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SF PERUSALS

Thick as a Brick

A musical

John Godber

Samuel French — London
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UNITED KINGDOM AND WORLD
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THICK AS A BRICK

First performed by the Hull Truck Theatre Company in April 1999, with the following cast of characters.

Mary Clifford	Gilly Tompkins
Jimmy Naylor/Colin Grey/Gary Fox	Gordon Kane
Tom/Headmaster/Ronnie Baines	Dicken Ashworth
Stacey Naylor	Lyanne Compton
Kerry Shields	Jo Theaker
Maggie Brooke	Sally Carman

Music by John Pattison
Additional lyrics by Jane Thornton
Directed by John Godber
Choreography by Lucy Cullingford

CHARACTERS

Mary Clifford, 42. A nervous type. She is an ex-teacher who is returning to education after a fifteen year lay off. She is extremely bright with a Ph.D. in Romantic drama, but has the affliction of a slight stammer.

Tom Duncan, 50. Has been in education for as long as he can remember. Despite being tired and jaundiced he does try his best to save a sinking ship. He is longing, however, for his place in the sun. His place is Tuscany, where he dreams of buying a holiday home.

Gary Fox, 38. The PE teacher at Common Road. He is sharp and angular. Nasty and hard-faced.

Stacey Naylor, 16. An attractive but difficult child. She is not of high academic ability but is street wise and savvy. She has a natural ability at dance and drama.

Kerry Shields, 16. A shy and quiet girl. She is a real dreamer but her birdlike qualities give the impression of someone not always focused.

Maggie Brooke, 16. Truculent and dour. She is uninterested in anything at all, and is very much a passenger in the trio.

Jimmy Naylor, 45. Stacey's father. He is a bright and worldly but uneducated man. He has been in and out of prison several times, and is aggressive and frightening. His wife died five years ago. He is extremely protective of Stacey.

Ronny Baines, 50. Runs the Astoria Guest House, near King's Cross. It is part brothel part hotel, indeed Ronny is part landlord and part pimp.

The action of the play takes place in a fictional East Yorkshire secondary school

The time—the present

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Place

Common Road High School: a failing school with a high truancy rate and the dubious honour of being bottom of the National league tables twice!

The Set

Essentially an open space which will have to accommodate a number of different locations. Since the play is about imagination, the set should mirror this. Only chairs and tables will be used, though a number of other indicators should be used for the Marina and the Astoria Hotel.

Doubling

The opening Prologue involves everyone save Mary. The actors playing the students take part in the opening scene. Jimmy doubles with Gary. Tom also doubles with Seedy Ronny.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Overture	**I Shalln't Say It Again**
No. 1	**Bored**
No. 2	**Walking the Dog**
No. 3	**Where Did Love Go?**
No. 4	**Break Away**
No. 5	**Big Bad World**
No. 6	**Birds and Bees**
No. 7	**I Remember When**
No. 8	**What Next**
No. 9	**Not Worth It!**
No. 10	**Remember When**
No. 11	**Not Worth It**

ACT I

Prologue

Playover: children shouting and playing

The Lights fade to black. Music

Five actors enter. Tom, Gary, and three female teachers, June, Joyce and Lynne

A musical routine-which incorporates strong movements depicting teacher frustation, is played out on stage. The actors suddenly stop. As each actor speaks they are spotlit by a vertical spotlight until all five are lit

Overture: I Shalln't Say It Again

Tom I shalln't say it again!
Lynn I shalln't say it again!
Joyce I shalln't say it again!
June I shalln't say it again!
Gary I shalln't say it again!
All I shalln't say it again!

From here all the actors speak the verse in choric fashion, though they still retain individual intonations

Tom Right, shut up!
I said, shut up!
I didn't say chatter
I said, shut up!
And take off your coats!
And shift your bags!
And look this way.
And lose the fags!

Lynn Right, sit down!
I said, sit down!

I didn't say slouch,
Or fool around.
Come off that table!
Come off that shelf!
Come off those wires!
You'll kill yourself

Tom I shalln't say it again!
Lynn I shalln't say it again!
Joyce I shalln't say it again!
June I shalln't say it again.
Gary I shalln't say it again.
All I shalln't say it again!

Joyce Right, look this way!
I said, look this way!
I didn't say chew!
I didn't say play!
I said, look this way!
I said, look this way!
How many times do I have to say?

