. I SAID: "YOU HAVE LIMITATIONS, DARLING." GORDON. INSTEAD SCREAM YOUR ACCUSATIONS. DON'T BE WELL BRED LIFE AIN'T ALWAYS HAPPINESS AND LIGHT.			
ROGER. WE HOPED THINGS WOULD TURN OUT BETTER.					
HOMELESS WOMAN. THINGS DON'T GET BETTER. THEY ONLY SEEM TO. THEN THEY DON'T. DON'T BE SURPRISED WHEN LIFE TURNS OUT TO BE A TRASHY OLD CATASTROPHE AND . . . (She sees him sobbing.) HEY, MISTER. (She kind of hugs him.) IT'S ALL RIGHT. LIFE IS A ROTTEN OCCASION.					
56		55			
HOMELESS WOMAN. THEY ALL ARE. THEY ALL ARE.		(They leave the stage with her arm draped around his back.)			









Evaluation: A New Brain

What have I learnt?

Working on A New Brain I have learnt the following:

- How to source props.
- Managing a budget.
- Communicating with a Director.
- Working with pace and integrity to meet the brief and short league time.

Was I able to communicate a feeling, mood, or message?

I believe I was able to successfully deliver the Directors vision with props as I tried my best to source everything desired within the strict budget.

What are my strengths and weaknesses?

Strengths:

- Excel skills.
- Working to budget.
- Staying organised.

Weakness:

I did not keep track of online orders, in particular if they had been delivered or bought. In the future, by keeping track using an excel spreadsheet this will avoid any confusion about missing props or last minute buys.

What problems did I encounter and how did I solve them?

When absent the team for two weeks I was not communicated with about props bought. Due to this it led to confusion and time wasted.

Overall I have recognised the importance of having key defined roles and accountability within projects. Organisation and communication within the team about props and costume is key in order to ensure that everything is at site. Through this module it has made me aware how important it is to have a strengthened plan about all key elements to avoid rushing during production week.

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