

**Inside the Mind: Realising 'Dissociative Identity Disorder' on  
stage and the challenges that came with it. Including the  
new play  
(Choices)**

By Madeleine C Levy

A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of  
MPhil (B) in Playwriting Studies.

Dept of Drama and Theatre Arts  
College of Arts and Law  
University of Birmingham  
July 2013

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

**University of Birmingham Research Archive**

**e-theses repository**

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

### Dedications and acknowledgements

This thesis is for all of you who have inspired and supported me in my life. Thanks for everything.  
The academic journey has been enlightening and challenging at the same time.

'I don't give a damn what other people think. It's entirely their own business. I'm not writing for other people.'

Harold Pinter. (*Conversations with Pinter*)

## Abstract

This thesis documents and critically reflects upon how the new stage-play *Choices* was developed. It looks at the challenges that were presented to the writer when realising a mental health condition on stage. It also shows what the writer did to tackle those challenges.

*Choices* is a script which explores the mental illness 'Dissociative identity Disorder' also known as multiple personality disorder and (D.I.D). The script gives voice to identities which reside inside fictional protagonist Kathy Harris.

Aristotle was a Philosopher who wrote on the subject of a playwright's craft. In his *Poetics* he talks of appropriate structures for Tragedy plays. The author of the thesis uses Plato's *Allegory of the cave* to demonstrate that the protagonist's suffering in *Choices* is conditioned by her environment, however Aristotle used Plato's allegory to talk about the way we read the shadows of theatre to learn about the world outside.

Postmodernist theory would suggest that there is no absolute truth of an event only the subjective truth that is learnt through an individual's experience. Therefore when watching plays audiences can acquire many readings of a script, these readings are all determined by an audience's experience of the world around them. There is no absolute reality behind *Choices* and audience member's experiences of the play are conditioned by the theatre environment and by their experiences of the world outside the theatre.

Finally, throughout the thesis, the challenges that the writer faced, when writing *Choices*, are discussed and analysed to show how *Choices* has borrowed from other theatrical works in order to create a successful piece of drama.

## CONTENTS

<i>Description</i>	<i>Page Number</i>
Introduction: Dissociative Identity Disorder and theatrical challenges	5
Practices	18
Processes	21
Theorisation	23
Conclusion	24
References	26
Appendix: <i>Choices.</i>	28

## Introduction: Dissociative Identity Disorder and theatrical challenges.

This thesis describes the development of the play *Choices*. It also discusses the difficulties in presenting an illness such as Dissociative Identity Disorder (D.I.D) on stage and examines the ways in which the writer achieved that end.

Edward Bond states, 'The stage does not go inside the mind as easily as novels and music can' (Bond, 1987:128). Practical problems arise when realizing the mind on stage; for example one cannot show the audience the mind unless a scene or a picture is translated into action. Getting inside the mind is particularly difficult to achieve on stage because theatre continually presents action in order to extract thought. There are many devices available to practitioners in other media, for example in television and film flashbacks are used, allowing the audience access to the character's thoughts. On the radio voice overs and sound, in novels, a stream of consciousness can be deployed. For example, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* follows the protagonist's thoughts throughout the novel. This is helpful to the reader because it allows access to the mind that we would not see because of the naturalistic external view that often hinders access to thought. In fine art, Noble's identities have attempted to show the inner workings of her mind through abstract painting and images with traumatic content ([http://kimnoble.com/virtual\\_galleries.htm](http://kimnoble.com/virtual_galleries.htm)). Other artists, such as Goya, Picasso, Van Gogh and Bacon have attempted to show representations of the mind.

Although viewing thought is difficult on stage there is a long history of dramatists attempting to do so. William Shakespeare is an early example of a practitioner who tried to show the audience inside the mind of his characters. In his play *Hamlet* the audience is shown Hamlet's thought processes through soliloquy. In Brechtian theatre, devices such as asides and placards have been used. More recently, modern practitioners such as Edward Bond *Early Morning* (1976) Peter Shaffer *Equus* (1973) and Abi Morgan, *Splendour* (2000) have tried to show inner thought on stage. Edward Bond created a device to try to deal with inner thought, which he called 'public soliloquy' in his play

*Early Morning*. 'Bond's notion of the public soliloquy can be described as moments of heightened insight when a character sees through his/ her situation and deepens his/her self-awareness.' (Edward Bond Letters II, 1995) Peter Shaffer uses direct address in his play *Equus* (Shaffer, 1973) and Abi Morgan uses very complex multiple viewpoints in her play *Splendour*. (Morgan, 2000) Although many dramatists have battled with getting inside the mind the author of *Choices* found that incredibly difficult because *Choices* is a play about mental illness. One of the traits of mental illness is that there is a disruption to thoughts inside the head. The distinction between what is real and what feels real becomes blurred. Portraying a mental health condition on stage is a particularly delicate subject matter. The initial problem is that Dissociative Identity Disorder (D.I.D) has a complex pathology that needs to be related within the drama. However drama is about experience rather than knowledge of a subject and the play should not be a description of pathological information. It still has to stand up as a piece of theatre rather than a description of an illness.

While mental illness is a difficult topic to portray on stage it is still being discussed as a contemporary issue. Peter Shaffer's *Equus* (1973) depicts the story of Alan Strang and how he came to be in a psychiatric unit because of his unhealthy obsession with horses. Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis* (1995) describes how the protagonist feels at the hour 4.48am. Joe Penhall (2000) begins to discuss schizophrenia in his play *Blue Orange*. A very recent example is Antony Neilson's *Wonderful World of Dissocia*(2007) which narrates the story of protagonist Lisa. She takes a lift down into Dissocia and has to deal with the enemies of that world such as the black dog. Neilson uses a two part structure, the first act shows the audience Lisa's world of madness and the second act shows us the recovery process and psychiatry.

Mental illness presents practical problems with staging. Not only did the writer have to show inner thought but had to show disruptions and disturbances within the inner thought. Subjective versus objective reality was a major issue. Audiences might be confused by what was inside the mind of the protagonist and what was happening in the real world.

Ethical challenges arose due to the inspiration behind the play's development. The script was based on Kim Noble, a real life sufferer of the disorder, however the writer decided to create an entirely fictional character that suffers from the disorder. This eliminated ethical concerns and allowed for more control over the play's plot.

Whilst mental illness, in general, presented practical problems, the disorder itself (D.I.D) created further problems due to having to present multiple identities on stage. (D.I.D) is a psychiatric disorder whereby a person has many identities within one body. A display of two or more identities occurs and one of these identities controls the person's behaviour at any one time. These identities are a result of traumatic incidents in the past that the sufferer has felt unable to cope with. The identities are a coping mechanism and it is unusual to have more than two but it has been known for patients to acquire twenty or more. The writer began to research the phenomenon because of a previous interest in psychology and sense of self. The intention was to experiment with the idea of showing the concept of self on stage and how this would be disrupted if there were several entities that made up one self.

The identities are part of the protagonist's subjective experience, members of the audience have to decide whether or not they trust the information presented to them. The first time the identities in *Choices* speak they are given short utterances which would not be spoken chronologically in reality. 'Free me, find me, help me.' (Levy, 2013:30) This alerts the audience that these characters are other, more unusual forms and that this will not be a naturalistic play about a bedsit in Brighton. These identities are not objectively present and so showing this to an audience became a practical problem.

To deal with these problems the writer used three commonly known devices that appear in other works. The first was to map the pathology of the illness onto the dramatic structure of the piece as Anthony Neilson does in his play *Wonderful World of Dissocia*. The pathology of the illness becomes the structure for the play. *Choices* takes from this because act one shows the disorder and confusion and act two shows Kathy using coping mechanisms to help with her daily life, such as writing a diary.

The second device was to use the format of consultation as Joe Penhall does in his play *Blue Orange*, and finally the writer used signposting of subjective versus objective reality which is clearly done in Shaffer's *Equus* by having actors appear dressed as horses to notify the audience of when the patient is dreaming. However, the writer of *Choices* made a different decision. The only way the audience know that an Identity is speaking is that they have a spotlight to introduce them. The uncertainty of the audience helps to further the plot because the audience wish to learn more to combat their confusion. The audience's confusion mirrors that of the protagonist, they learn with the protagonist to keep them in suspense.

Mapping the pathology of the illness onto the dramatic structure of the piece was difficult to achieve because *Choices* was initially written as a narrative describing the recovery process from (D.I.D). Spencer states that 'there are two major tools of structure, action and conflict' (Spencer, 2002:73). *Choices* portrays an internal conflict and so there is very little dramatic action in the piece. The overall action is the protagonist trying to rescue her daughter from social services. However, when the play was read in workshops the audience's interest lay with the character's internal struggle and the beauty of the repetition and the rhythm in the language used. The result was that a structure was created to fit the overall vision of the play rather than using an ordinary recognisable structure.

Despite the fact that a structure was created to fit the overall vision of the play, in the final draft the writer wished the audience to see that one never truly recovers from the disorder. One merely develops coping mechanisms and an ability to deal with everyday life. Early on in the creative process the writer wished to teach the audience about (D.I.D) without bombarding them with pathological facts. The writer chose to allow the audience to learn with the protagonist as the narrative progressed. This kept suspense which resulted in maintaining the audience's interest in the play's resolution. The writer also sought a link between Kim Noble's story and the thesis play script. The idea of the number twenty was kept because Kim Noble had twenty identities and so the initial draft had a twenty part structure. However in the final draft *Choices* has two Acts and eight scenes. Condensing the parts into longer scenes gave the script a narrative focus and the audience discovered the disorder through the dramatic action.

The writer's intention was that the audience begin the piece in a state of confusion. They know nothing of the Disorder and are given contradictory instructions to begin the play '*On the door is written 'audience members can come and go as and when they like. Feel free to interrupt the performance, but it is preferred if you do not.'* (Levy, 2013:30) This flouts common theatre conventions because normally interrupting a performance is considered rude. The writer hoped to create a state of anxiety because the audience would not know what the performers expected of them. Gradually through format and structure the audience will obtain order and clarity. This is because the strategy of repetition helps the audience to recognise and interpret the motif being established. They become familiar with the lines and are comforted when they hear them used to introduce another scene and or situation.

**'Kathy Harris:** I noticed things weren't quite right on New Year's Day. I wasn't exactly sure what it was, but I was feeling a lot more agitated than usual.' (Levy, 2013:31) These lines are repeated several times throughout the script and are used as a motif that the audience will recognise as introducing a new identity and or situation.

*'A Spotlight comes up on Kristie in the space.*

**Kristie Crisis:** A lot more agitated than usual.

**Kathy Harris:** I mean I always feel agitated, but this felt different. I was lying on the floor. I couldn't move and I was crying. There were people everywhere.

**Kristie Crisis:** People everywhere

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** And then I began to worry, of course, and that's when this madness started.

*Pause.*

**Kenny:** And that's when this madness started.'

(Levy, 2013:32)

Repetition and distortion of language were used so that scenes would be disconcerting for audience members. They never know if the situation is real or not because the scenes are repeated in different manners. Postmodernist theorists state that there is no absolute truth and what we experience as reality is defined by our subjective interpretations of the world. 'I had always thought of theatre artistes as "grave diggers" working on the edge of two extremes of destruction and preservation, throwing up the skulls of history and transforming them' explains Johannes Birringer. 'The theatre must show its physical bodily existence and its "liveness," the volatile progress of its human labour, the contingencies of the space in which it labours and its schizophrenic awareness of its own unreality' (Birringer, 1991:3).

This is similar to Kathy's situation in *Choices*; she is aware of her identities and is struggling to understand them and how to transform them so that they work with her everyday life. Kathy grows increasingly aware of an unreality but cannot quite place what it is. Her illness is her reality and she works on the edge of two extremes, destruction and preservation, as she tries to quiet the

voices by taking the pills, thus destroying her reality in the process. However, when she stops taking the pills she tries to preserve her identities and transform them into multiple selves that work with her when she is in control of them. Distortion of language offers helpful readings of the play. It is in keeping with the play's ethos and allows an audience to see that the 'Normal' mind is no less fallible than the pathological one. Doctor Way's language becomes unreliable when the motif is repeated for a third time.

**'Doctor Way:** love with, wonderful, woman, Kathy, referred, GP. Letters to herself, Identities.' (Levy, 2013:47)

This would lead the audience to be wary of the Doctor as his lines become twisted. He also answers questions that are not directed at him, from inside a toy box placed on stage on page 49. This makes audiences uncertain of his professionalism and reality in Kathy's world. A personal view is that in society there is a fine line between those needing treatment and those giving the treatment. The toy box also represents the idea that in society human beings are constantly placed into categories and 'boxes'. The irony here is that usually it is Doctors who analyse others yet the audience continually doubt his professionalism.

