

ENGLISH

By Melanie Spencer

Original stage play, now being adapted for as a feature film for production in 2024 with Screen Northants

MIKEY

Scottish. Glaswegian. Fluent.

AGATA

Polish. Little English. Determined to learn.

TOMASZ

Polish. Little English. Getting by.

SHANNON

English. Local. Fluent.

Setting: Corby, an industrial town in rural Northamptonshire.

The year is 2003, one year before Poland and Latvia join the EU.

Thirteen years before the UK will vote to leave.

NOTES FOR PRODUCTION

AGATA and TOMASZ both speak Polish in scenes with English characters. This can be translated via surtitles. Or not. There are benefits to both versions for the audience and test audiences have enjoyed it without.

When the two Polish characters are alone they speak in English with ease and fluency. This is to show how they interact within their mother tongue.

ONE

The street at night. MIKEY and TOMASZ, are steaming drunk and in high spirits. They have just emerged from a fight in which they were triumphant. They celebrate the victory.

Mikey: 'We'll be coming, we'll be coming down the road, when you hear the noise of The Tartan Army Boys, we'll be coming down the road.'

Tomasz: ***[In Polish, shouting]*** We scared them off! Those fucking pussies.

Mikey: Another song! We need another song! Hey....*You* suggest me somethin'.

TOMASZ touches his bleeding eyebrow. It stings.

[Gently] Hey, hey. Does it sting, yer wee scratch, aye?

TOMASZ grins, drunkenly.

Tomasz: ***[In Polish]*** Agata doesn't like me fighting.

Mikey: ***[Not understanding, babying him]*** Is that so?

Tomasz: ***[In Polish, laughing]*** I'm in trouble, mate. Fuck.

Mikey: D'ye need yer mammy tae kiss it better?

MIKEY grabs TOMASZ's face and kisses it. TOMASZ laughs.

MIKEY starts clapping, beginning the next song to the tune of 'She'll be coming round the mountain.'

'If you hate the fuckin' English, clap your hawns!'

[Laughing] Ye gotta fucking *clap*, man, ah got ma paws full aw fuckin' cans!

Tomasz: ***[In Polish]*** Mate, I don't know where the fuck we are. I'm following you.

MIKEY demonstrates clapping.

Mikey: Ye got to put these geez together. Like so. Now you. You dae it.

MIKEY claps, TOMASZ copies him.

That's it. That's it.

MIKEY starts the clapping the rhythm. TOMASZ claps. Jigs a bit.

'If you hate the fucking English, CLAP YOUR HAWNS!'

'If you hate the fucking English, CLAP YOUR HAWNS'

They clap together, breaking into giggles. They don't know what they are laughing at. But it's very funny. They clown.;/ about and face off against invisible dissenters in the dark.

'If you hate the fucking English, hate the fucking English; if you hate the fucking English clap your hawns.'

MIKEY finishes the song by roaring, with all his body, out into the night. The sound echos. He then wraps TOMASZ up in a hug, scruffling his hair and they bounce about with abandon.

Man! It'd be fuckin' nippy oot here the night if ah wisnae steamin'.

He pats TOMASZ on the back and thrusts his drink high.

Tomasz: ***[In Polish]*** Are you going to open that beer or what?

He takes the can of beer off MIKEY.

I'm thirsty.

Mikey: People are so fuckin'...serious. Like.

Tomasz: ***[In Polish]*** Is this beer or is it piss water?

Mikey: Tek a joke.

Tomasz: ***[In Polish]*** Tastes of nothing.

Mikey: Dinnae sing shit about England. *In England.* They dint. like. it. ***[He starts laughing]***
But, ah'm just havin' a laugh, man.

Tomasz: ***[In Polish slowly]*** You know, I don't have a fucking clue what you're saying, right?

Mikey: Pal, I dinnae have the foggiest what you say, ye know that? ***[He laughs harder]***

TOMASZ smiles at this crazy guy, slapping him on the back and laughing. He gives MIKEY the open can.

Tomasz: ***[Raising his can]*** Cheers.

They toast.

Mikey: Cheers.

TOMASZ throws his head back, ploughing through his drink in big glugs.

TOMASZ finishes, slams his can down.

Tomasz: ***[In English, exclaiming]*** Good!

MIKEY, thrilled at this use of a word he can understand.

Mikey: Good! Ahahahahaa! Ye know 'good'

They laugh, clink cans.

Tomasz: **[In English]** Good! / Good! / Good! /

Mikey: Good! / Good, aye. / Good! / Genius. Just genius.

A pause, companionable.

TOMASZ offers his can to clink again with MIKEY.

Tomasz: **[In English, sincerely]** Good. **[‘I like you. Tonight was great’]**

Mikey: **[Sincerely]** Aye. Very good. **[‘I feel the same’]**

TOMASZ pats his body. He has lost something.

Tomasz: **[In Polish]** Fuck.

Mikey: What are you doin'? You got fuckin' crabs doon there, caw baw?

Tomasz: **[In Polish]** You seen my wallet?

TOMASZ starts rummaging in his pocket, finds his wallet.

Mikey: If you've got the wee fellas, ah'm shiftin' away.

TOMASZ has found what he wanted – a picture. He passes it to MIKEY.

Who's this?

Tomasz: **[In Polish]** My daughter. Zosia.

Mikey: This your kid?

Tomasz: **[In Polish, holding up one finger]** One year old.

Mikey: **[Mikey holds up one finger]** You just got the one?

TOMASZ doesn't understand. He ignores the question. He takes the picture, delicately and tucks it into the wallet. He kisses the wallet.

TOMASZ lies down, done in by booze.

You goin' tae sleep mate?

MIKEY peers over.

HEY!

TOMASZ opens one eye.

Nah!!!! You're no! You're a sneak You're eyes are open!

MIKEY nudges him. TOMASZ smiles, shuts his eyes again.

Ye can have a wee rest, pal. *[Sincerely]* Aye, ye can. Nae harm'll come tae ye, ah'll watch over ye.

MIKEY leans back on his hands.

Nay harm will come te ye.

MIKEY looks up at the sky, the dawn beginning to break.

See the moon up there? Made of cheese.

TOMASZ is asleep. MIKEY looks around – even though they are in an urban street, nature surrounds them. The birds. The breeze. The peaceful beginning of the day.

You know anything about the stars, man? There's...patterns.

Ah'm interested in that kinda thing.

MIKEY sees his surroundings with fresh eyes.

It moves him.

The world is fuckin' beautiful, int it?

Why is everywin in bed when they could be out here wi' us jus' ...

Appreciatin'.

Beat.

Aye.

The world is so...fuckin' beautiful.

It really is.

TWO

Lunchbreak. The factory.

Shannon: **[Gesturing]** What they all gawping at?

