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live
theatre

Iris

By Alison Carr

***Iris* is a Live Theatre production and had its world premiere at Live Theatre, Newcastle on Thursday 7th April 2016. It was performed from Wednesday 6 to Saturday 30 April 2016.**

The original cast were Katy Cavanagh, Joe Caffrey and Sam Neale.

The production was supported by the Friends of Live Theatre

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CAST

Julie	Katy Cavanagh
Ruby	Sam Neale
Gerry	Joe Caffrey

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

Writer	Alison Carr
Director	Max Roberts
Designer	Patrick Connellan
Lighting Design	Drummond Orr
Sound Design	Dave Flynn
Production Manager	Drummond Orr
Creative Producer	Graeme Thompson
Stage Manager	Adam Johnston
Deputy Stage Manager	Heather Robertson
Technical Manager	Dave Flynn
Technician	Craig Spence
Costume Supervisor	Lou Duffy
Professional Casting	Lucy Jenkins CDG & Sooki McShane CDG
Prop Maker	Paul Aziz

Thanks
Chris Auld, photography, Cathy Gillespie, design and Ian McLaughlin, filming

live theatre



Live Theatre is recognised as one of the great new writing producing theatres on the international stage and is deeply rooted in Newcastle and Gateshead where we are based.

We believe that creativity and cultural engagement are central to the lives of individuals and arts and culture should be recognised, supported and celebrated as significant contributors to the creative and economic wellbeing of our communities.

As well as championing the art of writing for the stage by producing and presenting new plays, Live Theatre unlocks the potential of young people and finds and nurtures creative talent. It also leads and demonstrates future thinking on new models of business sustainability and growth.

Founded in 1973, the theatre was transformed in 2007 with a capital redevelopment. The result is a beautifully restored and refurbished complex of five Grade II listed buildings with state-of-the-art facilities in a unique historical setting, including a 160-seat cabaret-style theatre, a studio theatre, renovated rehearsal rooms, a series of dedicated writers' rooms as well as a thriving café, bar and pub.

Live Theatre is a national leader in developing new strategies for increasing income and assets for the charity. In 2016 the company is completing Live Works, a £10 million capital development of quayside-fronted land and buildings adjacent to the theatre, to create a children's and young people's writing centre, a public park and a new commercial office space.

Live Works joins award-winning pub The Broad Chare, online course www.beaplaywright.com and The Schoolhouse (an office space for SMEs), as one of Live Theatre's creative enterprises, which increases funds through new income streams.

For more information see **www.live.org.uk**

Live Theatre is grateful for the support of Arts Council England and Newcastle City Council as well as its many other supporters and friends

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CAST

KATY CAVANAGH Julie

Katy trained at RADA. She recently bid a fond farewell to Weatherfield where she spent seven years playing much loved knicker-stitcher Julie Carp in *Coronation Street*. She is delighted to be making her debut at Live Theatre.

Katy's theatre credits include: *Sergeant Musgrave's Dance* (Oxford Stage Company), *Two and Two/2* (Bolton Octagon); *Ghosts, Mad For It* (Manchester Royal Exchange), *Romeo and Juliet* (English Shakespeare Company).

Her television appearances include: *Birds of a Feather* series III (BBC); *Wired* (ITV); *The Bill* (ITV); *The Street* (BBC); *Blue Murder: Crisis* (ITV); *Bodies* (BBC); *Cracker* (ITV); *The Family Man, Shameless* (C4); *The Royal, The Golden Hour, Burn It, Dalziel & Pascoe* (BBC); *Ted & Alice* (BBC), *A Line in the Sand, Bob & Rose* (ITV); *The Cops I, II & III, A Likeness in Stone* (BBC); *Holby City* (BBC); *Peak Practice* (ITV); *Sex 'n' Death* (BBC); *Where the Heart Is* (ITV); *Walter: The Secret Life, Wycliffe* (ITV); and *A Dance to the Music of Time* (Channel 4).

Her films include: *Rehab; Vacuuming Completely Nude in Paradise*; and short film *Bradford Halifax London*.

Katy has worked extensively on BBC Radio 4, most recently as Grusha in *The Brothers Karamazov* and Amelia in *Vanity Fair*.