June Will everybody look this way?
Will you look this way?
Do you think you could?
Am I doing this for my own good?
Put down your bags
Open your books!
And don't give me those dirty looks.
I said…

Tom I shalln't say it again!
Lynn I shalln't say it again!
Joyce I shalln't say it again!
June I shalln't say it again.
Gary I shalln't say it again!
All I shalln't say it again!

Gary Why does it have to be a drain?
Every lesson is just the same.
What do you think it is,
All A game?
June & Lynn & Joyce What's happening here is causing strife!

Tom & Gary Waken up you sods,
This is your life!
June & Lynn & Joyce It's your lucky chance.
All Your lucky day.

Tom I shalln't say it again!
Lynn I shalln't say it again!
Joyce I shalln't say it again!
June I shalln't say it again!
Gary I shalln't say it again!
All I shalln't say it again!

So will everybody look this way?
Tom Will everybody look this way?
Lynn Will everybody look this way!
Joyce Will everybody look this way!
June Will everybody look this way!
Gary Will everybody look this way!
All Will everybody please look this way!
(*Quietly*) Thank you!

Scene 1

Staff room morning meeting

Tom addresses the throng, holding a number of note cards. June, Joyce, Lynn and Gary sit and perch or read their papers. They are listening to the morning's briefing

Tom Morning everyone. Sorry we're a bit pushed this morning, but you know how it is, etc.! Staff off, etc.! I suppose you've all seen this morning's *Telegraph* or whatever! The league tables are in there, and for anyone who wants to make themselves ill you'll see Common Road High School in a strong position, tucked well in at the bottom, etc. Holding up everyone else! A few things before we get at them… (*He reads from his cards*) Number one: Just to alert everyone that Stacey Naylor is back in school again! So if you wonder what she's doing, you'll be pleased to know that we've got her back.

A number of staff groan

Secondly: Tony Watson, can we ensure that he sits near the front, he can't

hear on his left side apparently, so turn him sideways or whatever, etc.! And just to say Foxy's basketball team are through to the third round, well done to them! And can I thank all those who attended Ron Baker's funeral at the weekend. Not a pleasant occasion at the best of times! I know that Martine, his partner, was much comforted by those expressions of regret, so many thanks! Ron's classes will be covered by a supply lady for the rest of this term, if she appears: though I think there's been an accident on the road in etc. so … anyway! Oh, the cover sheet is up by the way so…

A huge groan from the rest of the staff as they move up stage. Tom puts away his reference cards. He hates staff meetings, it is a relief when they're over. As Lynn moves to exit she calls to Tom

Lynn Do you know what's happening with room five-oh-five?
Tom I'm on to them!

Gary collects his papers

Gary Tom, balls!
Tom Thanks, Foxy!
Gary We need to talk.
Lynn I think it's still raining in.
Tom I've been on to them six times this morning. I'll give them another ring. Are you short of buckets?
Lynn I've got more buckets than kids in there at the moment!

Gary exits with Lynn

Mary Clifford arrives. She is flustered and lost. She is bright with glasses. Fairly modern but not trendy

Mary Sorry. Mr Duncan?
Tom Ah!
Mary Mary Clifford. S-sorry, I'm la-ate.
Tom Sad news about Ron Baker, but there you are…
Mary Is he the teacher I'm covering for?
Tom Heart attack!
Mary Oh dear!
Tom Prime of his life!
Mary Oh dear.
Tom Stress, they reckoned!
Mary Oh dear!
Tom Only forty-five.

