

The Serpent's Book of Lamentations

TR ©2015

ONE LINE SYNOPSIS -

A playwright comes face-to-face with his own inner demons in an archetypal fool's journey of encounters with a serpent, hero, shadow, whore, angel, child and moon.

Act 1. A group of actors audition for a new production

ACT 2. Back-stories of a theatre company in-rehearsal

ACT 3. An avant garde story about archetypes

- Serpent - Karla - Leni Coonan
- Hero - Angus - Jack Braddy
- Shadow - Eamon - Mischa Reinthal
- Angel - Charlie - Tom Messina
- Whore - Mel - Georgie Steele
- Child - Annabel - Lilly McKenzie
- Moon - Observer - Luke Diamond

Questions: What is the main conflict in the play?

Each character yearns, through interaction/s with each other, to understand who and what they are, as well as discover where they belong. The audience, functioning as 'God-is-my-witness' is the critical observer who realises or destroys each character as he/she attempts to move towards self-hood (via self-understanding, self-determination, self-control, self-loathing, self-initiation and self-destruction etc). The audience must be convinced that each actor's role is vital and necessary, or be discarded as obsolete.

For example:

- Eamon seeks to know himself through emotional immersion in music which results in feeling deprivation and indifference
- Annabel seeks to know herself through artistic forms of self-obliteration using the kinaesthetic (e)motion of dance
- Charlie seeks self-actualisation through the fractured abstraction of poetry and its translation through avant garde theatre directing
- Karla seeks (self-)control through the cold detachment of psychoanalysis as an all-purpose tool for life
- Mel seeks to find love in sex and is incapable of distinguishing between the two
- Angus seeks power through primal expressions of masculinity, but doesn't know how to wield his power

What do I want the audience to:

Know? All of the characters are personality shards of one shattered persona, each shard a 'daily life actor' performing/surviving upon the 'stage' of life - *Life is theatre.*

Think About? How relationships may be determined by the cycling inner scripts and internal cast of archetypes that we deploy to make our way in the world (internally and externally)

Feel? Deeply unsettled yet compelled to watch... Poised on a precipice between a sense of 'liberation and fear'

PLAYWRIGHT'S PROLOGUE

A man enters the stage and begins a monologue

Charlie

I am eating you.

Just now I swam to the surface of this page, I smelled the warmth and the sugar of your blood the instant that your hands made contact with these words, and even now - I roar and leap to watch your curiosity bring you close enough that I could stretch out my rasping tongue and ravenously devour your whole head in one gulp, and, as I swallow, the rest of you will follow, flowing in silken rivulets of unresisting fluidity at the softest dreamy pleasure of being tasted, down deep inside of me and I am you, now, and you are mine.

I am so many people living inside this stretched and stripy predator's skin, and each and every personality within me speaks from it's own fully clawed and feathered perspective. Attempting to separate those speaking parts would deny my right to see through these night eyes, hobbling these defiantly stalking and chunky legs at full pelt.

Each of the people I have eaten has a voice. I hear Child, Healer, Traveller, Wounded, Storymaker, Poet, Cynic, Whore, Villain, Hero and the shadow selves of Dark and Disheveled.

This play is a public display of a wounded self conversing in seemingly random

interjections and coded metaphors, a device that typically and initially estranges audiences.

The actors silently set the stage for Act 1 as Charlie contines his prologue

By scrambling the textual conventions and speech patterns of an internal vernacular, there is a deliberate dis-enabling of the audience's ease of engagement with the work, unless the material is intended as comedy or the audience accords with the cryptic language, or responds intuitively to the bizarre, display of private self-talk.

Nonetheless, the creative experimentation invigorates, and the curious play of self-squabbling functions as something of a personal 'force majeure' causing the rigid walls of self-entrapment to rupture and fall; crazing the gloss and pitting the confidence of my outwardly competent self, unsettling the blanketing clouds of my uncertainties, rattling the cages of all these *other*, timid shards; these floating pieces of my hidden selves.

It begins...

ACT 1 AUDITIONS

Two people enter a dark room and sit at a trestle table with three chairs. There is a jug of water and three glasses. Each place has blank paper and a pen. The producer playfully tries to snatch something from the writers' hands.

Producer/Eamon

Give it to me.

Writer/Mel

No...

Producer/Eamon

Give it to me.

Writer/Mel

No!

Producer/Eamon

...What's wrong?

Writer/Mel

Nothing's wrong.

Producer/Eamon

Well obviously something's wrong. You're so angry.

Writer/Mel

I'm not angry.

Producer/Eamon

Oh come on, it's in your face, in your eyes, I know you...

Writer/Mel

I'm getting angry about you deciding that I'm angry. Why do you always do this? Why do you use that tone of voice, it's ridiculous?

Producer/Eamon

Look, you've been angry, ever since I asked you...

Writer/Mel

Listen, if you're going to start this again, find someone else to do it with, I'm not interested.

Producer/Eamon

So, nothing's changed then?

Writer/Mel

That's it, give it a little kick, stick your claws in it. Is it still bleeding?

Producer/Eamon

All I want...

Writer/Mel

No. It's not all you want. The problem is you always want more than I have to give, and you don't give up. Ever.

A third person enters the room, pauses on the way to the table as he/she realises an argument is in full swing, then strides to the table

Director/Charlie

If you two could see fit to excuse me from this personal debate, I have an audition to conduct.

An actor walks into the room and lights come up on a small stage/riser, the actor stands and bows in the spotlight and addresses the audition panel which is comprised of a stony faced director, producer and playwright...

Actor 1/Angus

I am not afraid of you, no, no, just watch me!
I can loll here, see, just nice'n easy on this hallowed ground. Oohhh, it's such a lovely arch, and I am so free in my being, that today I have selected a piece of my mind for you.

he/she turns and prepares for her piece

Director/Charlie to writer

Too old, d'you think? Too drab? Too confronting? and ah yes, now I hear you sniff for the lousy taint of some dribbled drink and I see you totally withdrawing, retreating from that initial flicker of interest that turned so poignantly into a harried dash of loss as yet... another lost fuckin' genius staggers, loose and reckless upon your stage.

Producer/Eamon to director

There's the slow irritation, see, pressing between your lips and escaping, woof!... just as loudly as this stinging dream gorges on your mangled life and, well, it's so within earshot. Tick Tick tock.

Actor 1/Angus

Suffer with me just a little... indulge me, just but once wonder, if I am that one, ahh, that fine and prodigal miracle borne upon your luckiest star? Do let's avoid the awkward end, the ugly mottled rising of my embarrassed

charm, ...let us wonder if the cutting edge is all but dulled, unheralded and oozing from the blackened wings of more primitive vessels? I remain unafraid, up high, held here, aloft in a puppetry of importance, nothing touches me, (*pointing to heart*) and if, ... if I offered you my limbs to crimp and mangle, to snip and fondle, I would banish my soul with a glorious "GET outta here", I would yell and I would wantonly, eagerly flush my mind of all thought to prepare for you, to host you, fully within my life-closet, I would consume your message and I could feign such fear for you.