Mikey: It's official. The Dutch are coming.

Shannon: What?

Mikey: The Dutch. It's some suits from Holland bought it out. There's gin tae be a 'restructure.' New section managers, duty managers an' that. 'Expressions of interest welcome'.

Shannon: Well. Now's your chance.

MIKEY shrugs.

No. None of that. You told me you wanted management.,

Mikey: When?

Shannon: Last year, at Pam's barbecue, you said to me –

Mikey: Weesht.

Shannon: You said to me. It's that or I leave.

Mikey: Ah wouldda left already if there was anywhere tae fuckin' get tae go.

Shannon: Mikey. You know that people really - **[love you]**

Interrupting. Dodging the emotion.

Mikey: **[Quietly]** If they ask me, ah'll dae it.

Shannon: So do it.

Mikey: But. Ah'm no fuckin' about wi' no CVs and 'applications'. They asks me tae write it doon an' bend over. No way, man. Ah've worked here ten year, ah'm no jumpin' through hoops jus' to be told no thank you.

Mikey: You're so grumpy. I write stuffs doon, right, they start asking non-relevant questions that matter diddly squat tae the here and now.

Shannon: Like?

Mikey: Like 'Have you a criminal record?'

He makes a face to her, pointed.

Shannon: You're a different person to what you was then.

Mikey: You're a dreamer.

Shannon: You was a kid back then and now.

Mikey: *'And now?'*

Shannon: Now you're fuckin' ...old, isn't it.

Mikey: *Old.* Who you callin' old?!

Shannon: Wise, then.

Mikey: Wise.

Shannon: *Wise.*

You want to come round at the weekend?

Mikey: What's broken?

Shannon: Nothing.

Mikey: Liar.

Shannon: Go on, I'll cook you something.

Mikey: Cook?

Shannon: Burn. I'll burn you something. Get a takeaway.

Mikey: You tek care of those kids, Shan.

Shannon: Kids miss ya. You come round, they get their fix of Uncle Mikey isn't it. I don't want a kick a ball about with them.

TOMASZ and AGATA enter, MIKEY waves as he sees them approach.

Mikey: Hey! You alright, man? How was the heid the nex' mornin'?

[To SHANNON] This guy's ma new pal.

He's no that chatty.

Shannon: What's his name?

Mikey: What?

Shannon: What's his name?

Mikey: ***[To TOMASZ]*** Who's this?

Tomasz: ***[In Polish, to AGATA]*** This is the guy I was telling you about.

Mikey: ***[To TOMASZ]*** This your sister?

SHANNON shoots MIKEY a look.

Ah'm Mikey.

AGATA looks to TOMASZ.

Tomasz: **[In Polish, to AGATA]** He will help you.

Mikey: You the translator then?

Shannon: She doesn't understand you.

Tomasz: **[In Polish, to AGATA]** I'm going outside for a smoke

Mikey: Hey man. "Good".

TOMASZ gestures a smoke. MIKEY repeats.

Aye man, I'll take a fag. "Good." "Good".

TOMASZ frowns and then remembers.

Tomasz: **[In English]** "Good".

Mikey: **[To Shannon]** See?

Tomasz: 'Good.' 'Good'. **[Meaning: I remember, I understand]**

MIKEY gestures for a cigarette. TOMASZ gives him one.

MIKEY sticks it behind his ear.

Mikey: **[To Shannon]** The universal language.

SHANNON shakes her head – MIKEY can charm the birds out the trees.

TOMEK offers packet to MIKEY, who takes one and sticks it behind his ear. Takes another and sticks it in his mouth with a smile.

I'll pay you back when I can, pal.

Tomasz: **[In English, pointing at Agata]** English.

Mikey: ?

Tomasz: **[In English, pointing at Agata]** English.

TOMASZ makes a chatting gesture with his hand. Points at AGATA.

Exit TOMASZ.

Agata: **[In English]** He say...I **[Points at herself]** want learn English.
You speak to me.

Shannon: Direct.

Mikey: Is that a question or an instruction?
TOMEK leaves to smoke.

Agata: **[In English]** More people I speak, more good I am at speak.

Mikey: Right.

Agata: **[In English]** I want be good....mmmm....job. You understand? You speak to me and...good job.

Mikey: He said all that?

Agata: **[In English]** Errr...Yes.

Mikey: You wan' me to talk to you, sos you get good at English?

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: Not much in it for me, is there?

Shannon: Mikey...

Agata: **[In English]** I don't understand.

Mikey: Look. Ah'll mek ye a deal. Ah'll help you wi' English if *you* 'learn' *me* some of your words.

Shannon: Come on, Mikey.

Mikey: There's nae such thing in life as a free dinner. **[To AGATA]** We got a deal?
MIKEY holds out his hand to AGATA.
AGATA shakes his hand.

Agata: **[In English]** My name is Agata.

Mikey: Mikey. This is Shannon.

Agata: **[In English]** Hello.

Mikey: You understan' 'hello'?

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: Right, an' you understand 'yes'.

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: 'No?'

AGATA hesitates.

I mean you understand the word 'no.'

Agata: **[In English]** Yes. I understand.

Mikey: **[Listing]** Hello. Yes. No.

Tell me that, in your language.

AGATA frowns.

It sounds like ch...ch..chush? Something like 'chush.'

Shannon: Are you having a stroke?

Mikey: **[To SHANNON]** Shut up. **[To AGATA]** In English, 'hello'. But you. How do you say 'hello'?

Agata: **[In Polish]** Hello?

Mikey: Aye! That's it. 'Chesht.'

Shannon: How the hell do you know that?

Mikey: They're sayin' it all the time.

Shannon: Yeah but -

Mikey: So's I listen, don't I? **[To AGATA]** 'Chesht.' We say 'Yes'. You say...

Agata: **[In Polish]** 'Yes'

Mikey: 'Tak.'

Shannon: That's a lot easier.

Mikey: 'Chesht', 'Tak'

Agata: **[In English]** 'Hello', 'Yes'.

Mikey: Next win - 'No'.

Agata: **[In Polish]** 'No.'

Mikey: Ooh.

Shannon: That's hard.

Agata: **[In Polish, slowly]** 'No.'

Mikey: N-yeah.

Agata: **[In Polish, gesturing]** Kind of.

Mikey: 'Chesht'. 'Tak'. 'Nyeah'.

Agata: **[In English]** Yes. **[In Polish]** Very good.

Mikey: Well that's me. We can now go about oor day a wee bit more educated.

MIKEY retrieves a cigarette, about to head outside.

Agata: **[In English]** Wait. English.

Mikey: Seems tae me ye've got the basics, petal. You'll pick it up, no time.

AGATA touches him.

Agata: **[In English, firm]** No. I want...*speak*.