Mary Oh dear!
Tom I told the Chair of Education that he'd be sorely missed. A one man workhorse! So do you know much about Common Road?
Mary Well, no, but I'm a fast study!
Tom You'll need to be! Do you live locally?
Mary Goole at the moment, but everything could change.
Tom Some people travel from Leeds, God knows what for. You would have thought they could find somewhere equally awful on their own patch.
Mary Oh well…
Tom I'm joking! I have a queer sense of humour, Mrs Clifford. You'll soon come to realize that!
Mary Oh right!
Tom I have a sardonic sense of humour. My wife calls it gallows humour. And the sooner they bring them back the better. That's what Polly says. I tell her to shut up and put the kettle on. We have to laugh here, Mrs Clifford, we're bottom of the league. Twice in a row, now that is an achievement! I'm only joking. No, I'm not really, but there you go. So what was the school like you taught in?
Mary It was fifteen years ago!
Tom Well, I suppose we're lucky you can recognize a school.
Mary It was an E.P.A. School in a mining area.
Tom You'll know all about tough kids, then?
Mary Well, they can't have changed that much.
Tom Got their heads stuck in a computer screen most of the time, watching some filth, lucky sods, eh? Still, we mustn't grumble.
Mary Small victories!
Tom Ron Baker had a saying about this school, "You must live every day here like it's going to be your last, because one day you're going to be right".
Mary Sounds a little bit gr-grim!
Tom Give a dog a bad name!
Mary It's about drops in the ocean, isn't it?
Tom Absolutely! You've got a timetable I take it?
Mary Yes, the lady at the office…
Tom Mavis! She runs the school really, when she goes we've all had it. You've got a map, have you? I'd take you around myself but I've got a leak.

Gary Fox enters the staff room. He is laden with files and books. He also has a basket-ball

Gary Balls!
Tom This is the supply woman! (*He introduces Mary*)

Gary shakes her hand

Gary Gary Fox.
Tom Head of PE. He's after new balls.
Gary Barry Folds, truancy again!
Tom See Brian!
Gary Brian's off.
Tom If Maureen's here ask her to see to it, I'm up to my neck! Lynn Webster's got a drip in five-oh-five. And it's not one of the kids. (*To Mary*) Gary'll take you down there.

Tom exits

Gary and Mary are left together. Silence

Gary You're covering for Baker, then?
Mary Just for a term.
Gary He's got all the dregs. When they brought in the National Curriculum, drama went out to the fringes. All that poncy stuff got pushed to the sidelines. They reckon that's why he had the heart attack, all that effort and little reward. I reckon it was the performance-related pay myself.
Mary Really?
Gary Well, he wouldn't benefit from it, would he?

Gary and Mary turn suddenly and simulate walking

Listen, as long as they can read and write and don't cause any trouble on the way home, parents around here aren't generally bothered! We've got the largest teenage pregnancy rate in the area, and we're third in the truancy tables. Apart from basketball it's what the kids around here do the best!
Mary Oh, it's all coming b-back.
Gary What is?
Mary Why I left teaching in the f-f-first place!

Music. The Lights fade

Scene 2

Drama studio

Music fades

Mary and Gary have arrived at the drama studio

Three girls have entered. Stacey, a tough looking and mature girl, wearing

hardly any school uniform and a too short mini skirt, sits with Kerry, a smaller and skinnier girl, also wearing very little uniform. They lounge on a number of chairs. Maggie, a larger and sullen girl, sits nearby, listening to her headphones. All three girls are sixteen, bored and ready to leave

Gary attempts to get their attention. Mary stands by apprehensively

Gary Morning! Is this Mr Baker's class?

No reply from the girls

Is this all there is?

No reply from the girls

Can we just take the register before we push on?

He reads from the class register

Barry Adams? Peter Armley? Saul Bellman? No? Not here? How about Mark Goodman?

Kerry (*whispering*) Left.
Gary Sorry?
Kerry Left.
Gary Left? How can he have left, you should be here till July.
Maggie Well, he has!
Gary What about Shaun Hepton?
Kerry He never comes to this lesson.
Gary Sam Roberts?
Kerry Got shits!
Gary Right! Who are you, then?
Kerry Kerry Shields!
Gary OK, and the next one?
Maggie Mag.
Gary Mag what?
Maggie Maggie!
Gary Maggie what?
Maggie Maggie Brooke.
Gary Margaret Brooke.
Maggie Not Margaret, Maggie!
Gary Whatever. And the next one?
Kerry That's Stacey Naylor.
Gary OK. This is Mrs Clifford. She's going to be taking Mr Baker's classes.

So I want you to be as good for her as you were for him. (*To Mary*) I'll leave you to it, then!

Gary exits

Mary stands looking at the girls. Silence

Mary Ca-can yo-you all come around here, then?

A beat

Stacey Have you heard her?
Mary Br-bring a se-seat and let's h-have a c-chat, shall we?
Stacey A ch-chat? Ch-chat ch-chat?

The girls laugh at Mary

Mary Br-bring a seat!
Stacey That's why she didn't do the register, we'd have been here all day!