Director/Charlie

Your piece?

Actor 1/Angus

Daily I watch the same-names, drive vast cars to penitentiaries of greed, trudging and straining to create a product need for some evil seed of mass-consumerism, I started asking *who is free in there, I just wonder, officer, ... who breathes inside this corporate life-coffin, when it's filled with frightened men, trapped inside a hellish den of deep deception? ...and I am clearly seeing just whose brothers are identified by the privilege of wearing toe-tags, plastic bags and man, what's that flapping on my chest? Is this my true identity...?*

I'm cool, I'm hip, fashionably attached by my snap-on clip, I'm hanged by nylon cords, see, tied to my corporate corpse, tightly observed by associate suspicion, beaten into submission by so much derision, and with your permission,

I'll be terrified now, right back into the company's steel chokers of control. *Your Money for My Power.*

I'll have a large serve of ineptitude, so you can brand me with a platitude of never-ending, condescending attitude, ... and I'm still believing that my anonymity, my homelessness, my poverty, cloaks me in a freedom that offers me choices to come and go. I am so completely fuckin' wrong y'know. I am fodder, flotsam, boot-grease for the titanic white wheels of misfortune. I am...

The actor bows. There is no reaction from the judges panel, the silence creates a tension that the actor picks up, and after standing in an arrogant stance of defence, gradually fidgets and deconstructs himself into a nervous apologetic wreck, until he finally slinks off stage...

Director/Charlie

Thank you... *(stiffly)*, *(Shouting off-stage)* Oh Martin? David has asked for 10 minutes please.

Director stands and walks around scribbling and reading notes as a person dressed in black appears and adjusts the lighting... the argument continues in a hushed but desperate tone at the judges table

Producer/Angus

It's not much that I'm asking. God, sometimes I feel so lonely. I love you, why can't you at least try and understand me?

Writer/Mel

Love me? Understand you? You don't even know me. You're so busy trying to make me something

that I'm not. Lonely. Hah! You wouldn't know the meaning of lonely. Grow up.

Producer/Angus

Yeah, push 'em all away, that'll fix it, fixes everything. Let's pretend that we're happy. I'll play the fool, and you...

Writer/Mel

Play more stupid mind games, oh, what's that other one?

Producer/Angus

You mean play dead?

Writer/Mel

Oh, I've been doing that all my life.

Walks out of room - blackout

Passionate tormented musical piece. Writer now appears on stage numbered as Actor 2, and actor one is sitting at the judges table. This rotation continues every time a new performance takes place. Each actor can be seen removing a number from their shirtfront and throwing it into a waste basket before taking up the judging panel chair...

Director/Charlie

Begin.

Actor 2/Eamon

I dreamed I heard the voice of an old man, and he was calling out... he said

Children! Where are you? I'm so blinded by your darkness, your fears are heavy in my heart. I feel you and suddenly I find that I am an old father, weary and sad. I offered you

so many choices. Was I wrong?

Where are you? I can't hear you for the screaming, the roaring, I am deafened by your need. And yet, if I reach out my hand to you, I break the law, the very law I created for your freedom. I trusted you to find me. You plead for me to come to you when you wander in your horrors, yet, if do I respond, you only turn away. I'll admit that I'm an over-sensitive one. I needed strong faith from you. But you have forsaken me, traded me, slandered me and taken what was sacred to me in ways that I have witnessed... for long enough.

I was weak. I showed you my shadows, my nightmares, my pain. I was loving you in vain hope that you would come to my rescue, love me as I have needed you. Heal me, save me, hear me... and those few gentle souls that heard my cries, you hunted, slaughtered, humiliated... in my name. What am I to do?

Heaven? You pray for me to take you there but you don't understand. You are heaven. You are who I made the precious sunlight and glorious green hills and the oceans for. My precious jewels, my divine lost children, you are my heaven.

Director/Charlie

Why did you dress in so much darkness?

Actor 2/Eamon

I'm afraid that you will see my shame.

Director/Charlie

Do you believe that I can't?

Actor 2/Eamon

I am so powerless... Small. I cannot change, it never leaves, this stain, this black and fraudulent soul, I am acid on life. Nothing is mine. Not destiny, not love. I am a liar in God's ears and in mine.

Producer/Angus

Who are you?

Actor/Eamon

Don't ask me that.

Producer/Angus

I must know what are you?

Actor 2/Eamon

Please don't ask me...

Producer/Angus

I must know.

Actor 2/Eamon

Why do you torment me? I am not important. Let's talk about you. Who are you?

Producer/Angus

I was a woman. A mother, a child and a soul dancing, I was always here with you. I have seen you bleed, I have heard your rhythm and I have felt you inside of me and yet, I don't know what you are.

Actor 2/Eamon

I am your heart. I am god's broken and endarkened child. I shiver away from all love, nothing follows me, I am destruction's toy, and I am filled with emptiness.

Writer/Mel

What do you desire?

Actor 2/Eamon

I have no desire.

Writer/Mel

I see you and I acknowledge your truth. What do you truly desire?

Actor 2/Eamon

Only peace... to take one exquisite breath in the wilderness, to awaken in the magnificence of the uncut jewel, to be touched by perfection.

Writer/Mel

Wondrous within the magnificent dream?

Actor 2/Eamon

My only desire is to be born from love...

Director/Charlie

Next.

Light fades as another actor appears from left side, downstage and actor 2 steps away, crying to the right, upstage.

Lights up...

Actor 3/Mel

Inside my body lurks an ominous quivering; it senses itself as the electric language of my internal distress; *to be seen or remain unseen.*

Fear of the alien quivering races my heart, drops my stomach and roars my blood in a pounding cascade of fluctuating rhythms and temperatures; I am all at once ice cold and burning with red, blotching blooms. My head is squeezed in a too-tight bandage, my eyes weep and my muscles bunch into aching blocks of lead-jointed loss.

At other times, my jaw, in isolation, shivers, although more frequently whole colonies of nerve bundles spike and shock and stab, seizing comfortable complacency until dry-mouthed, skin crawling with dread I imagine what yet may come.

Cowering back from the predatory spectre of such a precarious self, nauseous inside all of my physically complex and dangerous skins, I stifle the urgent, primitive being and impose rational space and intellectual distance, deploying detachment and the ingestion of all manner of drugs (prescribed, advised, divulged). I assume a sort of 'whole person' persona.

Loved, yet solitary under a blue blanket of abjection, shuddering and dueling with the

unfathomable organism, I am subject to the whims of an unknowable chemical mystery, *'what's wrong with me?'*

Director/Karla

Beyond a miraculous transformation, your performance remained a vacuum of identity. A mere shadow, not even, ...a fading memory. An anti, a non, it was the Un. Choked by inability, deep black ravenous holes appeared within the blossoming of your Creation.

Actor 3/Mel

The gnawing of being less than light, was far too painful to bear.

Director/Karla

You clung so stubbornly to your pain that you formed beliefs.

Producer/Angus

Your creative performance ability abandoned you, destroyed you, hurt you and killed all and any hope of success.