The language used also illustrates how Kathy's memory is distorted. It shows that Kathy's ability to recall short term information has been lost.

**'Kathy Harris:** There's money missing from my account. I don't know who spent it. It must have been me I suppose, but I have no recollection of doing such a thing.' (Levy, 2013:37)

However, she remembers how she felt when her mother took pills at home and she remembers losing her daughter. This is because patients who suffer (D.I.D) may experience dissociative amnesia. This means that one identity may have no awareness of events taking place when other identities are in control. (Mind, registered charity in England and Wales, 2013). Psychologists would suggest that this would affect Kathy's sense of self because she has no recollection of what she is like at any one time. This is interesting theatrically because a usual convention is that the protagonist tells their

own story and the audience listen. In *Choices* Kathy's story is reconstructed by her identities and the Doctor as they work together, with the audience, to gain an understanding of the disorder. This demonstrates that there is no absolute truth of the situation because an identity is only real to the person suffering the disorder. Everyone will read the play in a different fashion because views are determined by their own subjective experiences of the world. In order to demonstrate the pathology of the illness the writer used images to create a dramatic effect. The final scene is particularly powerful.

*'Kathy Harris kicks over all the chairs. She is still screaming. Kristie Crisis takes the rope out of the toy box.*

**Cast except Kathy and Kristie:** *Singing.* Ding Dong merrily on high

*Kristie restrains Kathy with the rope and pushes her onto the floor.*

**Cast except Kathy and Kristie:** *Singing.* In heaven bells are ringing

*Kathy fits on the floor and Karen leaves the stage. Doctor Way steps in as if concerned but does nothing.*

**Cast except Kathy:** *Singing.* Ding dong merrily the sky.

*Kenny and Kathy's mother leave the stage.*

**Kristie, Younger Kathy, Doctor Way:** *Singing.* Is riven with angels singing.

*Doctor Way and younger Kathy leave the stage.*

**Kristie Crisis:** *Singing.* Gloria, hosanna in excelsis.

*Pause.*

Save her.

*Light fades and Kathy is left alone sobbing. Kristie exits through the door on the stage.'*

(Levy, 2013:84)

By juxtaposing joyful song with awful events the author of *Choices* demonstrates that whilst others enjoy Christmas there are elements of it which might make someone with a mental health

condition anxious. This is just one example of how imagery was used to demonstrate the pathology of (D.I.D)

The format of consultation was achieved by looking at the work of Sarah Kane and Joe Penhall. David Edgar states that there are 'scenes in which (the location, its milieu, the associated activity) provides the means by which the action of the scene is revealed, and without which the scene couldn't happen at all. In this case, the situation becomes the scene's format.' (Edgar, 2009:130). The format of consultations is one which the audience will always recognise because it is used so often in the theatre. Sarah Kane uses consultations in an interesting way because no specific character is identified as a Doctor. There is just a feeling of Interrogation because of the violence and forcefulness of the language used. The repetition of questions allows the writer to create a violent atmosphere in the theatre without having to use violence on stage.

“You have a lot of friends.

What do you offer your friends to make them so supportive?

(A long silence)

What do you offer your friends to make them so supportive?

(A long silence)

What do you offer?’

(Kane, 1995:204)

Compare this with:

**‘Doctor Way:** Why on earth do you live in three houses?

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know.

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** You don't know?

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** No.

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** How do you afford them? Why do you go missing every so often and make your friends worry about you?'

(Levy, 2013:35)

When Doctor Way asks Kathy questions she cannot answer them; whereas the character in 4.48 Psychosis refuses to answer. An interrogation occurs in both scenes. It pries, intrusively, into the character's personal lives. Neither character can answer leaving unspoken issues for an audience to debate. The violence, here, is the threat of the unknown or the idea that the character's view of reality may not be real. *Choices* employs this device throughout the play and makes use of subtle humour to mock the world of psychiatry. There is a scene in *Choices* which is very similar to a scene in *Blue Orange*.

**'Doctor Way:** Tell me Kathy, do you know why you're here?

**Kathy Harris:** No

**Doctor Way:** Well the report I have here tells me that you punched a car mirror. Do you remember that?

**Kathy Harris:** No'

(Levy, 2013:34)

In *Blue orange* it reads

**'Bruce:** Well Christopher, why do you think you're here?

**Christopher:** Eh?

**Bruce:** Why are you here? Why do you think you're here?

**Christopher:** Why am I here?

**Bruce:** Yes

*Pause*

**Christopher:** I dunno'

(Penhall, 2000:5)

The interrogation scene provides the audience with a sense of familiarity. They know that the play will consist of consultations with the Doctor which leads to the patient's recovery. There is also a hidden humour because Doctors always ask the same questions and, of course, the patient never knows why they are there because in their mind they think that there is nothing wrong. Using consultations helped the author of *Choices* guide the audience through the confusion of subjective and objective reality because the consultations can be recognised as something real and concrete.

Finally subjective versus objective reality was identified by using signposting, dream sequences expressionism and staging. 'Symbolist dramatists and directors increasingly regarded the stage as an empty psyche at the same time they envisioned the protagonist's form as a material representation of an inner empty space.' (Les Essif, 2001:34) Thus the staging of the thesis play changed dramatically in production. Initially there was to be an outer ring of seats from which the identities entered. It was noted that the identities are together in the mind of the protagonist; they would not be kept separately from the rest of her space. In the final draft the identities sit together with the protagonist in the space and the audience members have to work out which voices are being presented to them. This better represented the view of the stage as an empty psyche or space.

'To live in the Postmodern Condition', according to Mark Fortier, 'is to live without a grand and deep sense of abiding truth.' (Fortier, 1997:176) if there is no sense of abiding truth in this piece

then there will be several diverse readings of the play's action. 'Deconstruction, with Derrida's notion of iterability, implies that there is no faithful reader but only an infinite possibility of different readers, none of whom are any truer than the others' says Fortier (1997). To agree with this notion is to conclude that there is no correct way of seeing any performance and that all interpretations are valid due to the confusion caused by the subjective versus objective reality.

The protagonist in *Choices* also lives in this 'Postmodern Condition' she lives without 'a deep sense of abiding truth.' This is because the theatricality of *Choices* is such that it tries to explain to an audience the inner workings of the mind. The entire space is a representation of the mind thus alerting audiences to the unreality of the space. By asking the audience to be mindful of this unreality at the beginning of the piece, the writer creates a theatre that examines a mental health issue and the validity of representing it theatrically simultaneously.

Several coffee tables and chairs were turned upside down on stage to represent the mind's disarray. Initially staging in the round was to be used to create an intimacy between actor and audience. However, it was decided that creating an expressionist space would be more valuable. Expressionism is the idea of using a subjective perspective to represent the world. Thrust staging was used with coffee tables and letters scattered about the stage; so that the space was not recognised as anything locatable in the real world. The protagonist read letters on the coffee tables to signify the introduction of a new identity and spotlights came up on each identity when it was their turn to speak.

Dream sequences were used to reinforce the idea of subjective reality. The audience knew that the protagonist was relaying what was in her mind when a repetition of a dream sequence was enforced. 'Then my body starts to break. It breaks into different parts and I can see myself floating above my own head, but it's not me. It's someone else, something sinister that I don't quite

understand. I try to put myself back together'. (Levy, 2013:62) The audience are aware that this is Kathy's reality and the dreams allow them a glimpse of her mind.

A relevant theory to discuss is Plato's *Allegory of the cave*. A student of Plato's speaks of prisoners chained, from childhood, to a blank wall in a cave. Shadows on the walls are seen by the prisoners, caused by things moving in front of a fire behind them. These shadows are given forms by the prisoners. Socrates believes that the shadows are as close as the prisoners get to viewing reality. This is important to note because *Choices* protagonist Kathy sees her identities as a reality. She has known nothing else her whole life and she has never viewed the world without them. When she takes the medication that Doctor Way prescribes her, she quickly rejects it. Socrates believes that the prisoner would be angry at being released from the cave, he would be distressed and unable to cope with the world outside.

Kathy's dominant identity tells the audience 'she's scared that if she takes those pills that it'll change her personality. She doesn't want to lose us really. It'd be like committing suicide.' (Levy, 2013:66) Kathy rejects the drugs that are meant to help her as she does not know how to cope in the world outside of the cave.

Kathy's initial refusal to help herself alerts the audience to the fact that she relies on her subjective reality to help her make sense of the world. In order for the audience to decipher Kathy's world they have to rely on their own view of the play's reality. This reality is just as subjective as Kathy's and the audience are addressed throughout the piece as if they are identities themselves. In this case the protagonist's identities that are on stage are the shadows that Socrates describes and are as close as the audience will get to viewing Kathy's reality. The audience are unwitting prisoners in Kathy's madness, they believe they are free because they are given the chance to leave a few times throughout the performance.

**'Kristie Crisis:** If you'd like to exit or think the subject matter is overrated just open the door and step away from us. We won't mind. '(Levy, 2013:41)

Although the confusion due to subjective and objective reality was a problem for the writer it really made a difference to the play's theatricality. The audience at the Playwright's workshop were intrigued by the madness and wished to learn more about the disorder (D.I.D).

### **Practices**

The previous section dealt with the problems writers face when portraying mental illness on stage; and how other media, such as novels, radio and fine art deal with representation of the mind. The writer's dramaturgical decisions regarding portraying (D.I.D) on stage were also discussed. This section discusses the practices used to implement these dramaturgical decisions, paying particular attention to what was successful and what still needs work within the script.

Having discussed the use of pathology, format and signposting of subjective versus objective reality to help overcome the challenges of the project; the focus now turns to the fact that by the end of draft two the script was still a description of the disorder rather than a dramatic narrative. There was a lot of repetition of the diagnosis of the disorder so that the audience would remember the pathological information. It was felt that the repetition was excessive and in the final draft it was cut. In future performances audience will be given a leaflet with the information on at the beginning of the play. It is preferred that they see the disorder through the dramatic action and narrative rather than being repeatedly told pathological information.

To transform the script into a narrative the character of Doctor Way was developed substantially between drafts one and three. Originally the script stated that 'Doctor Way is a representation of a stereotype and not somebody that the audience ought to be attached to.' (Levy, 2012a:48) However, through workshops and readings the writer discovered that the Doctor was necessary to relay the pathology. He provided the audience with a link to the medical world that

they would not have accessed otherwise. In the final draft he is more of a narrator; giving the audience a clearer picture of Kathy and her condition.

**‘Doctor Way:** It appeared that, upon going to see her GP, she had registered herself, on three consecutive days, under three different names. She had also been writing letters to herself addressed to those names.’

(Levy, 2013:38)

In Draft two of *Choices* Doctor Way was also used to tell the audience what it would feel like, for a patient, to be taken over by a dominant identity

‘There are great periods of time when someone who suffers from (D.I.D) is taken over by a dominant personality. During this time the patient will not remember what they have done or who they have spoken with. Kathy told me that Kristie was her dominant personality, after many therapy sessions. I presume that when being taken over someone would feel like...’

(Levy, 2012b:40)

However in the final draft it was felt that the audience should be allowed to see what the process feels like rather than being told by a character in the medical profession.

The Doctor in *Choices* is similar to Doctor Dysart’s character in Peter Shaffer’s *Equus*. Dysart and Way are both used to structure the play and relay information to the audience. They are the audience’s link to the medical world and the fictional world of their patients. Dysart differs from Way, however, because he directly talks to the audience about his concerns about his job and he has confidential conversations with all of the characters except for Jill. Way only ever talks to Kathy, and through Kathy, to her identities. This is because Way is a less reliable character than Dysart. He falls

in love with Kathy and the audience are unsure about his motives or how trustworthy he really is. The only link the audience have to reality is what they themselves choose to believe.

*Equus* depicts Alan's therapy with the doctor, and shows how Alan copes with intense feelings of lust towards horses. Each scene shows a progression as Alan torments Dysart about the problems in his personal life. In *Choices* Kathy's case torments the Doctor and he cannot seem to get it out of his mind. He falls in love with her and, through Kathy, the identities continually question his personal life. However, the progression in *Choices* does not lie in the protagonist's relationship with the Doctor as it does in *Equus* but in Kathy's choice to take matters into her own hands and overcome the illness. In *Equus* Strang does not overcome his problems and all that is gained is a knowledge as to why he attacked the horses. Using the format of visitations and therapy sessions in both plays is powerful because it allows the audience to see whether or not the protagonists recover from their respective illnesses in a time-restricted session that is controlled by the worlds of psychology and medicine.

