

The Pride by Alexi Kaye Campbell

Author's Note		The main challenge in any production of this play is to handle effectively the constant scene and costume changes between the two different eras it is set in. Flow the director and designer deal with this challenge is up to them. Here, though, are a couple of thoughts.
		When the play begins we should feel as if we are watching a 1950's drawing-room play. Only as the play progresses does this world slowly start to disintegrate and break up. The furniture and walls gradually disappear until we find ourselves in the multi-locational second half.
		One idea is to make a virtue of the costume changes - perhaps they take place somewhere on stage and are partly visible to the audience. Something more stylised. This might help the transitions between scenes become easier and more fluid.
		The most important quality is one of confluence. The two different periods should meld into each other. They are distinct from each other in appearance but they know each other in spirit: a young woman standing next to her elder self. Different clothes, different hairstyles, different textures of skin... but the eyes are the same. The past is a ghost in the present just as the present is a ghost of prescience in the past.
Characters		1958 Oliver, mid-thirties Philip, mid-thirties Sylvia, mid-thirties THE DOCTOR, late thirties
		2008 Oliver, mid-thirties Philip, mid-thirties Sylvia, mid-thirties THE Man PETER
		Oliver, Philip and Sylvia are to be played by the same actors in both periods. One actor plays the DOCTOR, the Man and PETER.
ACT ONE		
1-1	1958	
		Philip and Sylvia 's apartment in London. It is modest but tasteful. Lots of books, a sofa and armchairs, a few pictures on the wall. Philip is standing by the front door. He is dressed for a night out. Oliver has just arrived.
1	Oliver	Philip.
2	Philip	Oliver.
3	Oliver	Yes.
4	Philip	At last.
5	Oliver	Yes.
6	Philip	I've heard so Many things.
7	Oliver	Have you?
8	Philip	So Many things about you.
9	Oliver	Gosh.
10	Philip	All good.
11	Oliver	That's a relief.
12	Philip	Sylvia's always talking about you.
13	Oliver	Is she?
14	Philip	I'm beginning to get rather jealous.
15	Oliver	No need, I'm sure.
16	Philip	She thinks you're a genius.
17	Oliver	There are Many things I am, but a genius is definitely not one of them.
18	Philip	Extraordinary is what she calls you.
19	Oliver	Does she?
20	Philip	Out of the ordinary.
		A slight pause.
21	Philip	Let me take your coat.
22	Oliver	Thank you.
		Oliver takes off his coat and hands it to Philip, who hangs it up carefully.
23	Philip	I'm afraid the lady is running a little late. Applying the face paint. I believe. That ancient ritual.
24	Oliver	I'm early.
25	Philip	Not at all. You're right on time.
26	Oliver	I walked. I thought it would take me slightly longer.
27	Philip	It's a lovely evening.
28	Oliver	Well, no rain in any case.
29	Philip	All the way from Maida Vale?
30	Oliver	Yes, Maida Vale.
31	Philip	Across the park, eh?
32	Oliver	Yes.
33	Philip	That's a long walk.
34	Oliver	I enjoyed it.
35	Philip	It's the season for it.
36	Oliver	Everything in full bloom.
37	Philip	Lovely.

		<i>A slight pause.</i>
38	Philip	What can I get you to drink?
39	Oliver	A Scotch?
40	Philip	Ice and water?
41	Oliver	Perfect.
42	Philip	I think I'll have the same.
		<i>Philip walks over to a small drinks table and pours them a couple of drinks.</i>
43	Philip	She thinks your stories are wonderful.
44	Oliver	She's certainly captured the spirit of the thing.
45	Philip	She seems to care. About the book, I mean.
46	Oliver	She's very, very talented.
47	Philip	Can't stop talking about it. Something about a garden.
48	Oliver	Well, it's more of a jungle, really.
49	Philip	A jungle.
50	Oliver	Let's call it a jungle in the heart of England. Or at least a very overgrown and rather tropical garden.
51	Philip	What is it with children's writers and gardens? There seems to be a proliferation of them. Most of them secret, I dare say.
52	Oliver	You're right.
53	Philip	Well, she's very busy with it in any case. Sketches of strange creatures all over the place. I came across a rather alarming picture of something that resembled a two-headed antelope in the bathroom the other day. Fascinating.
54	Oliver	That'll be the Bellyfinch. I'm supposed to be having a first look at it on Friday morning, I believe.
55	Philip	Bellyfinch indeed. I'm afraid by comparison my life seems rather lacklustre.
56	Oliver	I don't honestly believe there is such a thing as a lacklustre life.
57	Philip	You haven't sold property for a living.
58	Oliver	Unexplored perhaps, but not lacklustre.
		<i>Philip hands him his drink. They sit.</i>
59	Philip	I've never met anyone like you before. A writer, I mean.
60	Oliver	Haven't you?
61	Philip	Apart from this ghastly friend of my mother's who's published a book on baking cakes.
62	Oliver	Baking cakes?
63	Philip	I'm not sure that really counts.
64	Oliver	That sounds a little unfair. Nothing wrong with books about cakes.
65	Philip	Have you only ever written for children?
66	Oliver	For the most part. But I've written two travel books as well.
67	Philip	Sylvia mentioned it. One on Athens.
68	Oliver	I lived there for a year.
69	Philip	And the other?
70	Oliver	The other on the Lebanon.
71	Philip	The Lebanon?
72	Oliver	But mostly I'm drawn to writing for children.
73	Philip	I wonder why.
74	Oliver	I don't really know. I think it might have something to do with running completely wild.
75	Philip	Wild?
76	Oliver	The possibilities are infinite. The parameters and conventions of adult fiction I find a great deal more restrictive.
77	Philip	I see.
78	Oliver	I feel a lot happier in a world of talking tigers and magic mirrors. More in my element, really.
79	Philip	Fair enough.
80	Oliver	Maybe one day adult fiction will embrace my more extravagant flights of fancy, but for the time being I'm quite happy writing for the under-twelves.
81	Philip	Well, it seems to keep a roof over your head.
82	Oliver	A leaking one, but yes, just about.
83	Philip	Well, here's to the book anyway.
84	Oliver	The book.
		<i>They toast.</i>
85	Philip	It's strange.
86	Oliver	What is?
87	Philip	When I opened the door.
88	Oliver	Yes?
89	Philip	You look familiar, is what I think I'm saying.
90	Oliver	Yes, I thought so too.
91	Philip	Did you?
92	Oliver	Yes, I think I did.
93	Philip	Well, maybe we've bumped into each other. On the Underground or something.
94	Oliver	Maybe.

95	Philip	Stranger things have happened.
		<i>Pause.</i>
96	Philip	Or maybe it's just because she talks about you so often.
97	Oliver	Talks about me?
98	Philip	So perhaps that's why I felt like I'd seen you before.
99	Oliver	How d'you mean?
100	Philip	Oh, it's just that sometimes if you've heard a great deal about someone, if you've been expecting them in some way, you sort of imagine them before they actually arrive.
101	Oliver	Yes.
102	Philip	If you know what I mean.
103	Oliver	Yes, I think I do.
		<i>Sylvia enters. She is smartly dressed for an evening out.</i>
104	Philip	Here she is.
105	Sylvia	(to Oliver) Has he been interrogating you?
106	Philip	Mercilessly.
107	Oliver	Hello, Sylvia.
108	Sylvia	He's a very jealous kind of Man.
109	Philip	Rabid with it.
110	Sylvia	Can easily become violent. Philip, be a darling and do me up.
		<i>She turns her back to him so that he can help her with the top hook of her dress.</i>
111	Sylvia	Comes in handy though from time to time. I must say. I see he's offered you a drink.
112	Oliver	He's been the perfect host.
113	Sylvia	So all that training wasn't a complete waste of time after all.
114	Philip	I'm learning fast. Gin?
115	Sylvia	I've hooked the table for eight.
116	Philip	A quick one.
117	Sylvia	Thank you. darling.
		<i>Philip goes to the bar to pour her a drink.</i>
118	Philip	I've been telling Oliver how you keep talking about him.
119	Sylvia	You haven't been embarrassing me in front of my employer, have you?
120	Philip	Probably.
121	Sylvia	I've been rather nervous, you know. God knows why.
122	Oliver	Nervous?
123	Sylvia	About the two of you meeting.
124	Philip	She has been putting it off. hasn't she, Oliver?
125	Oliver	Now that you mention it.
126	Sylvia	It's a silly thing, really. I suppose it's just that I want you to get on.
127	Philip	We were doing just fine.
128	Sylvia	To like each other, I mean.
129	Oliver	I don't see why we shouldn't.
130	Philip	As long as I don't discover you've been having a torrid affair behind my back we should get on just fine.
131	Sylvia	I did warn you about his sense of humour, Oliver.
132	Philip	Sense of humour?
133	Sylvia	Or lack of it, I should say.
134	Philip	You're heartless.
135	Sylvia	Just honest.
		<i>A slightly awkward pause. Philip hands Sylvia her drink.</i>
136	Sylvia	I hope you like Italian food, Oliver.
137	Philip	We've made a reservation at a little Italian place around the corner.
138	Oliver	Lovely.
139	Sylvia	Philip's always making fun of it but I find it charming.
140	Philip	It's extremely red. Everything in it is red.
141	Oliver	I'm partial to a little red.
142	Philip	The walls, the tablecloths, the waiter's face. Everything's red.
143	Sylvia	Philip's convinced they're not real Italians.
144	Philip	They're Yugoslavians. I'm convinced they're Yugoslavians pretending to be Italians.
145	Oliver	It sounds interesting.
146	Sylvia	But the food is good.
147	Philip	With a strong Serbian flavour to it.
148	Oliver	Delicious, I'm sure.
		<i>A slight pause as they all sit down.</i>
149	Oliver	I'm very pleased to hear that a Bellyfinch has been spotted hanging around the house.

150	Sylvia	Just a preliminary sketch, I'm afraid, but it's getting there.
151	Oliver	I can't wait to see it.
152	Sylvia	Hopefully by Friday it will be a little more confident. As we speak it's looking a trifle too purple for its own good.
153	Philip	All this talk of Bellyfinch and Hampshire jungles has made me very curious. I can't wait to read the damn thing.
154	Sylvia	Well, you'll have to be patient, won't you?
155	Oliver	Nearly there.
156	Sylvia	Nearly. And in the meantime, you're not to snoop.
157	Philip	It's not my fault if you leave pictures of alarming things scattered across our home.
158	Oliver	Is he a snooper?
159	Sylvia	Of the very worst kind.
160	Philip	In the bathroom. On the sofa. Even in the fridge.
161	Oliver	The fridge?
162	Sylvia	Just once.
163	Philip	Something brown crawling up a tree. In the fridge. It was most disconcerting.
164	Sylvia	The doorbell was ringing. I was preparing dinner. A moment of absent-mindedness, that's all.
165	Philip	Your story has invaded us. And then I'm accused of being a snooper.
166	Oliver	Please accept my apologies.
167	Philip	Apologies accepted.
		<i>They laugh. There is a pause.</i>
168	Philip	I am envious of you two. you know.
169	Oliver	Envious?
170	Sylvia	Whatever of?
171	Philip	Oh, you know, your work. Doing something creative I suppose is what I mean. Being able to invest a certain amount of passion in what you do for a living.
172	Oliver	It doesn't feel passionate. Lonely more like.
173	Sylvia	Philip is very frustrated in his work, aren't you, darling?
174	Philip	I sell houses, Oliver.
175	Oliver	You were saying.
176	Philip	Houses and flats.
177	Sylvia	The thing that you really ought to know is that Philip came into his line of work almost by accident.
178	Oliver	Accident?
179	Philip	My father died.
180	Sylvia	Philip's father died when he was just twenty-one.
181	Philip	I'd just left university.
182	Sylvia	Philip's father had spent years running his own business buying and selling property. Philip's brother was all set up to take it over.
183	Philip	Well, he was being groomed for it, really. Father was grooming him for it. I was the useless one. Rather aimless. I'm afraid.
184	Sylvia	But then two years later, Roger -
185	Philip	That's my brother.
186	Sylvia	Roger was killed.
187	Philip	It was an accident.
188	Sylvia	A car accident. A terrible thing.
189	Philip	I had to look after my mother.
190	Sylvia	And your sister.
191	Philip	So I had no choice, really. The business just sort of fell into my hands, as it were.
192	Sylvia	I sometimes wonder what you would have done. What you would have been. If things had turned out differently, I mean.
193	Philip	God knows, so do I. I'd have emigrated, probably.
194	Oliver	Emigrated?
195	Sylvia	Philip's always had this terribly mad idea of emigrating.
196	Oliver	How exciting.
197	Sylvia	Australia, Canada, that sort of thing.
198	Philip	Somewhere new.
199	Sylvia	Do you remember you became obsessed with the whole idea of moving to Africa?
200	Philip	Africa, yes.
201	Sylvia	He read every possible book that he could get his hands on. Books on Kenya, books on Rhodesia. They were strewn all over the house.
202	Oliver	I'd love to visit Africa.
203	Philip	Never did make it further than Brighton, I'm afraid.
204	Sylvia	One day.
205	Oliver	One day.
206	Philip	Then next thing you know you wake up and you've spent the good part of your life showing people around empty flats.
207	Sylvia	There are worse things one could do with one's life.
208	Philip	Are there?
209	Oliver	I'm sure Sylvia's right.
210	Philip	(kindly). She always is.

		<i>Pause.</i>
211	Philip	Now you on the other hand, Oliver, have made it beyond Brighton.
212	Oliver	I've been to a few places.
213	Sylvia	Oh, stop being modest, you've been absolutely everywhere.
214	Oliver	Not quite everywhere.
215	Sylvia	Oliver lived in Greece.
216	Philip	Yes, he was saying...
217	Sylvia	And Italy. And Beirut. And Syria.
218	Oliver	I do have an affinity with that part of the world.
219	Philip	How exciting. To have lived there.
220	Sylvia	Oliver was based in Athens.
221	Philip	How wonderful.
222	Oliver	I lived in a tiny little house at the foot of the Acropolis. Infested with mice, but absolutely charming.
223	Sylvia	How utterly roMantic.
224	Oliver	If you craned your neck outside the kitchen window you could just about catch a glimpse of the Parthenon.
225	Philip	The Parthenon.
226	Sylvia	Philip and I are determined to drive down to Greece one day, aren't we, darling?
227	Philip	If you say so.
228	Sylvia	Down through France and Italy and across the Adriatic.
229	Philip	One day.
230	Sylvia	And then on to the islands.
231	Oliver	The islands are beautiful.
232	Sylvia	Philip, myself, a couple of copies of The Odyssey and a chessboard.
233	Philip	Not forgetting the gin, of course.
234	Oliver	Not forgetting the gin.
235	Sylvia	One day.
		<i>There is a pause. Suddenly, Sylvia remembers something. She turns to Oliver.</i>
236	Sylvia	Tell him about Delphi.
237	Philip	Delphi?
238	Sylvia	Yes, Delphi. The story about what happened to you in Delphi.
239	Oliver	Oh, that...
240	Sylvia	Your epiphany in Delphi.
241	Philip	What epiphany in Delphi?
242	Sylvia	Oliver told me a wonderful story...
243	Oliver	It's nothing really.
244	Philip	An epiphany in Delphi.
245	Sylvia	It's wonderful.
246	Philip	Sounds like the title of a dreadful novel. An Epiphany in Delphi.
247	Oliver	I don't know whether Philip...
248	Sylvia	We took a break from work the other day and Oliver told me he'd been to Delphi.
249	Oliver	It's not much of a story. Maybe some other time.
250	Sylvia	And that something had happened to him there. Is it fair to call it a mystical experience?
251	Philip	Oh, you must say.
252	Oliver	I really don't think...
253	Philip	Please.
254	Oliver	It's not really that exciting or interesting. In a matter of fact it's not much of a story at all. It was just this funny thing that happened.
255	Philip	I'm all ears.
256	Oliver	You'll be very disappointed. I'm afraid.
257	Sylvia	Oh. go on, Oliver.
258	Oliver	Well. I'd gone up to Delphi because it was one of the places in Greece, one of the sites I most wanted to visit.
259	Sylvia	The oracle.
260	Oliver	So I'd taken this rickety old bus from Athens and it took hours and hours and it twisted its way through the mountain roads and I remember we arrived just before the sun was going down and it dropped us off just outside this little hotel. The Hotel Zeus or something. And there were a few other foreigners - an old American couple and a GerMan and a few other English people including this insufferable woman with a loud pompous voice and very confident opinions.
261	Philip	Not the most winning combination.
262	Oliver	And we all had a bite for dinner and then went straight to sleep.
263	Philip	I'm riveted already.
264	Oliver	And the next morning I woke up and opened the shutters and, well... the view was absolutely...
265	Sylvia	Breathtaking.
266	Oliver	The view was absolutely breathtaking. I mean, I can't do it justice. I can't attempt to describe it. You'd have to go and see it for yourself. To believe it.
267	Philip	One day.
268	Oliver	The landscape, you see, the position of it. It is quite mesmerising. Very, very dramatic. Because you are high up in the mountains and on the peaks above us there was even snow, but then you look down, down through these silver slanting olive groves and you can see the sea.