Actor 3/Mel *pleading*

Creation is my mortal and dangerous foe?

Director/Karla

Unwittingly creative in your pain, anti-matter was formed.

Producer/Angus

A suction of destruction.

Writer/Eamon

Critical mess. Next!

Actor 4/Charlie

I steal people's souls. It's true. I watch and listen and gather up their best gestures and one-liners and I creep and...

Writer/Eamon

Conceptually fragmented by the blackening mass of such densely packed particles of ego, you struggle with shattered multipersona.

Actor 4/Charlie

Ohh, you must be the spark, the sweet one. Jaded in my taste for compassion, hungered by nothing, I slumbered, lonely and dissonant within the emptiness of a talent beyond choice. And now I am in your super-presence. At long last...

Director/Angus

Withered by exhaustion, the beaming smile of all loving, all benevolence fails to notice you or care.

Actor 4/Charlie

My story shuddered and completed the expulsion of all its original intention for play and passion to unfold. The game has grown tedious, the rules somehow forgotten in my entanglements and beseeching. I'm tired of whingeing, of provocation and you must be drained by the unending human preoccupation with the self-absorption of drama.

Producer/Annabel

That's anecdotal, hearsay, unfounded, superstitious bunk!

Director/Angus

All you are required to do is smile, nod, allow, accept, accommodate! We choose, the hoteliers of all fear, innkeepers of corruption, boarding house for all discomfort. We twist your fear, and, holding so much power, proudly acknowledge ourselves as the creators of a golden age of new science.

Writer/Eamon

Yes, yes, divine corruption, the political genius of profit and exquisite human greed, you plant our seeds for commercial procreation and we are lovingly cherished as the all-new people makers. Not one god but three.

Actor 4/Charlie

Yet my soul somehow sobs. In the silence of my eyes, opened as in the first moments of awakening from a dream, I am disorientated by the pounding of an energy once heralded as my loving heart, this tiny spark of joy flickers, in stubborn denial of all your words. I see shreds of anguished, angelic ambassadors lying quivering, torn there in the halls of our only heavenly hope.

Director/Angus

Then you lose. Next!

Lights up on actor 5

Actor 5/Karla

Far within the state of absolute pre-being I existed in an awareness of simple Self. Embryonic in perfection, completely peaceful in equilibrium and unlimitation, my ignorant Bliss swam through the mouth of a great silent

tide, in a warm red evanescence, an ocean of pure love.

Every glorious possibility ebbed in and out, like an invasion of gastronomic aromas to a ravenous sleeper until the underlying tension of my Desire stirred up streamers of friction against the fabric of an urgency emerging. Radiance bursts, it's purpose resonates in a bell sound of such dynamic and awesome proportion, that my Power reverberates throughout the burgeoning superpathways of your choices.

Judges *nodding*

Yesssss, good, good.

Actor 5/Karla

Here, we stand in the temple of the Supreme, Infinite, and eternal Freewill of the popular awards, the prosperity Seekers, the winner's circle. Ultimate Creative Being springs into form, here in me, bubbling endlessly with a golden light streaming in all directions from my centre.

Writer/Annabel

A pulsing thought form of marvellous ability?

Actor 5/Karla

A great and glorious good. Give it to me.

Black. The judges and Actor 5 leave the stage. From off-stage a voice calls out

No.

Spotlight snaps on a final actor who stands in front of the riser.

Actor 6/Annabel (*veiled*)

Ever wonder why you are so fascinated, ...enraged by my innocence? You are spellbound by the intimate implications of all my stifled secrets. Are they even mine? I can sense your discomfort... your... un...ease. Relax, take a slow breath and ease yourself back down in your seat, that's right, make yourself a little more comfortable while I slip into something ... less comfortable.

I wield the power of your snivelling discomfort as it grovels in the shadows of your shifting psyche. You are shocked by the deliberate annihilation of my identity; I am eyeless, lipless, silent, absent, yet eternally observing you in secret, I judge, I spectate, I am public voyeur, a walking shroud. You may not control that which you cannot see.

My blackness is the cold spectre that embodies endless great mystery, I hold the promise of that which is forever unattainable to you. I am the unwinnable prize. I am Lilith.

And I am here, wandering casually through your supermarket aisles, I confront you and I challenge your lazy beliefs, your powerless structures, your mindless trance of safety, your comfort zone. I feast upon your righteous indignation.

I am the nightmare.

ACT 2 - IN REHERSAL

The stage is marked by 6 squares. The squares are defined by a sort of lego wall. In one square is a step ladder. One square is a lounge-room. One square is a stage riser. One square is a bed. Another square has a street-lamp and bus-bench and the last square is an office with a desk and a tripod mounted video camera. Each actor has a tall gooseneck lamp and several torches which are used for lighting up or animating the squares as each zone is active.

Charlie is lying on a couch in the loungeroom square with Karla, who holds a glass of wine and is listening while Charlie reads her a newly completed poem.

Charlie

...until softly-spoken through a cyclone of wire,
her whispered hooks of hope lunged out and
hovered, cowering under God's stark and lonely
hill, in some snatch at love, from anyone.

Karla

Ooof, that bit about God's hill, won't it alienate
hmmmn... around half the audience?

Charlie

Does it matter? It's a literary luncheon, they
have to expect some artistic idiosyncrasy.

Karla

Yeah, but couldn't you...?

Charlie

How about the Night Spider?

Karla

Too 'Cartland' for that pack of bitches, why don't
you read from the Lucifer piece, oh God, it's so
gustatory.

Charlie

Oh, that reminds me, Mel's coming for dinner.

Karla

Again huh? How's this current episode effecting rehearsals? I'm seeing her in clinic next Tuesday.

Charlie is scribbling through his papers, he refills Karla's wine glass, and tries to refill his own, but the bottle is empty

Charlie

Here it is, mmmn, what? Oh, do you want to go out, or make some... hey, did you buy more wine?

Karla

When *didn't* I buy more wine? I'll make some elegant sandwiches for your sister and she can pretend to eat them. Go ahead and read *Lucifer* to me while I pretend I've never heard it.

Charlie

In the morning of days, I was reckless and I carried you into great dangers, I hardly knew my strength. I tested you with my brutality, and I boasted of deeds without merit. Some touch unsettled and chained my core in a gang of poisonous, earthly rot.

Crushing my faith in your goodness, I fell, and there wept in muffled heavings. I proved my masculine worth.

I clanked and sweated with the worst of foul mischiefs and I wandered so far from you in a cold, lit stupor. A shadow crept into me.

Black

Lights up on Eamon is composing a piece of music, alternating in scoring it, and playing phrases of it on the guitar.

The telephone rings... An answering machine records the following

Charlie

Hello Eamon, this is Charlie. Just calling to let you know that we'll be in rehearsal from the 5th right up until opening. I'd like to hear what you've written for the choreographer. Also I'm sending some singers to see you next week. Call me please.

Black

Lights up on Mel & Angus on stage. They are sitting opposite each other at a small table and both are staring into their coffees. They never look at each other.

Mel

Angus, ... what's wrong?