The second way of making the narrative more dynamic was to develop the characters of the protagonist and her identities. The second draft focused on giving the identities more of a voice. In the original draft the identities were all women and this made it confusing for the audience to understand who was representing what. It also made the piece seem like a commentary upon female hysteria and that was not the initial intention. The identities were given names which began with the letter K to indicate that they were all part of the protagonist Kathy Harris. In the original draft the protagonist was called Kathy Noble but as the link with Kim Noble's story was dropped the name of the protagonist was changed to an entirely fictional one. In Kim Noble's original story she had a personality called Francisco who was a gay man and so a gay man named Kenny was represented in *Choices*. Kenny's character is used to exemplify the idea that there is no absolute truth in any situation. It is as possible for an identity inside a female to be a gay man as it is in

Shaffer's play to have dancing horses. This is because a play can be anything that a writer crafts it to be. It is also possible within the terms of the condition as clearly evidenced in the case of Kim Noble, as mentioned previously; she has a gay identity called Francisco.

### **Processes**

The previous section discussed the different practices used in order to create a valuable piece of drama. This section will discuss the conditions under which the writing practices occurred and the effects that those conditions had on writing practices.

The processes used to write *Choices* were workshops, collaborative work, researching, drafting and editing. These processes were valuable because they allowed for positive criticism of the script. The workshops were particularly constructive because when pitching a play to directors, authors have to clearly understand the dynamics of the play and be able to explain their material to others. During the collaborative work, other actors were asked to come in and read extracts of the piece. This process was particularly helpful because it allowed the writer to hear what was unsuccessful in the piece and edit accordingly. Being given a deadline for a first draft was valuable as it allowed the writer to focus and get ideas written down quickly.

Research played a very important role in the production of the script. The writer needed to know enough about the disorder in order to present the world of the protagonist to the audience. In order to create a convincing piece the writer needed factual information so that the protagonist's emotions seemed real and valid. Newspaper articles about Kim Noble's life were read, psychological theses were consulted and a meeting with a sufferer of the disorder was conducted. Meeting a real person with the disorder was a sobering experience and assured the writer that she had the correct medical information.

The editing process began as soon as the first draft was submitted. An unrehearsed reading took place, which was recorded, so that the writer could hear the whole play. This allowed the writer

to see where the set changes were hindering the dramatic action. For example, in the initial draft a desk was placed centre stage. It was soon noted that this would block the audience's view of the action and gradually the set was altered throughout the development.

An extract of *Choices* was performed at the playwright's workshop on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2012.

Rehearsals had taken place the day before and the writer questioned the actors to make sure others understood the intentions behind the writing. Questions about linguistic decisions were asked and the intentions behind each line were examined so that the actors possessed a better understanding of their character's motivations. During the rehearsal, the actors found it helpful to view the scene as a power struggle for control of the narrative between the two lead females. Each female wanted to be in control of telling the audience their version of the story. During the workshop it was useful to see the extract live. It drew attention to areas that needed improvement and demonstrated that the protagonist and the doctor's character had more potential for development than the writer initially foresaw.

Discussion of practices and processes has so far aimed to demonstrate that there are many tools that writers can use to make a piece of exciting theatre; particularly, the use of theories from other disciplines and the structures of existing works.

Theorisation aims to discuss how other writers go about choosing an appropriate play structure. It demonstrates the point that when beginning to write a play; every writer is aware of other material that is already in existence in the theatrical world. It is helpful to consult the works of other writers to overcome barriers that may appear in the editing process.

## Theorisation

It is worth noting that other playwrights' works were consulted when exploring the implementation of structure. For example, Antony Neilson's two act structure in his play *Wonderful world of Dissocia*, which was mentioned earlier, provides a useful model for the play *Choices*. Fraser Grace's play *Kalashnikov: In the woods by the lake* was also considered for different reasons. The play has three acts and eight parts and *Choices* was originally going to be a play which made use of parts to narrate the action. *Choices* borrows from *Kalashnikov* in that it has eight scenes which narrate the action. It would appear that Grace has taken from Aristotle's thesis, antithesis, and synthesis theory which states that 'we formulate theories, they yield contradictions, and we correct the theories so that they no longer yield these contradictions. We tailor our rational constructs to experience.' (Sion,2008:170) in *Kalashnikov* the first act sees Kalashnikov not wishing to be interviewed about why his guns were built. He does not regret building them he just made them because they were necessary for war. The second act shows the interviewer's argument against the guns and the final act shows one of Kalashnikov's family members in danger from his own weapon. Kalashnikov has to think again about whether or not he believes he was right to make the guns. *Choices* borrows from this model in terms of Kathy's character. When the play begins Kathy is ignorant to her condition. By the middle of the play she has gained knowledge and finally she controls her situation and seeks a resolution.

Caryl Churchill's (1986) *A mouthful of birds* 'also makes use of a part structure. There are two acts which are split thus: Seven very short parts 'which show what the characters were doing before extraordinary things happen to them. The middle section consists of another seven parts and movement pieces ... "The Fruit Ballet" relates to the sensuousness of tearing things up and "Extreme Happiness" to the feelings of the women on the mountain. At the end there are seven monologues which show what eventually happens to the characters, how they've changed yet further.' (Fitzsimmons, 1989:74) *Choices* borrows from Churchill because it uses strong imagery to

demonstrate ideas and forms. These plays best illustrate the use of plays in parts because they speak of internal struggles that the characters have to face and show their decisions in the dramatic action.

The final script was one that audiences described as being moving, confusing, entertaining and gripping. If given the opportunity to approach the script again, the writer feels that placing the protagonist in a situation where she has to deal with other people and her disorder may be a better approach. For example, how would someone with (D.I.D) deal with being held up in a bank robbery or how would they deal with their car breaking down on the motorway? This would mean that less time would be spent explaining the pathology but rather showing the condition to the audience in a realistic way.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, concepts from philosophy and psychology inform the play *Choices*. It makes use of strong imagery to explain the pathology of (D.I.D). This is so that the audience can process the meaning behind the text. Although it is generally considered difficult for a playwright to go inside the head of their characters without using monologues, stream of consciousness or soliloquy, it is not altogether impossible.

The writer feels that she has been successful in meeting the challenges set and that this work holds up as a play script rather than just an illustration of the condition. A strong narrative and structure make the play informative and interesting to watch. Audiences have described feeling moved and enlightened by the piece. There is a story which audience members are being asked to follow and they piece together the puzzle that is the protagonist's disorder throughout each act. The audience members are working together with the protagonist to understand the traumas of her mind. In future drafts there is still more work to be done in regards to subjective versus objective reality and in making the identities voices distinguished. However, the writer feels that the script was an achievement because it tackled the issue of going inside the mind in a new and entertaining way.

Finally, as human beings in modern society we are all prisoners of a capitalist system and as such many of us struggle to find meaning in the world around us. We are the prisoners in Socrates cave, chained to the wall struggling to find meaning in the shapes we see around us. *Choices* came about because the writer wanted to raise awareness of (D.I.D); she also wanted to understand the disorder better herself. In the end she created a play in which everyone, including the characters, are struggling to find meaning only to find that there is no true reality of the situation. *Choices* is a play that not only depicts a disorder on stage but is a metaphor for the world we live in. When people struggle to find the meaning of life or the meaning in anything for that matter, they have to be the creators of meaning for themselves.

## References

- Birringer, Johannes (1991) *Theatre Theory Postmodernism* (Indiana: Indiana University press)
- Bond, Edward (1995) *Letters II* (Luxembourg: Hardwood academic publishers)
- Bond, Edward (1987) *A note on Dramatic Method in The Bundle*, (London: Eyre Methuen Ltd.)
- Bond, Edward (1967) *Early Morning* (London: Methuen Drama)
- Edgar, David (2009) *How plays work* (Great Britain: Nick Hern Books limited)
- Essif, Les (2001) *Empty figure on an Empty stage* (United States: Indiana University press)
- Esslin, Martin (1961) *The Theatre of the Absurd* (London: Methuen Drama)
- Fitzsimmons, Linda (1989) *File on Churchill* (London: Methuen Drama)
- Gussow, Mel (1994) *Conversations with Pinter* (Great Britain, Nick Hern Books Ltd)
- Fortier, Mark (2002), 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, *Theory/theatre an introduction* (London, Routledge)
- Grace, Fraser (2011) *Kalashnikov: In the woods by the lake* (London: Oberon Books)
- Kane, Sarah (1995) *4.48 Psychosis* (London: Methuen Drama)
- Lee, Hermione (1977) *The Novels of Virginia Woolf* (London: Methuen&Co Ltd)
- Levy, Madeleine (2013) *Choices* (Appendix to this thesis)
- Levy, Madeleine (2012a) *Choices: a play in twenty parts- draft one* (Unpublished)
- Levy, Madeleine (2012b) *Choices: a play in twenty parts-draft two* (Unpublished)
- Morgan, Abi (2000) *Splendour* (London: Oberon books)
- Neilson, Antony (2007) *The Wonderful world of Dissocia* (London, Methuen Drama)
- Sion, Avi (2008) *in defence of Aristotle's Law of thought* (Switzerland: Google Books)
- Penhall, Joe (2000) *Blue Orange* (London: Methuen Drama)
- Shaffer, Peter (1973) *Equus* (London: Samuel French)
- Shakespeare, William (2009) *Hamlet* (London: Geddies & Grosset, David Dale House)
- Spencer, Stuart (2002) *The Playwright's Guidebook* (London: Faber and Faber)

## Further reading

- Coupland, Douglas (2004) *Girlfriend In A Coma* (Great Britain, Harper Perennial)
- Brown D. Jonathan (1998) *The Self* (Boston: The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc.)
- Conway, A. Martin (1997) *Cognitive Models of Memory* (United Kingdom: Psychology press)
- David, Stephen, (2005) *The Gift of Self Shattering, Emptiness, Betrayal* (New York: Global Academic Publishing)
- MacDonald, Francis (1941) *The Republic of Plato* (London: Oxford University press)
- Mclaughlin, Buz (1997) *The Playwright's Process* (United States: Back Street Books)
- Serger, Linda (1990) *Creating Unforgettable characters* (New York: Henry Holt and company)
- Thompson, Evan (2003) *The Problem of Consciousness* (Canada: University of Calagary press)

## **On Dissociative Identity Disorder**

[http://kimnoble.com/virtual\\_galleries.htm](http://kimnoble.com/virtual_galleries.htm)).

[http://www.fsc.yorku.ca/york/rsheese/psyc1010/wiki/index.php/Does\\_Multiple\\_Personality\\_Disorder/Dissociative\\_Identity\\_Disorder\\_Really\\_Exist%3F](http://www.fsc.yorku.ca/york/rsheese/psyc1010/wiki/index.php/Does_Multiple_Personality_Disorder/Dissociative_Identity_Disorder_Really_Exist%3F)

[http://www.mind.org.uk/mental\\_health\\_a-z/8039\\_dissociative\\_disorders](http://www.mind.org.uk/mental_health_a-z/8039_dissociative_disorders)

Kemp, Charlotte (28<sup>th</sup> September 2011) The woman with 20 personalities in one body: An anorexic teen and a boy who only writes in Latin. (England: Daily Mail article)

## **Choices**

*The play is based on the story of Kim Noble Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> sept 2011. Daily Mail.*

### **Characters**

- 1) Kathy Harris, protagonist early thirties.
- 2) Kristy crisis, Kathy's dominant personality, early thirties smartly dressed but has aggressive tendencies.
- 3) Karen, one of Kathy's personalities and is a very troubled woman.
- 4) Kenny, one of Kathy's personalities and is a gay man.
- 5) Kathy's Mother
- 6) Younger Kathy
- 7) Doctor Way

Scene one: The crisis begins

*The stage is in the round. Half of the audience are in the dark and half are in the light. All the cast are about the space using different chairs. Some are standing, some are sitting some are lying over the chairs etc. A spotlight comes up on each identity when it is their turn to be present in the space. There is a small coffee table stage left with several letters and a vase on it. All of the letters are addressed to different identities. Doctor Way's desk is placed upstage right .There is a wooden door inviting the audience into the space. On the door is written 'audience members can come and go as and when they like. Feel free to interrupt the performance, but it is preferred if you do not.'*

**Kathy Harris:** Could this half of the audience please turn off your mobile phones and sit quietly in the dark. This performance is about to begin.

*There is a Spotlight on Kristie Crisis in her seat in the space.*

**Kristie Crisis: (Mirrors Kathy Harris)** Could this half of the audience please leave your mobile phones on, you can even answer them if you like. Come sit down here with me and I'll tell you a story.

*She gestures to the audience to sit on the floor.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Free me.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Find me.