MIKEY looks at AGATA's hand. She takes it away.

Mikey: Tomorrow.

Agata: **[In English]** Tomorrow.

The horn sounds for the end of break. AGATA leaves.

SHANNON follows. Lights change and MIKEY takes to the microphone.

THREE (MIKEY)

The sound of a pub. MIKEY has a pint of Tennent's. It's the start of the night and he hasn't had too much yet. He glows, holds court. He is in his element.

Mikey: Ah'm going tae tell you a wee story, ok? **[Gesturing playfully to someone in the crowd]** Pipe down, you! This is fuckin' important. It's the key tae happiness, right.

Right:

Aw ye need tae know is some stupid cunt trusted me wi' their dog over a fuckin' summer bank holiday, right. A rott-vila. Some peoples dinnae like a rottvila but this dug was, aye, it was a wee saftie. It's name were Roberto.

So, ah wis babysittin' Roberto. Ah wis takin' *good* care o' him. Food, water, walks....chuckin' sticks – *the works*. He wis ma wee companion, me an' this dug we was great pals. 'Cause it was a summer's day, ah decided tae tek it tae this beer gerden fer a bit o' social interaction.

Aye, so fast forward a few hours. Ah've had a skin full. But we've had a great afternoon the dog an' me. So good, aye, that headin' haim **[MIKEY laughs at the memory]** aye, *headin' haim*, right, an' ah realised ah wis lost tae fuck. Ye know how it is how it is roond here, it aw looks the same at night! So ah'm fuckin' stumblin' aboot wi' this dug Roberto, an we're walkin' past this fuckin' guy havin' a slash under a lamp post.

Then....Then it aw gets a wee bit blurry: but *either* ah said somethin' to this guy or he says somethin' to me and we end up sorta pushin' each other. Then we're on the grun wrestlin'. An' Roberto...he's gone crazy barkin' his heed aff. An ah'm like fuck, Roberto! But then somehow ah realises that – by magic - he's tied aw neatly tae the lamp post where the guy had been pissin'.

So Roberto's safe but there's yers truly rollin' aboot a fuckin' cul-de-sac with this guy, throwin' shitey punches an' shoutin' fuckin' this an' that when aw of a sudden he says: 'Hey' and ah'm like, 'What?' an' then we're both like 'Hang on a wee minute here'.

It turns oot, right, ah'm on m'ain fuckin' street an' this guy that ah'm punchin' an' kickin' is ma fuckin' neighbour. Aye! My neighbour but one! We just startid laughin' an that was it. Went haim. Aff tae bed. Next day ah see him, an' we cidnae stop laughin' then either. Became like a runnin' joke, y'know. Ah even endid up goin' tae the guy's fortieth birthday barbecue, as like...a guest of honour, because he'd bin tellin' everyone the tale aboot how he'd tried to kick the shite out of this mad Scottish bastard wi' a dog in the road an' it was his neighbour. An' the Roberto went home safe and soun'.

Beat.

[Serious] An' the moral af the story is....

He laughs...fuck knows what the moral is.

He thinks.

He clocks.

An' the moral af the story is: it's not aw bad, ye know whit ah mean?

FOUR

MIKEY and AGATA are in the factory canteen.

Mikey: Monday.

Agata: **[In English]** Tuesday.

Mikey: Thursday.

Agata: **[In English]** Friday.

Mikey: December.

Agata: **[In English]** Ah...January.

Mikey: What's the time, Mr Wolf?

MIKEY taps his wrist for the time.

Agata: **[In English]** Three o'clock.

[Smiling] Mr Wolf.

Mikey: 'See you later...'

Agata: 'Aligator.'

Mikey: And the rest.

Agata: 'In a while croc-dile.' I am still think is same animal.

Mikey: What do you have for lunch on Sunday?

Agata: **[In English]** Please can I have a pint...of Tennent. And the Sunday roast with beef and gravy.

MIKEY sticks up his middle finger at her.

This one is rude.

Mikey: **[In English]** You must answer all questions on the test.

Agata: It is bad you teach me these words.

Mikey: **[In English]** You must answer *all* the questions on the test.

Agata: **[Middle finger raised]** Fuck off.

Mikey counts one, two, three on his finger and AGATA says:

Shit.

Bollocks.

Arsehole. ***[She doesn't pronounce this correctly]***

Mikey: ***[Enunciating, like a beautiful word]*** Arsehole.

Agata: ***[Copying]*** Arsehole.

Mikey: I have taught you well.

Agata: Mikey. Where do you live?

Mikey: ***[Confused]*** Where do I live?

Agata: New questions I learn. Answer please.

Mikey: I live...here.

Agata: ***[In English]*** I live in a town. Do you live in a house?

Mikey: I live in a flat.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Do you have a brother?

Mikey: Aye.

Agata: ***[In English]*** You have one brother?

Mikey: I have one brother. This is very good.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Is all...correct?

Mikey: Aye, perfect.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Do you have dog?

Mikey: No. But ah want one.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Do you have cat?

Mikey: A cat.

Agata: Do you have *a* cat?

Mikey: No.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Do you have. A. Horse?

Mikey: Where the fuck would ah keep that?!

Agata: ***[In English, laugh]*** A Fish?

Mikey: A fish? Do I have a fuckin' fish? Like a goldfish?

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: No. Ye eat fish, ye dinnae make friends wi' a fish. Ye cannae **[he mimes]** *pet* a fish, ye cannae *walk* **[he mimes walking with a lead]** a fish. Fish dinnae gi' a shit. Fish are borin'. They're just like **[he mimes]**.

Agata: **[In English]** Can you ask me?

Mikey: Agata, do you have a fish?

Agata: **[In English]** No. New questions. New words.

Mikey: Are there **[he gestures]** *mountains* in your country?

Agata: **[In English, gesturing]** Moun-tins.

Mikey: 'Mountains.'

Agata: **[In English]** Yes. There is mount-tins.

Mikey: Are there....lakes?

He draws a water shape. Mimes diving in.

Agata: **[In English]** Swimming pool?

Mikey: No. A lake. **[Draws]** Mountain. **[Draws]** Lake.

Agata: **[In English]** Ah! Yes. How you say?

Mikey: 'Lake'.

Agata: **[In English]** Yes. There is lake. I....and Tomek. We...in our town...there is lake and m-, m-

Mikey: Mountain.

Agata: **[In English]** Can you write for me?

She pushes forward her notebook. MIKEY looks at her directly, encouragingly.

Mikey: Dinnae need tae write it. We keep practicin' you'll remember.

Agata: **[In English]** Ok.

Mikey: Ok. 'Mountain'.

Agata: **[In English]** 'Mountain.'

Mikey: So where you and Tomek are *from*, where you *grew up*, in your town you can there is a lake and a mountain.