Angus

Nothing's wrong.

Mel

Obviously something's wrong. You're so angry.

Angus

I'm not angry.

Mel

Oh come on, it's in your face, in your eyes, I know you...

Angus

I'm getting angry about you deciding that I'm angry. Why do you always do this Mel? Why do you use that tone of voice, it's ridiculous?

Mel

Look, you've been angry, ever since I asked you...

Angus

Listen, if you're going to start this bullshit again, find someone else to do it with, I'm not interested.

Charlie

from the wings Lovely. Keep working on your pacing, I'm thinking we might try this in different settings. Very good.

Mel and Angus smile at each other and laugh as they leave the stage.

Black.

Lights up on Annabel who is stretching and dancing in leotards and rehearsing some lines...

Charlie

You're Annabel Lewis? I've been hearing good things about your Norman Drysdale piece from Mel. You've read *Gourd* obviously? Let's see what you've got for me then. How about the Witch's daughter?

Annabel

childlike My mother is a dream. She is a savage beauty, an ocean woman. I am my mother, I am a swing from her hips. Watch me make the moko with my grandmother's carving knife. See my story-hands, sky mother, sailing, singing me. My mother is a witch in a wilderness.

Charlie

You may want to lighten up on the delivery. Don't lean too hard on the sibilance, you are a strong child, a clear speaker. Let your child speak out,

already wise. Convince the audience to work at locating your age.... hold still and make them really see you. I'd like you to do another piece for me. Your choice.

Annabel

I'm really falling in love with Eamon. He is everything that I want in a partner, I call him my twin-soul and he gets so... disgusted. He calls it cosmic lint, and I know he really hates it when I talk about our relationship with other people.

Y'know, I went to see a shaman. He gave me this disgusting drink, called Ayahuasca....? Look I can't remember exactly what it was called but it made me so sick. I threw up and lay on the floor in a state of hysteria. There were all these colours and sounds flying around me and then I saw my own death. Wow, it was so intense. I went there so I could have a vision about Eamon, and I saw my own death. I just wish I knew how he really feels.

Mel is practising yoga. Angus is ironing a shirt. She stops stretching and looks at him.

Mel

So nothing's changed then?

Angus

That's it, give it a little kick, stick your claws in. Is it still bleeding?

Mel

All I want...

Angus

No. It's not all you want. The problem is you

always want more than I have to give, and you don't give up. Ever.

Mel

It's not much that I'm asking. God, sometimes I feel so lonely. I love you, why can't you at least try and understand me?

Angus

Love me? Understand you? You don't even know me. You're so busy trying to make me something that I'm not. Lonely? Shit! You wouldn't know the meaning of lonely. Grow up.

Mel

Yeah, push 'em all away, that'll fix it, fixes everything. Let's pretend that we're happy. I'll play the fool, and you...

Angus

Play more stupid fucking mind games, oh, what's that other one?

Mel

You mean play dead?

Angus

Oh, I've been doing that for a very long time.

he walks out of the room and black

Lights up as passionate tormented music is coming from Eamon practising guitar. Annabel bursts in.

Annabel

Hi,... guess what? I'm in, I can't wait to show you what I've been working on all day... Oh my

God, I'm so inspired...

She plugs in her ipod. Emotional chaos and screaming sounds begin....

Annabel

I see your face, but I cannot recognise your soul. Shh, those eyes, that mouth...these floating playgrounds of your journey, watch me wandering.

Eamon explodes, ripping the plug from his amp.

Eamon

Fuck, I can't do this..I'm in the middle of practising. I can't switch myself into this...what the fuck? The audient for your, your dramatic moment right now.

Annabel (*hurt*)

I...(collapsing) I can't believe you...

Eamon

I'm sorry, I have a massive headache, can we go over it later...?

Annabel crouches, weeping and hitting her head with closed fists

Eamon

Please don't do this 'bel, we've done this to death. I'm so tired, you know I'm in concert tomorrow and I just don't feel like getting into a major drama.

Annabel

I want to know why your career is so much more fucking special than mine?

Eamon grabs a coat and leaves, slamming the door behind him. After a while, Annabel hold Eamon's guitar and plucks the strings as she closes her eyes. Eamon's composition plays itself to her.

Mel enters the room. Angus is sitting in the dark. He turns his face to her but remains silent.

Mel

Why is it so dark in here? I can hardly see you.

Angus

I didn't hear you come in.

Mel *(turns the lamp on)*

Look, I'm sorry about the way that I...

Angus

What are you trying to say? You sound terrible.

Mel

I'm really sorry about last night, Y'see, I just wanted you to get it from my perspective, because, well, I'm just not very clear about my feelings right now.

Angus

Listen, there's no way I'm getting dragged into another diatribe about our relationship, I've heard enough accusations to last a fucking lifetime.

Mel

I'm not accusing you, you don't get it, I just pictured you and I having a beautiful time tonight, maybe clearing the air and you can't even recognise what's happening. Open your eyes Angus...

Angus

You've been with Karla right? She's been pissing in your ear about active listening again.

Mel

Why are you always angry?

Angus

For fuck's sake Mel, top shrieking at me.... this is a waste of time.

Black.

Lights up on Angus and Eamon in a bar drinking together

Angus

Hey, sorry man, but I don't think Mel and I can make it to your gig tomorrow night.

Eamon

Yeah no sweat... maybe you guys can babysit

Angus

Huh?

Eamon

Annabel is driving me round the fuckin twist, she's like a neurotic 2 year old... jesus her tantrums...

Angus

Yeah. I can dig it.

Eamon

How come you guys aren't coming, you said you really wanted tickets... what's up?

Angus

I don't really want to talk about it.

Eamon

OK. How's the play progressing? Must be weird working with Mel and Charlie, I always found that... ahh... a little tense.

Angus

Shit man, let's just talk about...?

Eamon

What, cars? Steroids...? Art? Football? The Intergalactic Federation?

Angus

Nah, I just wanna sit here and get so fucked up we completely forget whoever we thought we ever were.

Eamon

Deal.

Angus

Your shout, brother...

Karla's office. Karla sits in a chair, listening intently to Mel.

Mel

It's really good to be able to come here and talk to you like this, because... I don't think I can talk to anyone else I know about what's going on, they usually just glaze over or try and fix me and no one can. I sort of like being broken, it gives me a place to hide.

Karla, where are you taking me? I'm so afraid to change...

Karla

Change is all we are.

Mel

I keep sensing that I have this incredibly powerful engine, but I'm sitting here, revving in neutral, pouring my life force into going nowhere. I'm afraid of you Karla.

Karla

You're just hypnotised by an old, cracked mirror. I simply aim to show you a different picture. Relax. Trance is simply a focus of attention, a place for imaginations to run wild, a dream-like comfort zone where ideas are born and possibilities are infinite and endless.

Mel

I'm not arrogant, I just feel lonely...shut out. It's like there's plastic wrapping over my life. I can't get out and nothing gets in.

Karla

Trance happens when we enter a great film, when we listen intently to music, deeply engage in artmaking; trance is a fixed state of attention, an inwardly opened path to the creative muse.