269	Sylvia	How beautiful.
270	Oliver	You can see the waters of the Corinthian Gulf. So there is something very spectacular. I mean, truly, truly beautiful. And you begin to realise why it is that the Greeks chose that place for their oracle. That maybe in a place of such beauty and stillness you could have a sense of things to come. It takes you out of your time, out of time. You could see the bigger picture in a way.
271	Philip	Is that it? Your epiphany?
272	Oliver	I've barely started.
273	Sylvia	Oh, Philip, give the Man a chance.
274	Oliver	So after breakfast I set off towards the ancient theatre and the site of the oracle and I had the old Americans in tow. I think they thought I was a classics scholar or something. They kept asking me these questions and were very disappointed when my answers weren't quite as thorough as they were expecting.
275	Sylvia	You do look the part. Especially when you're wearing your specs.
276	Oliver	Well, eventually I succeeded in shrugging them off. I lost them somewhere and was able to continue on my own. Which was rather a relief, I must say.
277	Philip	I'm not surprised. One does not want to have a spiritual experience with American tourists in close proximity.
278	Oliver	I just started wandering around the site. I was completely on my own and it was very, very quiet. All you could hear was the incessant humming of the cicadas. And a bit of a breeze playing through the trees. And I just walked through the place in a bit of a daze, really.
279	Philip	I feel an epiphany coming.
280	Oliver	And then I heard it.
281	Philip	Told you.
282	Oliver	I suppose I can only describe it as a voice. Not a voice in any conventional sense. Not the kind of voice one could immediately identify as in any way recognisable.
283	Philip	Are you sure it wasn't one of the Americans?
284	Sylvia	Oh, Philip, do be quiet.
285	Philip	Pearls before swine.
286	Oliver	I just stood there and I heard this voice. And it pretty much said that everything was going to be all right.
287	Philip	All right? What was going to be all right?
288	Oliver	Well, that one day, maybe many, many years from now, there will be an understanding of certain things, a deeper understanding of certain aspects of our natures that would make all the difficulties we now feel, all the fears we now hold onto and the sleepless nights we now have seem almost worthwhile... And that the people who live in those times, be it fifty or five hundred years from now will be happy with that understanding and wiser for it. Better.
289	Sylvia	How wonderfully Chekhovian.
290	Oliver	And it sort of felt that this voice was coming to me in some way from that very future. Some future awareness of ourselves as it were. And that's it, really. That was my epiphany.
291	Sylvia	There are certain places which have an effect on one. Certain places that touch one.
292	Philip	Yes, I know what you mean. I can't imagine experiencing a similar sort of self-revelation in Pimlico.
293	Oliver	Knightsbridge maybe, but certainly not Pimlico.
294	Philip	In any case, my darling. I wish you'd informed me that we were having dinner tonight with a Man who regularly hears voices. I'd have been more prepared.
295	Sylvia	Oh, Philip, you're awful.
296	Oliver	I feel positively embarrassed now.
297	Sylvia	Oh, don't. He's just being silly.
		<i>They laugh and then there is a pause.</i>
298	Sylvia	We ought to get a move on.
299	Oliver	Yes.
300	Philip	We don't want to upset the Yugoslavians.
301	Sylvia	God forbid. I have to fetch my cardigan. I'll only be a minute.
302	Philip	You can't possibly leave us alone. We'll have nothing to talk about.
303	Sylvia	You could have fooled me.
304	Philip	Well, hurry along then.
305	Sylvia	All right, all right, stop being a bully.
306	Philip	Hurry up.
		<i>Sylvia leaves the room and the two men are left alone. There is a pause and then they both begin to talk at the same time.</i>
307	Philip	I can't begin to tell you...
308	Oliver	There's something that...
309	Philip	After you.
310	Oliver	No, please...
311	Philip	I was just going to say I can't tell you what this job means to Sylvia. How much she enjoys working for you.
312	Oliver	It means a great deal to me too.
313	Philip	I don't think she's ever thrown herself into a project with such zeal. And the timing was so fortunate.
314	Oliver	The timing?
315	Philip	The commission. It's what she needed after everything that happened.
316	Oliver	She did mention that she hadn't been very well.
317	Philip	Yes.
		<i>An awkward pause.</i>
318	Philip	You know she used to be an actress, don't you?
319	Oliver	She told me.
320	Philip	Before she took up illustrating.
321	Oliver	Yes.
322	Philip	Only for a couple of years.

323	Oliver	I wish I'd seen her on the stage.
324	Philip	Then she decided to give up. She said she was doing it for us.
325	Oliver	Oh.
326	Philip	But I think it scared her in some way.
327	Oliver	Scared her?
328	Philip	She was exceptionally good. It was rather terrifying how good she actually was. She would become these people. Enter these people's lives so fully, so completely. Her imagination. I suppose.
329	Oliver	I can believe she was very good.
330	Philip	Of course, that whole world...
331	Oliver	The theatre?
332	Philip	Not really her cup of tea. I don't think.
333	Oliver	Wasn't it?
334	Philip	But she was very good. Instinct. I suppose, intuition. And empathy. Those sort of qualities.
335	Oliver	Yes.
336	Philip	But I think it's wise.
337	Oliver	Wise?
338	Philip	That she gave up. I mean.
339	Oliver	Do you?
340	Philip	She's fragile.
		<i>There is a pause.</i>
341	Philip	Have a lot of sleepless nights, do you?
342	Oliver	I beg your pardon?
343	Philip	You said earlier. In your story. The oracle. You said something along the lines of one day there will be an understanding of certain things that will make all the sleepless nights we now have seem almost worthwhile.
344	Oliver	Oh.
345	Philip	And I was just wondering if there's lots of them. Sleepless nights.
346	Oliver	A few.
347	Philip	All those Bellyfinches floating around in your head no doubt.
348	Oliver	Probably.
		<i>A long pause. Something has happened. Then Sylvia enters.</i>
349	Sylvia	I'm ready.
350	Philip	It's about time.
351	Oliver	You look lovely.
352	Sylvia	Thank you, Oliver.
		<i>Philip starts turning off the lights.</i>
353	Sylvia	I was thinking.
354	Philip	What?
355	Sylvia	How important this evening is.
356	Philip	Is it?
357	Sylvia	For me. For all three of us, really.
358	Philip	Why?
359	Sylvia	Oh, I don't know.
360	Philip	Have you got the keys?
361	Sylvia	Yes.
362	Philip	Come on then.
		<i>They make a move towards the door. As they move towards it, a Man enters the room. He is wearing a Nazi uniform. He is invisible to them but on his entrance he brushes up close to them.</i>
363	Sylvia	What was that?
364	Philip	What was what, darling?
365	Sylvia	I felt... I felt something.
366	Philip	You felt what?
		<i>The Man moves to the centre of the room and stands there silently.</i>
367	Sylvia	Nothing.
368	Philip	Don't forget your coat.
369	Oliver	It's not warm.
		<i>Sylvia picks up her coat. They open the door to leave.</i>
370	Philip	So why is tonight so important then?
371	Sylvia	Don't mind me. Just thinking out loud.
372	Oliver	Do that often, do you?
373	Sylvia	That's all.
374	Philip	Mad as a hatter, Oliver.
375	Oliver	Is she?
376	Sylvia	Don't be a beast.

377	Philip	Mad as a hatter.
		<i>They close the door behind them. Slowly, a scene change happens imperceptibly, in semi-darkness. Perhaps some music could be played - something that could well have been played in the scene change of a 1950's production - something soft, elegant. A couple of changes to the room - maybe a giant modern photograph is revealed or a plasma screen appears - so that now this could be a modern flat decorated in a 1950 s retro style. But the room is essentially the same, the changes are superficial and decorative. The 1950's music begins to meld into something new, something loud, maybe violent. All the while, the Man in the Nazi uniform remains in the centre of the room, still and silent.</i>
1-2	2008	
		<i>Still in semi-darkness, Oliver enters, but he is now in his underwear. Behind him he drags a dressing gown. He sits on the floor somewhere in the room with the Man standing over him, looking down at him. The lights return and the music comes to an abrupt end. For the first few lines, the Man speaks in a GerMan accent.</i>
1	Man	Don't fucking look at me, you fucking piece of shit.
2	Oliver	I'm sorry. I'm sorry.
3	Man	You better be.
4	Oliver	I'm sorry.
5	Man	You never fucking look at me, you worthless piece of shit. What are you?
6	Oliver	What am I?
7	Man	What are you? Tell me what you are!
8	Oliver	What am I.
9	Man	You fucking tell me what you are, you fucking piece of huMan shit.
10	Oliver	I'm a fucking piece of huMan fucking shit.
11	Man	Yeah, das ist good. Now lick my fucking boots.
		<i>Oliver bends over to lick the Man's boots, but before he gets there he stops.</i>
12	Oliver	Okay, I'm sorry. I'm going to stop you.
13	Man	Shut your fucking mouth.
14	Oliver	No, seriously, can you just stop. Please. Time out. Stop. Abracadabra.
15	Man	Abracadabra?
16	Oliver	Yes. Please. Stop. Abracadabra. Definitely abracadabra.
17	Man	(in his own rather camp London voice now) You'll have to pay me.
18	Oliver	Yes.
19	Man	I mean, I spent two fucking hours trying to get here. From Earls Court.
20	Oliver	Yes. The Victoria line. It broke down. You told me.
21	Man	And I got wet. Soaking.
22	Oliver	I'm sorry.
23	Man	Soaking wet.
24	Oliver	Yes.
25	Man	You'll have to pay me.
26	Oliver	Of course. Of course I'll pay you.
27	Man	I came a long way.
28	Oliver	I know.
		<i>Pause.</i>
29	Oliver	I'm just not in the mood. I should never have called. I was bored.
30	Man	Okay.
31	Oliver	And a bit lonely.
32	Man	A lot of them are.
33	Oliver	I think I just drank a bit too much.
34	Man	All right.
		<i>Pause.</i>
35	Oliver	Have a drink with me.
36	Man	You're paying.
37	Oliver	You might as well.
38	Man	It's still pissing it down.
39	Oliver	Have a Scotch.
40	Man	Oh. go on then.
		<i>Oliver pours the Man a Scotch and hands it to him. They sit in silence for a while and listen to the sound of the rain.</i>
41	Oliver	You're very good at it. Convincing, I mean.
42	Man	Oh.
43	Oliver	The accent and everything.
44	Man	Thank you.
45	Oliver	You're welcome.
		<i>Pause.</i>
46	Oliver	The picture's good as well. On the website.
47	Man	So they say.
48	Oliver	Is the Alsatian yours?
49	Man	My sister's.

50	Oliver	Glad you didn't bring him along.
51	Man	Yes.
52	Oliver	Effective though.
		<i>Pause.</i>
53	Oliver	You an actor?
54	Man	Was.
55	Oliver	Thought so.
56	Man	Couldn't really make ends meet.
57	Oliver	Theatre?
58	Man	Mostly. All over the place. Northampton. Bristol. Fucking Ipswich.
59	Oliver	Rep.
60	Man	Did an ad once though. Dog food. Made a mint.
61	Oliver	I thought you looked familiar.
62	Man	And the odd voice-over.
63	Oliver	It's a hard life.
64	Man	You're telling me.
		<i>Pause.</i>
65	Oliver	So what do you do now?
66	Man	Oh, you know. Bits and pieces. This, for a start.
67	Oliver	Of course.
68	Man	Help out in a florist's twice a week.
69	Oliver	Nice.
70	Man	Teach drama.
71	Oliver	Great.
72	Man	That kind of thing.
73	Oliver	Okay.
		<i>Pause.</i>
74	Oliver	My boyfriend's left me.
75	Man	Oh right.
76	Oliver	Third time this year.
77	Man	Makes a habit of leaving you, does he?
78	Oliver	But this time it's for real. Took his vinyls.
79	Man	How long you been together?
80	Oliver	Year and a half.
81	Man	That's a lifetime.
82	Oliver	It is. isn't it?
83	Man	I've never Managed anything longer than eight months.
84	Oliver	Haven't you?
85	Man	No.
		<i>Pause.</i>
86	Man	Had a thing with this guy from Ecuador last year. Asked me to marry him. Had a dick the size of my forearm.
87	Oliver	That's nice.
88	Man	Never seen anything like it.
89	Oliver	I'm sure I have.
90	Man	Weird though.
91	Oliver	Weird?
92	Man	Wanted to shit on me. Come out of nowhere. 'I want to shit on you,' he says. Some people.
93	Oliver	Strange.
94	Man	Fucking perverts.
		<i>Pause.</i>
95	Man	You sad about your boyfriend leaving you then?
96	Oliver	Yes. Yes, I think I am.
97	Man	Oh right.
		<i>Pause.</i>
98	Man	No.
		<i>Pause.</i>
99	Oliver	It's been three days.
100	Man	Three days?
101	Oliver	Since he left.
102	Man	Oh.
103	Oliver	I haven't really gone anywhere.
104	Man	Right.

105	Oliver	Just sat here. Thinking about stuff.
106	Man	You'll get over it.
107	Oliver	I don't know.
108	Man	You get over things.
109	Oliver	No food left. Have to make the trip to Tesco's.
110	Man	You don't want to starve.
111	Oliver	No.
112	Man	You'll get over it.
113	Oliver	Who knows?
		<i>Pause.</i>
114	Man	So what is it you do for a living?
115	Oliver	I'm a journalist. I write.
116	Man	Oh, nice.
117	Oliver	Is it?
118	Man	Proper job. Not like me.
119	Oliver	If you say so.
120	Man	Not like dressing up.
121	Oliver	Freelance. Write for the Mail a lot.
122	Man	Got to pay the bills.
123	Oliver	Yes. About to start working on a new magazine though.
		<i>Pause. The sound of keys in the front door. It opens. Philip enters. He sees Oliver and the Man and looks surprised. Oliver jumps up.</i>
124	Philip	Fuck.
125	Oliver	Shit.
126	Philip	Fuck it.
127	Oliver	It isn't...
128	Philip	I thought...
129	Oliver	Fuck.
		<i>Pause.</i>
130	Philip	I thought you were going to Glasgow.
131	Oliver	I cancelled.
132	Philip	You said you were going to Glasgow.
133	Oliver	I didn't realise you still had keys.
134	Philip	You said you wouldn't be here.
135	Oliver	I thought you left the keys.
136	Philip	I came to get the case. The last case.
137	Oliver	Yes.
138	Philip	The books.
139	Oliver	I know.
		<i>Oliver notices Philip looking at the Man and taking in the uniform.</i>
140	Oliver	This is...
141	Philip	It's fine. I'll be quick.
142	Oliver	Take your time.
143	Philip	They're in the bedroom.
144	Oliver	I know. By the bed.
145	Philip	I'll be quick.
146	Oliver	Okay.
		<i>Philip hovers for a second, then darts out of the room and into the bedroom.</i>
147	Oliver	Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck. Please go.
148	Man	Sorry?
149	Oliver	Just go. Please. Go.
150	Man	I've only just started my drink.
151	Oliver	Just please go.
152	Man	You haven't paid me.
153	Oliver	Yes.
154	Man	I'm not moving till you pay me.
		<i>Oliver runs over to where his wallet is and takes out a few twenty-pound notes.</i>
155	Oliver	There. Keep the change. Just go.
156	Man	(counting the money) I need to get out of this.
157	Oliver	No. You really must go. It's important to me.
158	Man	I'm not travelling on the fucking Victoria line dressed up as a Nazi.
159	Oliver	You know where it is. Just be quick. Please.