Kerry and Maggie find this funny

Mary Co-come on, let's just have a natter.
Maggie We don't want to natter.
Mary I'll come to you, then, sh-shall I?
Maggie Oh God!

Mary picks up a chair and walks over to the group. She sits on the chair as Maggie rises and sullenly walks across the drama studio and sits elsewhere

Mary Aren't you joining us?
Maggie No.

Stacey and Kerry take their seats and move elsewhere in the room. Mary leaves her seat and walks over to their new position

Mary So what kind of things have you been doing lately?
Kerry Our projects.
Mary And what are they?
Kerry We have to make a play up for GCSE.
Maggie Yes. We just sit and chat.
Mary So what is the play about?
Maggie Is there going to be a World War?

Mary Can we just concentrate on this?
Maggie If there is I'm flitting!
Stacey Where to, you dildo!
Mary I wonder if you'd mind just pa-paying attention. And having a chat first so I can get to know you?
Kerry Miss, we want to do our project.
Maggie Oh God!

The girls reluctantly give some attention

Mary So what sort of things are you interested in?
Stacey Do one, love, will you?
Mary Are there any things that interest you?
Stacey What, apart from Robbie?
Mary Robbie?
Stacey Don't you know who Robbie is?
Mary He's a singer?
Stacey Oh God!
Maggie Robbie's crap!
Stacey Not.
Maggie Snot!
Stacey Not.
Mary OK, what kind of things in school are you interested in?
Stacey Karl Evans.
Maggie Yes!
Mary So are you interested in anything out of school.
Maggie Karl Evans!
Stacey Not!
Maggie Snot!
Stacey Not!

Mary decides on a different angle

Mary So you're not interested in anything in sc-school?
Stacey God!
Mary Did you do drama in the other school you went to?
Stacey Which one?

There is much laughter from the girls

Mary OK! So let's do a little bit of an exercise, shall we?
Maggie No.
Mary We'll do a word association game. Don't worry, it won't kill you.

Maggie (*mimicking*) It mi-might!

More laughing from the trio

Mary I'll say a word and you say the first thing that comes in your head, OK?
Stacey Oh no!
Mary No, I haven't started yet!

The girls laugh beyond the call of duty

Stacey Oh, I thought you'd started.
Mary No, not yet, I'll say I've started when I start, right?
Stacey Left.

The girls laugh once more

Mary No, hang on.
Kerry Hang out.
Maggie We've done this, it's crap.
Kerry I haven't!
Mary Well, let's have a go at doing it again and I'll see how crap you are.
Maggie I'm not crap, it's the game what's crap!

A beat

Mary OK, here goes! Apple.
Stacey Apple!
Kerry Apple!
Maggie Apple!
Mary No, yo-you have to say the word that you associate with apple. Not say what I said. So like, if I said black, you might say white.
Kerry I might say grey.
Mary You might.
Kerry I might say night.
Mary That would be good.
Stacey Doesn't rhyme though!
Mary OK. Here we go, ready?
Stacey Steady.
Maggie Eddie.
Kerry Izzard.
Mary Eh?
Stacey What?
Maggie Who?

Kerry You?
Stacey Me?
Maggie Pee!
Kerry Me?
Stacey You.
Maggie Poo!
Mary Shoe!
Stacey Arsehole!

The girls break into laughter

Mary OK, OK, you're too good for me, let's move on to something else. I don't think it's going to work with so few of us. What about music, what kind of music are you interested in?
Maggie Good music!
Mary So what about dance, are you interested in dance?
Maggie Can't we just sit and chat?
Mary (*to Stacey*) What do you do?
Stacey Why, me?
Mary Do you dance?
Stacey Why, are you asking?

Laughter from the trio

Maggie Oh, kinky!
Stacey Yes, I'm a stripper in a club.
Mary Oh, really?
Maggie No, O'Reilly's!

More laughter from the trio

Stacey Not.
Maggie Snot!
Kerry Not!
Stacey Snot!
Maggie Not!
Stacey Snot!
Maggie Big not!
Stacey Big snot!
Mary You think that's good, do you?
Stacey Ye-yes, we d-do! M-Miss!
Mary Oh, here we go! The same old st-stuff!
Stacey Ooohhh!