Mel

Some days I want to... I don't know, just get out of the car and walk away. I don't understand the whole living thing. I want a map.

Karla

Trance is the unconscious tool of artists, trance awakens the watcher within, trance is a delicious, shivery feeling that happens when soundwaves

become tactile, when light is soft, when fragrance is hypnotic and all time ceases to exist.

Mel

How come so many of us are broken, like baby birds that fell out of a toxic nest? Most days I lie in bed, nauseous and strangled, and I read crazily from six different books, searching like a mental glutton for something fresh and alive,... but it's all so tepid and stale.

Karla

Trance invites the curiosity of the inner self to participate, stimulating sensory acuity, composing life in abstract sensations and impressions through the soothing pleasure of paying very relaxed attention to what's happening and yet, being motionless, utterly aware of what is unfolding, yet completely still.

Mel

I have this phantom walking around in my mind with the weight of doom to drag around and it's searching for a home. There is no home!.. I tell it, and it crushes my skull and twists my guts and I flounder on a feather bed with six books of emptiness, and life and people float by and I gag on my self.

Karla

Trance accesses the past and the future whilst being fully present in the moment.

Mel

I think I'm beginning to understand how much pain is in a joke. The stand-up comics can't sit down, they had their arses kicked so hard that they just gotta stand there and distract us with these manic

stories about the truth of what really hit' em.
And we laugh and laugh and go home and forget it
all, but they don't...

Black

Lights up on a script reading at Charlie's.

Charlie

on the phone ...mmn, well we're working on that tonight, it's
all over the shop. I know,... oh that reminds me,
Jo Baker? I thought she was coming to audition for
the Serpent. Jess' said she's perfect,... tough,
gorgeous, stick thin...

*Mel and Annabel are reading through their lines while Charlie
finishes his phone conversation. Charlie hangs up and rejoins them.*

Charlie

I'm sorry, that damned phone seems to become more
insistent by the hour. Let's start, shall we?
We'll read it through and then discuss
choreography later. I'd like to hear it from 'a
tiresome ache'. Mel please start.

Mel

The distance between them remains constant. Their
desire is a tiresome ache that never ceases for
either of them.

Annabel

His magnificence echoes her, and he is only ever
aware of her pale and beautiful presence,
floating, illuminating his dark side, pulling his
thoughts to be with her, to touch, but they can
not.

Black

*Mel steps out of the square into a space between where Eamon and Mel
kiss in the unlit zone*

Mel

Angus can't know, and it'll destroy Annabel...

Eamon nods and kisses her

Eamon

Look, Annabel was, ...is a huge mistake. I must be devoid of any compassion, because I just sort of slid into this passive role of being ...? Christ, I'm still so fucked up over.... you...

Mel (*returns, dazed*)

His moods are linked with her own temperament, and they erupt into violent storms and furies when he is low.

Charlie

This is where the asanas begin. The cherouti starts droning, and you both make the salute to the sun... and here, (*moving in time with the words*) together they weep and twist, gazing at each other from a silent forbidden distance that dooms...and then, Mel, pick it up from there...

Mel

Her tears fall onto his surface.

Charlie

and then the tablas, and Annabel, you make your turn on 'He turns away.'

the phone rings and Charlie takes it and leaves the room...

Annabel

So here we are, receiving one last pure slick breath of candid choice. How do I know what's real? Where is my light? I pray for the Spectre to come for me...

Mel

I really can't seem to lock into this now, there's so much going on, my head is going to burst. You're so good at getting your lines down. How do you do that?

Annabel

dropping the script When all is said and done, Mel, words are only words and your loving him will follow whatever path you choose. What do you want?

Mel

I just wish you could tell me what to do. I am so unclear and I'm in pain all the time.

Annabel

Taste your pain, is it so delicious that you can't live without it?

Mel (*turning*)

Why on earth are you always so fucking abstract, so evasive? How do you shop, or even live?

Annabel

How do you?

Mel

Should I laugh or cry, I'm already so confused, and now you're making me crazy.

Annabel

Making you, forcing you, crazing you?

Mel

I'm going home, this is ridiculous, why can't you listen to me? Properly?

Annabel

I've fallen under the chiming lilt of a travelling white-faced windsong? What do you think? For the link between the end of the first scene and Womana's final swansong?

Charlie

returning It's the song of rain, dear.

Black - Lights up on Eamon and Angus still drinking together.

Eamon

I keep dreaming about my father, I dream that he's either dead or dying, and I wake up in a stricture of feeling that haunts me for days, or weeks.

Angus

I was at a training today, you know, one of those corporate revups, and there was this exercise, some shit about brain hemisphere dominance and out of the blue, I lost the plot. I started shaking and I was freaking out in front of all these strangers.

Eamon

Last night I dreamed about Linda Sorokin, this angry woman I used to know, we were walking together through a flood and she pointed out the body of a drowned woman floating past us. She behaved in the most clinical way. I wandered around in my dream searching for her feelings.

Angus

Fuck, everything was coming apart, and it wasn't even that kind of training, d'you know? So I quit my job. I've left my reality and I think it was the most dangerous task I have ever had to

perform. Maybe I've lost all touch with reality, or maybe I've finally begun to recognise it properly. I don't know what's true or how to tell the difference between international lying and face-to-face betrayal. My gut instincts are all in knots and I wonder where the end of this tangle really lies?

Eamon

Where am I? I mean where is the real me? I know, that sounds so facile and I'm facile, I'm OK with dents, I can live with crumple, but I can't even make my way in the traffic. I know there's more than the flat screen out there, I have choices, to drink or not to drink!. Who fucking cares anyway?

Angus

You know, I join in all these great causes, to help some fundamental component of the planet to cling on, and some prick just does away with it whether I paid my dues or not.

Eamon

I'm living chained to a post, I'm going bald with worry. I mean what's even out there?

Angus

There's Annabel, mate. Now she's pretty out there!

Eamon

She constantly wants my approval for her artistic expression, and I don't even understand it, it's so bloody abstract. I never know what to say. I'm swamped right now, I actually feel like I'm drowning. I just want to be left alone.

Angus

Oh, for Christ's sake Eamon, there's no such thing.

Black Light up on Charlie in Karla's office filming himself.

Charlie V/O

It's all about balance. I see the spectres, and I know about blood sugar. There's a little mist that creeps in through the window, but I know it's because I live in a pretty misty place, and that's OK... It's just that, well, I'm not sure what to do with all the mist.

Black

Lights up on Karla seated and speaking to the video camera

Karla

After Sarah died last year, I was so burned out that I just closed up and went away. I had so much to learn about living from her death. I never knew how hard it was to walk alongside death and watch someone you really care about just vanish like that. One moment we were talking and the next she had slipped into the tunnel of her own dying.

Black Lights up on Charlie

Charlie

Oh yes, sometimes I love it like a cool mother, wrapping me in silent safety, shutting out the creeps, the killers and the monsters that lurk out there. Other days it suffocates me and I'm blinded by the closeness and I lose all my strength and vision. I don't want to ramble on, how do you feel?