*Pause*

*A spotlight comes up on Kenny who is sat with his legs open on his chair.*

**Kenny:** Help me.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Escape.

*Pause*

*A spotlight comes up on Karen who is lying on her back with her legs on her chair.*

**Karen:** Let me leave this hell.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I want out.

*Pause*

**Kenny:** Don't let me drown in my shame.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I just want to feel safe.

**Karen:** Anxious.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Always anxious.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Save me.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** Save her.

*Lights go out on all the identities, lights up centre stage. Doctor Way enters the space and sits at his desk.*

**Doctor Way:** I am in love with a wonderful woman. I've always been confident that I am an excellent consultant psychotherapist; but this lady places doubts in my mind. I hope I can help her but I'm not so sure anymore.

*A Spotlight comes up on Kathy in her seat in the space.*

**Kathy Harris:** I noticed things weren't quite right on New Year's Day. I wasn't exactly sure what it was, but I was feeling a lot more agitated than usual.

*Pause*

*A Spotlight comes up on Kristie in the space.*

**Kristie Crisis:** A lot more agitated than usual.

**Kathy Harris:** I mean I always feel agitated, but this felt different. I was lying on the floor. I couldn't move and I was crying. There were people everywhere.

**Kristie Crisis:** People everywhere

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** And then I began to worry, of course, and that's when this madness started.

*Pause*

*Kenny is seated in his seat in the space.*

**Kenny:** And that's when this madness started.

**Kathy Harris:** Things always happen when I start to worry.

*Pause*

**Kenny:** Start to worry.

**Doctor Way:** It appeared that, upon going to see her GP, she had registered herself, on three consecutive days, under three different names.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Fuck!

*Doctor Way leaves the space. Kathy reads one of the letters on the coffee table. Kristie Crisis remains frozen in her seat for this scene.*

**Kathy Harris:** *Reading aloud* Dearest Kenny stop bringing Martin over. I know you are a feisty bastard, but I do want to get to sleep sometime. The sound of you guys at it drives me mad. Love Karen.

*Kathy shrugs her shoulders and sits back in her seat.*

*A spotlight comes up on Kenny in his seat. He's having sex on it.*

**Kenny:** Keep going, keep going, harder, faster. I'm going to fucking break you.

*Pause*

**Kenny:** That's what I always say to the boys I sleep with. Then I always get these strange voices in my head. The first one usually belongs to my father. You let me down. It's your fault I moved away. I had better aspirations for a son of mine. That's what he tells me. Then my boyfriend used to say Hey babe you know I love you right? You know I'm here for you right? and I'd think, Though you're never fucking here. Sometimes the men would say I cannot be there for you. I don't want to be there for you.

**Kathy Harris:** I cannot be there for you. I don't want to be there for you.

**Kathy and Kenny:** Keep going, keep going, harder, faster. I'm going to fucking break you.

*Pause*

**Kathy and Kenny:** That's what I always say to the boys I sleep with. Then I always get these strange voices in my head. The first one usually belongs to my father. You let me down. It's your fault I moved away. I had better aspirations for a son of mine. That's what he tells me. Then my boyfriend used to say Hey babe you know I love you right? You know I'm here for you right? and I'd think, Though you're never fucking here. Sometimes the men would say I cannot be there for you. I don't want to be there for you.

**Kathy Harris:** I cannot be there for you. I don't want to be there for you.

*Pause*

**Kenny:** and then he said....

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** I don't love you.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** What?

*Pause*

**Kenny:** I don't love you anymore.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

*Pause*

**Kenny:** I said I don't love you anymore. What are you going to say to that?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** ok.

*Spotlight goes down on Kenny and comes up on Karen. Kathy goes to sit back in her chair.*

**Karen:** Hello, who's this? No, no I haven't seen Claire at all ... sorry.

*Karen mimes being on the phone in a feminine voice.*

**Kathy Harris:** You're worthless, you know that?

*Kathy mutters aggressively to herself. She's angry with herself.*

**Karen:** I don't even know who she is ok! Can't you just leave me to deal with my sorry life?

*Karen speaks timidly, still on the phone.*

*Kathy speaks Louder.*

**Kathy Harris:** You're fucking worthless you know that?

**Karen:** I do so much for you I just wish you'd appreciate.....

*Kathy is shouting.*

**Kathy Harris:** You're fucking worthless you know that?

**Karen:** I miss her so much.

*A telephone rings several times, but nobody answers it.*

*Pause*

*The lights down except a spotlight on Kathy Harris. Doctor Way's voice can be heard although he cannot be seen.*

**Doctor Way:** Tell me Kathy, do you know why you're here?

**Kathy Harris:** No

**Doctor Way:** Well the report I have here tells me that you punched a car mirror. Do you remember that?

**Kathy Harris:** No

**Doctor Way:** Your friends said you had only drunk a couple of glasses of wine and that doesn't explain why you had smashed five car mirrors and were trying to hit every car on the street. You had blood pouring from your knuckles and you tried to head butt a window screen. Do you not remember?

**Kathy Harris:** No. That doesn't sound like me; you must have the wrong report Doctor.

**Doctor Way:** Do you remember anything from that night Kathy?

**Kathy Harris:** All I remember is feeling anxious

*Doctor way begins to note things down.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Feeling anxious

**Kathy Harris:** and the voices, the flashing lights and not being able to move.

**Doctor Way:** by voices do you mean the people around you? I mean you did have a bit to drink.

**Kathy Harris:** No I mean .... The voices.

Scene two: The voices

*Dim light. Kathy can be seen pacing the stage and kicking over the chairs.*

Kristie speaks abruptly to the audience. Her voice can be heard but she cannot be seen.

**Kristie Crisis:** Each one of us has a house. The Doctor told us that. I personally always struggle to pay the rent. I've been threatened with eviction so many times.

*Kathy is surprised.*

**Kathy Harris:** Three houses?

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** yes.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** How?

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** Why on earth do you live in three houses?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know.

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** You don't know?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** No.

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** How do you afford them? Why do you go missing every so often and make your friends worry about you?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know.

*Doctor Way speaks kindly.*

**Doctor Way:** well Kathy you should know.

*Kathy gets up and walks over to the door.*

**Kathy Harris:** I wish you would stop dictating to me how I should live my life. How do you know so much about me? What the hell happened to my privacy? I wish I could go out there.

*Kathy opens the door and shuts it again.*

**Kathy Harris:** I've often wondered what it'd be like to escape this world, to switch off completely, to stop thinking and be at peace with myself. I bet its lovely out there. If I could stop thinking I'd go to a field full of brightly coloured flowers and just lay there spreading my arms like a snow angel.

*Kathy lies down and makes a snow angel.*

**Kathy Harris:** I'd be content for once in my life. I may even be happy but no.

*Stands up and stamps her foot.*

**Kathy Harris:** I don't like bright colours.

**Kenny:** but no ... I don't like bright colours

**Karen:** but no ... I don't like bright colours

**Kristie Crisis:** but no ... I don't like bright colours.

*Kathy slowly gets more agitated.*

**Kathy Harris:** What is this? What's going on? I don't understand.

*Pause*

*Kathy Leans closer to a different member of the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** There's money missing from my account. I don't know who spent it. It must have been me I suppose, but I have no recollection of doing such a thing. I found a package addressed to Claire the other day, but I don't remember ordering it.

*Getting agitated*

*Shouting*

**Kathy Harris:** It must have been me. I just don't know anymore. There is no Claire here.

**Kristie Crisis:** There is no Claire here!

*Doctor way enters the space and sits at his desk.*

**Doctor Way:** I am in love with a wonderful woman. I've always been confident that I am an excellent consultant psychotherapist; but this lady places doubts in my mind. I hope I can help her but I'm not so sure anymore.

*A spotlight comes up on Kathy in her seat.*

**Kathy Harris:** Then things got really strange and it got to the point that I didn't even know myself anymore. I was afraid of everyone and I didn't know who to turn to, then one day ... I was feeling a lot more agitated than usual

**Kristie Crisis:** A lot more agitated than usual

**Kathy Harris:** I mean I always feel agitated but this felt different. I was lying on the floor. I couldn't move and I was crying. There were people everywhere.

**Kristie Crisis:** People everywhere

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** And then I began to worry, of course, and that's when this madness started.

*Pause*

*Karen speaks from her seat in the space.*

**Karen:** And that's when this madness started.

**Kathy Harris:** Things always happen when I begin to worry.

*Pause*

*Karen does not move from her seat in the space.*

**Karen:** begin to worry.

**Doctor Way:** It appeared that, upon going to see her GP, she had registered herself, on three consecutive days, under three different names. She had also been writing letters to herself addressed to those names.

*Pause.*

*The spotlight comes up on Karen. Kristie Crisis sits in the seat centre stage and stays frozen. Doctor Way remains frozen in his place.*

*Karen sings softly*

**Karen:** Goodnight my angel, now it's time to dream, and dream how wonderful your life will be.

Someday your child may cry, and if you sing this lullabye then in your heart, there will always be a part of me. Someday we'll all be gone, but lullabyes go on and on they never die, that's how you and I will be.

*Kathy speaks to the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** Sorry I didn't notice you lot there. I do wish you'd stop just popping up and let me know that you were coming first. When you appear like that I don't have enough time to make you tea. I've got so much to do these days. I'm just busy, busy, busy. At the moment when I speak I can hear shrieking. It gets in the way when I'm trying to do the housework. I live at home you see.

Always lots of work to be done, but I can't concentrate with all this shrieking going on.

*She gets off the chair and mimes doing housework.*

**Karen:** *Shrieks*

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Anyway, I'm busy today because my Claire is having a birthday party; so I need to prepare the house, cook the food and ring round all the guests to make sure they're still coming and

...

**Karen:** *Shrieks*

**Kathy Harris:** It wasn't always like this. I can only just remember what it was like, but I didn't always used to forget things, and find things that I cannot remember buying, around the house. Some say it's a way of life. I just don't know how to deal with it.

*Beat*

**Karen:** I had my child taken away from me. Karen my name is Karen nice to meet you. There is no Claire living here.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** There is no Claire living here.

*Pause*

*Kathy starts to cry.*

**Kathy Harris:** It's just so hard all the time you know? I can't bear it. I just can't bear to live life like this anymore. I feel like something is missing in my life. You know the other night I got through a whole box of tissues because I couldn't stop crying? It was terrible.

**Karen:** It was terrible.

**Kathy Harris:** I don't really understand what I'm supposed to be doing here. Sometimes I feel like wiping myself from existence to see whether it would matter to anyone. To see if anyone would remember Karen.

**Karen:** Remember Karen.

**Kathy Harris:** You know what fuck it. I knew this would be a waste of time. Fuck you, fuck all of you.

*Pause*

*Kathy regains control by taking deep breaths, trying to decrease her rasping sobs. Kathy goes to Karen in her seat and tries to strangle her then she calms and goes to sit by the door inside the space.*

### Scene three: Consultations

*Doctor Way speaks to the audience.*

**Doctor Way:** I discovered that Kathy had been writing letters to herself. Only these letters were strange because, although they were all in the same hand, they had very different writing styles and

identities. Some letters mentioned a daughter, Claire. Each letter was signed off with a different name, much like when Kathy registered herself with the GP.

**Kristie Crisis:** If you'd like to exit or think the subject matter is overrated just open the door and step away from us. We won't mind.

**Kathy Harris:** Please stay in your seats audience please.

**Doctor Way:** Kathy have you noticed that these letters are all in your handwriting? All of the names match up with the names on the bills you have shown me for the houses.

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** I said have you noticed that these letters are all in your handwriting? All of the names match up with the names on the bills you have shown me for the houses.

**Kathy Harris:** What?

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** I told you that these letters are all in your handwriting. All of the names match up with the names on the bills you have shown me for the houses.

**Kathy Harris:** So? How do you know?

**Doctor Way:** I just know.

**Kathy Harris:** But how do you?

**Kristie Crisis:** It's a feeling I get when I'm sad sometimes.

**Doctor Way:** What is Kathy?

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know.

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** You don't know?

**Kristie Crisis:** I said I don't know. Leave me alone. Please!

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** Do you know who Claire is Kathy?

**Kristie Crisis:** I said no.

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** So why is she mentioned here?

**Kathy Harris:** She just is.

**Doctor Way:** Why is she mentioned here?

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** Huh?

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** I asked you why is she mentioned here Kathy?

**Kathy Harris:** who?

**Doctor Way:** Claire!

**Kristie Crisis:** It just didn't feel right, time makes things come to an end.

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** I'm not sure I understand what you mean Kathy.