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: Sounds nice.

Agata: **[In English]** It is beautiful. Trees...**[She gestures: many]**

Mikey: Why'd you come here then?

AGATA pauses. She thinks of the words:

Agata: **[In English]** You cannot.

Eat.

Trees.

You need work. And money. I have baby.

Mikey: 'Zo-sha.'

Agata: **[In English]** Yes. You remember.

Mikey: Aye, ah remember. It's a cool name.

I have a boy

Agata: **[In English]** A boy?

Mikey: Aye. Fifteen.

Agata: **[In English]** Fifteen.

Mikey: Dinnae see him. Dinnae know him.

Think about him.

Agata: **[In English]** Why?

Mikey: Never tol' no one that.

Agata: -

Mikey: How'd you get so clever?

Agata: -

Mikey: I mean it. You are very clever.

I like clever people. It's good. If you're clever, you can do anythin'.

Agata: **[In English]** You are clever.

Mikey: -

Agata: **[In English]** You teach me, Professor.

Mikey: Professor?! Who taught you that word?

AGATA smiles, shrugs.

No sure ye ken what a Professor is, Petal. But, aye, ok, Professor Mikey tae you.

Agata: **[In English]** I find Tomek now.

Mikey: Aye, ok.

AGATA leaves.

Another lesson soon?

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

FIVE

TOMASZ takes to the microphone.

My brother Maciek remembers things I don't.

He is not a natural public speaker. But he thinks about what he wants to say.

He used to tell this story of Mum queuing for food. The first time he saw a banana. The first time he saw a plastic bag. I don't remember any of it. **[He shrugs]**

Maciek was much older than me, ten years.

I didn't go to school. I helped him with scrap metal.

He pauses...

He taught me how to fish. Tench. Perch.

Pike.

Carp.

Some of the time it was just **[shrugs]** for the hell of it. They didn't die. We threw them back. I remember Maciek telling me that is was still cruel. They'd had hooks in their mouth.

Maciek taught me everything I know.

How to be a man.

The distant sound of voices, music: a party. It grows and grows until it is everything.

SIX

Enter SHANNON enters wearing reindeer ears and not much else. She takes TOMASZ's spot behind the microphone and belts out a joyful karaoke version of an iconic song.

We see MIKEY and AGATA, trying to communicate with one another. They gesture, lean in – but it's difficult to understand, they head away from the sound to the door leading out to the smoking area.

Outside,

Agata: ***[In ENGLISH]*** I can't understand what you say in there! /

Mikey: I couldnae hear a waird you was...

Me neither.

MIKEY offers her a cigarette. She refuses.

Mikey: D'ye know, ah'm deaf in one ear?

AGATA pulls a face. He's pulling her leg.

No. Truth.

Agata: ***[In ENGLISH, disbelieving]*** No...

Mikey: Aye. Kicked in the heid, right in the ear drum.

AGATA looks doubtful...

Ye not noticed me leanin' like that, no?

He demonstrates.

Agata: ***[In ENGLISH]*** No!

He leans closer...

Mikey: Whit was that?

Agata: You lying again?

She shoves him affectionately.

Why you always telling me these jokes!

Mikey: 'Cause I like tae mek ye laugh.

Agata: **[In English, Firmly]** You teach me new words. Not jokes. Not lies.

Mikey: The more ye laugh. The better you get.

And it's no a lie. It burst ma fucking eardrum, man.

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** Who?

Mikey: Who? What you mean who?

Agata: **[In ENGLISH, sarcastic]** Yes, who?!

Mikey: What does it matter who? It was some...

Some someone.

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** How?

MIKEY mimes fighting. AGATA isn't impressed.

Mikey: Can ah give ye a tip?

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** No.

Mikey: It don't matter who ye take on. If they are fuckin'twice the size of ye.

Ye look for a way to tek 'em by surprise.

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** Ok.

Mikey: Ok.

Silence. They smile at each other.

Ah've got you a wee thing.

He passes AGATA a plastic bag.

AGATA opens the bag – it's a brand new top of the range mobile phone.

The one she wanted.

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** You get this for me?

Mikey: It's the one you wanted, aye?

Ye like it?

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** I give you money.

Mikey: Naw. It's a wee...

Agata: Mikey –

The gift is significant, a declaration. And they both know it.

MIKEY tries to style it out.

Mikye: It's a Christmas present.

Agata: -

Mikey: Ah thought...

Agata: -

Mikey: Ye can speak tae yer daughter. Christmas day or.

Agata: **[In Polish]** I can't take.

Mikey: Ye can.

She hands the bag back.

He pushes it back to her.

Mikey: **[Sincerely]** Let me do a nice thing for ye.

Please.

Agata: -

Mikey: Ah dinnae....Ah dinnae want anythin' back.

SHANNON bursts out. She has had few drinks.

Shannon: **[To MIKEY]** You owe me a drink! Fuck it's cold out here. You enjoying the party, Ag? We really *do* Christmas over here, don't we. You gonna get on the mike and give us a sing song?

Agata: Sing?

Shannon: Yeah, you gonna.

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** No.

Shannon: Go on. I heard you humming to the radio. You know the words.

Agata: **[In ENGLISH]** No.

Shannon: Go on, I'll sing with you.

Agata: **[In ENGLISH, laughing, shaking her head]** No, no, no.

Shannon: The words are on the screen, babe.

Mikey: She's shy.

Shannon: Oh yeah.

Well.

You're not.

Mikey: I dinnae sing.

Shannon: Who says?

AGATA sneaks inside.

Mikey: You've made her run away now.

Shannon: So?

Mikey: So, it's no very Christmassy.

Shannon: What were you talking about?

Mikey: Nothing.

Shannon: That's a lie. You're always talking. You must be talking about something.

Mikey: You're drunk, Petal.

Shannon: Look, is she your new best mate, have you replaced me?

Mikey: Stop pretendin' yer jealous.

Shannon: What if I was.

Beat.

Mikey: You are *so* smashed darlin' -

Shannon: Don't matter, if I'm smashed, that's my personal choice, answer the question.

Mikey: Hey. Do you want to see a magic trick?

Shannon: Yeah.

MIKEY picks SHANNON up and whips her around. She screams with delight. As soon as he puts her down, she pretends to be angry.

Shannon: Do you want me to be sick, you lunatic!

Mikey: Yes! It's no Christmas unless there's tears an sick.

Shannon: You promised me a drink -

Mikey: Aye, then ah'll get ye one.

Shannon: But I've changed my mind. I want a song.

Mikey: No.

Shannon: YES. It's my Christmas present.

Mikey: I dinnae dance an ah dinnae sing.

Shannon: I'm not talking no for answer. They've got everything you can imagine. I'm going to get the book.

Mikey: What book?

Shannon: The book with all the songs!