Karla

I was so charred by the loss of her that I couldn't see anything else for ages. That's probably where I learned not to really care what other people thought about me.

Black Lights up on Charlie

Charlie

I died once, and no one came to get me. I thought, I better watch for a big white light to summon me into a glorious meaning, but it was all black and totally silent and nothing happened.

I waited and waited, and I didn't know where I was in all that blackness. It dawned on me then. In the blackness I knew. I knew I had found my way to the ultimate abandonment. God forgot to come for me.

Black. Lights up on Karla speaking to the camera

Karla

...and it's all those little contracts that we enter into when we say Hi, wow, haven't seen you for ages, what you been doin'? Or hey, you free this weekend, we're having a few friends over.

I took the phone off the hook, stayed in the dark and worked like a possessed maniac. Sarah was always serene and centred, oh we had our conflicts but I marvelled at her depth of feeling, her... soul. I just admired her so completely. I would give anything... I just yearn to float and billow in a private sanctuary of composure, deriving joy from an open window and a rainstorm.

Light up on Mel and Angus. After an uncomfortably long silence, Angus speaks

Angus

Yeah, and what's your point? Look, I'm loud and I get passionate about shit, but I'm not fucking angry. I just want you to know that I wholeheartedly reject all your negative projections as being far more dangerous... you bought right into a socially constructed quarantine for life's imagined threats, the no-go zone for shifty selves, oh, fuck, the very whiff of masculine virility lands us all in a castration tank, a holding bay for all offensive identities of indeterminate intellectual, physical and psychological capabilities, Yes, every sorry-assed *other* dwells in a halfway house, a godly mission administering to poverty, isolation, oppression, just a bunch of white cunts trawling and trafficking in the vulnerability of every condition of minority. *Our otherness, our differences, the grand alterities* are locked inside sanctimonious institutions for every free and deviant expression of sexuality, fuck me, my *other* car's in the sheltered workshop of your social control.

Black - Lights up on Annabel speaking on her phone.

Annabel

I went to see a shaman and he gave me a drink ...Ayahuasca...wow, it was so intense. I went there so I could have a vision about Eamon, and I saw my own death. Man...

Eamon calls Mel on the phone and when she answers.. he hangs up.

Black

Lights up on Annabel standing under a streetlamp

Annabel

Nick, you know, my dramaturge, said that it was really a book, not a play, because it's so descriptive and audiences don't want to listen to all that language, but I don't know, I see it on stage, arms waving, sweat running, people interacting, and the audience just adopts the pieces that resemble their own lives and take'em home. The rest doesn't matter, really.

Black Lights up on Charlie

Charlie

Sometimes my spine feels as if there's somebody else in here and they want to move in a different direction to me. I wake up feeling so exhausted and I wonder where I went when my conscious brain wasn't looking.

Black Lights up on Eamon drunk and staring at himself in mirror

Eamon

You keep asking me what I do? I don't know, I'm just as curious as you, I mean there's lots of stuff that I do, or can do, and I don't know what for.

screaming

What the fuck did you do?

Black. Lights up on Annabel making up, talking to Mel

Annabel

I keep saying to myself over and over, I'm dead, I'm really dead, and it's bizarre, because I used to do that when I was alive, I used to walk around saying I'm dead. Now, I can't feel anything,

there's no point to life, you know and either I was kidding myself, or..... am I alive?

Mel

I went to see my shrink today. My friend Al says we have to do our own shrinking, and... I really like that....

Black. An almost empty stage.

Karla sits in darkness. She speaks in a subdued voice to the audience

Karla

If you think I have a precious gem for you, you know, one of those deeply poignant moments stored up just for now, then you're wrong.

All I see are small, small roads leading to the same destinations, and nothing moves far from it's... from it's orbit. I see an unending line of pale, grey and sickly faces, winding back through time, struggling and falling, and endlessly they come on, clinging, afraid, and unchanging.

Oh yeah, some are radiant for a few youthful seconds, but they all just wither into brittle clouds of the lost and frightened...

ACT 3

A strange-looking creature is centre-stage but motionless, in darkness. A drum beat increases in tempo and the creature moves, wriggling, stretching, animated by the tension of the drumming. The drumming becomes urgent... Moon stops drumming

Moon

Here, in this house of lamentations, from the very lips of darkness, issues forth a story of frankly, quite maudlin beginnings. Sit, be comfortable, listen as I describe the burial of Womana....

The Creature

Oh no, oh no...no

Moon

This is not a tragic story, no, no, it is true love's tale, and of course there are the usual heroes and villains, ahh, but our queen... Her life began with a haircut dream, a shivering down of sweet grief as she passed into the void of deep dimension. Was she a ghost, a spirit child? She surely must have died for she told me she was utterly gone. I walked with her, she was a small, unhappy girl with strange opinions.

Child

Tell me how it began, like a tiger's tale, in rhyme... a song of waves and rainbows.

Moon

A small girl, a dearly beloved child, once dropped from a very great height and fell to earth where she shattered into so many pieces that the pieces formed a rescue team to carry her through her journeys of days alive.

Child

...and the frightened, broken girl clutched at all her pieces and gave them secret names, ...of champions, of kings and queens of power, each piece gifted with its own wonderful voice?

Moon

Yes, and all of her pieces loved her, for she was their deep mother, and as she grew, she watched life from behind the veils of all her selves and never knew that her heroines were simply the glittering shards of all her old injuries, so long forgotten

Child

What were her very first words?

Black. Spotlight appears on a sign on stage that says 'BIRTH' - The Angel archetype squeezes out of the creature's costume, with much ado and sound effects.

Angel

Everything works. The language pours me in a bath of sweet milks that issue like dreams of my mother's breast. Floating in the luminous choice of my pure death, I awaken in darkness. Savage white darkness. Rolling, wet in the furry mercury of a first breath, I steamer into a world of motion, falling, meteoring from Graceland. A naked, wanton newborn. Curious, triumphantly bursting with expectation.

Moon

This terrifying creature is a womb from which the shards, our players emerge. It is my world, an interior realm, the inner space, an unknowable world where such uncertain dreamers bide their

time; watching and waiting for a coded signal, a clarion call, an innate urge to leap forth, claiming and articulating all that is hidden in the assumed ineptitude, the dark dormancy.

Angel, Whore and Child sit together as if waiting at a bus stop.

Child

Hold me.

Whore

Why? You're such a serious child, nothing seems to measure up, you're always so... disappointed.

Child

Not wanted here?

Angel

Unclaimed, I dangle in an etheric void.

Whore

Avoidance baby.

Angel

Primitive shame is seeping up my costume of organismic selfishness.

All 3

Selfish, Selfish, self-absorbed, manipulative and selfish. *Shellfish.*

Angel

Saggy baggage on a carousel of lost life property.

Whore

There's something wrong with that one, leave it.

Angel

Bleeding and unfinished, I wait in the wings. I hear them planning.

Whore

Kill it... it's for the best.

Child

I am such a serious child... nothing seems to measure up.