**Kristie Crisis:** he will never come!

**Doctor Way:** Who will never come?

*Kathy looks thoughtful.*

**Kathy Harris:** hmmm

Pause

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know.

*Doctor Way speaks accusingly.*

**Doctor Way:** You don't know?

**Kathy Harris:** Ok he's taller than me.

**Doctor Way:** Well that's not difficult is it?

**Kathy Harris:** And he loves me.

**Doctor Way:** Loves you?

**Kathy Harris:** That's right.

*Doctor Way is agitated.*

**Doctor Way:** Kathy this doesn't make sense!

Pause

**Doctor Way:** Ok let me get this straight, you're waiting for a man who you have never met, and you think he's taller than you and you're sure that he loves you is that right?

**Kathy Harris:** I didn't say that.

Pause

**Doctor Way:** Then what did you say Kathy? I want to know who Claire is.

Pause

**Kathy Harris:** It seems like you're hung up on this Claire Doctor. Do you want to date her?

*Doctor Way sighs.*

**Doctor Way:** No I do not want to date her Kathy! All I am trying to do is find out the facts and so far you're not helping me.

*Kristie speaks abruptly.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Have you ever been in love?

**Doctor Way:** What?

**Kathy Harris:** I asked you have you ever been in love.

**Doctor Way:** No.

*Kathy is surprised.*

**Kathy Harris:** Really?

**Doctor Way:** Well I thought I had, but I was mistaken.

**Kristie Crisis:** Mistaken how?

**Doctor Way:** I was fifteen years old and we dated for a long while; then we grew apart and I haven't loved another since. This guy who you're waiting for, what does he do for a living?

**Kathy Harris:** What?

Pause

**Doctor Way:** What does he do for a living?

Pause

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

Pause

**Doctor Way:** I said what does he do for a living?

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know, maybe he's a writer or a musician or something like that.

*Pause*

*Kristie sighs.*

**Kristie Crisis:** So the girl you were mistaken with, what happened with her?

*Doctor Way speaks very quickly.*

**Doctor Way:** Well Kathy I don't see why this is any of your business but we saw each other for a while and we got quite close then she cheated on me with my best friend and we never spoke again; so I know that I was definitely mistaken. You're not going to tell me about Claire are you?

**Kathy Harris:** I don't think so, it's nice in here.

**Kristie Crisis:** What do you think about when you're working here all day?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

**Kristie Crisis:** What do you think about when you're working here all day?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** What?

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** I said what, if anything, do you think about when you're working here all day?

*Doctor Way grows increasingly confused by the repetitive questioning.*

**Doctor Way:** Life sometimes, yeah I think about life mainly.

**Kristie Crisis:** What about life?

**Doctor Way:** That's enough Kathy! You've questioned my personal life far too much. I am here to find out more about you and to help you, not to have tea and a chat.

*Doctor Way addresses the audience*

**Doctor Way:** Well actually Kathy I think about how it's funny that you can love someone like mad; but they don't feel the same way about you and about how most people at my age are engaged or with children and I'm just constantly waiting for something.

**Kristie Crisis:** She was a FUCKING BITCH!

**Doctor Way:** excuse me?

**Kristie Crisis:** A fucking bitch

**Kathy Harris:** I really don't know who Claire is Doctor but I'd like to find out as much as you.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** Are you going to die alone?

**Doctor Way:** I beg your pardon?

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** Are you going to die alone?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Sorry Doctor but what did you say?

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** I said are you going to die alone?

**Doctor Way:** You asked me if I was going to die alone.

**Kathy Harris:** No I did not I said that I wanted to find out who Claire is as much as you did. This conversation is silly. You've wasted thirty minutes of my life. Can I go please?

*Kathy stands in her seat and shouts*

**Kathy Harris:** You're incompetent. You don't have the ability to find the answers. I guess I'll have to do it myself.

*Kristie speaks for Kathy although Kathy mouths the words.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Trust me he doesn't have the answers to your problems. He wouldn't even recognise me.

*Pause*

*Kathy goes to stand by the coffee table.*

**Doctor Way:** love with, wonderful, woman, Kathy, referred, GP. Letters to herself, Identities.

**Kathy Harris:** I felt like I was living a life that wasn't mine. Although I knew it was mine, I felt disconnected from everyone and everything. I wasn't exactly sure what it was, but I was feeling a lot more agitated than usual.

Pause

*A Spotlight comes up on Kristie in the space.*

**Kristie Crisis:** A lot more agitated than usual.

**Kathy Harris:** I mean I always feel agitated, but this felt different. I was lying on the floor. I couldn't move and I was crying. There were people everywhere.

**Kristie Crisis:** People everywhere

Pause

**Kathy Harris:** And then I began to worry, of course, and that's when this madness started.

Pause

**Kristie Crisis:** And that's when this madness started.

**Kathy Harris:** Things always happen when I start to worry.

Pause

**Kristie Crisis:** Start to worry.

**Doctor Way:** It appeared that, upon going to see her GP, she had registered herself, on three consecutive days, under three different names.

Pause

*Doctor Way gets in the toy box. He throws a gag and a rope onto the floor. He then closes the lid of the toy box.*

*Kristie speaks to an audience member.*

**Kristie Crisis:** If you were to ask me how I'd describe myself I'd always say that I was a very kind, very confident and extremely intelligent person. I'd tell you that I like the colour orange, and that my favourite thing to do of an evening is to shop online for new books on Amazon. I'd tell you that I walk with my head held high; so that I can see all of the inferior people around me. I'd tell you that I am a cynic, and that I am a very cold hearted individual. I'd probably say that I do not have the capacity to feel happiness, because my ambitions are too high. I'd tell you ....

*Kathy Harris coughs, she is lying over by the door.*

**Kathy Harris:** Are you lot still here? I guess he just hasn't come yet has he?

*Lights up. Kenny appears in one of the seats.*

*Kenny speaks to the audience.*

**Kenny:** Doesn't your pessimism make the people around you feel sad?

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** I beg your pardon?

*Pause*

*Kathy speaks to the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** Doesn't your pessimism make the people around you feel sad?

**Kenny:** No they don't have to listen to me if they don't want. I'd like to go and make my dinner.

*Pause*

*Kathy speaks to the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** What did you get up to today?

**Kristie Crisis:** Nothing of interest, talked to some mildly interesting people about some mildly interesting things.

*Pause*

Spotlight on Karen in her seat.

**Karen:** I once loved someone so much that I stalked his Facebook profile, and I followed him through the park near his house.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Are you ever plagued by loneliness?

*Doctor Way pops his head out of the toy box says his line then closes the lid again.*

**Doctor Way:** Sometimes.

*Kathy speaks to the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** Wouldn't you ever like to have someone to cuddle up to; someone to put their arms round you when you're scared at night?

**Planted actor in the audience:** If you're coming onto me then you can fuck off.

**Kathy Harris:** No, no, I'm not at all I'm just making conversation whilst I'm waiting for him. ]

*Doctor Way pops his head out of the toy box to speak his line.*

**Doctor Way:** Yes of course the one that you've never met. You know Kathy? It might be wiser to focus on the reality of the situation; rather than waiting for someone you've never met to help you.

**Kathy Harris:** I'm not desperate at all. I'm just confused.

**Doctor Way:** I never said you were desperate Kathy. We're all confused dear; it's just part of life.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** I could kill her she's so irritating.

*Kristie screws up one of the opened letters on the coffee table with her fists.*

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** What else have I to do with life except wait?

*The identities leave except Kristie and Karen. Doctor Way comes out of the toy box and sits at his desk.*

**Doctor Way:** I don't know, go to the gym, go swimming or watch a movie the list is endless.

**Kathy Harris:** When you go to the gym you gotta wait for the machines to turn on. When you go swimming you gotta wait in line to pay the entrance fee, when you watch a movie you gotta wait for the trailers to finish so voila, wait! Like what are you waiting for now?

**Doctor Way:** I beg your pardon?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** What are you waiting for now?

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** Excuse me?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I said what are you waiting for now?

**Doctor Way:** I'm waiting for you to tell me who Claire is. I'm waiting to finish work so that I can escape to the comfort of my own home where I don't have to deal with people like you.

**Kristie Crisis:** Of course why didn't you say?

*Karen sings softly*

**Karen:** Goodnight my angel, now it's time to dream, and dream how wonderful your life will be. Someday your child may cry, and if you sing this lullabye then in your heart, there will always be a part of me. Someday we'll all be gone, but lullabyes go on and on they never die, that's how you and I will be.

Scene four: Reading the letters

*Doctor Way remains at his desk. Kathy goes to stand by the coffee table.*

**Doctor Way:** Kathy, GP.

**Kathy Harris:** I was still confused about these odd things that kept happening; the money out of my account, for example, and the dealings with different parts of London. East London. I never go to East London. I live in central London just near Tottenham Court Road. Then it happened ....

**Doctor Way:** Can we read those letters Kathy?

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know let's have a look.

*Kathy takes the letters from the coffee table; she sits down and mimes writing a letter.*

**Kathy Harris:** And then I began to worry, of course, and that's when this madness started.

*Pause*

*Kristie speaks from her seat centre stage.*

**Kristie Crisis:** That's when this madness started.

**Kathy Harris:** Begin to worry.

*Pause*

*Doctor Way gets back in the toy box.*

**Kathy Harris:** I decided to open the letter.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** To open the letter.

*Kathy opens the letter and reads to the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** Dear Kristie I am sorry I irritated you so often over the course of the past few months. I didn't want you to hurt me and I fully accept that you are the right person to figure out the answers to our questions. I am just so sad all of the time and I only want my daughter back is all. My Claire;

my lovely Claire. I miss her so much. She'd be about 12 years old now. Anyway, sorry once again that I annoyed you and I wish you luck in figuring everything out. I will be silent now. Love anon.

*To the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** Who the hell are these people?

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** who the hell are these people?

*Kathy stops writing her letter and sits by the door again.*

*Kristie walks over to Kathy and stands behind her.*

*Kristie speaks to the audience.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Are you still here?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I can see that there are letters Doctor but I don't know why.

*Pause*

*Kristie speaks to the audience.*

**Kristie Crisis:** I still haven't made any tea. You were gone for ages so I didn't think you'd be coming back again.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** What?

*Kristie speaks to the audience.*

**Kristie Crisis :** I didn't think you'd be coming back. I didn't want you to come back you crazy fucking

...

**Kathy Harris:** Yes I understand. You're the one who's invading my dreams. You know you're quite pretty when you're angry?

*Kristie addresses the audience curtly*

**Kristie Crisis:** Thank you; now move out of my way.

*Pause*

*Kathy is gesturing to a television set that she can see in her head, the audience can hear a static all around the space for a few seconds.*

**Kathy Harris:** Look at all those people on the telly, there's a crowd and they're waving.

*Kristie Crisis stands in front of Kathy and waves.*

**Planted actor in the audience:** There aren't any people; it's not even turned on.

**Kathy Harris:** Yes there are people, there's a big crowd and they're waving.

**Planted actor in the audience:** I see no crowd, I just see a blank screen, you flipping lunatic.

**Kathy Harris:** There is a crowd, there is, there is, there is.

**Planted actor in the audience:** Ok there's a crowd. If it'll make you feel better.

*The static stops. Doctor Way gets out of the toy box and sits at his desk.*

**Kathy Harris:** You know once I loved this guy, but he was convinced he was in love with another girl even though she never appreciated him or paid him as much attention as she should do.

**Doctor Way:** Focusing on the past won't help you Kathy. We need to figure out who Claire is. I think she may be important to you.

**Kristie Crisis:** Claire? Who's Claire? I didn't think I'd ever been here before. I suppose I could be mistaken.

**Doctor Way:** Yes you are; very much so.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** What?

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** Mistaken.

**Kathy Harris:** Oh.

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** I'm going to do some research Kathy. See if I can find anything that'll help you. I have to go now but I'll see you again for your next appointment.

**Kathy Harris:** Please don't leave me here.

**Doctor Way:** Why?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Please don't leave.

**Doctor Way:** Why not?

*Pause*

*Kathy shouts.*

**Kathy Harris:** Please don't leave.

**Doctor Way:** I have to!

Scene five: Kristie takes over.

*Kathy Harris opens the front door to try and leave but she falls to the floor. She ties her own hands behind her back. She shakes violently. Kristie Crisis, wearing a plain white mask, circles her on stage.*

**Kristie Crisis:** You've got to face me now.

**Kathy Harris:** Who are you?

**Kristie Crisis:** I'm the part of you that you hate most. The part that keeps you awake at night. The part that makes you cry when nobody else is watching; the part that keeps you safe when you are lonely. You have someone to talk to when I'm around. At least I understand you. Nobody else understands you, or even cares what you have to say. To everyone else you're insignificant, but to me you are a goddess and yet you constantly try to get rid of me. You long to be normal. Well what

the fuck is normal anyway? You're just like me and I'm the one who'd help you slit your fucking wrists.