SAM NEALE Ruby

Sam's theatre credits include: *Nativities* and *The Girls from Poppyfield Close* (Live Theatre); *Continuum* (Theatre Cap-a-Pie) and *A Bit of Respect* (Operating Theatre); *Present Tense, The Big Society* and most recently her own play with her new company Flaming Barstool Productions.

Her television credits include: *Married, Single, Other*, (Left Bank Pictures); *Vera* (ITV); *Eternal Law* (ITV); *Holby City* (BBC); *Wolfblood* (BBC) and *Doctors* (BBC).

Film credits include: *Interview with a Hitman* and *Frank*.

JOE CAFFREY Gerry

Joe trained at LAMDA. He won Performer of the Year at the 2013 Journal Culture Awards for his roles in the Live Theatre productions *Cooking with Elvis* and *Wet House*.

Theatre credits include: *The Girls* (Leeds Grand / Lowry Theatre); *Light Shining In Buckinghamshire* (National Theatre); *Cooking with Elvis* (Live Theatre); *Wet House* (Live Theatre/Soho Theatre); *The Pitmen Painters* (Live Theatre/National Theatre/Bill Kenwright Ltd, West End and National Tour); *A Walk On Part* (Live Theatre/Arts Theatre, West End), *Much Ado About Nothing, The Globe Mysteries, Loves Labours Lost* and *We the People* (Shakespeare's Globe Theatre); *Billy Elliot The Musical* (Victoria Palace Theatre); *Keepers of the Flame* (RSC/Live Theatre); *Black and White Shorts* (Live Theatre/Paines Plough); *Studs* (Hull Truck Theatre); *Cooking with Elvis* (Live Theatre West End/National Tour) and many other Live Theatre productions over the last 27 years.

Television and film credits include: *Wolfblood*, *Clay*, *Doctors*, *Holby City* (BBC); *The Bill* (ITV); *Heartbeat* (ITV); *Badger* (BBC); *Spender* (BBC); *Hetty Wainthrope Investigates* (BBC); *Attachments* (BBC); *Byker Grove* (BBC); *Distant Shores* (ITV); *Catherine Cookson's Colour Blind* (ITV); *Quayside* (ITV); *Waiters, The Last Musketeer* (ITV); *Ain't Misbehavin'* (BBC) and *Soldier, Soldier* (ITV); *In Fading Light* (Amber Films); *The One and Only* (Assassin Films) and *Bridget Jones – The Edge of Reason* (Working Title Films).

CREATIVE TEAM

ALISON CARR Writer

Iris is Alison's first full length commission for Live Theatre. Alison won Live Theatre's 40th Anniversary Bursary in 2013 for *The Soaking of Vera Shrimp,* which transferred to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Her other plays at Live Theatre include *The Girls From Poppyfield Close* and *Clint*. Her recent theatre credits include: *Fat Alice* (Traverse Theatre/Òran Mór /Aberdeen Performing Arts); *A Wondrous Place* (Northern Spirit, tour); *Never Rains But It Pours* (Theatre503) and *Can Cause Death* starring Olivier Award-winning actor David Bradley (Forward Theatre Project at the National Theatre, Northern Stage & Latitude Festival).

Alison is a member of the Traverse 50. She has also worked with theatres and companies including Paines Plough, Nabokov, Old Vic New Voices, New Writing North, Village Pub Theatre and 5065 Lift.

Radio credits include: *Dolly Would* (BBC Radio 4) and *Yackety Yak* (The Verb, BBC Radio 3).

MAX ROBERTS Artistic Director

Max is the Artistic Director and a founding member of Live Theatre.

He is delighted to be directing *Iris* by Alison Carr, who joins an esteemed list of Live Theatre authors that Max has worked with including C.P. Taylor, Tom Hadaway, Alan Plater, Phil Woods, Julia Darling, Shelagh Stephenson, Peter Straughan, Lee Hall, Michael Chaplin, Sean O'Brien, Paddy Campbell and David Almond.

Recent productions for the company include a revival of Lee Hall's *Cooking with Elvis* as part of Live Theatre's 40th anniversary celebrations; *Tyne* by Michael Chaplin which following its run at Live Theatre transferred to the Newcastle Theatre Royal; *Wet House* by Paddy Campbell which won a host of Journal Culture Awards including Best Production, and transferred to London's Soho Theatre; *Flying Into Daylight* by Ron Hutchinson; and *What Falls Apart* by Torben Betts.