Moon

And yet, our Child is curious... she reaches out to touch and to taste the dripping walls of a wet and wondrous world. She leans in, listening to the whimper of stories that crouch behind her eyes, she dances to the tuneless moans of monsters that roam in packs beneath her heart. Sniffing around the tungsten cruelty of childhood, she ventures out for company, and for kicks.

Black. Lights up on 'CHILDHOOD'

Moon

The Shadow ruptures in a flood of hydraulic sorrows to reunite with his six year old. He wonders how they were separated, kept so far apart, hidden from each other, trapped in their lost worlds of scorch-blackened valleys and night-dimmed caverns?

Shadow

I have remembered his troubling sandals and his small, gentle feet. Somehow, just now, I stumbled across his drawings and his earliest words and I am fearful of scaling the fragile mountain of his confusion. I see him there, my little heavy-

heart, burdened with worldly weights and ancient worries, bleeding from the savagery of the playground and crinkled from all the spitting.

Inside the circling hurt he pounds himself into a mote. Before they could. Who comes to salve his fractured shell? He waits, orbiting each day for any friend. Digging into the onion weed, he whispers into the dirt, 'where are you?' but such sweet fairies are already long-gone; trampled by the arrogant stomp of cattle stampeding the school paddock, burrowing down until he deeply finds the satellite of daily deaths of dreams, buried in the choking dust of bells and little lunch breaks.

Child

I fall apart, the stabbing pieces pretend to glue together and I want to fly, but it can't happen here.

Angel

Hey, where are my wings?

Whore

I'm so heavy from the mold that clings to me.

Whore

The puzzling wand of walking contorts me, groaning and I smell a strangled violence in every rorting touch of domestic pretense.

Child

I draw a grotesque reflection, without Grace, without Joy.

Whore

They were your sisters,...they died so long ago.

Angel

Why is everybody smiling and buying more and more destruction?

Shadow

Wake up, I want to hate you.

Angel

I watch another feather fall, and an aeon of emptiness touches me on the spine.

Black. Lights up on 'PUBERTY'

Moon

The Child waits in the shadows and sees in the dark. She watches the dance.

Child

Life calls me on the phone

Whore

Someone get that, or take a message

Child

The toast burns and the torment burns and my stomach churns. I watch from behind my panic plate. Pregnant with loss, I run. Sheathing, merchandising, muttering and marketing. I am trapped in a trolley of wire.

Angel

Consuming, I gloat at small mercies and I am the small mercies. I lie to live.

Whore

'Tell the Truth' they demand.

Angel

How, I wonder?

Child

What is?

All

Bloating, bleating, behaving, buying. Bahhhh

Whore

Shop diseased, I purchase down pat. That's what I do. Providence conveys me to a cashier of oral therapy and I wait in the gloom of so much optionlessness.

Child

I fill up on nothing. I am fooled again.

Angel

Measuring my self in separate, nasty packages, I am smugly independent of the mechanism of deceit..

Whore

You're s'posed to take a number.

Child

Fuck you, I shout, and then stare vacantly at the deathscape.

Whore

Starved on gluttony and driven to the trough of sour grapes, I stink and my body writhes and bubbles in an ocean of toxic harm and I cannot see at all.

Shadow

My blindness buys me tickets to a joy ride. I am lining up to be strapped into the furnace of a cattled humanity.

Whore

Sucked in.

Angel

Viral.

Child

Fodder for fodder.

Shadow

Meatmeal for pigs.

Hero

Swine before pearls.

Whore

I inject myself with sweet tender cuts. I drink my mother's blood and I cry in.

Angel

Globalisation was my shiny new Messiah.

Child

Death to Choice. Freewill is a running dog with open weeping eyes.

Shadow

Here in the gut-space, the tube of what I am not, the passing of all my choices, the fisher casts his net for deeper suck, sweeter flow, and the promise of more and more...

Whore

More tasteless crap?

Child

Same as always?

Angel

Yes please.

Black. Lights up on 'SEX & POWER'

Moon

Such a flimsy circus, like a brittle tedium of cycling shards, each piece is calling out, pleading and bleating as an army of dim night guests that invade the refuge of a Whore's bed.

Child

I really need to know if love is just a nursery rhyme that never seems to end, if I'm so naive that I paint a perfect picture with the colours that I steal from the sweet dreams.

Whore

singing

Once I had a secret love...

Hero

I saw your love, he was so ugly.

Whore

You're so bitter, what ever happened to you?

Hero

Nothing. Nothing ever happens to me.

Whore

Look, I'm just searching for my love. He left me

here and I...

Shadow

Poor you? (shouting) I never left you. I cannot. I am here, grey and heartless, *right* where you *left* me. I am numb with cold. Lift me from this freakish curse. I am a man, afraid and hungry. My soul reasons with your wrath and still you summon me to this ... awakening?

Child

Each dance of rain into our open mouths marks us with unending joy and suffering. We thirst and carry the flourishing dream of life into light and shade. As sufferers, we fall, swooping to the ground of our own free, bleeding and blessed will.

Angel

Ahhh, and so it dawns. How I struggle is recorded in me. I learn all my parts.

Serpent

See these limbs? These are your tentacles of illusion. These soft and promising coils hold all your secrets, your power and your truths.

Angel

I reject this rising sensation of forbidden heat. Seal the door where evil dwells, I am ridden by a ghost of guilt and loathing, give me oblivion, I am afraid of the snake.

Hero

Am I such a dull flat land of honesty? Don't use this turgid language to flounder my control. Serve clarity with strong and comfortable ideas. I'm not a symbol.

Serpent

Allow me to swallow your bitter pain.

Whore

You're love? Some wisp, remotely floating? I walk with your slow death in my hands. Your form is drifting. I am staked and burned by your metallic aftermath.

Hero

My anger is vast. A tidal expanse. I am no longer submerged in fearful submission by your consumptive culture, a place where my slumbering spirit of determination did drown. I am awake now and haunted by eyes that did see, and were chained.

Whore

You want my score for a pale act of annihilation? Who gave you such bitter keys to my awakening?

Shadow

You have wrought an iron in me. A desecration of simple loving and I cannot breathe, nor find any peace in this ghastly mask.

Whore

I am alone, cold, frozen and glassed in loss. Your choice, your death, your anger.

Hero

I choose to spend time with ugly anger, to wail it and wear it and to spear it. I light a fire that summons you to the wheel of your true humanity. I call out for us to make right with ourselves and with each other, our past, our future. Move on.

Shadow

How am I afraid of my power? I love... summon all sound.

Moon

Body feels and belly reads and bowel listens and heart creates and kidneys correct and bladder cries

Child

Shhh you cry baby, dry up

Moon

Muscles hold and bones bear and lungs gather and stomach churns and uterus hides the fugitive... Skin speaks and eyes attend. Noses know. Tongues test and feet forgive. Blood delivers, lymph removes. Brain watches all from above

Whore

Birdbrain.

Moon

Unashamed of seething darkness, the Serpent curves in raw arcs, borne on the whittled spine of an alien genius. Bartering hard for her place at the mystic moment, she roams under the world and finds what others chose to lose.