Mary Why are you doing that? You don't know what you're dealing with, do you? I might be anybody, I might be dangerous. I might be totally unhinged. But because I'm in a classroom you think you can just mess me about! And the staff can't even touch you, now can they? Look at you, I used to eat kids like you for my breakfast, all right, sk-skinny?
Kerry Yes, Miss.
Mary All right, grunter?
Maggie Uh.
Mary So, let's find a space, shall we?

The trio slowly get to their feet

Look at you, what's wrong with you?

Music. The Lights change as the girls start to move to the music

Song 1: Bored

Girls We're so bored
We're bored,
Kerry Every syllable we hear just makes us snore
Maggie She's dull
All She's thick,
Stacey Her boffin talk just makes us
Stacey & Maggie Want to sick
Kerry It's
All rubbish
Maggie It's all
All Pap
Kerry What she makes us do is
Maggie Just a
Stacey Just a
Kerry Just a load of
All Crap!

Stacey She's like them all!
Kerry & Maggie They think they're gods
Stacey But they're not
All They all boring educated sods!

Kerry & Maggie Doo doo doo, doo doo doo doo doo
Kerry & Stacey We're so bored doo doo doo doo doo
Kerry & Maggie Doo doo doo, doo doo doo doo doo

Kerry & Stacey We're so bored doo doo doo doo doo

Maggie They're not like us, they think they are
Kerry Who are they, then?
Maggie & Stacey They roll around in their shiny, shiny newly plated cars
Kerry Our cars are wrecks
Maggie & Stacey They stand on bricks
Kerry The engine and the sump
All We've still to fix.

We're so bored we're bored so stiff.
Kerry & Stacey Why don't she take a running jump
Maggie Right off-f-f-f-f-f
All A cliff?

Maggie Get out our face!
Kerry & Stacey Stop harping on
Maggie We know it's just a
Kerry & Stacey Job that must be done!
Maggie So what's the fuss?
Kerry & Stacey So why all this
Maggie The more she gets red-faced
Kerry & Stacey The more we take the piss…
Kerry Miss!
Maggie Miss!
Stacey Miss!
All We're so bored, we get so bored
Kerry & Maggie We really can't be bothered
Kerry & Maggie & Stacey If we're left and get ignored
All We're so bored, we're bored so stiff
Kerry & Stacey Why don't she take a running jump
Maggie Right off-f-f-f-f-f
All A cliff

Maggie Do you think she'll cope?
Do you think she'll last the course?
(*Speaking*) I doubt it
Maggie & Stacey We'll make her shout and moan until she's hoarse.

Kerry We know the form.
Maggie & Stacey We know the game.
Kerry We know they try the chatty stuff,
All They're all the same.

Maggie She'll not last long,
Kerry & Stacey Maybe a week.
Maggie Then the Head will
Kerry & Stacey Send another gormless geek.
Maggie We've seen them off!
Kerry & Stacey We wear them out…
Maggie In twenty minutes' time
Kerry & Stacey She'll scream and shout.

All She'll tear out her hair.
Run off in tears
We're the kind of class that every teacher fears.
We're so bored
We're bored so stiff
That's why we're bored.
Why can't she take a running jump right off-f-f-f-f-f a cliff!

Stacey That's why we're bored.
Others Doo doo doo, doo doo doo doo doo
Just leave us be.
Doo doo doo, doo doo doo doo doo
Just leave us be
Doo doo doo, doo doo doo doo doo
Just leave us.
Doo doo doo, doo doo doo
Bored!

At the end of the song the girls end up seated as they were at the beginning of the song

Music stops. The Lights return to the previous state. A loud school bell rings. The sounds of children shouting and screaming is heard. In the original a taped musical sting linked this scene. Alternatively, sound cues of general school noise could also work

The girls place the chairs in a format that represents the staff room and run off

Scene 3

Drama studio. Night

Music fades

Mary is organizing some of her papers in her briefcase

As Tom wanders in he looks more hassled than previously

Tom Six days for the roof to be fixed! Six days! The Lord made the world in six days and we can't get the roof fixed. Still here, then?
Mary Just about!
Tom I remember my first term. Battle scars, three scalps. Five dead! I don't know what I expected but whatever it was they hadn't trained me for it. I jest of course!
Mary Yes, right!
Tom Sorry I haven't been in much this last fortnight, but we've got another Ofsted. Staying late?
Mary I was, I put a notice up for another dance class. Thought I'd try and get them motivated, but? I had two last week but it doesn't look like they're coming back! So I'll go home and make myself a pot noodle or something.
Tom Oh, well, you have to start somewhere. From little acorns etc.
Mary That's right.
Tom Keep at them. Good-night!