		<i>The Man takes his bag and starts walking towards the bathroom, then turns around.</i>
160	Man	He's not coming back to you.
161	Oliver	Fucking get dressed.
		<i>The Man exits. Philip returns carrying a small suitcase.</i>
162	Philip	Got it.
163	Oliver	Great.
164	Philip	I'll be off.
165	Oliver	No.
		<i>Pause.</i>
166	Oliver	Please. Just wait. Just for a minute. A drink. That's all. Promise.
167	Philip	Not a good idea.
168	Oliver	Please.
169	Philip	You have company.
170	Oliver	Oh, him.
171	Philip	Yes.
172	Oliver	He's just... he's...
173	Philip	You needn't explain.
174	Oliver	Friend of Nick's. Fancy dress. Fancy-dress party. On his way to Nick's. Had a drink. That's all. He's leaving.
175	Philip	Nick's in Brazil.
176	Oliver	Of course he is. I know that.
177	Philip	For fuck's sake.
178	Oliver	I know Nick's in Brazil.
179	Philip	For fuck's sake. Oliver.
180	Oliver	Yes.
		<i>Pause.</i>
181	Oliver	Please. Please just stay for a minute. Fifteen minutes. That's all.
		<i>Pause.</i>
182	Philip	That Man.
183	Oliver	Yes.
184	Philip	That Man is wearing a Nazi uniform.
185	Oliver	I know. Weird, isn't it?
186	Philip	You must wonder sometimes to yourself: what's next?
187	Oliver	Yes. I do. I do.
		<i>Pause.</i>
188	Oliver	Please stay.
189	Philip	I don't want to.
190	Oliver	Please.
		<i>Pause.</i>
191	Oliver	The cupboards look empty.
192	Philip	What?
193	Oliver	What I'm saying is I hadn't quite realised how Many clothes you had.
194	Philip	Oh.
195	Oliver	All of a sudden they look empty.
		<i>Pause.</i>
196	Oliver	You look well.
197	Philip	I haven't changed.
198	Oliver	No.
199	Philip	It's been three days. Oliver. People don't change in three days.
200	Oliver	Feels like longer. You look different.
201	Philip	Yes.
202	Oliver	Like I've lost you.
		<i>Pause.</i>
203	Oliver	The thing is. Philip, I'm not sure I can live without you.
		<i>The Man returns from the bathroom dressed in his own clothes and carrying his bag.</i>
204	Man	It's still pissing it down.
205	Oliver	Right.
		<i>The Man walks over to the table and drinks down what's left of his Scotch. Oliver and Philip just watch him.</i>
206	Man	I don't actually mind the job. For the most part. You meet some interesting people. And there's definitely variety. I'd never be any good at the whole office thing. Hours and hours behind a desk staring at a computer screen. And I don't even mind travelling around London on the Tube and walking around in the pissing rain. But you do expect to be treated with a modicum of respect.
		<i>He walks towards the door.</i>

207	Man	I'm not asking for much, am I? I suppose it's what everybody's after. The thing is this, you see. I'm not a piece of furniture or a wind-up doll. I'm a huMan being. And I deserve to be treated as one. You can't just discard me like a piece of rubbish. I may dress up for your entertainment but I do have feelings, is what I'm saying. (To Philip.) Nice to meet you.
		<i>He exits. A pause. Just the sound of the rain.</i>
208	Oliver	Some people.
209	Philip	I better go.
		<i>Oliver rushes to the bottle of Scotch. Pours him one.</i>
210	Oliver	Just the one.
		<i>Philip takes it reluctantly.</i>
211	Oliver	Sit. Five minutes. Then you go.
		<i>They sit. Pause.</i>
212	Oliver	Had Sylvia on the phone this morning. Trying to console me. Bless.
213	Philip	How is she?
214	Oliver	Sylvia? Oh. Sylvia's fine. 'I'll come by on Saturday.' she says. 'Come by with Mario. We'll go to Pride. Have a laugh.'
215	Philip	Pride?
216	Oliver	On Saturday. I said... I said. 'I don't know if I'll be in the mood. Philip's gone. I don't... I don't know if he's coming back.'
217	Philip	I'm not. Oliver.
218	Oliver	That's what I said to her. I said. 'Sylvia, I don't think he's coming back.' 'Well, you can't just sit there.' she said. 'Sit there being sad. We have to get you out. Out of the house. Cheer you up.'
219	Philip	What did you say?
220	Oliver	I said, 'It's going to take a bit more than a park full of fairies to cheer me up.'
		<i>Pause.</i>
221	Oliver	I didn't love him, Philip. The American guy. I didn't love him.
222	Philip	I don't want to talk about it.
223	Oliver	It's not love. I love you.
224	Philip	I'm going.
225	Oliver	No.
		<i>Pause.</i>
226	Oliver	Okay. Here goes. There are things about myself that I don't understand. Things I want to but can't. It's as if it's something in me. Something in my DNA.
227	Philip	For fuck's sake.
228	Oliver	With you it's different. With you it's love.
229	Philip	You lied to me.
230	Oliver	It didn't mean anything. The other thing. You know that.
231	Philip	So why did you do it?
232	Oliver	Because I need it.
233	Philip	You lied to me.
234	Oliver	I know.
235	Philip	Over and over again.
236	Oliver	Yes.
237	Philip	Fucking lying all the time. A year and a half of lies.
238	Oliver	D'you remember when we met?
239	Philip	It's as if I don't know you.
240	Oliver	At that party.
241	Philip	As if I don't know who the fuck you are.
242	Oliver	At Sylvia's party.
243	Philip	Of course I fucking remember.
244	Oliver	She knew we'd get on. She knew we'd fancy each other. There's this photographer, she said. Always travelling. You'll like him, she said.
245	Philip	I've got to go.
246	Oliver	You'd just got back from Israel.
247	Philip	The West Bank.
248	Oliver	Yes...
249	Philip	So?
250	Oliver	So we talked. About your trip. About the photographs you'd taken.
251	Philip	Why the fuck are you saying this now?
252	Oliver	I wonder what happened to that woman.
253	Philip	What woman?
254	Oliver	The one you talked about. The one whose photograph you'd taken. The Palestinian woman.
255	Philip	Oliver.
256	Oliver	You spent an hour describing her. You said her eyes were the blackest you'd ever seen and the most demanding.
257	Philip	Fucking hell.
258	Oliver	Her son had died.
259	Philip	Why the fuck are you saying all this?
260	Oliver	And I asked you what they were demanding.

261	Philip	So?
262	Oliver	And you said they were demanding the dignity that comes with being heard. Not responded to. Just heard. The dignity that comes with being heard. The privilege of having a voice.
263	Philip	For fuck's sake.
264	Oliver	That's when I recognised something in you.
		<i>Pause.</i>
265	Philip	I'm leaving.
266	Oliver	I felt a connection with you. There. At the party. And then here, when we came back. And now, I feel it now. I feel it now, Philip.
		<i>Pause.</i>
267	Oliver	And I think it's rare.
268	Philip	You're a cunt, Oliver. You're a stupid, stupid cunt.
269	Oliver	Thank you.
270	Philip	You're welcome.
		<i>Pause.</i>
271	Philip	A month and a half after we met, you fucking shagged someone.
272	Oliver	I know.
273	Philip	I was in Brussels. The night before I went we were together. In that fucking bed. You saying I've never loved anyone like this. Then you drove me to Waterloo.
274	Oliver	I know.
275	Philip	Eight - what? - ten hours after that, you're sucking someone else's dick.
276	Oliver	I know.
277	Philip	What's that about, Oliver? What's that about?
278	Oliver	I don't know.
279	Philip	To be fair, you told me. You said, 'I've done this thing. I don't know why but I've done this thing.'
280	Oliver	I did tell you.
281	Philip	I've sucked a man's dick,' you said. In the park.'
282	Oliver	I told you.
283	Philip	'I could hardly see him,' you said. As if that made a difference. 'I could hardly see his face.'
284	Oliver	It was dark.
285	Philip	'I could hardly see his face.' You said that like it would make me feel better.
		<i>Pause.</i>
286	Philip	The fact is, it depresses me. There. I've said it. The reason I can't stay with you. It depresses me.
287	Oliver	Depresses you?
288	Philip	I did think about it. I thought maybe there's something wrong with me. Maybe I'm a fucking prude. A puritan. God knows. Maybe I should be a fucking priest. He never saw his face, I kept thinking. Sucked his dick, maybe...
289	Oliver	Philip -
290	Philip	Sucked his dick, maybe, but never saw his face. Perhaps I'm the one who has the problem. They're not out on a date, they're not spooning, they're not planning their fucking holidays together, all they're doing is sucking each other off in a park. But it bothered me.
291	Oliver	It's not your problem.
292	Philip	It's because we're men, I thought. That's what they say, isn't it? It's because we're men. It's not a gay thing. It's a Man thing. Men need it.
293	Oliver	That's what they say.
294	Philip	But all I know is what I felt. And that night, when I got back from Brussels, after you'd told me, I just lay in bed and looked at the ceiling. And I felt the loneliest I'd ever felt in my life.
295	Oliver	I'm sorry.
		<i>Pause.</i>
296	Oliver	Sylvia's got that job.
297	Philip	What job?
298	Oliver	That job she went up for. The Shakespeare. She said it's a break. The lead. Viola. Twelfth Night. Stratford.
299	Philip	She deserves it.
300	Oliver	And Mario. The Italian boyfriend. It seems to be good. They're in love. He's a good man, she says. And very, very straight.
301	Philip	Good.
		<i>Pause.</i>
302	Oliver	I don't know what it is about me, Philip. Something about my name. It feels as if someone's calling me by my name.
303	Philip	What are you talking about?
304	Oliver	The name I respond to. Like the other night. I'm walking by the gay place on the corner.
305	Philip	Right.
306	Oliver	And I'm walking by it and I'm thinking, you need to go home, you need to work. Had to write a piece for the Mail on God knows what. The end of the world is nigh, that kind of thing. And I'm walking by the pub and it's as if this voice is calling my name.
307	Philip	Your name?
308	Oliver	As if this voice knows my name. So I walk in. Coz this voice is calling me by my name. Have a couple of drinks. And there's a guy there... and he's not even good-looking. Actually, come to think of it, he's actively quite ugly. And you can smell the beer. You're six feet away from him and you can smell it. Wafting off his breath. And he's got a look in his eyes and he's looking at me as if he knows my name too. He's a bit pissed and he's leering... I mean leering, and I'm thinking, God, you're really kind of gross and next thing you know I'm actually standing next to him and he's telling me he's married and his wife's at her mother's for the week and he's kind of talking to me and rubbing his groin at the same time...
309	Philip	I'm not sure I want to hear the rest of this.
310	Oliver	And the next thing I know we're in a cubicle. And I'm on my knees.

		<i>Pause.</i>
311	Philip	Thanks for that.
312	Oliver	It's an addiction is what I'm trying to say.
313	Philip	An addiction.
		<i>Pause.</i>
314	Oliver	There's something I never told you.
315	Philip	I'm beginning to miss your economy with the truth.
316	Oliver	This thing that happened when I was young. Once, I must have been seventeen or something and I was staying at my aunt's. My mother's sister. The one you met.
317	Philip	Right.
318	Oliver	And this woman came by. A friend of hers. And I was on my way out. So my aunt introduced me to this woman and I said hi, how are you and all that and then ran out. But a minute later I realised I'd left something. My sweater or something. So I ran back in the house to get it and then I realised that the two women - my aunt and her friend - were talking about me. But they hadn't heard me come back in the house. And I stood there, rooted to the spot. And listened. I couldn't hear everything but then - then this thing happened. I heard my aunt saying something along the lines of, 'He's a good boy but a bit of a lost soul.' Actually, it wasn't along the lines of. It was her exact words. I heard them. 'He's a good boy but a bit of a lost soul.' And the weird thing is - the weirdest - was that even before she said it, I kind of knew what she was going to say, like I'd heard her speak the words before, like her saying it and me knowing what she was going to say was all kind of tied up. Happening at the same time. 'He's a good boy but a bit of a lost soul.'
		<i>Pause.</i>
319	Philip	I must leave.
320	Oliver	Yes.
321	Philip	I can't stay.
322	Oliver	No. You can't.
323	Philip	There is a part of you I'll always care about.
324	Oliver	Thank you.
325	Philip	But this other thing... this thing you call your addiction. I can't deal with it.
326	Oliver	No.
		<i>Pause.</i>
327	Philip	Okay.
328	Oliver	Yes. Yes. Okay.
		<i>Pause. Philip stands. Picks up the suitcase.</i>
329	Philip	I'm sorry. I really am.
330	Oliver	Don't go.
331	Philip	I have to.
		<i>Philip walks towards the door. He stops and turns to Oliver.</i>
332	Philip	I still don't know why I hung around as much as I did. I was thinking that on my way over. I mean, it's not as if I didn't know. And yet I kept... I kept at it. I believed in something. You. I don't know. I believed. I thought I knew you is what I think I'm saying.
		<i>He leaves. Oliver is left alone in the room. He stands and walks over to where the Scotch is to pour himself a drink. Then, suddenly he stops. There is a gesture - a move of the hand to the head, a bowing of the head, something - a gesture that suggests aloneness.</i>
		<i>He walks over to one of the light switches and turns off the lights. In semi-darkness, Sylvia emerges from the door that leads to the bedroom. She is wearing a dressing gown. The room reverts to its previous state. Oliver slowly drifts off, walking into the room that Sylvia has just entered from.</i>
1-3	1958	
		<i>Sylvia comes to sit on the sofa. After a few seconds, Philip enters. He too is wearing pyjamas and a dressing gown.</i>
1	Philip	There you are.
2	Sylvia	Darling.
3	Philip	I woke up. You weren't there.
4	Sylvia	I had a dream.
5	Philip	One of your nasty dreams, darling?
6	Sylvia	Yes.
7	Philip	All that Serbian food.
8	Sylvia	Probably.
		<i>He joins her on the sofa. They sit in silence for a few seconds.</i>
9	Sylvia	Did you enjoy yourself tonight?
10	Philip	I had a perfectly pleasant evening.
11	Sylvia	Did you?
12	Philip	Drank a little too much of that awful wine perhaps.
13	Sylvia	We all did.
14	Philip	But it was a nice enough evening.
		<i>Pause.</i>
15	Sylvia	You were quiet.
16	Philip	Was I?
17	Sylvia	Not to start off with. Not at the beginning of the evening.
18	Philip	I thought-
19	Sylvia	You were chatty before. In a good mood. But then during dinner you became quiet.
20	Philip	I'm sorry you thought I was quiet.
21	Sylvia	I didn't mean it like that. It wasn't a criticism. Just an observation.

22	Philip	An observation?
23	Sylvia	It didn't bother me... I just felt that you became slightly pensive. Melancholy.
24	Philip	That's a big word.
25	Sylvia	Maybe as if something was bothering you.
26	Philip	I was listening, that's all. I felt I didn't have all that much to contribute, but I'm sorry you thought I was an awful bore.
27	Sylvia	I didn't mean it like that.
28	Philip	No.
29	Sylvia	I wish I hadn't said anything now.
		<i>Pause.</i>
30	Sylvia	So you liked him then?
31	Philip	Liked whom?
32	Sylvia	Oliver, of course.
33	Philip	He seems like a nice enough chap.
34	Sylvia	Isn't he though?
35	Philip	I'm not sure that we have an awful lot in common, but he's a perfectly decent fellow.
36	Sylvia	Why do you say that?
37	Philip	Why do I say he's a perfectly decent fellow?
38	Sylvia	No, why do you say that you don't have a lot in common?
39	Philip	Because we don't. That seems clear enough.
40	Sylvia	I thought you'd get on.
41	Philip	Well, it's true, isn't it? I mean, the Man's a writer and all that. Very intelligent and outgoing, isn't he?
42	Sylvia	Whereas you...
43	Philip	Well, I'm nothing like him. really. There isn't an artistic bone in my body.
44	Sylvia	I don't know.
45	Philip	Anyway, what does it matter what I think of him? The point is the two of you get on famously and that's all that really matters.
46	Sylvia	Well, I wanted you to like each other.
47	Philip	And the work, of course. That's important.
48	Sylvia	Yes.
49	Philip	You seem to have discovered a way of understanding each other when it comes to the work and that's the most essential thing.
50	Sylvia	I suppose so.
51	Philip	So what I think of him is irrelevant, really.
52	Sylvia	Well, I wouldn't go that far.
53	Philip	The work is what matters.
		<i>Pause.</i>
54	Sylvia	You sound as if you loathed him.
55	Philip	I protest.
56	Sylvia	As if you absolutely hated him.
57	Philip	I can't win with you, can I?
58	Sylvia	Poor Oliver.
59	Philip	Why is it so important to you that I should like him.
60	Sylvia	I think he'd be upset.
61	Philip	Why is it so important?
62	Sylvia	If he even suspected how much you loathe him.
63	Philip	Now you're exaggerating.
64	Sylvia	How you detest him.
65	Philip	Why is it so important?
		<i>Pause.</i>
66	Philip	He has a Manner to him, that's all.
67	Sylvia	A 'Manner'?
68	Philip	That's all.
69	Sylvia	What sort of 'Manner'? How do you mean, he has a 'Manner'?
70	Philip	I can't put my finger on it.
71	Sylvia	What sort of 'Manner'?
72	Philip	I don't know. Just a Manner.
73	Sylvia	How do you mean?
74	Philip	We just don't have a lot in common.
		<i>Pause.</i>
75	Philip	I don't know about you but I'm very, very tired.
		<i>Pause.</i>
76	Sylvia	I think of you, my darling, sometimes.
77	Philip	That's reassuring.