Following *Iris* Max will direct *The Savage* by David Almond, an adaptation of his popular novel, which will mark the opening of Live Tales, the company's new writing centre for young people.

In 2014 Max was given an honorary doctorate of letters from Northumbria University in recognition of his work raising the International profile of theatre in the region. In 2011 Max received the Journal Culture Award's Special Contribution Award, which was given to salute his work with Live Theatre.

PATRICK CONNELLAN Designer

This is Patrick's first design for Live Theatre. Theatre credits include *Martha, Josie and The Chinese Elvis* (Hull/Bolton Octagon Theatre); *The Ladykillers* (New Vic/Hull/Stephen Joseph); *The Hook* (Royal & Derngate/Liverpool Everyman); *Three Minute Heroes, One Night in November, The Rink, A Midsummer Night's Dream* (as director and designer Edinburgh Festival), *The Dice House, This Lime Tree Bower* (as director and designer, also Edinburgh Festival); *Silas Marner, She Stoops To Conquer, Leader of the Pack, Neville's Island, The Wedding* (Coventry Belgrade); *The Taming of the Shrew, The Merchant of Venice* and *Into The Woods* (nominated for TMA Best Musical Award) (Derby Theatre/Playhouse); *20th Century Boy* (New Wolsey); *Edward III* (RSC/West End); *A Passionate Woman, Misery* (West End); *The Slight Witch* (National Theatre/Birmingham Rep); *Where Have I Been All*

My Life, Abigail's Party (as director and designer) *Copenhagen* and *Alphabetical Order* (New Vic, Stoke); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, The Price, Ghosts, All My Sons, The Seafarer, Meet the Mukherjees, Popcorn* (as director and designer) (MEN Award), *Broken Glass, Twelfth Night, Little Malcolm, The Weir* and *The Hypochondriac* (Bolton Octagon Theatre) and for Hampstead Theatre: *Amongst Friends, Life After Scandal* (also Plymouth), *Taking Care of Baby* (also Birmingham Rep), *The Maths Tutor, Osama the Hero/A Single Act, My Best Friend* (also Birmingham Rep), *Nathan the Wise* and *When the Night Begins*.

Patrick is currently designing *The Baraem Play* for Al Jazeera Media Networks; *Roll over Beethoven* for Belgrade Theatre, Coventry; and *The Gaul* for Hull Truck.

Patrick has previously won the Linbury Prize for Stage Design and a Prague Quadriennale Gold Medal. Until recently, Patrick was the Course Leader of Theatre Design at Nottingham Trent University and now teaches theatre design at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

LUCY JENKINS CDG & SOOKI MCSHANE CDG Casting Directors

Live Theatre credits include: *Tyne, Cooking with Elvis, Chalet Lines, A Walk On Part, Nativities, Faith & Cold Reading, Inheritance* and *A Northern Odyssey.*

Other theatre credits include: *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Regents Park and tour), *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, Desdemona, Bomber's Moon, Adult Supervision* and *Casualties* (Park Theatre); *Our Country's Good* (Out Of Joint); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Royal Exchange Theatre); *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl* (Talawa Theatre); *War Horse* (UK Tour/West End), *Solid Air* (Theatre Royal Plymouth); *Afraid of the Dark* (Charing Cross Theatre); *Serpent's Tooth* (Almeida Theatre/Talawa Theatre); *The Glee Club* (Cast Theatre) and several productions for Nottingham Playhouse including *The Kite Runner, My Judy Garland Life, Richard III, The Ashes* and *Diary of a Football Nobody*.

Television credits include: *Skins* (Company Pictures); *Wild At Heart* (Company Pictures); *The Bill* (Talkback Thames); *Samuel Johnson: The Dictionary Man* (October Films) and *Family Affairs* (Talkback Thames).

Film credits include: *Myrrdin* (Screenworks); *Awaiting* (Solar Productions); *Containment* (Bright Cold Day Films); *Five-A-Side* (Emerald Films); *Entity* (Nexus DNA); *The Somnambulists* (No Bad Films); *Desi Boyz* (Desi Boyz Productions) and H10 (Dan Films).