*Kathy struggles to get free.*

**Kathy Harris:** What do you want from me?

**Kristie Crisis:** Just to talk to you. I want to find out more about you. You see I think you and I are similar. Just I'm more qualified to do this than you are. You have to understand that.

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** You're mistaken.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** Excuse me?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I said you're mistaken.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** What?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** You're mistaken.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** How?

**Kathy Harris:** We're nothing alike. For one thing I am a nicer person than you are. For another you just don't seem like you have any social skills.

*Kristie Laughs*

**Kristie Crisis:** And you are incompetent. So you're quite right, I guess we are nothing alike. I suppose it's my fault for trying to be nice to you.

**Kathy Harris:** I don't need your false niceties; you've tied me up. You flaming sociopath.

**Kristie Crisis:** So you're afraid of me? That's quite alright. I'm afraid sometimes too.

**Kathy Harris:** I'd never say such a thing. I'm fine as I am.

*Kristie, still wearing the mask, stands Kathy up and holds her bound hands.*

*Kristie gets louder each time*

**Kristie Crisis:** No one can hear you. No one will come to help you. No one can hear you. No one will come to help you.

*Kathy shouts.*

**Kathy Harris:** I don't need help. I'm fine as I am.

*Pause*

*Both women speak to the audience.*

**Both women:** What are you afraid of?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** I'm fine as I am.

*Pause*

*Both women look at each other.*

**Both women:** What are you afraid of?

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** Nothing. I'm fine as I am.

**Kristie Crisis:** Death.

**Kathy Harris:** Death.

**Kristie Crisis:** I'm fine as I am.

**Kristie Crisis:** Loneliness.

**Kathy Harris:** Loneliness.

**Kristie Crisis:** I'm fine as I am.

**Kathy Harris:** I'm fine as I am.

**Kristie Crisis:** Heartbreak.

**Kathy Harris:** Heartbreak.

**Both women:** Pain.

Misery

Suffering

Memory loss

No identity

*Kristie gags Kathy and continues the list alone.*

Boredom

Fear

Depression

Anxiety

Inadequacy

Failure

Losing control.

*Kristie gives Kathy a dirty look.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Being a bad fucking person.

*Whilst this is going on Kristie is controlling Kathy, pulling her round the stage like a rag doll. She paints her face entirely white. She then holds a mirror up for Kathy. Kathy struggles free from her and punches the mirror. Doctor Way jumps out of the toy box and carries a book over to his desk.*

**Doctor Way:** There are great periods of time when someone who suffers from ‘Dissociative Identity Disorder’ is taken over by a dominant personality. During this time the patient will not remember what they have done or who they have spoken with. Kathy told me that Kristie was her dominant personality, after many sessions. I presume that when being taken over someone would feel like.....

*Kathy Harris screams.*

## **Act two**

### **Scene one: Kathy’s Epiphany**

*Kathy’s mother is lying across one of the chairs. She has been drinking and there is smashed glass all over the floor. Older Kathy stands upstage left by the coffee table as if she is remembering. Doctor Way sits frozen at his desk.*

*Kathy’s mother speaks to the audience.*

**Kathy’s mother:** Where is she? She’s a worthless piece of shit. I swear her life won’t be worth living if she’s not back in five minutes. Oi shit- face where are you?

*Younger Kathy climbs out of the toy box. She sighs as she sees the drink*

**Younger Kathy:** I’m here mother.

**Kathy’s mother:** Where are my fucking pills?

**Younger Kathy:** I hid them. I can’t stand you taking them and you know that when you drink it creates a bad environment for Claire.

**Kathy’s mother:** Sod you! Sod the pair of you. I hope she dies!

**Younger Kathy:** You don’t mean that. You know you don’t mean that! It’s not our fault that Dad left you. He only left you because you’re a vile cow.

*Kathy’s mother stands and sways slightly. She gets a bit of the broken glass and stabs at Kathy with it. She nicks the side of her face and throws the bottle down and begins to punch her. Doctor Way restrains Kathy’s mother and gets her into the toy box. Younger Kathy walks off stage crying.*

**Kathy Harris:** I remember it now. Social services took Claire away because they said she wasn't living in a stable environment. I was an unfit mother because mine was a useless ....

*Kathy breaks down into uncontrollable sobbing.*

**Doctor Way:** I think I can help you Kathy. Just give me some time and I can find out more for you.

**Kathy Harris:** Claire would be about 12 now Doctor. I want her back so much.

**Doctor Way:** I'll do the best I can.

### Scene two: Doctor Way discovers more

*Doctor Way is sat filing his papers. He is alone in the room full of empty chairs and coffee tables. The door is closed. He sighs and chews on the end of his pen. He is writing in his journal.*

**Doctor Way:** I have been a psychotherapist for three years now. I went to University and I gained a first class honours degree in psychology. Now I work with patients who suffer from Dissociative Disorders such as Dissociative amnesia or Dissociative identity disorder. 'Dissociative Identity Disorder' is a very rare thing and usually begins at a young age. It is a post-traumatic stress disorder whereby the mind splits off the memory of the trauma into a separate identity, that means that in its original and true form there is an amnesiac barrier between different personality states; although people can develop flash backs or nightmares. People may just have two or three personalities, but I have worked with some individuals who have an enormous number. Sometimes people, who experience trauma, especially as children, have separate identities for every traumatic incident.

I worry, though, about the state of my job. Although, there will always be a high demand for psychotherapists, the cuts that are being made in the NHS truly worry me. I do not see how it can be doing the health of the public any good.

*Knocking can be heard Doctor Way snaps the diary shut and gets up to open the door.*

*Kathy stands hesitantly at the door.*

**Doctor Way:** Come in, come in Kathy. Do come in.

*Kathy sits down in the empty seat. Kristie follows Kathy in and sits down behind her.*

**Doctor Way:** Let's take a look at what we know so far shall we Kathy? According to my notes it says that you were referred to me because there was a threat that you might be sectioned under the mental health act. You were violent and caused a lot of damage on New Year's Eve is that correct?

**Kathy Harris:** Yes

**Doctor Way:** You also reported that you kept finding strange letters in your house and that money keeps going missing from your bank account. You have no recollection of using the account. Is that right?

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Yes

**Doctor Way:** When we read through the letters we discovered that they were all written in your hand but addressed to different people. We also know that you have three different houses but only successfully pay for one of them.

*Doctor Way notices Kathy's key chain.*

**Doctor Way:** May I look at your key chain please?

**Kathy Harris:** Yes all right. If you think it'll help.

*Kathy hands the keys to Doctor Way.*

**Doctor Way:** You have three different house keys on here too so at least I can assume the houses are real rather than imagined. You have a daughter called Claire who was taken away from you when she was young and you want to get her back and you mentioned hearing voices. Would you mind if I read through the letters again? I just want to make absolutely sure that my thinking is correct before I tell you anything that could potentially be upsetting for you.

*He takes the letters from his file and reads aloud.*

Dearest Kenny stop bringing Martin over. I know you are a feisty bastard, but I do want to get to sleep sometime. The sound of you guys at it drives me mad. Love Karen.

**Kristie Crisis:** At it like Rabbits they were it was so frustrating.

*Doctor Way reads aloud*

**Doctor Way:** Dear Kristie I am sorry I irritated you so often over the course of the past few months. I didn't want you to hurt me and I fully accept that you are the right person to figure out the answers to our questions. I am just so sad all the time and I only want my daughter back is all. My Claire. My lovely Claire, I miss her so much; she'd be about four years old now. Anyway, sorry once again that I annoyed you and I wish you luck in figuring everything out. I will be silent now. Love anon.

**Kristie Crisis:** Whiney bitch that woman was. I'll tell you that now.

*Doctor Way reads aloud.*

**Doctor Way:** Dear Kathy. This is very odd, because you don't know me. I don't know you and yet I feel that we know each other very well. I know that your favourite colour is Red and that you sometimes shop online. My name is Kristie and I imagined that I met you the other day. You were slightly crazy I must admit, but I've been hearing your name a lot recently and this is going to be hard to tell you, but I must be blunt. I think you have a daughter. Her name is Claire. I think we should meet, but I don't know how to contact you. There are many things I need to talk to you about.

**Kristie Crisis:** To talk to you about .... And now she's sat on that sofa in front of me. I need to talk her It's urgent.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** It's urgent.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** It's urgent.

**Kathy Harris:** Shut up, Shut up, Shut up, I can hear you ok? What do you want from me?

*Kathy goes over to the door*

**Kathy Harris:** I need to get out, I need to breathe, I need some air, I need bright colours and a field of flowers.

*Kathy kicks her chair to the floor. She violently forces Doctor Way back into the toy box. Kristie stays in her seat. Kathy lies down on the floor and spreads her arms as if she were making a snow angel.*

**Kathy Harris:** I'm constantly searching for something. It's as if I had it initially and lost it. Now I feel a great inadequacy. I always blame myself. I am frightened of myself and I just assume that others are afraid of me too. Sometimes I wake at night and I'm crying, but I don't know why I'm crying and it feels almost as though the tears aren't mine or don't belong to me. Almost, like I don't deserve the privilege of emotion, because I feel as if I'm a monster. I'm some creature that shouldn't be allowed to feel. I keep having this recurring dream. I dream that I am in a field full of flowers and bright colours. I'm making snow angels in the flowers. I know that all of these flowers will die out during the winter. They'll freeze to death and the field won't look pretty and happy anymore. Then I feel agitated in my sleep. I feel angry and sad, because happiness never lasts forever. We're allowed a glimpse of it every now and then, but it almost immediately disappears. Then my body starts to break. It breaks into different parts and I can see myself floating above my own head, but it's not me. It's someone else, something sinister that I don't quite understand. I try to put myself back together. It's like a Tetris puzzle, but I cannot figure out how all the pieces fit together and then I pound the floor with my fists and when I wake up in my bed I'm crying.

*Doctor Way gets back out of the toy box and put Kathy's chair back in place. He sits down as he was at the beginning of the scene. Kathy still lies on the floor making snow angels.*

**Doctor Way:** Kathy I think you have Dissociative Identity disorder. I think we need to try to talk to Kristie and Kenny to figure out how we can get Claire back.

Scene three: The agonizing.

*Doctor Way sits in his chair. He is reading from his papers until Kathy knocks.*

**Doctor Way:** Kathy, come. Sit down. I have been doing more reading and it would seem that we need to treat the anxiety and the insomnia that you reported to me before. Once we've treated those then we can work on some self-help activities to reduce the internal chaos that you feel. Then when you are feeling better you can try to get Claire back from social services but until you are feeling more stable they won't let you near her do you understand?

**Kathy Harris:** I do Doctor but how do you treat anxiety?

**Doctor Way:** Well I'd need to give you a prescription for anti-depressants. They'll calm you down and reduce your anxiety. I'll monitor the effects and make sure the pills are right for you. If they don't work then we'll try something else but you must give it a go first. I think for the next few weeks Kathy you should keep a journal of everything you do and get back to me with the results. That'll help you to remember what you are doing and connect the identities. In the mean time I shall do some research and phone you if I come up with anything new; if that's ok with you of course?

**Kathy Harris:** I won't take the drugs doctor. I hate them. I refuse to do it. All I want is to have my daughter back. My Claire.

**Doctor Way:** Well you won't get her back if you refuse to co-operate with me Kathy.

*The other identities enter and sit around the space wearing white masks.*

**All identities:** Are you Doctor Way?

**Doctor Way:** Yes, Kathy you know I am. Now I will see how I can help you with your daughter.

**All identities:** I'm not Kathy, My name is Kristie and I'd like your help.

**All identities:** I'm not Kathy, my name is Kenny and I'd like your help.

**All identities:** I'm not Kathy. My name is Karen and I'd like your help.

**Doctor Way:** What would you like my help with?

*The identities stand behind Kathy in a line*

**All identities:** I'd like to get my daughter back. Social services took her away. They said that I was an unfit mother. Can you imagine that? I'm an unfit mother? I'd like to undergo as much therapy as I can; so you can prove to them that I'm fit to look after my own daughter.

**Doctor Way:** Has your friend Kathy been helping you? Was it she who suggested therapy?

**All the identities:** Who is Kathy?

**Kathy and Kristie:** Kathy lives in some scummy, little house near Tottenham Court Road. I live in Leyton; so it's way too far to go. I only went the first time to see if she'd help.

*Getting agitated.*

You know what I knew this would be a waste of time nice to meet you MR Way, goodbye.