78	Sylvia	No. I mean I think of you sometimes when you're at work. During the day, when I'm here. I'll be sitting in this very room, having my cup of tea or listening to the wireless. and I think of you at work. I see you in one of those large flats standing in the corner of the room in your brown suit as they look around. Then I see you locking those large doors behind you and walking down the road and back to the office.
79	Philip	What a strange thing to say.
80	Sylvia	And I think you must be lonely. Philip must be lonely.
81	Philip	What a strange and funny thing to say, my darling.
82	Sylvia	What you were saying tonight about not being happy in your work. About being envious of Oliver and me. I found it sad.
83	Philip	Oh, that.
84	Sylvia	And I thought about you and the things that make you happy.
85	Philip	You needn't worry about me, darling.
86	Sylvia	And I thought how terrible it will be if you never attain them. If you never hold close to you the things that really make you happy.
87	Philip	You needn't worry about me.
88	Sylvia	Is there anything sadder?
89	Philip	You're exaggerating.
90	Sylvia	Than a life lived like that?
91	Philip	You make me happy.
92	Sylvia	And even if Dr Marsden is right -
93	Philip	Darling.
94	Sylvia	Even if there isn't a reason -
95	Philip	We said we wouldn't-
96	Sylvia	Even if we can, and will -
97	Philip	Sylvia.
98	Sylvia	I'm wondering if that will -
99	Philip	We said we wouldn't.
100	Sylvia	If it will make a difference.
		<i>Pause.</i>
101	Sylvia	If having children will make a difference. To that.
		<i>Another pause. Philip stands.</i>
102	Philip	Maybe you did have too much wine.
103	Sylvia	We've never talked about it.
104	Philip	I think I'm going back to bed.
105	Sylvia	Please don't.
106	Philip	I'm tired. And tomorrow's a long day.
107	Sylvia	Please wait. Just for a moment.
108	Philip	I have to be up at seven.
109	Sylvia	Stay.
		<i>Pause.</i>
110	Sylvia	Please stay.
		<i>Pause.</i>
111	Sylvia	I should have felt relief when Dr Marsden said that he couldn't identify a reason we couldn't have children. He seemed to imply that if we just kept trying...
112	Philip	For God's sake, Sylvia...
113	Sylvia	But then I started to question why I wanted it so much. A child. Why it meant everything to me. The desperation. Sometimes, I prayed with my whole body. I would lie next to you in bed and pray with my whole body to feel it... the beginnings of it. The stirrings. A new life inside me. I was sure I'd know the very night it happened.
114	Philip	For God's sake.
115	Sylvia	And I thought it's natural, it's because I'm a woman. To be a mother. That's all. So I prayed and prayed and prayed.
116	Philip	What are you saying?
117	Sylvia	But then I realised that there was something else. I wanted a child because I was frightened of us being left alone, Philip. The two of us. Just us. Alone.
		<i>Pause.</i>
118	Sylvia	There was something I didn't tell you. Something that happened.
119	Philip	I don't understand you.
120	Sylvia	Do you remember that actor I worked with?
121	Philip	Not now. Not the way you're speaking to me.
122	Sylvia	Richard his name was. Richard Coveley.
123	Philip	Sometimes I simply don't understand you.
124	Sylvia	He was in The Cherry Orchard with me. You came to see it.
125	Philip	What about him?
126	Sylvia	He was tall and fair. He played Yepihodov.
127	Philip	I remember the play.
128	Sylvia	You met him. After the performMance one night we all went to have a drink together. We went to that little pub just off Shaftesbury Avenue. Do you remember?
129	Philip	Why are you telling me about this now?
130	Sylvia	I liked him. He was a kind Man. Unusual and quite private. But kind.
		<i>She pauses.</i>

131	Sylvia	You didn't like him very much. I remember you said you didn't like him.
132	Philip	That was years ago. I met the Man for a quick drink. There were Many other actors there. I can hardly remember. Why is it important all of a sudden what I thought of this one Man?
133	Sylvia	You took exception to him. You said, I think you said, 'I find him offensive.'
134	Philip	I honestly can't remember.
135	Sylvia	'He offends me,' you said.
136	Philip	What has this to do with anything?
137	Sylvia	You may have even called him Mannered. Like you did Oliver tonight. You may have said he had a 'Manner'.
138	Philip	I'm not quite sure of the significance of this conversation. But I'm very tired. Maybe you can explain to me in the morning what this is all about.
139	Sylvia	Three days ago I read in The Times that he had killed himself. I didn't tell you at the time. I don't know why. But I didn't.
140	Philip	Well, I'm sorry to hear it.
141	Sylvia	Maybe it's because I remembered that you hadn't liked him. That he'd offended you in some way.
142	Philip	You've obviously been very affected by it.
143	Sylvia	He hung himself. There'd been a scandal. A court case. Gross indecency, that sort of thing.
144	Philip	I see.
145	Sylvia	I think he was homosexual. I think Richard Coveley must have been a homosexual.
		<i>Pause.</i>
146	Sylvia	When I read it I just thought of that night. Of why it was that you seemed to take such a dislike to him.
147	Philip	I can hardly remember the Man. He seems to have made a lasting impression on you, but I can hardly remember the Man. I'm very sorry that he's taken his own life and I'm sorry you seem to have been so upset by the whole affair but I hardly met the Man.
148	Sylvia	Why was it that you found him so repugnant?
149	Philip	I don't remember finding him repugnant. That's an exaggeration on your behalf. I found him mildly offensive, that's all. In a way that those men can often be offensive. Effeminate. I do recall him looking at me in a way I found overt.
150	Sylvia	But even if he did look at you, even if he did, why would you find that so objectionable?
151	Philip	This discussion is absurd. You seem intent on upsetting me.
152	Sylvia	I just couldn't fathom why it was that Richard Coveley disgusted you so. And that's why I didn't tell you.
153	Philip	This is wonderful. You're accusing me in some perverse way of being responsible for the death of a Man I met on one occasion for approximately twenty minutes.
154	Sylvia	I'm not accusing you of anything, Philip. I'm just asking you a question.
155	Philip	Well. I can't deny to you that I'm concerned. That you seem to have regressed.
156	Sylvia	I'm sorry you feel that way.
157	Philip	You're sounding alarmingly similar to what you sounded like before Devon.
158	Sylvia	Before my illness. That's what we decided to call it. wasn't it? My illness.
159	Philip	Are you finished?
160	Sylvia	As if it were a bad case of the flu.
161	Philip	Is there anything else you wish to discuss? Or am I free to go now?
162	Sylvia	I didn't mean to keep you here by force.
163	Philip	You asked me not to leave. You obviously felt a burning need to communicate these disparate and disturbing thoughts to me and I'm simply asking you if you've now finished.
164	Sylvia	Did Oliver offend you in the same way that Richard Coveley did?
165	Philip	If you're asking me if I think Oliver Henshaw is a homosexual, I really wouldn't know. I haven't given it a moment's thought. His private life after all is none of my business and neither do I think it should be any of yours. I will try and explain to myself your somewhat strange behaviour tonight by the fact that you have clearly been upset by this Man Coveley's death. This, combined with the possibility that you had a few too Many glasses of wine, can go some way to justifying what can only be described as an outburst of irrationality. Now if you'll excuse me I really do need to return to bed.
166	Sylvia	Goodnight, Philip.
167	Philip	Come to bed with me. You're tired.
168	Sylvia	In a little while.
		<i>Philip exits and Sylvia stays in the room alone. A few seconds pass and she slowly stands. She is about to follow him into the bedroom but then, suddenly, there is a gesture - an echo of Oliver'S gesture from the end of the previous scene. An anguish. She leaves the room.</i>
1-4 2008		
		<i>Oliver enters and sprawls out on the sofa, still in his dressing gown. By his side is a near-empty bottle of Scotch and a glass. The lights are dim. The television is on and the room is full of the sound of Big Brother or something similar; contemporary. Then there is a knock at the door. He doesn't stir. The knocking becomes louder, more determined. Eventually he crawls to the door to open it. Sylvia enters. She's carrying a bag of groceries.</i>
1	Sylvia	Fuck.
2	Oliver	Lovely to see you too.
3	Sylvia	I thought you'd slashed your fucking wrists.
4	Oliver	I have told you on numerous occasions that if I ever choose to follow the path to self-obliteration it will be noxious fumes.
		<i>She sweeps by him and disappears into the kitchen. She speaks the next few lines from offstage.</i>
5	Sylvia	You have fifteen minutes.
6	Oliver	How very generous you are with your time. It's a good thing we're such good friends.
7	Sylvia	Mario's just flown in. He's taking me out. And then I'm staying at his. Call me old-fashioned but I've missed him.
8	Oliver	Sweet.
9	Sylvia	I bought you food. Avocado mousse. Organic feta. Madagascan vanilla yogurt. Basics.
10	Oliver	Thanks, Mum.
11	Sylvia	I'm having a beer.

12	Oliver	Help yourself.
		<i>She reappears at the kitchen door, beer in hand.</i>
13	Sylvia	You look like shite.
14	Oliver	Funny, I thought there was a portrait in the attic doing that for me.
15	Sylvia	What happened?
		<i>Pause.</i>
16	Oliver	He said I depress him.
17	Sylvia	You depress him.
18	Oliver	The anonymous sex thing. He said it depressed him.
19	Sylvia	Okay.
20	Oliver	So I told him it's not the same thing. I mean, when we're together... when I'm with Philip, that's different. But you know the other stuff, the park, the sauna, the internet, whatever, that stuff...
21	Sylvia	The slut stuff.
22	Oliver	The slut stuff, thank you. that's not the same. It's kind of... what's it like, it's kind of like going to the loo. Only with someone else.
23	Sylvia	Like going to the loo with someone else.
24	Oliver	Exactly.
		<i>Sylvia pauses. Her phone is vibrating.</i>
25	Sylvia	Excuse me, I'm feeling a vibration in my nether regions.
26	Oliver	Lucky you.
		<i>She takes out the phone and checks to see who it is.</i>
27	Oliver	Is that Pesto-breath?
28	Sylvia	Racist.
		<i>She answers it.</i>
29	Sylvia	(On the phone.) Hi. Welcome back. How was the trip?...
30	Oliver	Say hi from me.
31	Sylvia	Good... no. I'm fine. I missed you. I'm at Oliver's.
32	Oliver	Say hi.
33	Sylvia	Ollie says hi. Hello back. Yup. Okay. I won't be long.
34	Oliver	He's eating into my time.
		<i>Sylvia makes a face at Oliver, telling him to shut up.</i>
35	Sylvia	I haven't got the car, I'll take the Tube. (She looks at her watch.) I can be there by nine. Or nine-thirty at the latest.
36	Oliver	Tell him he's eating into my fifteen minutes.
37	Sylvia	(to Oliver, with her hand covering her mobile). Please shut up. (On the phone again.) That sounds nice. Yummy. I'll see you then -call you from Hammersmith. Ciao. Welcome back. Ti amo.
		<i>She turns it off.</i>
38	Oliver	'Ti amo'?
39	Sylvia	Shut up.
40	Oliver	Vintage Cartland.
		<i>Pause.</i>
41	Sylvia	Okay, so let me try and get into Philip's mind here. Figure out what it is... what it might be that depresses him.
42	Oliver	Be my guest.
43	Sylvia	Okay, here goes.
44	Oliver	I'm all ears.
45	Sylvia	Okay, so you're walking through a park, it is night-time and then suddenly you see this guy.
46	Oliver	I'm with you.
47	Sylvia	And he is gorgeous. I mean gorgeous. And he takes his dick out.
48	Oliver	I like it.
49	Sylvia	And it is big. I mean big. And he is waving it, nay, brandishing it in your face. And your urge -
50	Oliver	My urge is to get down on my knees and give him satisfaction.
51	Sylvia	Your urge, as you so succinctly put it, is to kneel down and give him satisfaction. But stop. Newsflash. You find out, after you've seen his Man-tool but before you do the actual kneelingdown bit, you find out through some psychic newsflash something about him. A few facts. I don't know. Someone tells you this Man is a racist. Or he sells crack to fourteen-year-olds. Do you still suck his dick? Do you still give him satisfaction?
		<i>A pause as Oliver thinks about it.</i>
52	Oliver	When you say big, how big?
53	Sylvia	Be serious. Do you suck his dick?
54	Oliver	Probably.
		<i>A short pause.</i>
55	Sylvia	I'm siding with Philip on this one.
56	Oliver	It's not like we're having a conversation. I'm not endorsing his world view. It's not like I'm saying of course I agree with you that the Holocaust never happened. I'm just sucking his dick, for God's sake. I'm not voting for him.
57	Sylvia	Definitely with Philip on this one.
58	Oliver	Anyway, the point is you pick the worst possible scenario. You say this Man is a freak and kills babies. Whatever. That's the exception. I mean, most of these men. most of the men in the saunas or whatever, are like you and me. I mean, why did you have to choose a fascist freak? Why couldn't it be a concert pianist who gives all his money to the Save the Children fund?

59	Sylvia	It could be. But the point is - and I've got a feeling that this is the detail that depresses Philip - the point is you don't know. You don't know whose dick you're sucking.
60	Oliver	Whatever.
		<i>Pause.</i>
61	Oliver	Are we playing the honesty game?
62	Sylvia	I hope so.
63	Oliver	The honest truth?
64	Sylvia	And nothing but.
65	Oliver	However unattractive?
66	Sylvia	That's what friends are for.
67	Oliver	In that case the honest truth is that not only I'd do it, I mean the cock-sucking thing, but I kind of really like it. The example, I mean. What you chose. Kind of turns me on.
68	Sylvia	I knew you'd say that.
69	Oliver	The fact is - oh, fuck, fuck, fuck, I wasn't going to tell you this, but when Philip came round, there was a Man here and he was, fuck, I don't know how to say this...
70	Sylvia	Just try.
71	Oliver	Well, he was a Nazi.
72	Sylvia	A Nazi? You had a Nazi over?
73	Oliver	Not a real Nazi.
74	Sylvia	How d'you mean, 'not a real Nazi'?
75	Oliver	A make-believe one.
76	Sylvia	A make-believe Nazi.
77	Oliver	I mean, you know, from the internet. So they have these various costumes and you choose one and then they come over and... well, it's roleplay, really.
78	Sylvia	Roleplay.
79	Oliver	I mean, you can have anything. A fireMan. An air pilot. A plumber.
80	Sylvia	But you chose a Nazi.
81	Oliver	And you roleplay. You know, kinky stuff. It's not serious. It's fantasy land.
82	Sylvia	Okay, so. What's your part? I mean, he's a Nazi, but what are you? A Viking?
83	Oliver	No, I'm just me.
84	Sylvia	You?
85	Oliver	Yeah, he's a Nazi but I'm just me.
86	Sylvia	So you're in the middle of this roleplaying thing and Philip walks in on you.
87	Oliver	Kind of.
88	Sylvia	'Kind of'?
89	Oliver	Well, we'd stopped. I'd stopped it. We were just having a drink.
90	Sylvia	You were having a drink with the Nazi?
91	Oliver	Yes. And Philip came in.
92	Sylvia	That's not good.
93	Oliver	Thanks for that. I know.
		<i>Pause.</i>
94	Oliver	I was once looking through the personals in Gay Times. Long ago. Before Philip. And this one personal caught my eye. It went something like this: 'Gay Man, thirty-three, non-smoker, into bondage, rape simulation, leather, rubber, chains, rimming, felching. Looking for roMance.'
		That's my life.
95	Sylvia	And then you find someone.
96	Oliver	Why do I have to choose?
97	Sylvia	Maybe you don't. Maybe you just have to understand it.
		<i>Sylvia's phone makes a vibrating noise again.</i>
98	Sylvia	Excuse me. More vibrations.
		<i>It's a text. She reads it; smiles.</i>
99	Oliver	Is that the Italian again?
100	Sylvia	Might be. Shit. I've got to go.
		<i>He doesn't answer. She stands up and starts putting on her coat.</i>
101	Oliver	Sebastian called earlier. They've been given the green light for the magazine - the money's come through. Said it was going to do to gay literature what Marie Antoinette did for the guillotine. Widen its appeal.
102	Sylvia	'Literature'?
103	Oliver	Apparently they have the biggest names on board. BA, BMW, Gucci, Gap. You name it. The big boys. Everyone wants a piece of it.
104	Sylvia	Well, you guys are cool. And have disposable income.
105	Oliver	They're already floating ideas by me: a Tom Ford interview. A gay rich list.
106	Sylvia	Have they got a name?
107	Oliver	A name?
108	Sylvia	For the magazine.
109	Oliver	Blissful.
110	Sylvia	Okay.
111	Oliver	And something else too. Sebastian's recommended me for a one-off. Some lad-magazine editor wants to meet me tomorrow. I'm intrigued.