Tom exits

Mary Good-night! (*She sits*)

Music underscores

Stacey, Maggie and Kerry sheepishly enter

Stacey Is this the dance thing?
Mary It might be!
Stacey Came to see what was going on!
Mary Nothing at the moment, I'm about to go home.
Maggie I wanted to go home and all but it's pissing it down.
Mary So you've only come because it's raining? Well, go away! I don't want you. You either come because you're interested or you can leg it.
Maggie Leg it? Have you heard her? You're supposed to be a bloody teacher!
Stacey You teach dance, then?
Mary Amongst other things!
Stacey What sort of dance is it?
Mary What sort do you want it to be?
Stacey Is it disco?
Mary Why don't you come and sit down and we'll have a ch-chat!
Kerry Miss, can I leave me coat on?
Maggie I didn't want to come, me.
Mary Change the record, mate!

Maggie Eh?
Mary You've told me that!
Maggie I think you're a bogey. From up my nose.
Mary Yes, I am.
Kerry Miss, can I leave my coat on?
Mary Do you think you'll be able to dance with your coat on?
Kerry No.
Mary Well, then.

A pause

Kerry Miss, can I leave my coat on!
Mary What are you like? You're about five, aren't you? Miss, can I leave me coat on?

The girls laugh

Kerry Miss, I'm cold!
Maggie Can't do much dancing with just three! You can dance and I'll watch. (*She plonks herself in a chair*)
Stacey You go clubbing, then, miss?
Mary I'm out every night.
Maggie Not!
Mary Snot!
Maggie What?
Mary Don't you believe me?
Stacey No.
Mary Why not?
Stacey Because teachers are boring!
Mary Yes, that's why they become teachers.
Kerry Is it?
Mary You have to be boring to be a teacher in the first place.
Maggie Yes, I've heard that!
Mary There's a special college you have to go to!
Kerry Are you married, miss?
Mary I am at the moment!
Stacey Are you going to show us how to dance, then, miss?
Mary Yes, I'll prance about, so you can have a good laugh, shall I?
Stacey Yes, brilliant!
Maggie Yes, come on!
Mary OK. I'll move about a bit. Just to get warmed up, but if any of you laugh, you have to get up, OK?
Stacey Yes, all right!

A beat

Mary It may be a bit seventies, but…!
Kerry Miss, can I keep my coat on?
Mary Oh, shut up, you silly arse! (*She clicks on some music*) Wait for it! Here we go! (*She plays a track on the cassette and begins to move to it. She knows it is embarrassing but goes for it*)

The kids find it funny. She is genuinely funny

Right, you laughed and you laughed! Come on, up you get!
Maggie I didn't laugh, I was just smirking!
Mary Everybody who laughed, on their feet! Let's see if you can do any better! Kerry!
Kerry Oh, miss!
Mary Let's see if you can do any better.
Kerry No, miss, I can't, I've got my coat on!
Mary Oh, yeah, very good!
Kerry Well, I have!
Mary Maggie, come on!
Maggie I didn't laugh!
Mary Stacey?
Stacey No.
Mary Come on, you laughed!
Stacey No way.
Mary Come on, don't think you can get away with it! You laughed, I saw you.
Stacey I don't fancy it.
Kerry Come on, Stacey, you do it, she's brilliant, miss!

Stacey slowly stirs

Stacey OK, st-stand back, miss!
Mary Oh, right, then!
Kerry Miss, she's brilliant.
Stacey OK, don't try this at home, right! (*She takes centre stage. She starts to dance*)

Jimmy Naylor, an aggressive man in his mid-forties enters. He turns off the cassette

Silence

Jimmy What are you doing?

Stacey Nothing!
Jimmy Home!
Stacey Dad?
Jimmy I've got drenched coming across here. Come on, let's have you! You know I want to go out!

Stacey grabs her bags and walks quickly past her father, and her friends

Stacey I've got to go!
Mary OK!
Jimmy (*to Mary*) Who are you, then?
Mary I, I, I!
Jimmy Spit it out, love, I haven't got all night!
Mary I'm Stacey's dr-drama teacher.
Jimmy Well, she should be at home!