Serpent

I taste your limbs, ever the tentacles of your hedonism. Do you not feel my soft and promising coils? Could you take me into your self, delivered unto your deepest need?

Your flesh hurts, that proud and persistent hostage to fear and I will not inhabit your sour temple of ugliness, your bleeding tomb of

terrors. I slither, free and sweet, fresh in earthly gardens of wild root and wondrous loam.

You shower me in the wetness of your scorn. Now you are weighed down, stoppered by an indolence of soul. I grimace at the wickedness of your foul and pious march of destruction upon the glorious path, and yet, I remain deaf to your ecstatic madness. I banish the buried, muffled cries that whimper from under your savagery, I sever my eyes from the sight of you.

My Earth quakes at the blight of your days. Make way, dispassionate wisps. Victim to the illusion, you are truly Fallen! My end is a silken fold of purest drifting shimmer. I devour me in the void of your heavy silence.

Whore

I know what you want, I hear your prayers, I keep the velvet nipple that fits your hand and embouchre. Go on, suck here and feed, feed and feel how much I love only you.

Angel

I fill myself with anger to honour the grief. I choke on the silken cord of horror that smiles my youth at the bell of so much human intercourse.

Whore

Perfectly in time I hurry in my sudden pain to be away from you... whoever you are. Scuttling in my coffin of loneliness, I pretend to love.

Child

I fall apart. The stabbing pieces cannot glue together. I am gone.

Whore

Drunk on slime, something must come. To my hand,
to the game, to destiny. Piercing the wall of the
virgin goddess, I offer my tongue to metal
penetration. Come to me, bludgeon my blankness in
the salt.

Child

You are never real and I am nowhere. I
contrive to keep you in my darkness. Don't get in
me, I can't feel.

Whore

Sex is just a movie with a vapid song laced in
wordless solemn tones.

Moon

La la la...

Angel

I punish them all with a slow dark venom that
releases in the irony of time.

Whore

Boys!... Get home to yer mothers.

Black. Lights up on 'BREAKING THE CURSE'

Moon

Long and tight within the growling dark of July's
heavy womb, her soft and satin crown tenses, and
a drifting knowing surges into the void of
silent and close-made change. Flapping off her
soul's ledge, ready to be gone from a grim and
shuttered back, I see that she cannot turn, can
never return to suck on old bones, she stands
alone.

Whore

I captured a beast, and grievous, nourished its child by mine own hand at mine own cold fireside. Sweetly I fed, from my leaking life into the cauldron of such bitter syrups, as you did sit, there, stirring ooze, until I stuttered, *Eschew and taste not this flavour, 'tis mine own.*

Moon

In the tumbling path of four August winds, she chants.

Whore

Naked, I freely run, long within the mist of Spring's drenching rains where at last I bleed my lost and stammered pain upon the earth, clad only in the breath of death's oldest prayer, and there do I banish thee at last, discarding the strangling cords of your foul predation to get away of me now, and forever!

All (*broken into parts*)

West wind winds you, sunlight blinds you, fortune finds you at your own creation. Forest falls away, green paths fade to grey, long roads growing longer, ways mist and shadow stronger, safer in cities, glittering in pretties, dreaming circles smaller, numbers lost to caller, distant doors into foreign shores beckon and command thee 'Attend' and I sever you from me.

Moon

Now 'tis done.

Music plays. Fade to Black. Lights up on 'DEATH'

Angel

Who are you?

Shadow

I'm a witness, some sort of scribe, the porter
for all her pain, I bear her scars.

Hero

Why am I here? What is this?

Shadow

Shhh, this is a sacred zone, a women's place and
you are all powerful women in a combat zone,
alive alongside me. You are the soldiers who
guard these tendrils from harm, watch out.

Angel

I have returned to gather you, to drift upon your
eyes like a mist of pure love, to help you
remember your promises, and grow... grow.

Hero

But why have we been summoned here. Like this?

Angel

Are you afraid to die?

Whore

Death is everywhere and I shiver in anticipation.

Shadow

You are a fish of very old magic. I see you
darting through ribbons of light in icy cold
water, silvery and dark in all your masks.

Hero

Quiet... This is a birth. Still yourselves and observe the cutting of all your cords, they fall in blinding arcs of roaring radiance.

Shadow

Yet why make others witness this strange inner turbulence?

Angel

I tremble now, it's new. Where did I buy this sudden fuck in the heart? It rips me into shreds of black grief that no one can explain.

Angel

Everything is nothing, and we are walking towards a dawn. Each story is rolling, unfolding, gathering speed and momentum and we are merely the small truths of every child ever born and lost.

Hero

Am I just a play in words?

Shadow

Hurry now, the child is ready. I hear her crying.

Everybody

Give it to me, Give it to me, Give it to me...

Serpent

Bury me in this blanket, dead as they who walk, drugged upon artifice, startled by the elegance of allusion. Mother, I feel your body beneath me and I know an ocean of loss. Father! I am the Path! Following none but the truth of my own creation, I am here and well away. Not once upon this shifting skin did I find affliction, nor do I hear the

snarling of your monstrous rage. See me! I am a radiance of emptiness mind, seeking guidance from a furious light, onwards and upwards, breathing, clear, fostered by a dream of compassion. Resting in such vacant joy, I slide into the skies.

Moon

The Child grows lighter, weightless, transparent. She begins rising; higher, faster with each breath, silently chanting, growing pure, as stars.

She is joined in her search by other flashes of beings who reach inside the selves and each other for answers to their questions, for wholeness and for balance. Yet all they find is a mirror of strengths and vulnerabilities.

Each shard begins its own descent, falling a great distance back through the darkness. Holding herself, the Child falls onto the earth and falls to her knees as the room returns and the world returns and she cannot speak for a very long time. Gazing into the mirror she touches her face and gently kisses her own reflection as she is transformed forever.

Throughout the final monologue the other actors slowly come forward and touch the Woman in a gentle gesture of goodbye and silently exit the stage, discarding portions of costumes that have signified their identity.

Woman

Under a blanket of sedative sorrows, nightly on a troubled face I scrabbled in a black and breathless hollow, for daylight, for hope. Casting the burdens, where in the world weathers such loss of simple choice?

If I was Angel, Whore, Child and Hero, Villain,
Snake and Shadow... I too am human.

In the innocence I find a radiance of emptiness
mind, I am guided by an angel of furious light. I
stand and breathe, protected by a warrior of raw
compassion in an ignorance of suffering. I feel a
piece of peace.

I champion my own hand of fate at the birth of
power, I cast myself into the rising waters,
adrift on the tides of time and human kindness.

Grace upon my face.

In even the darkest places, I find the Sun,
pressed into a face, window-heart to loving
warmth. I am star in seed form, an aeon filled
with endless light. I rise, sunflower, unbroken in
these final days of freedom.

I surrender now and in all ways.

She leaves the stage

Angel

I dreamed that a woman came to me. And, as we
touched, a river of silence flowed into me.

black

END