112	Sylvia	I'll call you in the morning.
113	Oliver	Anyway, it's all good. Salvation. Wash the Man right out of my hair. I need to keep busy. Otherwise...
114	Sylvia	Otherwise what?
115	Oliver	Otherwise I'm going under.
116	Sylvia	'Under'?
		<i>Pause.</i>
117	Oliver	I've never been this bad. Not ever. I mean it.
118	Sylvia	Well, that should do the job. Blissful. And then there's your book, of course.
119	Oliver	Book?
120	Sylvia	Your fucking book, Oliver, remember?
121	Oliver	Oh, that.
122	Sylvia	I could have sworn you were writing a novel.
123	Oliver	So like you to bring it up.
124	Sylvia	Love. Life. Some sort of meaning. Or at least an effort to find it.
		<i>She moves towards the door. She opens it.</i>
125	Sylvia	We'll talk.
126	Oliver	I don't know what I want any more. But it's not good.
127	Sylvia	What isn't?
128	Oliver	I'm scared.
		<i>A pause, and then:</i>
129	Oliver	I mean, I'm sitting here and I'm joking with you, but I don't really see the point any more. And I have to figure it out. Otherwise...
130	Sylvia	Otherwise what?
131	Oliver	Who knows?
		<i>Pause.</i>
132	Oliver	I'm going to ask you the biggest favour. And it's not easy for me. But I have to do it. Just this once. Never again. You know I wouldn't. If I didn't have to.
		<i>Pause.</i>
133	Sylvia	Fuck.
134	Oliver	Stay with me. Just tonight. Please. Sylvia.
135	Sylvia	I can't.
136	Oliver	Just this once. Please. Please. Please.
137	Sylvia	No. Oliver.
138	Oliver	I'd never ask. You know that. Not if I didn't feel I had to. Not if I didn't feel -
139	Sylvia	Please don't do this.
140	Oliver	Not if I wasn't scared of me.
141	Sylvia	Scared of you?
142	Oliver	Of being left alone tonight. Of being me alone tonight.
		<i>A pause as she lets these words sink in.</i>
		<i>Philip enters in his 1958 clothes; a ghost. Sylvia can't see him and neither can Oliver, but his presence, somehow, is felt. He emerges from the shadows.</i>
143	Oliver	Somewhere inside me a feeling that... a kind of betrayal.
144	Sylvia	Betrayal?
145	Oliver	Yes.
146	Sylvia	You're the betrayer or the betrayed?
147	Oliver	Both. I don't know. Both.
148	Sylvia	Okay. Take a deep breath. Start again. Try and make sense. I mean, articulate, for God's sake, and then maybe, maybe, I can start to help you.
149	Oliver	I'm trying, you shit.
150	Sylvia	Try harder.
151	Oliver	I keep returning to this one same place. So I have to figure it out.
152	Sylvia	What same place?
153	Oliver	And I'm not threatening to wake up a born-again Christian or a Muslim or God knows what. Or shave off my hair and walk around Soho singing 'Hare Krishna'. But something needs to happen, some sort of realisation. Because otherwise, well, fuck me, it's untenable.
154	Sylvia	What is?
155	Philip	Oliver.
156	Oliver	The voice.
157	Sylvia	What voice?
158	Oliver	The voice that says -
159	Philip	Oliver-
160	Oliver	You're no good -
161	Philip	Oliver-
162	Oliver	You're unlovable -
163	Philip	Oliver -
164	Oliver	This is what you deserve.
		<i>Pause. Philip stands back into the shadows.</i>

165	Sylvia	I'll call Mario.
166	Oliver	I'm so sorry.
167	Sylvia	So am I.
168	Oliver	Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
169	Sylvia	I don't know why. I don't know how -
170	Oliver	Thank you so much.
171	Sylvia	- how you do it.
172	Oliver	And then tomorrow you can spend the whole day with him. Morning, afternoon, evening.
173	Sylvia	Thank you. For your permission, I mean. How generous.
174	Oliver	Don't be mean.
		<i>Pause.</i>
175	Sylvia	I'm having another beer.
176	Oliver	I'll get you one. Make yourself comfortable. Mia casa. tua casa.
		<i>He goes to the kitchen. Sylvia sits.</i>
177	Sylvia	I can't keep doing this, you know. Ollie. Being here for you. Not like this. It's not fair. On either of us. I need to say that.
178	Oliver	I'll never forget this.
		<i>Pause. The sound of him opening a drawer and then a bottle.</i>
179	Sylvia	The irony is that Mario can't wait to meet you. I talk about you all the time. He said he wants to come to Pride on Saturday. He's only ever been to the one in Rome. He swears he saw a priest throwing an egg but I think that's just his own brand of antiCatholic propaganda. Did I tell you he wants to have a baby? I said, 'Not until I meet your mother.' Her name's Filomena. Can you believe it? Filomena. Sounds like a bloody volcano. Apparently, her gnocchi is to die for.
		<i>Pause. She stands and walks over to the door that leads to the kitchen just as Philip emerges again from the shadows and comes to sit in the chair she has just left.</i>
180	Sylvia	The thing is you need to sort it out yourself is what I'm saying.
		<i>Philip stares ahead as if lost in his own thoughts. There is a knocking at the door. He ignores it for some time - it persists. Then, slowly, he stands up and walks towards the door just as Sylvia disappears into the kitchen. Philip opens the door and Oliver is standing there in his 1958 clothes. He is in a raincoat and soaking wet.</i>
1-5 1958		
1	Philip	Hello.
2	Oliver	I'm sorry.
3	Philip	You're drenched.
4	Oliver	Yes.
		<i>Pause.</i>
5	Oliver	I wasn't planning to come. We said...
6	Philip	We said we wouldn't meet.
7	Oliver	I know.
8	Philip	We said we'd try not to talk to each other.
9	Oliver	Yes.
10	Philip	I think we both agreed it wasn't a good idea.
11	Oliver	I know.
		<i>Pause.</i>
12	Philip	You're drenched.
13	Oliver	I was absent-minded.
14	Philip	Soaking.
15	Oliver	I left my umbrella in the library.
16	Philip	Well, you'd better come in.
		<i>Oliver enters. He hovers.</i>
17	Oliver	I'm sorry.
18	Philip	Sylvia's in Wimbledon staying with a friend. She'll be back tomorrow.
19	Oliver	I know. We spoke on the telephone. That's why I came.
20	Philip	I don't think it's a good idea.
21	Oliver	I needed to talk to you, Philip.
22	Philip	I didn't realise there was anything else to say.
23	Oliver	Just one last time. And then I won't bother you.
		<i>Pause.</i>
24	Philip	Well, you'd better have a seat.
25	Oliver	Thank you.
		<i>They sit facing each other. There is a long pause before Oliver starts talking.</i>
26	Oliver	I wanted...
27	Philip	What?
28	Oliver	Nothing. I thought... I hoped...
29	Philip	You hoped what?
		<i>Pause.</i>
30	Oliver	I walked across the park. It was pouring with rain. I was forgetful. I'd been in the library. Trying to write. But I couldn't. I couldn't write. So I left. To come here. But I forgot my umbrella.
31	Philip	Yes.

32	Oliver	I couldn't... I know we said... but I couldn't...
33	Philip	You couldn't do what?
34	Oliver	All my life I've been waiting for some sort of confirmation that I'm not alone.
35	Philip	Yes.
36	Oliver	When it comes, when that confirmation comes, you can't... I can't -I had to come here. And see you. I'm sorry.
37	Philip	For God's sake.
		<i>Pause.</i>
38	Oliver	It's funny. I thought I knew.
39	Philip	Knew what?
40	Oliver	Knew what it meant to be lonely. To be alone. I thought I knew.
41	Philip	What do you mean?
42	Oliver	But now. Now I know.
		<i>A long pause.</i>
43	Philip	What is it you want to say to me?
44	Oliver	That I love you.
45	Philip	Please don't say that again. I find it absurd.
46	Oliver	I have no choice. It isn't a choice.
47	Philip	We agreed. You said... I asked you not to talk like that.
48	Oliver	I love you so much.
49	Philip	Stop saying those words.
50	Oliver	At night, I can't sleep. I see your face. I hear your voice.
51	Philip	Stop it.
52	Oliver	When we were together, the last time, when we were together it did feel, didn't it, as if... as if. Did it not feel to you as if all of a sudden, everything, everything you were and are...
53	Philip	No.
54	Oliver	I miss you.
55	Philip	I'd rather you left.
56	Oliver	No. Please. One moment. Please let me stay for a moment.
		<i>Pause.</i>
57	Oliver	These four months... I understood something.
58	Philip	You understood what?
59	Oliver	I used to think it was just a sexual lust. A physical need. A deviation.
60	Philip	It is a deviation.
61	Oliver	That if I met the right girl, that if I married, if I had children, the physical need, the sexual need would stop.
62	Philip	It is a deviation.
63	Oliver	That it would go away. That I could fight it.
64	Philip	That's right.
65	Oliver	But then, when I met you...
66	Philip	You can fight it.
67	Oliver	I knew it was more than that.
		<i>Pause.</i>
68	Oliver	That it was everything I am. Not something I can put away. Not just one part of me.
		<i>Pause.</i>
69	Oliver	When we were together. The times we met. All those times. When we talked.
70	Philip	We've been over this.
71	Oliver	I realised that it was more. And that what I slowly learnt...
72	Philip	For God's sake...
73	Oliver	Was that what happens between two people can be sacred. And important. And that it doesn't matter who those two people are.
		<i>Pause.</i>
74	Oliver	I remember being a boy. I remember having this dark, secret knowledge of what I pined for. Of who I was. It kept me up at nights. I was terrified. Everything, every one, told me it was wrong.
75	Philip	It is wrong.
76	Oliver	I thought so too. I believed that if the whole world told me so, the whole world must be right. Who was I to question that?
77	Philip	I don't see what it is you're trying to say.
78	Oliver	I'm saying that when I met you. when I fell in love with you... I knew that it was true. That the world was wrong. That what I felt was honest and pure and good.
		<i>Pause.</i>
79	Oliver	There was a place. In the park. Where certain men went.
		<i>Pause.</i>
80	Philip	I don't want to hear this.
81	Oliver	I went... there was this one Man and he... I didn't know him. He didn't know me. We barely talked. Just a word. We didn't even really look at each other. And then... then it was as if I wasn't quite there. It was over in a couple of minutes.
82	Philip	I think you should leave, Oliver.

83	Oliver	But then when I... when we... it wasn't, it isn't the same. Because, you see, there was something else, Philip. We had spoken and I felt that I knew something of who you were. Your fears. Your loneliness. Your wants. I saw in your eyes, that you too, like me, are a good man.
84	Philip	A good man?
85	Oliver	Yes, Philip, a good man. A good man. A good man. And it was the first time, when we were together, when we were embracing that I felt that I had a pride. A pride for the person I was.
86	Philip	Is this what you needed to tell me?
87	Oliver	Yes, I suppose it is. I suppose I needed to tell you that what happened between us is not the same thing. Not the same as that place I went to.
88	Philip	It is the same. You're deceiving yourself. It's wrong.
89	Oliver	And I thought that some of those men. if only you had seen them you would know what I mean, that some of those men, hovering, waiting in that dim flickering light, some of those men would also choose this, that maybe that's what many of them want, but because they don't know where... how to find it, and because they have been told that this is who they are, that they are these men who stand waiting to touch someone, to touch another man's skin, that they've believed that's all they are, but that what they want, what they really want is more than that, what they want is what we can have... an intimacy with someone they can hold onto for a while.
90	Philip	Have you finished?
91	Oliver	Because from the minute I met you it felt as if you were the only person who had ever known my real name.
92	Philip	How do you mean?
93	Oliver	As if we spoke the same language.
		<i>Pause.</i>
94	Philip	But I don't feel the same way, Oliver.
95	Oliver	Don't you?
96	Philip	No, Oliver, I don't. I don't. I don't.
		<i>Pause.</i>
97	Philip	You see, Oliver, I love Sylvia. And Sylvia loves me. We're a couple and we love each other. What happened... I mean, what happened between us, between you and me, Oliver, between the two of us, that was simply a mistake. Call it what you will. A moment of weakness. A weakness. That's all.
98	Oliver	But you said -
99	Philip	I may have said many things, Oliver, but unfortunately I probably didn't mean them. You see, I wasn't being myself. I was like a Man possessed. I want you to understand though that I hold nothing against you. No rancour, no spite. I have some affection for you. I believe you are a decent Man. I don't believe you influenced me or tempted me in any way or that your motives were malicious. I was as responsible as you were. We both made a mistake. That's all. I wish you well. Oliver. There are no hard feelings. But the memory of what happened... now that I seem to have regained my senses, the memory of what happened between us, of the things that happened between us, that memory fills me with shame. And disgust.
100	Oliver	Disgust?
101	Philip	You came here today to persuade me that what we felt for each other, what you felt for me was noble and pure.
102	Oliver	I did.
103	Philip	Well, you can feel that for me as a friend. And I can do likewise. I can like you and respect you. try to respect you, as a friend. But the other thing... that thing that you talk about... that place, those people.
104	Oliver	What about them?
105	Philip	That place... the one you so eloquently described, Oliver. They are not like me and I am not like them. If you want me to be honest, Oliver, if you want to know the honest truth, I despise them. That isn't too strong a word. I have to be honest with you. I pity and despise them. I've seen them... I see them, I notice them in a crowd, on a bus, on the street and they disgust me. The way they walk, the way they look at you, all in the same way. I'm not like that, Oliver. And I don't think you are either. So we must put this behind us. It's for the best. I promise you it's for the best.
106	Oliver	Is it?
107	Philip	One day you'll thank me. You'll understand that I did this to protect you in some way. From yourself. You'll understand that in my own, strange way it was my gift to you. My parting gift.
		<i>A long pause.</i>
108	Oliver	I suppose I should leave.
109	Philip	Yes.
		<i>Pause.</i>
110	Oliver	She knows, Philip.
111	Philip	Knows what?
112	Oliver	She knows everything. About you. She knows everything about you, Philip.
113	Philip	How do you mean?
114	Oliver	About what keeps you up at night. About the stirrings of your heart. The Many things you're frightened of. The lonely thoughts you have. And you have to now - because you will not be offered another opportunity - you have to now ask yourself why it is you repay her with the worst possible deception. And I'm not talking about us. About what happened between us. I'm talking about the opposite - I'm talking about your refusal to acknowledge it for what it really is.
115	Philip	Please don't talk about Sylvia to me.
116	Oliver	Why not?
117	Philip	I don't want her talked about in this way. Between us, like this. I don't want us to discuss the subject of my wife.
118	Oliver	Do you honestly think it's easy for me? I care about her. Deeply.
119	Philip	I don't want to talk about it.
120	Oliver	But then I understood that this is what she wanted. Not this. Not how things are now. But us. The meeting. That is what she wanted.
121	Philip	You're insane.
122	Oliver	She brought us together, Philip. I know that she brought us together.
123	Philip	You're mad.
124	Oliver	Maybe not consciously, maybe not in full awareness of what she was doing. But I can put my hand on my heart and swear that Sylvia brought us together.
		<i>Pause.</i>
125	Oliver	I wonder when you first started thinking of emigrating.
126	Philip	Emigrating?
127	Oliver	Yes. Emigrating. You mentioned it. The night I met you. Sylvia said the flat was strewn with books on Africa.