MIKEY escapes, laughing, back inside. SHANNON follows. The music is loud and we watch SHANNON tail MIKEY and him playfully evading her insistence to pick a song. We see TOMASZ, who stands stiff and awkward. AGATA goes over to him. Takes his hand and leads him over to MIKEY. The music dips so we can see the conversation.

Mikey: Where you been, pal?

TOMASZ doesn't understand.

Agata: ***[In ENGLISH]*** He work. Late shift.

Mikey: ***[Playful]*** Late shift on party night? Only suckers do that, pal.

Agata: ***[In Polish]*** He's talking to you.

Mikey: Do you want a drink mate?

MIKEY gestures a drink.

Tomasz: ***[In Polish, to AGATA]*** What's in the bag?

Agata: ***[In Polish]*** Nothing. I'm holding it for someone else.

Shannon: Agata, you pick a song for Mikey to sing. He'll do it if you pick it.

Agata: *[In English]* We go home.

AGATA and TOMASZ leave. MIKEY clocks this, tries not to be distracted.

Shannon: What, I though you lot were meant to be hardcore.

Mikey: You're a bloody pain in the ass, Shannon.

Shannon: It's CHRISTMAS, Mikey. It's what you *do!* ***[To AGATA]*** This is the list of songs. I'll pick for you.

MIKEY takes the book off her.

Mikey: No way. If I'm singin', I'm pickin'.

MIKEY quickly scans down the list. One page, then another.

Can't see nothin' ah like.

Shannon: It's upside down, you numpty! How you meant to read it when it's upside down?!

He gently bops SHANNON on the head with it in a friendly manner, puts it back in her hands.

A beat.

You ain't gonna sing, are you?

Mikey: No.

Shannon: And there ain't nothing I can say is there.

Mikey: No.

MIKEY opens his cigarettes. The packet is empty.

Shannon: Here.

She gives him a cigarette, which she has artfully concealed on her person.

Christmas present. I'm giving up soon.

MIKEY takes it.

SEVEN

Christmas Eve. TOMASZ covers AGATA's eyes.

Agata: Tell me what you're doing!

Tomasz: It's a surprise.

Agata: I don't like surprises!

Tomasz: Everyone likes surprises.

AGATA removes TOMASZ's hands.

I have something for you.

TOMASZ hands her a catalogue.

Agata: Ok...

Tomasz: I thought you could pick out a ring.

Agata: -

Tomasz: We can't get married if you don't have a ring.

AGATA opens the catalogue.

Pick the one with the biggest diamond.

AGATA shoots him a look.

What? Come on, why don't you play? You know this game.

Agata: I don't.

Tomasz: You do. It's your game.

AGATA realises.

Agata: Is that what you're doing?

Beat.

Tomasz: The rules are you can have anything you want, right?

Agata: I was a kid.

Tomasz: Right?

Agata: Anything you want.

TOMASZ opens through the catalogue.

Tomasz: A television.

Agata: Yeah.

Tomasz: One that works.
International sports package.
Movies.
I want it...**[Spreads his arms]** on the wall.

Agata: Which one?
TOMASZ points.
Ok.

Tomasz: How do I know I got it?

Agata: You wished it, we got it.
She clicks her fingers.
TOMASZ turns the page.

Tomasz: No stop wait. Take it back. This one is bigger.

Agata: Come on.

Tomasz: I take it back. You can do that. New rules.

Agata: Where would we put it?

Tomasz: Wherever we want!

Agata: It wouldn't even fit in this room!

Tomasz: Well won't be in this shitty place! We'll have a house. **[Claps his hands]**

Agata: Sorry /

Tomasz: Your own game and /

Agata: It's just they don't have houses in here. /

Tomasz: / you're not playing it right. / They do! Give it to me.
TOMEK takes the catalogue flicks to a page he had already marked.

Agata: That's a doll's house! Come on. How's the television meant to fit in there?

Tomasz: Imagine it big.

Agata: It's only got two bedrooms? Come on. I thought we were dreaming.

Tomasz: Ok, ok. How many bedrooms you want?

Agata: Six.

Tomasz: Six. Ok. **[Clicks his fingers]**

Agata: And a garden. **[Clicks her fingers]**

Tomasz: I want a pond. With a little bridge. **[Clicks his fingers]**

Agata: We need a car.

Tomasz: Black. With a good stereo. **[Clicks his fingers]**

Agata: No, Pink.

Tomasz: A pink car?

Agata: Yes.

Tomasz: There's no fucking way we're having a pink car, Agata –

Agata: It's my car. You can have your own car. **[Flicking through]** Do they have cats in here?

Tomasz: We're getting a dog.

Agata: I want a cat!

Tomasz: The dog will eat the cat.

Agata: Give this to me.

AGATA flicks through.

Tomasz: What are you looking for? Trainers?

Agata: No. I want this...Laptop. That looks like this.

Tomasz: That is...It's very expensive

Agata: Doesn't matter. We've got a six bed house with two cars, a garden a cat and a dog and a fucking pond. We can afford it.

Tomasz: Shit, you're right. I'll get one as well.

Agata: Shall we get the doll's house for Zosia?

Tomasz: Yes. Any toys she wants she can have. Every day will be like Christmas Eve.

Beat.

Agata: Shall we call her?

Tomasz: What?

Agata: Zosia. We will call my mother and Danuta. They will be at home from church now.

TOMASZ gets up to make the call.

Wait. Wait a minute. Let's call her on this.

AGATA passes TOMASZ the plastic bag MIKEY gave her.

TOMASZ opens it, pulling out the mobile phone.

Tomasz: You said we weren't spending money.

Agata: I was given it.

Tomasz: By who.

Agata: Mikey.

Tomasz: What?

Agata: It's a gift. For both of us.

Beat.

Tomasz: Why did he give you this?

Agata: Because we are friends.

Tomasz: You don't buy your friends –

Agata: He didn't buy it. It was given to him by a friend.

TOMASZ turns it over in his hands.

Tomasz: So why did he give it to you?

Agata: Because I told him I missed my daughter

Tomasz: Are you stupid? That's not how men work.

Agata: She thinks Danuta is her mother now, do you know that?

Tomasz: She's a baby?

Agata: So?

Tomasz: So she will forget.

Agata: But I will always remember.

Beat.

Tomasz: You want to accept charity?

Agata: It wasn't charity it was -

Tomasz: Then what? You think I can't provide for my family?

Beat.

You've got two choices. Either you give this back to him.

Or I speak to him.

Agata: You speak to him, you'll need me there to translate.

TOMASZ slams the catalogue shut with violence.

You know, there's an exam. For a forklift operator. You sit that exam, you can get two pounds more per hour. To do that you need to speak English.

TOMASZ retrieves his cigarettes.