Jimmy exits

Silence. Mary is shaken

Maggie Show us that dance again, miss, it looked good.
Mary No. I'd better not…
Maggie Oww, I like a laugh!

A beat

Kerry Her dad doesn't like her staying behind.
Maggie You should see her dance, miss, she's brilliant!
Mary Well, I'd better let you go.
Kerry There's no point me going home yet, anyway, my mum'll not be back from the hospital till late.
Mary Oh, right.
Kerry That was one of the reasons why I wanted to come here. They want you off the grounds as soon as the bell goes. I've got four hours to kill. Can I stay here a bit longer?
Mary If you like, but I'll be leaving at half four.
Kerry I know, but I'm freezing! (*She sits and makes herself comfortable*)
Mary So does your mother work at the hospital?
Kerry No, it's my grandma! She's got breast cancer, miss.
Mary Oh.
Kerry And my grandad died last month. So that didn't do her any good.
Mary Oh, I'm sorry about that!

Silence

Kerry Miss, I used to love doing drama.
Mary Did you?
Maggie I didn't.
Kerry Ever since I was little I made stories up.
Mary Everybody does!
Kerry I've got characters and plots and all sorts.
Mary So what's your story, Maggie, what do you do at home?
Maggie Have my tea, and then go to my room.
Mary Don't you go out?
Maggie There's nowhere to go! Is there?
Mary And what do you do, Kerry?
Kerry Eh?
Mary At home?

Music. The Lights change for the song

Song 2: Walking the Dog

Kerry What do I do at home?
You want to know?
What do I do at home?
You want to know?
(*Speaking*) Well here goes…

When I get home from school
I have a snack
I have my tea,
I watch TV
And at nine o'clock I have another snack
I snack, that's what I do.
I sit there on the sofa and I snack.

Then I sit, just like a blob
I plug into the box, like I'm a slob.
I watch the soaps, I watch the vets
I watch the swapping homes
And looking after pets.

I stuff my face like it's a race
I stuff biscuits in my mouth just to fill the space

I watch the news,
It's always war.

Sometimes I wonder what we are educated for.
And there I sit just like a stone
Stuffed full of biscuits and deeply all alone.

Till Mum comes in, and Dad comes back.
Then I run upstairs and have another snack.

I snack, that's what I do
I have me tea and watch TV
And then I snack.
And then sometimes I walk the dog out on the back.

I help my mum
He dun't do owt!
Every night he says this time he's going to slit her throat.
It's just a joke, it's just a phrase.
When he's in that mood it makes me wonder why she stays.
It make me sick,
It makes me crack.
I wish for just this once that she would hit him back.

That's why I snack
That's why I snack
Sometimes I hear the clashing of a smack.
That's when I walk the dog out on the back
That's when I walk the dog out on the back.
That's why I walk the dog out on the back.
That's why I walk the dog out on the back.

Silence. Mary is moved by this song. Kerry and Maggie look at her

Kerry and Maggie exit

Mary remains on stage. A musical refrain from Walking the Dog. *The Lights fade to Black-out*

Scene 4

The staff room. Night

Music fades

Mary is on stage but is animated

Tom enters. He has books and papers, even more than we saw before

Tom Well, we get the roof fixed in History and the electricity goes in Geography. I wouldn't be surprised if the whole school ground to a halt one day. Ted Brown'll not have much chance of finding darkest Congo down there today. He'd be lucky if he could find the bloody blackboard rubber! It's one thing after another, Mrs Clifford! So how are you finding the kids? Don't tell me, you just open the classroom door and there they are? I jest of course!

Mary Well, they lack motivation, but…

Tom Motivation, exactly! Car keys? (*He fumbles for his car keys*)

Mary And what they do in their spare time seems … I don't know, empty.

Tom Don't think about it too much, you'll go mad. No matter how much we try to swing the balance the other way…

A beat

Mary I had three kids turn up for my dance class yesterday!

Tom And there you were desperate for your pot noodle!

Mary Stacey Naylor was one of them. Then her f-father came into school threatening.

Tom Thick as a brick! I know I shouldn't say that but… In and out of prison.

Mary I mean the girl has obviously got some talent.

Tom At what?

Mary Well, she's a n-natural mover.

Tom Yes, I think half the Year Eleven boys would agree with you there! I remember Stacey from the Christmas dance. I don't know what she was wearing, but it was all going on in there!