128	Philip	What has that to do with anything?
129	Oliver	So I was wondering when it was that you started having that dream. Seventeen, eighteen, when? Maybe when you were becoming a Man. Discovering yourself. Who you really were and what it was you wanted from your life. The open plains, you thought. The open plains of Africa. Not a bad place I can see you there. This country is small. You need somewhere bigger. Somewhere to breathe. So you set off. I can see you. You said you never got further than Brighton, but I can see you miles, miles away. Across the cold waters of the Channel, down across the Mediterranean, down in Africa where you long to be. What are you doing there? Farming? Hunting game? Teaching? I suppose it doesn't really matter. In that sort of place, under that kind of sky you'll eventually discover what it is you're there for. In your own time.
130	Philip	Oliver.
131	Oliver	I won't see you again then.
132	Philip	No.
133	Oliver	That's what you want.
134	Philip	That's what we both need. To continue. To return to things as they were.
135	Oliver	So what is the point?
136	Philip	The point?
137	Oliver	What is the point of this stupid, painful life if not to be honest? If not to stand up for what one is in the core of one's being?
138	Philip	I don't know. I don't know.
139	Oliver	Something's happened to me, Philip. I can't go back. Not to how things were before.
140	Philip	What do you mean?
141	Oliver	Don't worry, I'm not expecting you to come with me. I'm not expecting anything any more. Not from you.
142	Philip	I'm sorry.
143	Oliver	You're weak, Philip.
144	Philip	I wasn't...
145	Oliver	What?
146	Philip	It isn't that...
147	Oliver	Tell me.
148	Philip	No. Nothing.
149	Oliver	Please tell me.
150	Philip	It isn't easy. It isn't easy.
		<i>Pause.</i>
151	Philip	I wish I'd never met you. I wish she'd never brought you here.
152	Oliver	Who are you?
153	Philip	I don't know. Not any more.
154	Oliver	You've never known. This was your chance to find out. But you're not strong enough. You'll die. Philip, not knowing who you are.
155	Philip	Be quiet.
156	Oliver	What a foolish, sad way to live a life.
		<i>Suddenly, Philip strikes him across the face. It is a reflex; the reaction of a cornered animal. Philip is as shocked as Oliver, who reels. There is some blood in the mouth.</i>
157	Philip	I'm sorry. Oh, God, I'm so sorry, Oliver I'm so sorry.
		<i>He moves towards him; Oliver flinches.</i>
158	Philip	Let me see.
		<i>Oliver lets him.</i>
159	Philip	I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry.
160	Oliver	It's all right. I'm fine.
161	Philip	I'm so sorry. I didn't... I'm so sorry...
162	Oliver	I'm fine. Really, I'm fine.
		<i>And then, Philip begins to cry. He collapses into Oliver's arms and begins to sob like a child.</i>
163	Philip	I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.
164	Oliver	It's all right, Philip, it's all right.
		<i>Oliver comforts him. Then, a kiss. But Oliver tries to remain tender. Philip has been taken over by something else - there is something urgent, aggressive stirring in him.</i>
165	Oliver	Wait. Philip, wait.
166	Philip	No.
		<i>A struggle of sorts as Philip pulls Oliver over towards the sofa - his movement becoming more violent. He begins to pull at their clothes.</i>
167	Oliver	No. Philip. Not like this. Not now. Not here. Wait.
168	Philip	Why not now? Why not here? It's what you want, isn't it? It's what you want me to be. isn't it?
		<i>Philip has become violent. He throws Oliver down. Oliver is resisting. Philip unzips his own trousers and has Managed to pull Oliver's halfway down. He mounts him with Oliver resisting at first, then succumbing. In just a few, frenzied seconds he has ejaculated and the noise he makes at the moment of orgasm is a terrible, anguished cry of release. They lie on the floor for some time - Philip hiding his face in shame, Oliver hiding his.</i>
		<i>Eventually, Philip stands. Quietly, methodically, he dresses and leaves the room. Oliver does not move. He is lying on the floor; his face down against it. Philip returns a minute or so later. He pours himself a drink and sits. He lights a cigarette. A moment passes.</i>
		<i>Slowly, painfully, Oliver gets up and begins to rearrange his clothing. A minute or two pass in complete silence.</i>
	Philip	I knew you should never have come here.
		<i>Pause.</i>
	Philip	I think you should leave. Oliver. This thing... this thing is... I want you to leave and never come back.
		<i>Oliver moves slowly across the room to the door. He does not look at Philip. He looks down at the floor. He opens the door, then pauses.</i>
	Oliver	I'm sorry... I...

		<i>He pauses, confused. As if trying to gather his thoughts.</i>
	Oliver	What I... the thing... I... was...
		<i>Pause.</i>
169	Oliver	I'm sorry. I thought I knew you.
		<i>He leaves the room, closing the door behind him.</i>
		<i>Philip does not move. He remains seated, drinking his whisky and smoking his cigarette.</i>
		<i>The lights gradually fade.</i>
		<i>End of Act One.</i>
ACT TWO		
2-1 2008		
		<i>An office. Behind the desk sits PETER. A bit of a wide boy. Oliver is sitting on the other side of the desk.</i>
1	PETER	So I'm talking to Seb Nichols and he says. 'If you're looking for a good queer writer. I know the best one in town.' Is that all right? I mean, using that word, the word 'queer', is that all right? No offence. I hope.
2	Oliver	No offence taken.
3	PETER	Coz you never fucking know, do you? I mean, if you're using the right word. I mean. I know the whole political correctness thing's over - what the hell was that about? - but I'm not the kind of guy who enjoys offending people. Thing is, you never know what the right word is. I thought the word queer might be to you guys what the N-word is to blacks. All right amongst yourselves, but...
4	Oliver	Queer's fine, queer's fine.
5	PETER	Pushing out the boundaries, that's What I'm talking about. I don't know if you happened to see the piece we did on Iraq.
6	Oliver	No, I missed that.
7	PETER	This young kid gets back from the war and he's lost both his fucking arms. And we follow him for a week, I mean, it's like his diary or something, you know, stuff like how his life has changed and all the shit he has to deal with, stuff like his girlfriend walking out on him, and little shit too, everyday things like using a cashpoint and how the fuck he gets from A to B and this piece is very moving, I mean, it pushes people's buttons, makes them think. Powerful.
8	Oliver	I'm sure.
9	PETER	Coz there's more to life than tits and arse, tits and arse, tits and arse with a little football thrown in for good measure. And I'm not saying we're gonna turn into the New StatesMan overnight, but we've got a wide readership out there, and most of them are impressionable young lads and. you know what they say, with power comes responsibility and all that.
10	Oliver	So they say.
11	PETER	Coz the thing is, Oliver, most of these lads just love sex. Fuck, most of them would fuck a pig. And you know what I'm saying about 'times are changing'. I mean, they are, believe me. The other night I'm out with all these mates and this one guy, his name's Dave and he's a bit of an arsehole but not a bad guy. and he's had a few and he's telling us about his trip to Thailand and he's left his girlfriend back at the Shangri-La or wherever the fuck they're staying at and he's walking the streets and feeling horny, as you do, and next thing you know he's having his dick sucked by a lady-boy. A fucking lady-boy. So he's telling us this and we're all fucking, 'You did what?' and he's saying, 'Best fucking blowjob I ever had,' and we're all taking the piss and everything and having a laugh, and two minutes after that we're all playing snooker again and the thing's forgotten. That wouldn't have happened ten years ago, times are changing, Dave would have kept that to himself. I mean, who gives a fuck these days? I mean, at the end of the day, Oliver, and forgive me if I sound crude, but if you've got a problem with it don't look down.
12	Oliver	Fair enough.
13	PETER	So I'm thinking, come on, let's push the boat out here, nothing to be afraid of, lads, we're all fucking huMan after all, and you don't have to fucking get married or anything. Time to say to these lads it's okay if you get turned on by it, and it's cool to be gay or whatever and fucking face your homophobia or get over it. So what I really want is a piece on gay sex, I don't mean all the details but kind of the whole thing of sex in public and that kind of thing, making them a bit jealous, you know, kind of saying, well, if you could just walk into a park or a fucking public loo any time of the day and there's these gorgeous girls just waiting to be shagged, wouldn't you be up for it? Kind of like gay sex for the straight Man.
14	Oliver	Gay sex for the straight Man.
15	PETER	So really what I want to do is a piece which will make them identify in some way and at the same time say, 'It's okay to be gay.' Change the way you think. Gay is cool. That kind of thing. These gay guys know what they want and they know how to get it. Innovators in various fields - music, fashion, fucking dogging. And just by putting that into the magazine - just by having it there - you are making people change their minds. Coz it's not every lad's magazine that does a piece on gay sex. It's what I was saying at the beginning - breaking down barriers.
16	Oliver	Yes.
17	PETER	And basically what I'm saying is, if I can do my job and do the right thing at the same time then that's a good thing. And breaking down barriers is a fucking important part of that. Coz you guys fucking deserve it.
		<i>Pause.</i>
18	PETER	I mean, you guys fucking fought for your rights. You had a lot of shit to fight against. A lot of fucking ignorance.
19	Oliver	Sure.
20	PETER	I'm not gonna deny to you, Oliver, that I've got a personal connection. I mean, to the whole gay thing. The gay cause, if you like. Had an uncle.
21	Oliver	Don't they all.
22	PETER	No, but I fucking did. Great bloke. Fucking ace. My mother's brother. Uncle Harry. Fucking lovely Man. Heart of gold. Couldn't hurt a fly. Worked for the council. Fucking AIDS got him.
23	Oliver	I'm sorry.
24	PETER	Seared on my memory. Fucking engraved. This one day. Last time I saw him. And he's dying. And I'm, what? Twelve, thirteen. And my mum takes me and my little bro to the Royal Free coz that's where he is. Some special ward and they don't really know what it is, I mean, they know it's AIDS but this was the early days, I mean, you didn't really know if you could catch it, how you could catch it, so my mum's like throwing the glasses away, you know the ones he's drunk out of after he's been to ours, not in front of him, of course, but after he's gone, and it sounds fucking ignorant but you didn't really know what was going on back then. So we get to the Royal Free, this special ward, like, and Uncle Harry's under this fucking sheet thing, like a special sheet with wires coming out of him and drips and stuff. Fucking mad. And he's on a ventilator coz he can't fucking breathe and it's making this noise, I mean, enough to drive you mad, this kind of wheezing noise, like the sound of death. Never seen anything like it. And it's all a bit weird and I lean forward and I'm a bit freaked out by the whole thing and my mum's saying. 'Say hello to your Uncle Harry,' but what she really means is, 'Say goodbye to your Uncle Harry,' coz we all kind of know he's on his way out so I lean in and this fucking sheet thing is between us, but I look down and I see and. Fuck. Fucking hell. His eyes. Like every other part of him is dying but his eyes. Windows of the fucking soul. That kind of thing. Eyes full of fucking love. Breaks my fucking heart.
		<i>Pause.</i>
25	PETER	So we're turning around to go and there's this guy sitting there, a few feet away from us and he sees me and smiles and I'm a bit like, 'Who the fuck are you?' coz I'm twelve or whatever and don't know any better and my mum kind of drags us out of the place and I'm asking her who that guy was and she's like, 'That's your Uncle Harry's friend.' And later I found out that they've lived together for twenty-five years. Fucking twenty-five years. I mean, that's a long fucking time. I mean, that's fucking serious. So I'm asking my mum why we've never met him, how come we've never met Uncle Harry's friend before and she doesn't really have an answer. 'We just haven't,' she says. People are weird.

		<i>Pause.</i>
26	PETER	So that's my own personal connection. I mean, to the gay thing. Uncle Harry. I want to honour that.
27	Oliver	Thank you. I mean, thank you for sharing that.
28	PETER	So what I'm thinking, Oliver, it's been great to have this initial chat and I'll email you some more ideas. About the kind of thing I'm after. But the main thing is to keep it light. And kind of exciting.
29	Oliver	Exciting.
30	PETER	And you're all right about the money.
31	Oliver	Four grand.
32	PETER	Two up-front.
33	Oliver	Yes.
34	PETER	And two on completion.
35	Oliver	Great.
		<i>Blackout.</i>
2-2	1958	
		<i>The park. There is a bench. When the lights go up we find Oliver and Sylvia. They are standing. It is an autumn afternoon.</i>
1	Sylvia	Thank you for coming.
2	Oliver	It's a pleasure. It's been a long time.
3	Sylvia	I thought you might find it odd that I asked you to meet me here. In the park. But the weather is being so kind and it all looks...
4	Oliver	It looks beautiful.
5	Sylvia	And I needed to get out, really. I've been spending ever so much time at home these days. Sometimes you forget that there's a whole world out there. Other people.
6	Oliver	It's a lovely place to meet.
7	Sylvia	And what with Philip being away so much. He's very busy. All of a sudden, work seems to take up all of his time. So it's nice to get out.
8	Oliver	You look well.
9	Sylvia	Do I?
		<i>Pause.</i>
10	Sylvia	I walked by Hatchards the other day. Our book was in the window display. I felt so proud for a minute. So very, very proud.
11	Oliver	You should.
12	Sylvia	I do hope we get to work together again, Oliver. I hope that's not forward of me.
13	Oliver	Not at all.
14	Sylvia	Asking you, I mean. But I've plucked up the courage because it was important to me.
15	Oliver	Of course we'll work together again.
16	Sylvia	I thought maybe you were disappointed.
17	Oliver	Disappointed?
18	Sylvia	Oh, you know. That when it was actually over, that when the book was done and dusted maybe it didn't quite live up to your expectations. That it was a disappointment. My work. I mean, my contribution.
19	Oliver	Not at all.
20	Sylvia	That maybe it didn't quite live up to its initial promise.
21	Oliver	You musn't think that, not for a minute. I couldn't have been happier.
22	Sylvia	I suppose I was trying to come up with a reason why we hadn't seen each other for such a long time.
23	Oliver	I've just been very busy.
24	Sylvia	Of course.
25	Oliver	But I'm so sorry if I gave you the wrong impression. Nothing could be further from the truth.
26	Sylvia	Thank you for putting my mind at rest. That little part of me that remains sensible kept trying to tell me that it wasn't the case.
		<i>Pause.</i>
27	Sylvia	I'm sure Philip thinks I'm completely mad most of the time.
		<i>Pause.</i>
28	Sylvia	Your friendship is very important to me.
29	Oliver	Are you all right, Sylvia?
30	Sylvia	When I worked in the theatre there were a few people with whom I felt a similar kind of bond. There were people I could talk to openly about things which seemed vital and interesting and maybe even personal. Things I couldn't really talk to most people about. Even Philip. Especially Philip.
31	Oliver	That's the theatre for you.
32	Sylvia	And then when I met you I felt the same thing. That we didn't belong within that absurd little world in which talking about anything remotely significant seems an affront to one's dignity. A kindred spirit. Somebody you know you can be frank with and whom you hope can be frank with you.
		<i>She sits. A pause.</i>
33	Sylvia	I'm lonely.
		<i>Pause.</i>
34	Sylvia	Is that a terrible thing to say?
35	Oliver	Not at all.
36	Sylvia	I mean. I'm a married woman. I live with my husband. But sometimes I wake in the middle of the night and I lie in bed thinking how lonely I am. And the loneliness I feel is like a blanket. But not a blanket that comforts you. Something darker. More oppressive. It feels almost as if it stops me from breathing. I'm so sorry.
37	Oliver	What are you sorry about?
38	Sylvia	Calling you here. You were at home, writing probably, minding your own business and then you are summoned to the park to hear the ramblings of a mad woman.
39	Oliver	You're not mad. Sylvia.