*All the identities leave through the door, taking Kathy with them.*

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** *Moodily calling after them.* It's Doctor Way.

*Doctor Way sits at his laptop and reads from the screen.*

**Doctor Way:** The diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders states that dissociation is a process wherein a person mentally separates oneself from reality. The dissociation appears to serve as a protective defence mechanism and as a means of self- preservation. The DSM IV defines D.I.D as follows. 1) The presence of two or more distinct identities or personality states (each with its own relatively enduring pattern of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and self)  
2) At least two of these identities or personality states recurrently take control of the person's behaviour. Finally 3) Inability to recall important personal information that is too extensive to be explained by ordinary forgetfulness.

*All of the cast sit in the chairs in the space. Kathy is sat in the middle. Doctor Way remains seated at his desk he seems unaware of their presence.*

*Doctor way speaks to the audience.*

**Doctor Way:** I think I am a little out of my depth. I've not experienced a case like this since I got this job. I mean I know all the theory but I've never had to deal with anyone like Kathy. She just doesn't seem to want to help herself.

**Kristie:** You really fancy her don't you? What kind of Doctor are you if you can't stay professional?

**Karen:** I feel really sorry for her. I'll do everything in my power to help her.

**Kenny:** The cuts in the NHS truly worry me.

**Kathy:** I won't take the drugs doctor.

**Kristie:** Are you going to die alone?

**Doctor Way:** Damn I can't get these thoughts out of my head. I must do what I think is right.

*Kathy walks into the space.*

#### Scene four: Choices

*Kristie takes out a mirror from the toy box and places it on an empty chair. Kathy does everything she can to avoid looking in the mirror during the scene. The other actors try to make her look into it.*

*Kathy speaks to the audience.*

**Kathy Harris:** I really don't want to take the pills. My mother was horrid when she was on them and she got dependant on them.

*Kathy lies down on the floor making snow angels. Kenny tries to make her look in the mirror but she lies on her stomach.*

**Kathy's mother:** Where are you shit face?

**Kathy Harris:** But I know the Doctor said I won't see Claire again until I try to help myself.

*Kathy stands up, acts out taking pills and spits them on the floor. Karen tries to make her look in the mirror but she pushes her away.*

**Karen:** Goodnight my angel, now it's time to dream, and dream how wonderful your life will be. Someday your child may cry, and if you sing this lullabye then in your heart, there will always be a part of me. Someday we'll all be gone, but lullabyes go on and on they never die, that's how you and I will be.

**Kathy Harris:** I want my damned child back!

*Kristie speaks to the audience.*

**Kristie Crisis:** She's scared that if she takes those pills that it'll change her personality. She doesn't want to lose us really. It'd be like committing suicide. She doesn't really care about her daughter.

**Kathy Harris:** Shut your mouth I can hear you ok?

*Kathy's mother speaks to the audience.*

**Kathy's Mother:** She's scared that she'll be like me. She thinks she's not good enough to look after a child. She wonders why she should bother anyway.

*Kathy wanders about the room and starts to cry.*

*Kenny speaks to the audience.*

**Kenny:** All we want to do is know that someone loves us. We hope that a child will love us and need us. We'd regret it forever if we didn't try.

*Kenny tries to hold the mirror up to Kathy again at first she dodges it but after considering Kenny's words she decided to accept.*

**Kathy Harris:** I will take the pills. It's the only thing that'll help me see my daughter again.

*Kathy holds the mirror and looks at her reflection. She sees the scars on her hands, puts down the mirror, sinks to the ground and sobs.*

Scene five: Side effects

**Kathy Harris:** I took the anti-depressants. I thought I was getting better but in actual fact I could feel nothing. I'd rather feel down forever than lose the ability to feel. I felt a lot more agitated than usual.

Pause.

*Kristie speaks from her seat.*

**Kristie Crisis:** A lot more agitated than usual.

Pause.

**Kathy Harris:** I mean I always feel agitated, but this felt different.

Pause.

Kathy Harris: and then I began to worry, of course, and that's when this madness started.

Pause.

**Kristie Crisis:** and that's when this madness started.

**Kathy Harris:** Things always happen when I start to worry.

Pause.

**Kristie Crisis:** Start to worry.

**Kathy Harris:** I stopped taking the pills and my dominant identity took over again.

*Kathy freezes and Kristie enters through the door. She sits in the chair diagonally from Kathy.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Fuck you, fuck you fuck you!

**Kathy Harris and Kristie Crisis:** I want my daughter back! I want my daughter back!

*Kristie speaks to the audience.*

**Kristie Crisis:** insufferable woman.

*Kristie takes the rope out of the toy box and threatens to strangle Kathy with it.*

*To the audience*

**Kristie Crisis:** Why did she go and see the Doctor?

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

*Pause.*

*To the audience.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Why did she go and see the Doctor?

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** What?

**Kristie Crisis:** *To the audience.*

Not this shit again.

**Kathy Harris and Kristie Crisis:** She wants to destroy us! She wants to destroy us!

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know.

**Kristie Crisis:** *To the audience.*

She doesn't know. Look at her she's worthless.

*Taunts Kathy*

She's scum she can't even take pills properly. Not worth the chair she's sat on.

She doesn't know.

What doesn't she know?

**Kathy Harris:** Anything. I don't know a fucking thing anymore.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis and Kathy Harris:** This doctor keeps trying to get rid of me. He won't do it anymore though. He won't do it. He's trying to get rid of part of who I am!

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** yes

*Longer Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** We need each other, we can't do this alone. Why don't we work together? We can share Claire she belongs to us.

Scene six: Kathy's journal

*There is a Spotlight on Kenny in his seat. Doctor Way sits up in the toy box.*

**Kenny:** *Writing in a book that he has on his lap. Kathy is also writing in a book the same as Kenny's which is on her lap.* Martin doesn't really want me. I know that. I know he just uses me for sex but I like feeling close to him.

**Kathy Harris:** I know through seeing the doctor that I have many identities. I could never find out who Claire's father was and I gave up trying.

**Kenny:** The doctor told me that if I could find a way to control the identities I would get better, have my daughter back and find love. That'd be nice wouldn't it? Finding love.

**Kathy Harris:** I have decided to try to find ways of coping with the identities; almost working with them if you will.

*Kathy takes out a tray of biscuits from the toy box.*

**Kathy Harris:** *To the audience.*

I knew you were coming this time. I got you some food see?

*Kathy walks over to Kenny and Gags his mouth with tape. She bursts into tears. Doctor Way hands Kathy a packet of tissues that he gets out of the toy box he then sits at his desk.*

**Doctor Way:** You'll get through this Kathy I have every faith that you will.

**Kathy Harris:** I was feeling a lot more agitated than usual.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** A lot more agitated than usual.

**Kathy Harris:** I mean I always feel agitated, but this felt different.

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** and then I began to worry of course and that's when this madness started.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** And that's when this madness started.

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Things usually always happen when I start to worry.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Start to worry.

*All actors except Doctor Way set up Doctor Ways desk as a dinner table and sit round it as if they had just finished a meal. All of the actors except Kathy wear white masks to symbolize the fact that they are part of Kathy's subjective reality. Kathy writes in her book throughout the process.*

**Kenny:** Well I must say Carol that was a fine meal.

**Kathy's Mother:** Why thank you. I just wish Kathy would be more sociable and stop writing in that bloody diary all the time. I know that her Doctor told her to but it's stopping her from living in the real world.

**Kathy Harris:** And just like that my friends were talking about me. I hadn't seen them since New Year. They said I should come to dinner so that they could make sure I was ok. Really they just wanted to talk about me, to show me that their lives were better than mine, to comment on my condition.

**Karen:** Come on Kathy; put that book away now please. Come and have a chat and a drink and a laugh with us.

**Kathy Harris:** You remember what happened last time I had a drink with you guys? Or have you forgotten because you haven't seen me in so long? You don't really give a fuck do you? She stood up and just looked at me. It was really awkward. I thought she might cry but she didn't. It was Kenny who rescued us.

**Kenny:** Let's go and have a smoke shall we?

**Kathy Harris:** he said and he escorted the girls outside

**Kenny:** You can come if you want Kathy.

**Kathy Harris:** He told me but I didn't want to. I just sobbed and went home without saying goodbye.

*Doctor Way enters sits at his desk. He leaves it set up as a dinner table.*

**Doctor Way:** That must have been quite hard for you Kathy. How are you feeling now?

**Kathy Harris:** Better but I just wish there was somebody who understood me. Doctor do you know when I might be able to approach social services about my daughter?

**Doctor Way:** Well because you have been coping so marvellously I sent them the report that I have written and they promised to read over it and get back to me as soon as possible.

**Kathy Harris:** Thank you Doctor. Thank you so much!

**Doctor Way:** Would you say that you're feeling happier now Kathy?

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know. I don't think so I still feel the same as I ever did.

**Kristie Crisis:** As I ever did.

**Doctor Way:** And why would you say that is?

Pause.

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** And why would you say you are still feeling distressed?

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Because I don't think I know what happiness feels like. Or if I do I certainly wouldn't recognise the feeling.

**Kristie Crisis:** Wouldn't recognise the feeling.

**Doctor Way:** I think that I could make you happy Kathy.

**Kathy Harris:** What?

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** I think I could make you happy

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** Well Kathy I have been wondering if I should tell you this for some time but I think it'd be unfair to you if I kept it from you any longer.

**Kathy Harris:** What is it Doctor?

**Doctor Way:** I really ...

*Doctor Way looks as if he is about to tell her that he loves her.*

**Kathy Harris:** Yes

**Doctor Way:** I really think that you are doing grand especially with regards to coping with your identities.

**Kathy Harris:** Thank you Doctor! I'm sure I'll get there in the end.

**Doctor Way:** Kathy I think as long as you continue to see me you'll be fine; same time next week then? We'll work on getting you to feel a bit better from now on too if that's all right with you?

**Kathy Harris:** Yes that's fine Doctor. Thank you Doctor.

**Doctor Way:** See you next week Kathy. Keep up the good work.

*Kathy Harris opens the toy box lid and the identities clear away the dinner table. They then push the desk back to where it is for Doctor Way's sessions. Doctor Way climbs inside the toy box. Kathy sits in the centre of the stage. She is writing in her journal.*

**Kathy Harris:** I keep having this recurring dream. I dream that I am in a field full of flowers and bright colours.

*There is brightly coloured revolving lighting in the centre of the stage. The identities try to jump on them.*

I'm making snow angels in the flowers. I know that all of these flowers will die out during the winter. They'll freeze to death and the field won't look pretty and happy anymore. Then I feel agitated in my sleep. I feel angry and sad, because happiness never lasts forever. We're allowed a glimpse of it every now and then, but it almost immediately disappears. Then my body starts to break. It breaks into different parts and I can see myself floating above my own head, but it's not me. It's someone else, something sinister that I don't quite understand. I try to put myself back together. It's like a Tetris puzzle, but I cannot figure out how all the pieces fit together and then I pound the floor with my fists and when I wake up in my bed I'm crying.

I told you that dream before didn't I? But now I have another one that goes with it. They always come one after the other, these dreams. I think I'd be anxious if I didn't dream both of them.

In this dream I'm with my daughter. She understands me and she loves me. We laugh and joke together and we go to the park to feed the ducks. I am happy for the first time in my life and Claire gives me a purpose. I have to live on when she is with me because she'd be unhappy without me. I love myself when I am with her because she gives me a reason to live. Then we are walking through

a forest. It is a dark, scary place. Suddenly I've lost her. I can no longer see her but I can hear her little voice calling out to me. "Mummy where are you?" She cries. I call out to her

**All identities:** Sweetie where are you?

**Kathy Harris:** I search on and on but I cannot find her. I run until I am exhausted and then I sink to the ground sobbing my heart out. Then the scene changes and she is at her head girl ceremony. Everyone is clapping and I am still there; crying, crying, crying. Then she says to me "Mum what's wrong?" and I tell her that I'm proud of her. I'm proud of me too for never giving up the search for her and I love her. When I wake I feel content. One day I will see her again. The Doctor sent the reports to social services. I am so close now I know I am.

#### Scene Seven: Coping mechanisms

**Kathy Harris:** *Directly to a member of the audience.*

I started to write poems in my journal to help me with my dissociation. It all started when I found a poetry book on the Doctor's book shelf.