A word from the writer

Iris started its life as a twenty-minute short called, believe it or not, '*Iris*'. In it, warring sisters Julie and Ruby met in a café to meet with a woman who was delivering the bequest of their recently deceased mother Iris.

I can't tell you what that bequest is (spoilers) but suffice to say it's a bit, well, odd. But then my plays often contain the unusual. A boy who believes he has an 'inside twin' growing inside him who only he can hear; a grossly obese upstairs neighbour's massive foot crashing into an adulterous couple's living room; a mother who replaces her child with a stuffed monkey toy. Of course, these stories are rarely actually about the weird thing that's happening, and I enjoy putting the extreme into the ordinary to see where it leads me and my characters.

This short play sat in a drawer for a few years until I was looking to write a full-length script. The central conceit was interesting, but there was a lot more in there to explore and discover. The sisters had a significant age gap between them, how did this affect their relationship? Why was this family estranged? Who was this mother and why had she done this? On and on it went until Julie was a Cher impersonator amongst a cast of six in a four act play called *The Day We Rode The Shuggy Boat*. Ahead of Live Theatre's final *Short Cuts* event back in 2012 during which they showcased a scene from this epic, I spent a day workshopping the script with actors and a director. A lot became clear. Not only has the title reverted back to its original since then (it had to, Iris is such a force even if she's unseen) but it's a lot trimmer, half the characters have been culled and there's not a Cher classic to be heard.

In the redrafting, the play became less and less about the weirdness of Iris's bequest and increasingly about the family in which this would be a thing that could happen. It opened up to ideas about sisterhood, motherhood, legacy, loss, blame, and all that big, juicy stuff.

Older sister Julie came to the fore, her relationship with Iris and Ruby, her sense of self, her guilt. Julie is one of those oft discussed lately 'strong female leads'. Not 'strong' as in infallible cos that's not interesting or human, but 'strong' as in central, the heart of this story. She's in her mid-forties, an intelligent, funny, conflicted, damaged woman whose decisions and mistakes have got her to this point and now it's all imploding. She, along with Ruby and Gerry, are not always right or likable, but that's ok. They're people who are coping (or failing to) with – in the words of Ruby – "a pretty fucking creepy" situation.

How the play was going to end prompted a lot of discussion. As it is, nothing is tied up in a nice neat bow, all rainbows and lollipops, but what is? There's hope. And that's something.

Alison Carr
Writer

Iris

by

Alison Carr

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Please note that text was correct at time of rehearsal and may differ from the live performance.

CHARACTERS

Julie
The elder of the two sisters. 45.
She can seem cold and distant. She doesn't like mess.

Ruby
The younger of the two. 19. She can be brattish and crude.

Gerry
In his mid-40s, a recently divorced dad-of-one
who is looking for love.

SETTING

The living room of a house.

A settee.

A low coffee table – it bears the leftovers of platters of food for a buffet.

Chairs around a small dining table with more leftovers, paper plates, paper cups and a cluster of half drunk or empty wine and spirit bottles.

In a corner on the floor is a pile of post – junk mail mostly, that is piled on top of a large square parcel still sealed tightly in its packaging.

One wall is covered with mirrors of various shapes, sizes and ages. There is a noticeable gap where a mirror once hung – there is an outline, the wallpaper less faded where it once was.

There are two doors. One, the front door off to outside.
The other to the kitchen.

There is a window with a view on to the street.

A staircase leads off upstairs to the bedrooms and bathroom.

ACT ONE

Scene One

The very early hours of the morning.

The room is in darkness.

JULIE *and* **GERRY** *are heard outside.* **JULIE** *is fumbling with her door keys –.*

GERRY *(offstage)* Shall I shine my phone?

JULIE *(offstage)* It's ok.

GERRY *(offstage)* Here, look…

JULIE *(offstage)* I've got it…

JULIE *opens the front door. They enter.*

JULIE *wears a smart black dress and heels.* **GERRY** *is smart too, but not a suit. They have both had a drink.*

I had the key upside down.

GERRY Silly.

JULIE Yeah.

GERRY Dafty, aren't you. Dafty.

A right silly sausage.

This breaks the mood. **JULIE** *moves away.*

JULIE I need a top up.

Get some lights on, eh.

JULIE *turns the light on and examines the leftover bottles on the table –.*

There's some vodka. Oh no, that's empty.