I'm permanent now, I'm the one with the contract –

Tomasz: You think you're better than me, that it?

You're the one who wanted to come here. So **[clicks fingers]** I brought us.

Agata: I don't want to be agency worker. No security.

I want to make something of myself.

Tomasz: You think I'm here for fun?

TOMASZ exits.

EIGHT (SHANNON)

From the microphone, SHANNON speaks.

My mum has this friend, Carmen, posh name, and when I was growing up she had....I can't remember, maybe three? four kids? Something like that. Felt like more. Thing I remember about Carmen, she had a different boyfriend every single week. Like, she was such a mug, because time and again, they always would take advantage. If you looked in the dictionary under the definition of 'desperate' I guess Carmen was it, 'cause she *never* learned.

And people, my mum and whoever else was about, Carmen would come round crying and they'd all get a bit boozy. Now men are - can be - dicks, but Carmen...Carmen really *picked* 'em. And so people'd be like 'Carmen, you got to be stronger', 'Carmen' **[laughing]** 'girl, you need to swear off dick, it ain't that good anyway' that kind of thing. And then Carmen'd say 'But I'm so lonely.'

And okay, I'm a little bit older now and I...you know, poor Carmen basically. I sometimes get so drunk, like *really* drunk - on my own even - because I am at the *edge*, the very *limits* of coping. And I only got two, you know. And they're actually, they're good. They're pretty sweet. I don't hate their dads. One of them is mostly shit but the other is ok. He sort of goes through phases.

But you do...You do get lonely. So you end up falling into bed with someone sometimes 'cause it's convenient. Or it feels just...No big romance, no big drama. Maybe you fall into bed with the same person. Not regular, just every now and then. Just because.

[Shrugging] Because.

A buzzer, loud and obnoxious, cuts her off. SHANNON steps away from the microphone and returns to work.

NINE

TOMASZ approaches MIKEY. AGATA follows him. MIKEY can sense the danger.

Mikey: Everything...ok?

TOMASZ hands over the plastic bag, the same one MIKEY gave AGATA the phone in.

MIKEY looks at AGATA. Opens the bag.

There's a wedge of money inside.

What's this fe?

Tomasz: **[In Polish]** You take this. Or you take the phone back.

Mikey: Agata.

Agata: **[In English]** For the telephone.

Mikey: **[To AGATA, firm]** I told ye it was a gift.

Tomasz: **[In Polish]** She has someone to take care of her.

Mikey: **[Still to AGATA]** It was...a gift. If ye din want it. Sell it.

Tomasz: **[In Polish, calm but direct]** Hey. I'm speaking to you.

Mikey: Is there a problem?

Agata: **TOMASZ hands the money back to him.**
[In English] Please take the money. It is right thing.

MIKEY raises his hands to show, he's not going to take it.

Tomasz: [In Polish] Tell him to take it.

Mikey: [To TOMASZ] Is this how you treat your friends?

Tomasz: [In Polish] What's he saying?

Agata: [In English] Take the money, Mikey.

Or here, I give you back the phone.

Mikey: You know this is an insult to me.

She hands over the phone.

MIKEY takes the phone and puts it on the floor, stamps on it.

Problem solved.

[To AGATA] Tell him I've got the message loud and clear.

He holds the money back out to TOMASZ.

Agata: [To TOMASZ, in Polish] Are you happy?

AGATA exits. She collides with SHANNON, who enters with a few pieces of paper.

TOMASZ slowly takes the money. He and MIKEY don't break eye contact for a moment.

TEN (split scene, moments later)

TOMASZ finds AGATA. AGATA turns to face him.

TOMASZ hands over the money to her.

Tomasz: He needed to understand.

Agata: What gives you the right to do that?

Tomasz: I don't know what you are talking about.

Agata: Yes, you do.

What you just did was humiliate *me* because you felt weak.

Tomasz: You think I'm weak?

Agata: I think you're terrified.

TOMASZ laughs.

We come all this way and Maciek is still there in your head, telling you how to be a man.

Tomasz: You should be grateful.

Agata: What? Are you mad? Do you think is what I want for me? For my daughter?

To live with an angry man, a frightened man.

Tomasz: I'm not angry at you I'm angry at –

Agata: A man who doesn't trust me!

I'm not a child, Tomek! I won't be treated like one any more. Do you hear me?

Tomasz: You should be grateful that you have someone who loves you.

Agata: Love? I don't want this love.

Tomasz: Then what do you want?

Agata: I want you to *try*.

ELEVEN (split scene, back to MIKEY and SHANNON)

Shannon: Whose phone is that?

Mikey: Agata's.

Shannon: Ok.

SHANNON goes to pick it up.

Mikey: Leave it.

Shannon: If she don't want it....Waste otherwise.

It's a good one.

Mikey: Ah gave it tae her.

Shannon: Why?

Mikey: Fuck knows.

SHANNON knows.

MIKEY gets out his cigarettes.

Ye want?

Shannon: No, I got a patch on.

Mikey: *[Affectionate]* Smug bitch.

SHANNON laughs.

You gin tae dae it this time?

Shannon: I'm going to try. It's just a waste of my money, innit. I keep thinking I could put the cash in a jar and then...I don't know. Something. Or save it.

Mikey: Good luck.

Shannon: You know me, though. I always say these things and then...But I'm going to try.

I want to talk to you about something.

She passes him over the paper.

MIKEY looks at it, passes it back.

Shannon: It's the application form. I got it printed for you.

Mikey: Aye.

Shannon: So I got it printed for you.

Mikey: Is this a fucking...Dutch thing. Or is this the world now?

World's gone mad.

Shannon: It won't take long.

Mikey: That's no the point.

Shannon: Mikey. /

Mikey: Just fuckin' live in real life man. It's a factory floor, it's no fuckin' NASA.

Shannon: I can help you.

Mikey: No. I'm nae playin' these games. These fucking Holland...*Dutch*, whatever, fuckers right. They're gain swan in here wi' their suits an' their degrees and they're fuckin' German and Jap'nese cars, right. Ah've got a criminal record, darlin', doesn't matter

what ye do in life tae put it right. Everythin' ah've done, the man ah've tried tae be, they're gin tae *erase* it. Because in theys eyes, people like them, once shit, always shit.

Shannon: I care about you, Mikey. A lot.

I think you know that.

You *want* this promotion.

Mikey: Aye, an ah deserves it tae but its not gonna happen. Ah wis fucked the minute this place was sold.

Beat. AGATA enters.

I thought I could do it for you.

You don't need to lie to me.

Mikey: Lie about what?

Shannon: You can't read.

Mikey: -

MIKEY looks up and sees AGATA.

Mikey: ***[Coldly with menace, to SHANNON]*** Ah can read you.