**Karen:** There was a little ducky who swam in the water.

**Kenny:** The little ducky had a favourite daughter.

**Kristie:** The little ducky swam all day,

**Karen:** With her daughter she did play.

**Kathy:** I love you daughter ducky.

**Kenny:** The mama ducky said

**Kathy:** I love you mama ducky, though there are voices in your head.

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** *To another member of the audience.*

Now I write lots of Poetry to express my emotions, and I show them to the Doctor and he thinks that they're really good. He said I should try and get some published. I think that writing poetry is expressive, because it helps to get out all these bottled up emotions. The world is like a blank canvas ready to be written about and written upon. I discovered that I had quite a few identities through writing, because now all of them write poetry to express themselves. They each sign their names under the pages and I wake up some days with new work that I don't even remember writing. It's all very exciting. None of the identities give their work titles, though, so I often end up having to think of titles. Kristie likes to write quite blunt and passionate lyrics; so I think that if she didn't write her name on it I'd still know it was her. Karen is very troubled and she writes quite sorry, sad poems about having her daughter taken away. Even though she knows that the Doctor is helping us get Claire home she is still very depressed and won't be happy until we have Claire in our arms. Kenny's poems are quite crude and are mainly about the different positions he's had sex in; so I'm not going to read any of those out to you. I'm still really proud of the first one that I ever wrote, myself, so I'll read it out to you. Here we go.

*Kathy clears her throat.*

I cannot describe to you this feeling that I feel inside.

It is constantly a part of me, even when I try to hide.

I wish it wasn't there sometimes, but I keep my head.

The trouble is you'll never see it and you'll think I'm mad instead.

Sometimes I feel that I've been torn into many parts.

It's not there all the time it comes in fits and starts.

Often when she takes over me, white noise is all I hear.

The therapist told me that it's been happening many years.

There are great chunks of my life that I do forget,

But I've learnt to carry on and live life with no regrets.

Sometimes I feel sad about it and it gets me down,

But I know that I'll be fine when my Claire's around.

I know I'm not a normal mother. I'm eccentric and I'm strange.

I am not really all that good at small talk or social exchange.

When I'm well it's wonderful and everything is just grand,

But sometimes I get lonely and this you must understand.

It's hard to give up something that's been a part of your life so long.

It's hard to give up something that's kept you going strong.

I know I must stay well to see her. I know it truly I do.

But what will be the consequences if I annihilate all of you?

*Looks at the audience.*

Will it be like committing suicide? Will I be murdering myself?

Now only time can tell and I'll leave my poetry on the shelf!

*All of the company enter through the door and sit down in the different chairs*

*Kathy sits on the floor cross legged and the rest of the company stand around her in the space.*

*Doctor Way faces her.*

**Kathy Harris:** I was feeling a lot more agitated than usual.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** A lot more agitated than usual.

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** But this felt different. I mean I always feel agitated, but this felt different. I was lying on the floor. I couldn't move and I was crying. There were people everywhere.

**Kristie Crisis:** People everywhere

*Pause*

**Kathy Harris:** And then I began to worry, of course, and that's when this madness started.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** And that's when this madness started.

**Kathy Harris:** Things always happen when I start to worry.

*Pause*

**Kristie Crisis:** Start to worry.

**Doctor Way:** Kathy what's wrong? You were doing really well before and now you're slipping back to it. They were going to arrange a meeting with you to talk about Claire. You don't want them to cancel it do you?

*Kathy sits cross legged on the floor humming the song that Karen sings in the piece*

**Doctor Way:** Kathy are you listening to me?

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Huh?

*Pause*

**Doctor Way:** I said

*Shouts*

KATHY ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?

*Pause.*

**Kenny:** I cannot be there for you; I don't want to be there for you.

**Karen:** to see if anybody would remember Karen.

**Kristie Crisis:** *Taunting*

You're incompetent, he will never come.

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** The diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders states that dissociation is a process wherein a person mentally separates oneself from reality.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** She doesn't know

*Pause.*

**Kenny:** She just wants to be loved.

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** Kathy I think as long as you continue to see me you'll be fine.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Have you ever been in love?

*Pause.*

**Karen:** Would remember Karen.

*Pause.*

**Doctor Way:** I think it would be unfair if I kept this information from you.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Wants to destroy us

*Pause.*

*All the identities make the sound of a child crying.*

Pause.

**Doctor Way:** It's Doctor Way.

Pause.

**Kristie Crisis:** You have to face me now.

Pause.

**Kathy Harris:** *Shouts.*

Fuck off, fuck off and leave me alone!

*She knocks all the things from the doctor's desk. She then forces all of the identities to the floor around the toy box.*

**Doctor Way:** Kathy stop now please you were doing so well before. Why are you starting to ...?

*Kathy picks up a chair and hits the Doctor with it repeatedly until he falls to the ground. She throws the chair across the stage and goes to sit on top of the toy box. Once she's regained control of her breathing she begins to cry.*

#### Scene 8: Ambiguity

*Kathy goes to the toy box and takes out a skipping rope and some bread. She puts the Doctor back into the toy box. Younger Kathy takes the rope and starts to skip. Kathy takes out the bread and mimes feeding the ducks. We can hear sounds of ducks quacking, wind and other effects to represent the outside. Younger Kathy wears a pink duffle coat and Kathy wears a green one, however, she is still wearing the same t shirt and jeans that she has worn throughout the performance.*

**Younger Kathy:** Mummy will you tell me a story?

**Kathy Harris:** I don't know sweetie, Mummy's not too good at telling stories.

**Younger Kathy:** *Big cheesy grin.* Please!!!!!!

**Kathy Harris:** *Uncertain.*

Oh all right then, but after this you have to be a good girl and go back with the social worker for me?

**Younger Kathy:** *Nods and mumbles*

Ok then.

**Kathy Harris:** *Thinks for a while.*

Now let me see, where to begin. There once was a little princess who was stuck in the house of her evil step mother. The little princess wanted to escape so badly and wished that one day a handsome prince would come and rescue her. Well the prince came, fucked her and left her. She was distraught but the one good thing that he left her was a beautiful little girl. The little girl was loved by everyone in the kingdom. The prince had been kind and let her stay in a little cottage if she promised never to bother him again. There was happiness and merriment from everyone but then one dark, horrific night a dragon came to the cottage and took the little girl away; far away so that her mother would spend most of her adult life searching and searching.

*Younger Kathy gasps.*

**Younger Kathy:** What happened to the little girl?

**Kathy:** She remained lost forever and ever and the people searched for her but they couldn't find her in any of the nearby villages.

**Younger Kathy:** So they gave up?

**Kathy:** No, they are still searching in the hope that one day the dragon might take pity and bring their little girl back.

**Younger Kathy:** but I'm here

**Kathy:** yes, yes you are.

*Kathy hugs her but doesn't seem convinced. Kathy takes out her journal and begins to write again.*

**Kathy:** A whole year had passed since I had started to see the Doctor. He was very kind to me. I should have gone to prison for attacking him like that but he let me off as long as I promised never to do it again and never to mention it to anyone, ever. I think I'm willing to go outside now. I know I need to see the world for what it really is rather than the visions inside my head. I'm glad I decided to get better for myself. Initially the only reason I got better was, because I needed Claire in my life. I

had nothing left when the social workers took her away. It felt like I was dying but now I am ok with being me.

*The cast take everything offstage so that there is only one chair left. They then sit on the floor cross legged around the space.*

**Cast except Kathy:** *singing.* Ding dong merrily on high

**Kathy Harris:** Hangover, agitated, different, People everywhere.

**Cast except Kathy:** *singing.* In heaven bells are ringing

**Kathy Harris:** *sighing.* No these letters aren't mine thank you. They're all addressed to Claire. They're Christmas cards from the identities. They've all instructed me to buy her something, because they love her so much. I'm going Christmas shopping later and to Santa's grotto after I've seen you

**Doctor Way:** That's nice. Will you be alright not seeing me until the New Year?

**Kathy Harris:** Yes I think I will be ok. I might need you after New Year though; A year since the incident and all.

**Karen:** Goodnight my angel, now it's time to dream, and dream how wonderful your life will be. Someday your child may cry, and if you sing this lullabye then in your heart, there will always be a part of me. Someday we'll all be gone, but lullabyes go on and on they never die, that's how you and I will be.

**Doctor Way:** Well we'll just see how we go. Are you glad you listened to me now then?

**Kathy Harris:** Yes, to be honest. I knew there was always something missing from my life, I just couldn't figure out what it was. You helped me figure things out before it were too late and I missed all of my little Claire's life.

**Doctor Way:** Well I'm glad I was able to help you Kathy. I have never failed a patient yet.

**Kathy Harris:** Of course thank you doctor.

**Doctor Way:** Now go Christmas shopping and to see Santa. You deserve a treat for yourself for once.

**Cast except Kathy:** *singing.* Ding dong merrily the sky

*Younger Kathy runs to sit on Kristie's lap. She's still wearing her pink duffle coat and her hair is still in bunches. She reads out her Christmas letter.*

*Kathy watches from a short distance, she's stood diagonally from Kristie stage right.*

**Kathy:** Dear Santa, I know that most girls ask for a Barbie or a Polly Pocket, but my Christmas list is a little bit different.

**Cast except Kathy:** *singing.* Is riven with angels singing.

**Younger Kathy:** I'd like my mummy to be happy and know that even though she has lost Daddy I still love her. I just wish she'd feel the same towards me. I wish she'd stop taking those pills and I'd like for her to be able to accept who she is and that she's still a nice person, even though she has a little problem. I'd like her to acknowledge the work I do at school and maybe hang the drawings I do for her on the fridge, so that she never forgets how nice and lovely she really is. I'd like her to be able to get on with her life without anti-depressants and I'd like it so that she doesn't have to see the Doctor anymore and that the mean, mean social worker would go away. That's all I want really Santa. Oh and if it's not too much to ask, although, I'll understand if you think I'm being a cheeky Madame, I really would quite like that Barbie and the Polly Pockets please? I've been a really good girl this year and I do all my chores and I look after Mummy lots and lots. All my love from the goodest, little girl in the whole world. Claire.

**Kristie Crisis:** That's a really beautiful letter. I'm sure Santa will try his best to give you what you want this year Claire.

**Cast except Kathy:** *singing.* Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis

*Kristie pulls her Santa beard down and takes off her hat to give younger Kathy a hug. Kathy watches and gets really edgy and anxious as she does so.*

**Younger Kathy:** Thank you Santa please promise me you'll try. All I want is for my mummy to be happy.

**Cast except Kathy:** *singing.* e'en so here below, below let steeple bells be swungen and "io,io,io! By priests and people sungen. Gloria hosanna in excelsis.

*Pause.*

*Kathy runs around the stage screaming we can hear sounds of car alarms going off and general confusion on the stage. Kathy throws the plates out of the toy box and smashes them. She throws more mirrors from the toy box and smashes them.*

*Pause.*

**Cast except Kathy and Kristie:** *singing.* Pray you dutiful prime.

*Pause.*

**Kristie Crisis:** Free me.

*Pause.*

**Cast except Kathy:** *singing.* Your martin chime, ye ringers.

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Find me.

*Pause.*

**Cast except Kathy and Kenny:** *Singing.* May you beautifully rime.

*A spotlight comes up on Kenny who is sat with his legs open on his chair.*

**Kenny:** Help me.

*Pause.*

**Cast except Kathy:** *Singing.* Your evetime song ye singers.

*Pause.*

**Kathy Harris:** Escape.

Pause.

*A spotlight comes up on Karen who lying on her back with her legs on her chair.*

**Karen:** Let me leave this hell.

Pause.

**Kathy Harris:** I want out.

Pause.

**Kenny:** Don't let me drown in my shame.

Pause.

**Kathy Harris:** I just want to feel safe.

**Karen:** Anxious.

Pause.

**Kathy Harris:** Always anxious.

**Cast except Kathy:** *Singing.* Gloria hosanna in excelsis.

Pause.

**Kathy Harris:** Save me.

Pause.

*Kathy Harris kicks over all the chairs. She is still screaming. Kristie Crisis takes the rope out of the toy box.*

**Cast except Kathy and Kristie:** *Singing.* Ding Dong merrily on high

*Kristie restrains Kathy with the rope and pushes her onto the floor.*

**Cast except Kathy and Kristie:** *Singing.* In heaven bells are ringing.

*Kathy fits on the floor and Karen leaves the stage. Doctor Way steps in as if concerned but does nothing.*

**Cast except Kathy:** Singing. Ding dong merrily the sky.

*Kenny and Kathy's mother leave the stage.*

**Kristie, Younger Kathy, and Doctor Way:** *singing.* is riven with angels singing.

*Doctor Way and younger Kathy leave the stage.*

**Kristie Crisis:** *Singing.* Gloria, hosanna in excelsis

*Pause.*

Save her.

*Light fades and Kathy is left alone sobbing. Kristie exits through the door on the stage.*

**The End.**