This? No idea what it is, but if you're feeling brave…

GERRY Just a glass of water, if I can.

JULIE Just water? Cos I'm having this…

GERRY Best not.

JULIE You haven't had that much.

GERRY We've had quite a bit.

JULIE No.

I thought you said you were off work tomorrow…?

GERRY I am.

JULIE Right then.

GERRY Really, not for me.

JULIE Spoilsport.

Exit **JULIE** *to the kitchen.*

GERRY *mooches. He takes his coat off – drapes it over a chair.*

He is drawn to the wall covered in mirrors.

Enter **JULIE** *with a glass of water.*

She catches **GERRY** *preening himself –.*

GERRY Busted.

JULIE Here.

GERRY This is different. Very unique.

I like it.

JULIE *doesn't look at the mirrors. She moves away, sits down.*

GERRY *doesn't notice, remains.*

Apparently women spend fifty-five minutes a day looking at themselves.

That's two weeks a year. Think of what more you could –

Oh, you've gone.

JULIE Can you smell something a bit off?

GERRY No.

JULIE Are you sure?

GERRY Yeah.

JULIE …

He joins her on the settee.

GERRY Cheers. Clink.

JULIE …

GERRY *(re the water)* Delicious.

JULIE It's just out the tap.

GERRY Right.

JULIE Do you want some more?

GERRY I'm fine, thanks.

Pause.

I took my coat off.

JULIE Ok.

GERRY I wasn't sure where to put it…

JULIE There's fine.

GERRY Have you been throwing a party? *(The platters)*

JULIE No.

GERRY You're not a silly sausage.

JULIE What?

GERRY Before. I don't know why I said it…

JULIE It's alright.

GERRY It happens. If I'm nervous. Blathering on…

JULIE It's fine.

GERRY …on and on and on, like a right pillock.

JULIE Yeah.

GERRY Yeah.

They kiss.

GERRY*'s hand edges under her dress – she moves it away. He tries again and she breaks away –.*

You alright?

JULIE Yeah. Fine. Great.

Kissing resumes.

He continues to try to undress her. She pulls away again –

GERRY What's wrong?

JULIE Nothing.

Nothing.

JULIE *jumps up and grabs a platter off the coffee table –.*

Clear this up. Not nice for you, stale vol-au-vents wherever you look…

JULIE *heads for the kitchen.*

GERRY *stands and retrieves his coat.*

What are you doing?

GERRY Going home.

JULIE Why?

GERRY I thought you asked me back to… I've obviously misunderstood.

He goes to the door.

JULIE Wait. Just… Let me nip upstairs.

GERRY No, I'm sorry.

He hesitates at the doorway –.

When you rang… Out of the blue, like that. I never thought you would ring. I was just plating up a pasta bake. I left it. Dropped everything. Because I thought… I really hoped. I'm sorry.

JULIE I can't be on my own, not tonight.

Please.

JULIE *pulls a couple of "chicken fillets" from her bra / she hoiks up her dress and pulls off a pair of ugly support pants.*

Maybe Bridget Jones can make them sexy, but not me.

GERRY Is that it?

JULIE It's embarrassing. Imagine if you had a sock in your boxers, I stuck my hand in and pulled it out.

GERRY I'd just be glad you had your hand in my boxers.

JULIE This is a clingy fabric. And the cut, it needs shape and I…

I wanted to look nice.

GERRY You look beautiful.

JULIE She never liked what I wear.

I think this would get approval, though. I thought today, for her, try and do something she wouldn't find fault with.

GERRY Let's start again.

JULIE What?

GERRY Clean slate. Come on.

GERRY *grabs her and pulls her outside –.*

JULIE Yes, but – Hang on, my –

He slams the front door closed behind them.

(Outside) My keys.

GERRY *(outside)* What?

JULIE *(outside)* My door keys. They're on the table.

GERRY *(outside)* Oh. Is there a window open? I could shimmy up the drainpipe.

JULIE *(outside)* No.

JULIE *starts ringing on the doorbell.*

GERRY *(outside)* Who's in?

JULIE *(outside)* Ruby.

GERRY *(outside)* Who's Ruby?

JULIE *leans on the bell – it rings unrelentingly.*

(Outside) Is she definitely in?