Shannon: You can't lie to me, Mikey. Whether you like it or not, I know every part of you –

Mikey: You do talk some crap.

Shannon: Good and bad. And I'm still –

Mikey: Darlin', get it through yer skull. Ah'm no interested.

Ah feel sorry fe ye.

Shannon: Waste your life, then. If you're too fucking proud.

MIKEY exits past AGATA.

Did you come back for your phone?

Agata: ***[In English]*** It's not mine.

SHANNON laughs, ruefully.

Shannon: Mikey got it for you, didn't he? And your man didn't like it.

Agata: -

Shannon: You know you're pretty, don't you?

Agata: **[In English]** I don't understand.

Shannon: Fine, pretend you don't understand. But I think you knew what you were doing.

Agata: **[In English]** What you think, what you say. This is not me.

Shannon: Right ok.

Looking up at AGATA directly.

Fine.

It's none of my business anyway.

Agata: **[In English]** Then you apologise?

SHANNON gestures to the phone.

Shannon: If you don't want this thing, then I'm going to take into town get it repaired.

Agata: **[In English]** Can I see that paper?

Shannon: Why?

Agata: **[In English]** It is application form, no?

Shannon: It's for duty manager shifts.

Agata: **[In English]** I know.

Shannon: So, you got management experience?

Agata: **[In English]** Maybe I got something different that make me useful.

SHANNON holds out the crumpled application form.

AGATA goes to take it but SHANNON pulls it back.

AGATA gently takes the form.

TWELVE

TOMASZ has the catalogue open. AGATA enters.

Agata: What are you doing?

Tomasz: I'm trying.

Agata: -

Tomasz: I'm looking at the pictures.

Agata: Then I am looking at the words.

Agata: -

Tomasz: I'm trying it.

TOMASZ goes back to his work.

Agata: I got an interview.

Tomasz: For what?

Agata: One of the duty managers. For the section.

Evenings. Weekends.

Tomasz: Why? They just...ask you?

Agata: No. I ask them. They say ok.

TOMASZ doesn't know what to say.

He looks down.

I will earn more money.

Tomasz: If you get it.

Agata: If I get it.

Beat.

You know, I thought I was stupid.

I have always thought that.

I do all this for Zosia but if I look in my heart and look at the truth...

I do this for me.

Tomasz: -

Agata: I have something to tell you.

Which is, I am not the person I thought I was.

Tomasz: -

Agata: And if you don't like that...then maybe we don't get married.

Tomasz: What are you talking about.

Agata: I'm pregnant.

I don't want it.

I'm sorry. I don't want it.

Tomasz: You can't say that.

Agata: I can. I can. Because it is true.

I don't care if you call me a monster it is true.

Tomasz: -

Agata: I won't love it.

I don't want to love it.

I don't want to stop...and go backwards.

Tomasz: Agata, this is...life you can't stop life.

Agata: I can.

Tomasz: You can't. *You* can't do that.

AGATA is frustrated, angry, upset. She paces, TOMASZ moves into the background. We are left with AGATA as she decides what to do – which is take the microphone bravely and with confidence.

THIRTEEN (AGATA)

[In English] In past year, I have learn how communicate with colleagues. I try to build relationship and understand the business....process of this factory. I have many ideas for improve. We are, you and all staffs, in this to make money. Right now, there are stages in the process where there is waste – and that, I think, means we lose money. But I think is also easy to fix with...new ideas. I also want to say that this place has many, many excellent staffs. Who...you will come to know.

There are many you can give this opportunity. Maybe older than me, maybe more experience. Better English. Born here.

This is a business of many people. English, yes but also Latvia. Estonia. Poland. Scotland. Now...you from Holland. I speak Polish. I speak Russian. I speak English. Estonia...I use hand signals. What I say is this company....*international* company. With much talent.

But I ask you: pick me.

Pick me.

FOURTEEN

MIKEY approaches AGATA, who is facing away from him holding a clipboard.

He waits behind her, she senses it is him and turns around.

Agata: **[In English]** Hello.

MIKEY nods in response.

You have seen this?

Mikey: What?

AGATA gestures to the document clipboard.

Agata: **[In English]** You have read this?

Mikey: What is it?

Agata: **[In English]** You need to read it and sign it.

Mikey: Does it matter?

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: Then ah've read it. If you give me a pen, I'll....

She passes the clipboard to him with a pen.

Agata: **[In English]** Last page.

MIKEY picks up the pen and tentatively makes a the mark he uses as signature on the page.

Passes it back to her.

Now, we need to make appointment.

Mikey: Appointment?

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: Appointment.

Agata: **[In English]** Yes.

Mikey: What for? Fuck's sake.

Agata: **[In Confused]** For the training.

Mikey: What training?

Agata: **[In English]** The training.

Mikey: *What. Training?*

Training for what. I dinnae need training, I work here.

Agata: **[In English]** The training explained here.

Mikey: *Where?!*

Agata: **[In English]** Here, Mikey.

She points to the document he has just signed.

MIKEY rubs his brow.

Mikey: Right.

Agata: -

Mikey: If you just tell me when. I'll be there.

Agata: **[In English]** You are on shift...Friday morning.

You are paid for the time you spend -

Mikey: Friday morning. Ok.

Agata: **[In English]** On the computer. You watch a video and then answer the questions.

Mikey: Do you or someone ask me them or?

Agata: **[In English]** No is...On the computer. You read.

Mikey: -

Agata: **[In English]** And then you pick option. Is simple.

Mikey: Ok. Friday morning.

Agata: **[In English]** Friday morning.

MIKEY goes to leave.

Mikey –

Mikey: Is it true you're pregnant?

Agata: Yes.

Mikey: And they *still* gave you the job?

Agata: Probation.

MIKEY shrugs like – what's that?

I have to prove myself.

And I will.

MIKEY leaves.

We watch as he opens and consumes can after can after can of drink, until he takes the microphone again. He goes to speak.

Mikey: -

But nothing comes out.

-

-

His frustration and his rage is palpable.

-

-

-

MIKEY kicks over the microphone. We hear the sound of its destruction reverberate unpleasantly around us.

He crawls to it, exhausted, on his hands and knees. He picks it up again.

He tries to make one last attempt to speak into it.

He can't.

He puts it to the side, gently. The stars illuminate above MIKEY's head and he looks up.

He lays back, exhausted, as the night spins around him.

Morning comes and MIKEY sits up. His head throbbing with the consequences of the night before. He stands up, brushes himself off and we snap to:

FIFTEEN

MIKEY is at work – but he’s not working. SHANNON enters.

Shannon: Horn’s gone. Breaks over.

Mikey: -

Shannon: Did you hear the tannoy? There’s been, like, two.

Mikey: -

Shannon: Did you hear it? Delivery’s come in for you.