40	Sylvia	There are things you suspect. And then, you brush them aside. Things maybe a part of you knows but to acknowledge them renders your life a lie. And then...
41	Oliver	Then what?
42	Sylvia	Then the foundations of everything you've ever depended on, the ground you've moved on, the home you've built for yourself, everything, the walls, the furniture, the air you breathe, everything seems unreal. And you cease to be able to distinguish truth from lies. Or at least from something you know is not the truth. An appearance of sons. Life becomes a little like some horrible fancy-dress party. And it becomes unbearable.
		<i>Pause. Slowly, Sylvia starts to look through her bag for something.</i>
43	Sylvia	I found something of yours.
44	Oliver	Of mine?
45	Sylvia	At home. It must have fallen out of your pocket. I was wondering when it was. Three times you've been to our flat. Once, that first time when we asked you over so that you could meet Philip. The night we went to the Italian restaurant. And then twice after that. That morning you came to look at that last batch of illustrations when I couldn't come to yours because I had that awful cold. And then finally, the night of the party for the book's launch and that was only for five minutes when you dropped me off and we had a quick brandy. So only three times when I was there. And then, of course, on all those occasions you were only in the living room, unless of course you visited the bathroom, which to be honest I can't remember.
		<i>She pulls out a pen from her handbag.</i>
46	Sylvia	Your gold pen. The one you love so much. The one your sister gave you. It was behind the cushion on the armchair. The green armchair in our bedroom. It must have fallen out of your jacket. You always kept it in the inside pocket, didn't you?
47	Oliver	Yes. Yes. I did.
48	Sylvia	So it must have slipped out.
49	Oliver	Yes.
50	Sylvia	I assume it was the time I'd gone to visit my mother. I was away for at least a week, wasn't I?
		<i>Pause.</i>
51	Sylvia	Take it, Oliver. It's yours. It's your pen.
		<i>He takes it. There is a long pause.</i>
52	Sylvia	I want you to know I don't blame you. I really don't. I did think it hurtful and disturbing that you should choose... I found it disturbing that you would... knowing that you have a flat, that you have your own flat, that you would choose... Isn't it funny that it should be that which upset me more than anything else? I suppose because it was the only aspect of the whole affair that surprised me. Your choice of location. How absurd.
		<i>Pause.</i>
53	Sylvia	But then, you see, I thought about it and even that I don't blame you for. Because when one lives within that world of lying, of deception, then the details begin to blur. One's discernment is undermined I suppose is what I'm saying. One's sense of judgement. So under normal circumstances perhaps you wouldn't have chosen to insult me in that particular way. I like to think that.
		<i>She suddenly begins to cry.</i>
54	Oliver	I'm so sorry.
55	Sylvia	All that wasted time. And I look at myself now, in the mirror and my face is the face of a woman who's forgotten herself and has been forgotten.
		<i>Pause</i>
		Are you still in touch with Phillip?
56	Oliver	No. No, we're not.
57	Sylvia	Was that his choice or yours?
58	Oliver	His. I would have chosen the same as you.
59	Sylvia	The same as me?
60	Oliver	To live an honest life.
61	Sylvia	An honest life.
62	Oliver	Yes.
		<i>Pause.</i>
63	Sylvia	Was he happy?
64	Oliver	Happy?
65	Sylvia	Tell me. Was he happy? For an afternoon, at least. A morning. Was he ever happy?
66	Oliver	I can't... I find it...
67	Sylvia	Difficult. You find it difficult.
68	Oliver	Yes, I...
		<i>Pause.</i>
69	Oliver	Maybe once. For a very short while. When for a very short time he glimpsed the possibility of being... of being...
		He pauses.
70	Sylvia	Of being brave.
71	Oliver	Yes. I suppose that's the right word.
72	Sylvia	That thought filled me with a rage. Your happiness. For a day or two I hated you so much. Because I suspected then that even in your few, illicit meetings, in that very short time you describe, he would have been able to be his real self, something he has never been with me. In that glimpse you talk of.
		<i>Pause.</i>
73	Oliver	I'm so sorry. I'm ashamed.
74	Sylvia	I know you are. I hope...
75	Oliver	Yes...
76	Sylvia	I hope with all my heart you find what you're looking for. It isn't easy. I'm sure. You must be lonely too.
77	Oliver	Yes. I am.
		<i>She moves to go, then stops.</i>
78	Sylvia	That first night when you came over, something happened, didn't it? I felt it. I wonder what that is. It was thick in the air. I want to feel that too. And someone to feel that for me. Goodbye. Oliver.

		<i>Sylvia walks away, leaving Oliver sitting on the bench. The lights fade to black.</i>
2-3	2008	
		<i>Sylvia's flat. She's just opened the door. Oliver is there. There's some blood in his mouth.</i>
1	Sylvia	Fuck.
2	Oliver	You really need to stop greeting me like that. I'm starting to take it personally.
3	Sylvia	Jesus.
4	Oliver	That's more like it.
5	Sylvia	You're bleeding.
6	Oliver	As ever, your powers of observation astound me.
7	Sylvia	What are you doing here?
8	Oliver	I was in the area.
9	Sylvia	What happened?
10	Oliver	An accident.
11	Sylvia	An accident?
12	Oliver	Could we discuss the details after I've stopped dripping blood onto your floor?
13	Sylvia	What have you done?
14	Oliver	It's a cut. that's all. A piece of kitchen roll will suffice. Miss Nightingale.
15	Sylvia	Sit.
		<i>He sits. Sylvia runs into the kitchen to get the paper.</i>
16	Oliver	It was my farewell tour. Let's call it a souvenir. One of my many fans. But this one had a predilection for the darker side. It seems you have the gift of prophecy. Miss Burton. Don't quite know what his voting profile was but I wouldn't have him down as a woolly liberal. A primitive Man, I think it's fair to say. In a pinstriped suit though and he had shaved. I'll give him that. Shiniest brogues you've ever seen. You never can tell these days. I mean, he didn't look like he'd crawl led out of a cave. Though the sweat was just about detectable under a velvety surface of Acqua di Gio.
		<i>Sylvia runs hack with some kitchen roll. She gives him some to wipe his nose with.</i>
17	Sylvia	I thought you said that whole aspect of your life was becoming untenable.
18	Oliver	I was just checking.
19	Sylvia	That was a conversation we had yesterday.
20	Oliver	As recently as that?
21	Sylvia	I thought you'd give it at least a week.
22	Oliver	Obviously your powers of persuasion are not quite as effective as the lure of city cock.
23	Sylvia	What the fuck happened?
24	Oliver	I love a Man in a suit.
25	Sylvia	Clearly.
26	Oliver	The signs were all there. During the actual act the whole verbal thing was slightly more convincing than usual.
27	Sylvia	What verbal thing?
28	Oliver	His use of adjective was alarming. And his imaginative use of the common noun left me speechless. It wasn't, of course, the only thing that made it difficult for me to put a word in edgeways.
29	Sylvia	Spare me the details.
30	Oliver	And then upon completion there was a push. Along the lines of - out of the way. I have important things to get on with: my friends are waiting. I'm taking my wife out to dinner, the markets are closing. That sort of thing. It was definitely just a push.
31	Sylvia	You're bleeding.
32	Oliver	It was the Rolex. One of the chunky ones. Caught my upper lip at an unfortunate angle. But it was a push. Not a punch.
33	Sylvia	Well, that's all right then.
34	Oliver	Hence my use of the word 'accident'. He was back in the office before I'd even realised what had happened.
35	Sylvia	I'm sure if he'd noticed he would have driven you home in his Jaguar.
36	Oliver	Without doubt.
		<i>Pause.</i>
37	Sylvia	Fuck, Oliver.
38	Oliver	I was doing researeh.
39	Sylvia	'Research'?
40	Oliver	The piece on anonymous sex. God knows why they chose me.
		<i>Pause.</i>
41	Oliver	Speaking of being surrounded by a sea of my gay brethren, I need to talk to you about tomorrow.
42	Sylvia	Pride?
43	Oliver	Yes. I'm not coming. Send my apologies to the Italian.
44	Sylvia	You are coming.
45	Oliver	Really, I'm not. I intend to spend the day in bed, nursing my wound.
46	Sylvia	I spoke to Philip.
47	Oliver	Liar.
48	Sylvia	He said he might drop by. For me, he said. I told him you'd be there. He said that's okay, we're adults, we can cope. Something like that.
49	Oliver	Are you being serious?
50	Sylvia	Why would I lie?
51	Oliver	Coz you're ruthless in the pursuit of your objectives.

52	Sylvia	He's coming. Join us if you like. Or you could stay in bed having thoughts of loneliness and death.
53	Oliver	Thanks for that.
54	Sylvia	Let me know. I have to know how much food to make.
55	Oliver	But the whole thing is so passe. All those tight T-shirts, all those preening queens. Anyway, what's the point? Remind me. Is it a demonstration, a celebration or a fashion show?
56	Sylvia	Cynic.
57	Oliver	Ten thousand mincers admiring each other's biceps. How could I be so dismissive.
		<i>Pause.</i>
58	Oliver	You look nice, by the way.
59	Sylvia	Thank you.
60	Oliver	Expecting visitors?
61	Sylvia	A visitor. Singular. Yes. I am.
62	Oliver	Okay.
63	Sylvia	He's coming for dinner.
64	Oliver	You cooking?
65	Sylvia	Yes.
66	Oliver	Smells good.
67	Sylvia	Thank you.
68	Oliver	Nothing Italian, I hope. He'll compare it to his mother's. That's what they do.
69	Sylvia	Do they?
70	Oliver	Hope you've stuck to something English. Frozen peas, that kind of thing.
71	Sylvia	He'll be here any minute now.
72	Oliver	That's exciting.
		<i>Pause.</i>
73	Oliver	So what else did he say?
74	Sylvia	Philip?
75	Oliver	No, Clift Richard. Yes. Philip.
76	Sylvia	We talked about books.
77	Oliver	Books?
78	Sylvia	He told me about this book he'd been reading. Something Hungarian.
79	Oliver	But he didn't say anything about me.
80	Sylvia	No. Apart from what I just said. It'll be okay to see you, he said.
		<i>Pause.</i>
81	Oliver	Fuck you. You know how to push my buttons.
82	Sylvia	Of course I do.
83	Oliver	You know I'm coming.
84	Sylvia	Of course I do.
85	Oliver	I want to see him again. Be with him.
86	Sylvia	He's a special person. Profound, honest, loyal.
87	Oliver	Deeply compassionate.
88	Sylvia	And handsome to boot.
		<i>Pause.</i>
89	Oliver	Sometimes...
90	Sylvia	What?
91	Oliver	Do you ever get that thing?
92	Sylvia	What thing?
93	Oliver	When you've just fallen asleep, just before the dreams begin. Or maybe just after you've woken up and your eyes are open even though your mind might still be dreaming.
94	Sylvia	What about it?
95	Oliver	The brevity of life strikes you. The brevity. The randomness. A flash in the pan.
96	Sylvia	I've had that.
97	Oliver	And I kind of feel then that the only thing that matters is finding some meaning, some reason, something you can slap the face of brevity with. And say I was here. I existed. I was. And then I think that the only two ways to do that are through work and relationships. How you changed people. How people changed you. And how you held on. To each other. Or at least gave it a damn good try. That's what defines your flash in the pan.
98	Sylvia	Amen.
		<i>Pause.</i>
99	Sylvia	So what do you do?
100	Oliver	What do I do?
101	Sylvia	There's only one thing you can do.
102	Oliver	Which is?
103	Sylvia	You have to stop sucking his dick.
104	Oliver	Whose dick?
105	Sylvia	You have to stop sucking the dick of your oppressor.

106	Oliver	That's deep.
107	Sylvia	Of your Nazi-Rolux Man.
108	Oliver	Sounds like a City Lit course. 'Marxist Theory for the Promiscuous Homosexual.'
109	Sylvia	But one day soon you'll look up at the fascist whose dick you're sucking and you'll say something like -
110	Oliver	Now look here'-
111	Sylvia	Now look here, Klaus or whatever the hell your name is, surprisingly enough your dick is marvellously big but I have decided, a little like those pioneering fish that crawled out of the deep, dark ocean so Many zillions of years ago, that from now on I will only suck the dicks -
112	Oliver	Of social workers and yoga teachers.
113	Sylvia	- of people who I know for a fact or at least suspect, for God's sake, aspire to things like justice, equality, mutual respect. And I really need to make this evolutionary leap, otherwise God knows where I'll end up.'
114	Oliver	In the gutter. Or a cage. In an existential gimp mask.
		<i>Pause.</i>
115	Sylvia	I'm glad we've sorted that out. And now I have to...
116	Oliver	You have to what?
117	Sylvia	Mario will be here any minute and I need to, you know, get ready. That sort of thing.
118	Oliver	Are you asking me to leave?
119	Sylvia	Well. I mean, you can stay for a quick drink and meet him, but -
120	Oliver	But what?
		<i>Pause.</i>
121	Sylvia	The thing is this. It's not that I don't enjoy being there for you. Sometimes. Because I do.
122	Oliver	Sometimes?
123	Sylvia	I need a little space, Oliver. And I don't mean just tonight.
124	Oliver	Space? How d'you mean, you need a little space?
		<i>The question hangs.</i>
125	Oliver	I'll fuck off then, shall I?
126	Sylvia	You know how when you stay, when you're around you take over in some way.
127	Oliver	'Take over'?
128	Sylvia	With your charm, if you like, your charisma, your presence.
129	Oliver	Is that the spoonful of sugar?
130	Sylvia	And tonight I don't want you here like that. I've met this Man that I am very, very fond of -
131	Oliver	She's kicking me out.
132	Sylvia	And I have an overwhelming feeling that from now on I'm going to be focusing quite a bit more on him than I am on you.
133	Oliver	Fucking kicking me out.
134	Sylvia	And I don't think that's a bad thing.
135	Oliver	It's over between us.
136	Sylvia	For either of us.
		<i>Pause.</i>
137	Sylvia	There. I've said it.
		<i>The buzzer rings.</i>
138	Sylvia	Fuck.
139	Oliver	That'll be the future.
140	Sylvia	He's early.
141	Oliver	I'll be off then.
142	Sylvia	Stay. For a quick drink. And then go.
143	Oliver	You've made me feel as welcome as a bacon sandwich at a bar mitzvah.
		<i>She runs towards the door. Then stops.</i>
144	Sylvia	But come tomorrow. To the park. I think...
145	Oliver	You think what?
146	Sylvia	I think it is important. And yes, it's all of those things. A demonstration. A celebration. And a fashion show. But definitely in that order.
147	Oliver	The jury's out. Now answer the bloody door.
		<i>She runs out of the room. Oliver stays there, alone. He becomes pensive, as if trying to remember something. He closes his eyes, and then, almost in a whisper:</i>
148	Oliver	Philip.
2-4 1958		
		<i>A DOCTOR's surgery. Simple. A desk, two chairs, maybe an examination couch. The DOCTOR and Philip sit facing each other.</i>
1	DOCTOR	When was it that you first experienced sexual attraction to a member of your own sex?
2	Philip	I don't really... I suppose...
3	DOCTOR	Was it during or after adolescence?
4	Philip	I suppose it was during. Maybe when... maybe when I was thirteen or thereabouts. At school. But of course... well, you understand at that age. I didn't really know. I was frightened. I imagine. So I didn't really. I tried not to think about it. I made myself not think about it.
5	DOCTOR	Were you interfered with?
6	Philip	I beg your pardon?

7	DOCTOR	Were you ever interfered with? During your childhood or adolescence. By an adult of your own sex. Were you seduced into any sort of sexual activity by an older male? Either a member of your own family or a teacher or perhaps even a stranger.
8	Philip	No. I wasn't. I didn't...
9	DOCTOR	You do understand it is absolutely necessary to be truthful in your answering of these questions.
10	Philip	Yes. Of course.
11	DOCTOR	That unless you answer every one of these questions with absolute honesty and courage you are not only wasting my own time but your own as well. You must attempt to put all inhibitions aside.
12	Philip	I was never seduced. Or interfered with. By anybody.
13	DOCTOR	So you remember being about thirteen years of age when you first felt sexually attracted to a member of your own sex.
14	Philip	Thereabouts.
15	DOCTOR	And you indulged in sexual fantasies involving yourself and this boy?
16	Philip	When I was with him I felt... when I was close to him. A strong, overwhelming attraction.
17	DOCTOR	And your penis would become erect? I mean, there was arousal?
18	Philip	I suppose. I can't really. It was all, sort of connected. Everything was connected.
19	DOCTOR	'Connected.' How do you mean, it was 'connected'?
20	Philip	Well, I definitely felt something physical, but it was...
21	DOCTOR	Did you ever participate in any sort of sexual activity with this boy?
22	Philip	Good God, no. I wasn't... I didn't really know that anyone else... that anyone else had that kind of feeling. Looking back, I suspect that maybe it was mutual, but at the time.
23	DOCTOR	Describe to me the fantasies that you had which involved yourself and this boy whom you say you were infatuated with.
24	Philip	I can't really. I suppose we were together. Physically.
25	DOCTOR	Did you fantasise about anal penetration?
26	Philip	I can't really... Perhaps. Maybe.
27	DOCTOR	Do you remember if in those fantasies you adopted the sexually passive or the sexually active role?
28	Philip	I honestly can't remember. I do remember wanting to be with him. In a physical sort of way. But I can't remember the details. Maybe I've forced myself to forget them. I'm not sure.
		<i>A pause as the DOCTOR looks over some of the papers he has before him.</i>
29	DOCTOR	It says here that you were recently involved in a sexual relationship with a Man which persisted over a number of months.
30	Philip	I was, yes.
31	DOCTOR	I'm assuming that anal intercourse was included in these relations.
32	Philip	Yes. Yes, it was.
33	DOCTOR	On how Many occasions did you have sex with this Man?
34	Philip	Well, we were... well, it was over a period of four months.
35	DOCTOR	And over those four months how Many times were you sexually intimate with each other?
36	Philip	Well, it's difficult to say really. Maybe on average two, three times a week.
37	DOCTOR	And what brought this... this relationship to an end?
38	Philip	I did. I put an end to it.
39	DOCTOR	In a concerted effort to struggle against this tendency you both shared.
40	Philip	Yes.
41	DOCTOR	And have you kept in touch with this Man? I mean, have you been successful in keeping him out of your life?
42	Philip	Yes.
43	DOCTOR	And have you banished him from your thoughts?
44	Philip	Sorry?
45	DOCTOR	Have you been successful in banishing him from your thoughts? Your sexual fantasies.
46	Philip	Yes. I have tried.
47	DOCTOR	Have you, since the end of this relationship, been involved in any other sexual activity with any other men?
48	Philip	No. No, I haven't.
		<i>Pause.</i>
49	DOCTOR	This is an extreme form of therapy, there is no question about that. Firstly, let me congratulate you on taking the steps you have taken which have brought you here today. I'm sure it has not been easy. From speaking to you briefly this afternoon and from the conversations I have had with Dr Davies, I gather it has been a struggle for you. But fighting this pernicious enemy, this perversion, is an essential part in the development of your personality. I'm sure you agree.
		<i>Philip says nothing.</i>
50	DOCTOR	You've brought your belongings.
51	Philip	Yes, I have. A change of clothes. A toothbrush.
52	DOCTOR	Good. In a few minutes the nurse will take you to your room. The objective is to stay in the room for the length of the treatment. I would suggest till at least tomorrow morning.
53	Philip	All right.
54	DOCTOR	The room is simple. Spartan. Nothing extraneous. A bed. That is all. There is no window. You may want to brush your teeth beforehand. And get into your pyjamas. Though, of course, we can provide you with something appropriate. Something to wear, I mean.
55	Philip	I've brought my pyjamas.
56	DOCTOR	Excellent.
		<i>Pause.</i>
57	DOCTOR	There are pictures in the room. Publications. We will encourage you to look at them. They are of a pornographic nature and of homosexual content. You will be left alone in the room for approximately an hour. I suggest you spend most of that time looking at these pictures. You will probably be aroused.
		<i>Pause.</i>