JULIE *(outside)* Yes.

GERRY *(outside)* Some people can sleep through all sorts. A gas works went up near my uncle, he slept right through.

JULIE *(outside)* She can hear me.

Enter **RUBY** *from upstairs.*

She wears a dressing gown over pyjamas. She wears an eye-patch (which she wears throughout the play).

RUBY Who is it?

JULIE *pokes the letterbox open – talks through it.*

JULIE *(outside)* It's me. Open this door.

RUBY *opens the door.*

Enter **JULIE** *and* **GERRY**.

GERRY Thank you. Ruby, is it? Sorry to get you up, my fault…

RUBY *exits upstairs, ignoring him.*

Nothing worse when you're happily snoozing in the land of nod.

Sorry.

GERRY *and* **JULIE** *remain, awkward – him in his coat, her holding her support pants.*

JULIE If you want to go. Try and salvage that pasta bake.

GERRY Do you want me to go?

JULIE It's up to you.

GERRY You say.

JULIE I'd like you to stay.

GERRY Really?

JULIE I just said, didn't I?

GERRY You're sure?

JULIE Yes.

Yes.

GERRY Ok then.

JULIE Ok. Good.

GERRY Good.

JULIE Good.

Scene Two

The same day – late morning.

RUBY *is sitting on the sofa in her dressing gown eating her breakfast. The telly is on – something loud and obnoxious.*

The food/drink leftovers from the day before remain.

Enter **JULIE** *from upstairs.*

JULIE Morning.

RUBY …

JULIE *finds the remote – reduces the volume.*

I'm watching that.

JULIE It's blasting.

Exit **JULIE** *to the kitchen. She calls through to* **RUBY** *(who has turned the telly volume back up) –.*

What do you do in here? How is it possible to make toasting a slice of bread a cataclysmic event?

Ruby.

Ruby.

RUBY I can hear you.

JULIE Good. And stop putting empty milk cartons back in the fucking fridge.

JULIE *returns with a glass of water.*

She turns the telly back down.

Oi.

RUBY Yes.

JULIE *(re the platters/bottles)* You could have made a start chucking these.

RUBY The bin's full.

JULIE Put them out then.

RUBY Green bin's full too.

JULIE That smell is definitely getting worse…rotteny. Comes and goes.

RUBY It'll be this lot. *(She sniffs at the platters)*

JULIE *(pointedly)* I'll get some bin bags then, shall I? Make a start?

RUBY You bought it all, not me.

Exit **JULIE** *to the kitchen.*

(Mimicking **JULIE***)* "We have to put a spread on. There's always a spread, people will want feeding".

RUBY *ups the telly volume louder still.*

Enter **JULIE** *with bin bags. She sets about clearing up.*

JULIE *(re the bottles of booze)* We'll keep all the spirits and anything unopened.

RUBY Sorry what? I can't hear you, the telly's quite loud.

JULIE *wrestles the remote from her and turns the telly off.*

RUBY *watches* **JULIE** *tidy –.*

Good night?

JULIE There was me panicking we wouldn't have enough food.

RUBY It took me ages to realise you'd gone.

JULIE What a waste.

RUBY What time did you leave?

Julie.

JULIE I'm not sure. It was down to the last few.

RUBY I didn't top up any glasses or walk round with trays of nibbles.

JULIE I never imagined you would.

RUBY They were all staring at me, whispering.

JULIE No they weren't.

(Re the bottles) Can you go and pour these out please.

RUBY I went up to my room and stayed there.

JULIE Best thing.

RUBY So where is the poor sod?

Did he peel himself off your stinking sheets and leg it first thing?

Or maybe you've killed him and eaten him like one of them spiders?

Exit **JULIE** *to the kitchen.*

RUBY *pulls* **JULIE***'s black dress from the night before out from under a settee cushion.*

She's not even cold, Julie.

Enter **JULIE**. *She clocks the dress –.*

She's not even cold.

JULIE Give it here.

RUBY You looked so prim and proper in it at the service, who would believe it.

He's ruined it. It's definitely going to stain.

JULIE *snatches the dress off her and exits upstairs.*

(Shouting after her) You're upset over a few crumbs in the kitchen, but you'll happily let him shoot his load all over you.