Mary They're not a bad bunch to be honest. And I th-think they're quite interested. I don't know if you've seen it, but there are heats for a national dance competition up in the staff room. I thought if we entered it would be a little project for them.

Tom is still searching for his keys

Tom Oh no! Where have I put them? Now I had them this morning.

Mary So w-what do you think?

Tom finds his car keys

Tom Ah ah! Well, far be it from me to stop you. I like to encourage anything, anything to get us off the bottom! I'd even streak if I thought it would help us. Good grief, what a horrible thought, anyway, good-night!

Mary's mobile rings

Three cleaners enter (the three students, although where resources allow, separate dancers could be used) and begin to tidy up as Mary takes the call

Mary Hallo? Peter? … No, I can talk. … So when did you plan this? Have you asked Jess? … Oh, well, thank you, for consulting with me! … I'm only her mother, for God's sake! I thought that was supposed to be my weekend? … Well, if you think a fifteen year-old girl wouldn't want to go to Paris for the weekend you're softer than I thought. … No, I'm not shouting! … Well, I am her mother! … I'm not shouting, you're the one who's shouting! Oh, stick it, Peter, just stick it! (*She snaps the phone off*)
Cleaner 1 Have you finished in here, love?
Cleaner 2 'Cos we've got to get sorted.
Mary Yes. I'm just about finished!

The three cleaners dance a mop dance as Mary exits

Scene 5

Marina. Night

We get the impression of a marina quay. A bench is placed on stage. Ripple water effects. Music fades

Jimmy Naylor enters, he is wearing a tracksuit and has been running

Jimmy Oh, hell! (*He sits on somes steps*)

Mary enters. She is wrapped up against the cold. She walks down to look at the water

Don't jump!
Mary Do I look that desperate?
Jimmy Well, the water's freezing.
Mary Oh, right!

Jimmy stands to return to the gym. They notice each other for the first time

It's Mr Naylor? Isn't it?
Jimmy Who wants to know?
Mary You came into my class yesterday.
Jimmy Oh, ay, that's right!

Mary Is Stacey OK?
Jimmy Yes, she's fine!

A beat

Mary Anyway! (*She looks at the water and turns to go*)
Jimmy You a teacher, then?
Mary No, I'm a shepherd.
Jimmy Oh right!
Mary Sorry, yes, I am, yes.
Jimmy Fancy yourself as a bit of a joker, do you?
Mary Sorry!
Jimmy What are you doing down the docks, then?
Mary Just walking. Clearing my head! (*She looks at him and turns to walk away*)
Jimmy She promised me that she'd be home, that's all…
Mary Right!
Jimmy That's why I came for her.
Mary I see.
Jimmy She's only a bit of a kid.
Mary Well, she's…
Jimmy I like to keep my eye on her.
Mary Well, that's…
Jimmy I don't want her getting up to anything, you know what it's like. There's a lot of stuff going down on that estate. Heroin, all bloody sorts!
Mary Really?
Jimmy Next door but one's a dealer, I swear it. There's kids dropping like flies. I don't want Stace around any of that shite!
Mary Absolutely!

A beat

Jimmy Anyway they don't go to school to do that, do they? She can dance all she wants when she's got a job.
Mary That's rr-right! (*She turns to depart*)
Jimmy She any good, then?
Mary Well, she says she's interested.
Jimmy She'll tell you she's interested in going to the moon. If she thought you'd believe her!

A beat

Mary Well, anyway…!

A beat

Jimmy I'd better get back in there before I catch my death. (*He moves to exit*)
Mary So what are you training for, anyway?
Jimmy Me? I'm training for life. That's what I'm training for!

Mary moves to go

Mary Yes, so am I, Mr Naylor. It sounds like we're in the same job. (*She is almost off*)
Jimmy I don't think so, love! I don't bloody think so.

Jimmy exits

Music plays as the Lights fade to Black-out

Scene 6

The drama space

Music

The three girls enter. They sit on three chairs, and imagine they are on computers

Stacey Click on.
All Click on.
Stacey Click off!
All Click off!
Stacey Log on!
All Log on!
Stacey Log off!
All Log off!
Stacey On line…
All On line…
Stacey Dot com…
All Dot com…
Stacey Click on…
All Click on…
Stacey Click off.
All Click off.

The dance stops abruptly

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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