58	DOCTOR	An hour later, at approximately nine p.m., the nurse will enter the room and inject you with a generous dose of apomorphine. This is a drug that induces vomiting. Around ten to fifteen minutes after the injection you will begin to feel nauseous. You will then be violently sick and may suffer dizziness. Most of the patients undergoing this therapy in the past have asked for a basin, something to vomit into, some sort of receptacle. I have discovered, however, that in order for the treatment to be at its most effective, it is best not to provide you with any such objects. You will vomit in the room and you will have to remain surrounded by your own vomit till the therapy is over in the morning. After the first injection and the first bout of vomiting, it is vital that you try to return to perusing the pornography. A couple of hours later, the nurse will enter again and inject you a second time. This will be repeated three times during the course of the night. And between each injection I would strongly suggest you return to the pornographic images we have provided you with. This will help facilitate the therapy and increase its chances of success.
		<i>Pause.</i>
59	DOCTOR	Do you have any questions?
60	Philip	Yes... I... Dr Davies said that in certain cases. Where there is an individual involved.
61	DOCTOR	Ah. yes. He mentioned it. A few of our patients have asked for the same procedure. I mean, when a particular individual...
62	Philip	Yes.
63	DOCTOR	You have brought a photograph then. Of this individual.
64	Philip	Yes. Yes, I have.
65	DOCTOR	Good. Well, it's quite simple, really. You take the photograph with you. Into the room, I mean. Of the individual. You include it. You incorporate it into the treatment. You look at it with the other photographs. This is a common sort of request.
66	Philip	Yes.
		<i>Pause.</i>
67	Philip	The thing is, DOCTOR...
68	DOCTOR	Yes?
69	Philip	What I need to know is... the other things. The other feelings. I mean, the ones that aren't exclusively sexual.
70	DOCTOR	Yes.
71	Philip	Do they... will they...
		<i>There is an awkward pause.</i>
72	DOCTOR	The nurse will be ready for you now. And I will be seeing you again in the morning.
73	Philip	Yes.
74	DOCTOR	So there's nothing else then?
75	Philip	No. No, there isn't.
		<i>Philip stands up.</i>
76	DOCTOR	By the way...
77	Philip	Yes, DOCTOR?
78	DOCTOR	Do you mind me asking you what brought you here? What tipped the scales as it were and made you decide to come here? It's an important part of my research.
		<i>Pause.</i>
79	Philip	Forgetting.
80	DOCTOR	Forgetting?
81	Philip	I want an easier life.
82	DOCTOR	Don't we all?
83	Philip	We do.
		<i>Blackout.</i>
2-5 2008		
		<i>The park bench - it is the same one as before. Sylvia is sitting on it with Oliver. They have opened a bottle of champagne and are drinking out of flute glasses. In the background there are lots of noises from the Pride party — whistles, shouts, music. The sound of celebration.</i>
1	Sylvia	So we're on the 31 as it's crawling up Kilburn High Road and there's this blonde girl, she's about fifteen and scary and surrounded by her adoring fan club and she's very loud and every second word is 'gay'. Gay this, gay that, gay every thing. That song's gay. and EastEnders is gay and even the chicken sandwich she had for lunch was gay. So I muster up a little bit of courage and I turn around to her and in my most authoritative voice say. 'Excuse me...'
2	Oliver	Excuse me, miss.
3	Sylvia	Excuse me, miss, but can I ask you a favour and do you mind not using the word 'gay' in that particular context...
4	Oliver	Gay is shit. Sub-standard.
5	Sylvia	Or at least think twice before you do so because in some way that perhaps you can't quite fathom yet it is damaging to Many people and that upsets me.
6	Oliver	And she didn't stab you?
7	Sylvia	And then an hour later I'm at Jennifer's for dinner.
8	Oliver	Why you insist on being her friend is beyond me...
9	Sylvia	And she's invited another five or six people including Millie Wallis, who by the way has had a massive nose job and looks completely transformed but nobody's allowed to talk about it so we're all pretending that even though her face is entirely different we haven't noticed a thing and there's this one guy called Harry or something who's saying something along the lines of 'well, it kind of makes sense for the inheritance stuff but they don't really care about the other stuff,' whatever that means, 'I mean, most of them just want to have fun' and then Sonya's joining in and saying, and I quote, that 'some of her best friends are gay'...
10	Oliver	And most of her exes.
11	Sylvia	'But why do they need to get married. I mean, why aren't civil partnerships enough?' and then Harry's back joining in with 'who wants to get married anyway?' and 'they're much better off shagging in the parks. I know I'd be' and everyone's having a good laugh and at that point I stood up. I actually pushed my chair back and stood up on both legs...
12	Oliver	One leg would have been awkward.
13	Sylvia	And I said. 'Harry, the reason a lot of them were in the parks to begin with is because they couldn't be at home in the first place. They were in exile.'
14	Oliver	'In exile.' I like that.
15	Sylvia	But I looked at these people, Ollie, and they're not stupid. I mean, a little unimaginative maybe but not necessarily stupid, and I looked at them all and I thought...
16	Oliver	You thought what...?
17	Sylvia	Oh, I don't know. I thought, Ollie, of all the battles that had been fought. And what they had been fought against. Not only hatred but something else too, quieter but just as persistent. A world telling you what you are. I listened to these people and in some way they reduce you. And somewhere, you, Ollie, have believed them.

18	Oliver	I'm gullible, it's true.
19	Sylvia	And then I thought of what the things were that those battles had been fought for. What they'd been fought for.
20	Oliver	That's a lot of thinking.
		<i>He pours her some champagne.</i>
21	Oliver	Have some more. And now will you kindly step off your fucking soapbox.
		<i>Philip enters.</i>
22	Philip	I could hear you down the hill.
23	Oliver	The voice of an actress.
24	Sylvia	Was I loud?
25	Philip	Brilliantly so.
26	Sylvia	Oh God. I'm a cliché.
		<i>Pause.</i>
27	Philip	I brought sandwiches.
28	Sylvia	Oliver made some too. Mario's on his way.
29	Oliver	What's in them?
30	Philip	Chorizo. Duck. Tapenade.
31	Sylvia	What's wrong with cheese and pickle?
32	Philip	And there's blueberries too.
33	Oliver	Yum.
		<i>Pause.</i>
34	Sylvia	So last night he's talking about kids again.
35	Philip	Kids?
36	Sylvia	'I've always wanted children.' he says.
37	Oliver	He's keen.
38	Sylvia	And I love this Man.
39	Philip	Haven't you just met?
40	Sylvia	He writes his own songs. He has a guitar.
41	Oliver	That's all she needs to know.
42	Sylvia	He never misses an anti-war march. He reads, and reads, and reads.
43	Philip	And?
44	Oliver	The signs are all good is what she's saying.
45	Sylvia	He's great in bed.
46	Philip	An important thing.
47	Sylvia	He makes love to me and I'm thinking... if something should come of this love... If this love is fruitful in that particular way, well then I'm ready for it, and then that's great, I mean, we'll be lucky, it will be a gift. From God. Life. Whatever.
48	Oliver	She's having babies.
49	Sylvia	And if not, I mean, if it doesn't happen, if it's not meant to happen then that's fine as well. What we have is enough, I mean.
		<i>Pause. She's suddenly aware she should leave them alone.</i>
50	Sylvia	I'm going to... get an ice cream.
51	Oliver	An ice cream? But we haven't had lunch.
52	Philip	She wants an ice cream. Oliver.
53	Oliver	I'll come with you.
54	Sylvia	With me? How d'you mean, you'll come with me?
55	Oliver	I want one too.
56	Sylvia	Don't be stupid.
57	Oliver	Oh, that's right. I'm to stop stalking her.
58	Philip	Stalking her?
59	Oliver	Off you go then. You're a free woman.
60	Sylvia	At last.
61	Oliver	The operation was successful. My arms have been surgically removed from your waist.
62	Sylvia	About time.
63	Oliver	It's been lovely knowing you.
		<i>She starts to move.</i>
64	Sylvia	Have some champagne. Finish the champagne.
65	Oliver	Okay.
66	Philip	Will do.
67	Sylvia	And remember the battles, Ollie.
68	Oliver	What battles?
		<i>She leaves.</i>
69	Oliver	Oh, those battles.
		<i>Pause.</i>
70	Oliver	Hey.

71	Philip	Hi.
72	Oliver	How are you?
73	Philip	Fine. I'm fine.
74	Oliver	Good.
		<i>A long pause. They look out over the park. They start talking at the same time.</i>
75	Oliver	I wasn't -
76	Philip	I hope you don't -
77	Oliver	Sorry.
78	Philip	No. What?
79	Oliver	After you.
80	Philip	It's fine. You go first.
		<i>A pause.</i>
81	Oliver	Do you believe in change?
82	Philip	Do I believe in change?
83	Oliver	We're lucky really, aren't we?
84	Philip	Lucky?
85	Oliver	I mean, think about it. The freedom. What we have.
86	Philip	What freedom?
87	Oliver	All these people who were mute. Had been mute for hundreds, thousands of years.
88	Philip	Most of the world still is. Mute.
89	Oliver	I know. Which makes it all the more...
90	Philip	All the more what?
91	Oliver	Important, I think I mean. Not to throw the baby out with the bathwater. For us. If you follow me.
92	Philip	Not really.
93	Oliver	I mean, you watch those nature documentaries...
94	Philip	Nature documentaries?
95	Oliver	I mean, they're all fucking killing each other, for God's sake. That's all they ever do. Kill each other. And procreate. Inflict terrible pain and kill each other...
96	Philip	Apart from dolphins.
97	Oliver	True. They spend all their time swimming with autistic children. But apart from dolphins, they just kill each other. And the only thing, I mean, the only thing that separates us, that makes us different, that makes us huMan is this ability we're discovering, this thing we have to instil, to do things with and to give love. And some kind of respect. That's all we have. To listen to each other.
		<i>Pause.</i>
98	Oliver	That's what I'm going on about. It's what I was trying to say to you the other day.
99	Philip	What?
100	Oliver	The night we met. The way you spoke about that woman. The one whose photograph you'd taken. Your ability to put yourself in her shoes. It was genuine.
101	Philip	Oh, that.
102	Oliver	And that made me feel hopeful.
		<i>Pause.</i>
103	Oliver	You still haven't answered my question.
104	Philip	What's that?
105	Oliver	Do you believe people change?
106	Philip	That wasn't your question. Your question was do I believe in change. Not do I believe people change.
107	Oliver	A slight amendment.
108	Philip	What for?
109	Oliver	Oh, you know. Us.
110	Philip	What about us?
111	Oliver	The thing is...
		<i>Pause.</i>
112	Oliver	I love you so much. Profoundly.
		<i>Pause.</i>
113	Philip	God knows why I came here today.
114	Oliver	I'm irresistible?
115	Philip	Impossible is the word I have in mind.
116	Oliver	Charming.
117	Philip	You can be shallow.
118	Oliver	Thank you.
119	Philip	Vain.
120	Oliver	Lovely.
121	Philip	And you're addicted to sex with strangers.
122	Oliver	I've been thinking about that.
123	Philip	But I keep giving you the benefit of the doubt.
124	Oliver	Thank you. For the faith. I mean.

125	Philip	The sheer, pig-headed stupidity.
126	Oliver	You're very wise in your persistence.
127	Philip	Or completely fucking mad.
128	Oliver	Maybe.
		<i>A pause and then Oliver is suddenly overwhelmed by an emotion. He pulls back.</i>
129	Philip	What?
130	Oliver	Nothing... I...
131	Philip	What is it?
132	Oliver	Nothing. Can I...
133	Philip	Can you what?
134	Oliver	Sleep on your sofa for a little while?
135	Philip	Sleep on my sofa?
136	Oliver	Work. I may not be earning. Until things... I want to work on my book.
137	Philip	I thought you had all these jobs lined up...
138	Oliver	They've kind of fallen through. Not really me. So times may be hard. For a little while.
139	Philip	Okay. But definitely the sofa.
140	Oliver	Agreed.
		<i>Pause.</i>
141	Philip	After all...
142	Oliver	What?
143	Philip	Well, it may not be a long time...
144	Oliver	What isn't?
145	Philip	A year and a half. I mean.
146	Oliver	Nineteen months. Next Thursday.
147	Philip	Since we've known each other.
148	Oliver	That's years.
149	Philip	It may not be much but...
150	Oliver	But what?
151	Philip	It's a history of sorts.
152	Oliver	Yes.
153	Philip	You and I...
154	Oliver	What about us?
155	Philip	We have a history of sorts.
		<i>Pause.</i>
156	Philip	And I'm sorry.
157	Oliver	What for?
158	Philip	I don't know. If... If I did anything. Ever. To hurt you. To upset you. Whatever. Anything I may have done.
159	Oliver	Betrayed me.
160	Philip	Betrayed you?
161	Oliver	Yes.
162	Philip	I don't really...
163	Oliver	Never mind.
		<i>A pause. They look out over the park at the people who surround them. Oliver pours Philip a glass of champagne.</i>
164	Oliver	Have some champagne.
165	Philip	Do you know, I think I will.
		<i>They continue to look out.</i>
166	Oliver	Have you seen those two? On the bicycle.
167	Philip	They're in love.
168	Oliver	The blond one's had his tongue in the other one's ear since we got here.
169	Philip	Yummy.
170	Oliver	They're sweet.
171	Philip	And he must be ninety-five.
172	Oliver	Who?
173	Philip	The one over there. By the ice-cream van.
174	Oliver	I can't see.
175	Philip	Two o'clock. The string vest.
176	Oliver	Oh. him. Oh my God.
177	Philip	Ninety-five.
178	Oliver	Good on him. A survivor.
179	Philip	Bless him.
180	Oliver	If I look like that when I'm ninety-five I'm having a party.

181	Philip	If you look like that when you're ninety-five I'll have you arrested.
		<i>Sylvia returns but she comes back in her 1950's incarnation.</i>
		<i>She is wearing her nightie and holding a small suitcase. Oliver and Philip do not see her and she comes to stand in a pool of light on the other side of the stage from them. It is as if she is sleepwalking.</i>
182	Sylvia	When I next wake it will be to leave. You will still be sleeping. I will kiss you on your forehead and quietly go. I cannot blame you for what you have been. You have been the prisoner of fear. You have only known how to hold on to things and the things you have held on to have died in your hands. The birth pangs will be the pains of you hanging on to the way things are. And all I can do is whisper from a distance: it will be all right, it will be all right, it will be all right.
		<i>Blackout.</i>
		<i>The End.</i>