We hear a fumble of keys in the front door from outside. The front door opens.

Julie! Julie!

Panicked, **RUBY** *bolts to the door – slams it closed.*

GERRY *(outside)* Oouf.

RUBY Who is it?

GERRY *(outside)* It's me.

RUBY Oh well, in that case…

GERRY *(outside)* Gerry.

From last night.

RUBY *tentatively opens the door.*

GERRY*'s wearing the same clothes from the night before. He's clutching his nose and carrying a plastic bag containing provisions.*

Hiya.

He enters and moves across to the mirrors – examines his face for damage.

RUBY One shag and she's giving you keys to the place.

GERRY I took them off the table.

RUBY How very presumptuous of you.

GERRY No-one was up, I didn't want to leave the place standing open.

I'm sorry if I gave you a fright.

RUBY You didn't.

GERRY *(re his nose/face)* I think it's ok. No uglier than before, eh.

RUBY …

GERRY *(re mirrors)* I hope your missing one didn't get broken.

RUBY It did, actually.

GERRY Oh dear. Seven years bad luck.

Unless you bury the pieces, apparently. Under a tree during a full moon.

Or grind them to dust. Apparently.

RUBY Julie swept them up and put them in the bin.

GERRY Wrapped in newspaper I hope.

RUBY …

GERRY I was just saying to your…erm…to Julie last night, I like it –

RUBY Yeah?

GERRY That seventies looking one – I think we had that in our house growing up.

RUBY That one's charity shop. That one's quite recent, IKEA. That one Mam found in a skip when someone down the street was getting their garage done.

GERRY Why mirrors?

RUBY Why not? Some people collect stamps, Mam likes mirrors. She says "we should always be able to look ourselves in the eye".

GERRY Good advice.

Silence. Eventually –.

It's just the two of you living here, then, is it?

RUBY Yes.

GERRY No brothers or sisters?

Enter **JULIE** *from upstairs. She is not expecting to see* **GERRY** *back.*

JULIE Oh. Hello.

GERRY Morning.

RUBY He's back.

JULIE So I see.

GERRY Like a bad penny.

It's ok, isn't it?

RUBY Course.

GERRY I don't come empty handed.

Milk, I saw you were running low. Bread, eggs –

JULIE You didn't have to.

GERRY Happy to.

Beans –

RUBY Uh-oh.

GERRY No?

RUBY She finds them sinister.

JULIE It's something about the texture.

GERRY Noted.

RUBY This is so generous. Isn't it Julie, so generous.

JULIE Yes, thank you…erm… I'm sure I can rustle us something up. Do you want a cuppa?

RUBY Yes please.

JULIE Not you.

(To **GERRY***)* Tea or coffee?

RUBY Tea please.

JULIE I'm not asking you, I'm asking… *(But she can't remember his name)*

GERRY Gerry.

JULIE Gerry.

I'll put this away, shall I. *(The shopping)*

Was it tea or coffee?

GERRY Tea.

Exit **JULIE** *to the kitchen.*

RUBY Please. Take the weight off.

They sit.

Did you manage to avoid the dog shit on the doorstep?

GERRY I hope so.

RUBY It's a bastard terrier from the top of the street. We think it's been trained to empty its bowels outside our house.

GERRY *(checks his shoes)* All clear.

Enter **JULIE**. *She tidies some more.*

JULIE Kettle's just boiling.

RUBY I was just telling Gerry about the dog. Angelic little face, toxic arse.

JULIE Nice.

RUBY If you will leave me making small talk with your sexual conquests.

GERRY *(re* **JULIE** *tidying)* Can I help you with that?

JULIE It's fine.

GERRY I thought we could go for a walk later.

You too of course, Ruby, if you'd like.

RUBY No thanks.

GERRY It's a lovely day.

RUBY And?

GERRY Ok. Well, maybe us two. The beach maybe? It must be nice having it so close.

JULIE No.

GERRY No the beach or no the walk?

JULIE Let's just see how we feel later on.

RUBY She'll let you thrash her gash all night, but going for a walk with you…that needs some serious thought.

JULIE Sorry.

GERRY Your… *(He gestures to her patch/cheek)*

RUBY What?

GERRY You've got something…it's seeping.

RUBY *goes to the mirrors.*

JULIE Is it hurting?