Mikey: Aye, a delivery.

Shannon: Mikey.

Mikey: Go away.

Shannon: You’re going to get in trouble.

Mikey: Ah’m on ma break.

Shannon: **[Gently]** I can smell it on you.

Mikey: What?

There’s a tannoy calling MIKEY to the factory floor.

Shannon: I’ll say you’re sick.

The state of your face.

She moves to inspect his face.

He grabs her hand. SHANNON is shocked.

MIKEY releases her.

AGATA, who is now visibly, heavily, pregnant, enters.

He’s sick. He’s going home.

Agata: **[In English]** He can’t speak?

Shannon: He’s sick.

Agata: **[In English, to SHANNON]** Ok, well. Delivery here. Ten thousand units. We will need person, no maybe two person from another team. I will radio, you go to loading bay.

SHANNON leaves. AGATA radios:

Hello. Are you able to spare anyone to help with the delivery? Over.

Immediately someone radios back saying they will let her know.

You can go home. I will do your timesheet.

Mikey: I don't take orders from you.

Agata: What?

Mikey: You heard.

The radio spurs into life. AGATA doesn't break eye contact with MIKEY.

Agata: **[In English, into radio]** Thank you.

Mikey: I was just sittin' down for five minutes. Is that nae allowed nae more?

Agata: **[In English]** If you are sick you should –

Mikey: Ah'm nae sick. Ah'm tired. Ah'm really fuckin' *tired*.

But you need me, people like me are required to be used as steps tae....tae...

Agata: **[In English]** What are you talking about?

Mikey: If ye need me tae come and help wi' the heavy liftin' because you're pregnant, ah will do that 'cause ah believe its important tae be a gentleman about these things.

Agata: **[in English]** Come to help a pregnant lady. Or come and do your job. It is your choice.

Mikey: What's your fuckin' problem?

Agata: **[in English]** Don't speak to me like this.

Mikey: Or what? Or fuckin' what? What will you do?

Ah fuckin' teached you those words.

Agata: **[In English]** They are not respectful.

Mikey: Are you kidding me?

Shannon: Tomek's been released to help us. They said they can maybe give us someone else too. I just need to radio with an estimate of how long they'll be -

MIKEY spots TOMASZ and starts clapping.

Agata: **[In Polish]** Leave it. I am dealing with this.

MIKEY continues to clap.

Mikey: Right on cue. All the snakes here together.

Shannon: Go home, Mikey. You are embarrassing yourself.

Mikey: D'ye remember our game, Tom. When ah sing an ye clap. Remember that? This guy an' me had a laugh once. Used tae be ma friend. What a joke.

Agata: **[In Polish]** Leave it. I am dealing with this. **[In English]** Go home, Mikey. Now. **[In Polish]** Please go with Shannon and deal with the delivery. **[In English]** Shannon, I just tell Tomasz to go with you and sort delivery.

MIKEY tries to provoke TOMASZ.

Mikey: Are ye jealous a'wee Mikey, pal? Aw the time ah spend chattin' tae yer Agata. Well, you're right, every time you go round that corner, we're at it.

Tomasz: **[In Polish, to AGATA]** He pushes me one more time, I am going to knock him out.

Mikey: Yeah. You missed it, pal. I had this one suckin' ma dick, and your girl sittin' on my face.

Tomasz: **[In Polish, aggressively to MIKEY, giving him a shove, as he moves past]** Get the fuck out of my way before I have you spitting your teeth out.

Mikey: You think because ah dinnae understand the words, ah dinnae understaund the meanin', ye fuckin' Polish cunt?

MIKEY exits.

Shannon: Are you ok?

Agata: I'm fine. Go and start delivery. We need to reach today's target.

Alone, we can see AGATA is shaken. She holds the bottom of her stomach instinctively. But she composes herself quickly and competently and turns on the radio to give an update -

Hello. We sadly short staffed due to sickness. I get back up from loading bay who starting now, we think it will take 90 minutes for phase one to -

MIKEY rushes back in with a brick. SHANNON is chasing him screaming.

He is running directly for AGATA. TOMASZ appears behind her at the other side of the stage. When MIKEY reaches AGATA he pushes her out the way and manages to brick TOMASZ straight on the head. He hits him again and again relentlessly, when he is on the ground he kicks him.

The women scream.

We enter a new state, like time has stopped. MIKEY steps back from what he is doing. The canopy of stars glows again above his head and he looks up. Slowly he looks down at the brick, as if in amazement. He throws it away and time begins again – MIKEY is panting from the exertion.

Mikey: I know. I'm fired.

MIKEY exits, AGATA rushes to TOMASZ speaking to him in Polish. We hear the radio, someone talking incessantly.

MIKEY looks at SHANNON as he walks past – but keeps walking.

FIFTEEN

SHANNON waits nervously.

AGATA enters. She has two cans of fizzy drink. She holds one out to SHANNON, who opens it.

Shannon: So, go on then. Put me out of my misery.

Agata: ***[In English]*** This is not miserable. This is 'appraisal'.

I have discuss your work with management. I say is good, because.

It is.

I have ask that you get increase on hourly rate. Just small.

Shannon: What?

Agata: ***[In English]*** Small. You will get a letter.

Shannon: Sorry. I have to breathe out there. I didn't expect you to say that at all.

I thought you were going to fire me.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Why?

Shannon: Because. Well, because.

Agata: ***[In English]*** If work is good. And manner is respectful. There is no problem.

Shannon: No I know but...I just get nervous.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Not everyone get more pay. So.

Shannon: I won't tell anyone.

Agata: ***[In English]*** Discreet. Be discreet.

She shrugs.

Beat.

Shannon: Not long now.

Agata: ***[In English]*** No. I will be back at work very soon.

Shannon: Not too soon, I hope. You've got to....you know recover.

Agata: ***[In English]*** I take six weeks.

Shannon: Who will look after it when - ?

Agata: ***[In English]*** I figure out.

My little girl still at home with my mother. New baby is not part of plan.

Shannon: Can Tomek help?

Agata: ***[In English]*** He still need rest. But, yes. He is very good with children.

Shannon.

Shannon: Yeah.

Agata: ***[In English]*** I also recommend...Maybe you cover in these six weeks.

I say I train you, I have confidence.

Shannon: And what did they say?

Agata: ***[In English]*** They said maybe.

Shannon: -

Agata: ***[In English]*** This way you get management experience for you and...who knows. This is good for you. New opportunity.

And.

Maybe. Maybe I don't lose my job.

Shannon: They wouldn't.

Agata: ***[In English]*** I will be back in six weeks, but. There is risk.

[Philosophical] What can you do?

SIXTEEN

MIKEY looking out at the world.

MIKEY breathes in the night air.

He leans back on his hands to look up at the sky and take in the stars.