RUBY No.

JULIE Don't wipe it on your sleeve. That's why it gets infected.

Have you been putting the lotion on?

RUBY Yes.

Get it for me, then. It's in the bathroom.

Exit **JULIE** *upstairs.*

GERRY It is a stye? My brother gets styes.

RUBY …

GERRY Warm water compress, stops it crusting over.

RUBY Yeah?

GERRY With a vinegar soak. We swear by them in our family.

RUBY If you've got experience, Gerry…could you look at it for me?

GERRY Of course.

RUBY It started off going really red, and then –

She lifts the patch up right in his face, just a flash.

JULIE *returns with cotton wool pads/lotion in time to see this.*

Gone!

GERRY Jesus Christ.

JULIE For fuck's sake, Ruby.

RUBY A vinegar soak'll make it grow back, yeah?

JULIE Apologise.

RUBY No.

GERRY No, please. It was my fault. I got a fright. Sorry.

JULIE What are you playing at?

RUBY He thinks you're my mother.

JULIE What?

RUBY You do, don't you.

GERRY I just… I wasn't sure if…

RUBY We're sisters.

GERRY Right.

RUBY She's staggeringly older than me.

GERRY It's fine. I mean… I wouldn't have minded. How can I? I'm a dad myself.

RUBY Aw, really?

GERRY Matty. He's seven.

RUBY You alright, Julie?

JULIE Fine.

RUBY *(to* **JULIE***)* You look a bit sick.

GERRY He's a great lad.

RUBY Is he?

GERRY Do you want to see a photo?

RUBY Yes.

JULIE No.

GERRY His mum and I… I mean, we're not… I'm not running around behind her back here or anything.

RUBY I'd hope not.

GERRY We had a good run. Ten years, you think you're home and dry but…

Paula's great, a great mum. She's got twins on the way with her new fella.

But Matty, he's a special boy, he needs more looking after, more love. We meet his parenting needs better if we're apart.

RUBY You talk like a self-help manual, Gerry.

GERRY Do I?

RUBY It's either brilliant or horrific. I'm yet to decide.

GERRY Ok.

RUBY Julie's husband's called Matthew. He's a big bruiser, you might want to start running now.

JULIE Ex-husband. Very ex. Thank God.

RUBY Isn't it tacky when exes don't get on.

GERRY Everyone's relationship is different. Unless there's children involved, and then, well…

Did you and Matthew –?

JULIE No.

That kettle will be boiled. How do you have it?

GERRY Milk, half a sugar.

Exit **JULIE** *to the kitchen.*

RUBY How's your Paula going to feel about this one, eh? Although, twins, it doesn't sound like she's pining after you.

GERRY We wish each other every happiness.

Enter **JULIE.**

JULIE *(to* **GERRY***)* Do you want a biscuit?

GERRY Lovely.

Exit **JULIE** *to the kitchen.*

RUBY I knew you were called Gerry.

GERRY Sorry?

Enter **JULIE** *with tea things and biscuits.*

She invites **GERRY** *to sit with her at the dining table.* **RUBY** *remains on the settee.*

RUBY Before. When Suzy Slut here couldn't even remember your name, I knew.

JULIE Enough.

Ignore her. I'm not good with names.

RUBY Cocks, though. She's good with cocks.

JULIE Shut up.

Sugar?

RUBY I knew from what she was heavy-breathing through the wall last night that it was either "Gerry" or "Big Boy".

JULIE I never called you "Big Boy".

RUBY That's you told, eh Jezza.

Honestly, though, I'm mortified. Coming staggering home with some random she meets in a bar. No offence.

I had no idea this is how she goes on.

JULIE Biscuit?

RUBY I don't see her very much, you see.

GERRY Delicious.

RUBY She lives down the country, did she tell you that?

GERRY No.

RUBY Did the accent not give it away? Dumped it like she dumped us.

She's not stopping. Been here the best part of a month, still barely unpacked her suitcase.

GERRY How long are you staying for?

JULIE I'm not sure at the moment.

RUBY She never visits. But here she is, dragged back to the house she grew up in.

And now, screwing strange men in her childhood bedroom. Did the Holly Hobbie wallpaper not put you off your stroke? Or maybe you enjoyed it.

JULIE Right, that's it. Get upstairs, now.

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