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SF PERUSALS

# CACOPHONY

by Molly Taylor

SAMUEL FRENCH

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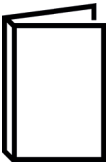
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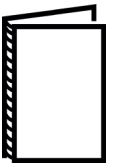
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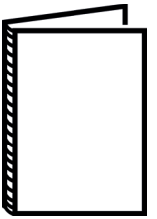
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Other notable productions have included *American Psycho: a new musical thriller* (transferred to Broadway); *Chimerica* (won three Olivier Awards and transferred to the West End); *King Charles III* (won the Olivier Award for Best New Play and transferred to the West End and Broadway, toured the UK and Sydney, and was adapted into a BAFTA-nominated TV drama); and *Oresteia* (transferred to the West End and won the Olivier Award for Best Director).



Matthew Needham and Patsy Ferran in *Summer and Smoke* by Tennessee Williams, directed by Rebecca Frecknall at the Almeida Theatre (2018)
Photo by Marc Brenner

Artistic Director **Rupert Goold**
Executive Director **Denise Wood**
Associate Directors **Robert Icke, Rebecca Frecknall**

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## MORE INFORMATION

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Almeida Participation is incredibly grateful to all our supporters, Trusts and Foundations, individuals and companies who have supported our work in 2017/18.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Molly Taylor is a playwright and theatre-maker, based in London.

She began making work when she was an Associate of the National Theatre of Scotland. Her first production, *Love Letters to the Public Transport System*, toured Scotland in 2012 and won the Critics' Circle Award, Adelaide Fringe 2018. Her most recent production, *Extinguished Things*, had a sell-out run at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2018, and won the Holden Street Theatre Award.

She works extensively in the participatory sector, making work with professional and non-professional performers. Recently she has made work for the Bush Theatre, the Young Vic, and VAULT Festival. She is currently working on projects with The BRIT School and The Yard.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

The play is set in the present day.

The world of the play exists in a liminal 'nowhere' space, where characters are trying to piece their memories together. Their versions of past events spring into life. Sometimes the liminal world and memories / reconstructions blur into one another.

The space should therefore have an ethereal quality, with minimal props, and avoid aiming for naturalism.

The staging is flexible; the original production was staged in the round, with cast members seated amongst the audience at the top of the show. The 2019 production was staged end-on.

Multi-role playing of smaller parts is advised, but those characters closest to Abi (friends, family & Seb) should be played by actors that don't multi-role. The character of Tash is present through most of the play, directly involved or silently observing, so it's key that the actor doesn't play more than one part.

A slash in the text ( / ) indicates overlapping dialogue. A dash (–) indicates interruption.

## CREATIVE LIST

### MICHAEL BRYHER

Michael Bryher is a theatre-maker, director and facilitator. He trained at LAMDA and has worked as an actor for companies including Kneehigh, The RSC, and dreamthinkspeak. In 2013 he was a finalist for the JMK award. He also runs Dumbshow, and over the last seven years has toured his work nationally and internationally. He has recently edited a volume of audition monologues for young people for Nick Hern Books, and created the Christmas show for the Nuffield Theatre Southampton in 2018.

### KHADIJA RAZA

Khadija Raza studied BA Design for Stage at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and was winner of the Linbury Prize 2017 for the Unicorn Theatre, and Stage Debut Award for best designer, 2018. Previous credits include; as designer: *Elephant in the Room* – R&D (Camden People's Theatre), *Cacophony* and *Loki & Cassie: A Love Story* (Almeida Theatre Young Company), *Spun* (Arcola Theatre), *No One Is Coming To Save You* (Bunker Theatre and Edinbrugh Fringe), *MIXTAPE* (Royal Exchange Theatre), *Hijabi Monologues* (Bush Theatre), *I Want You To Admire Me/But You Shouldn't* (Camden People's Theatre), *From Morning to Midnight* (Webber Douglas Studio) and as assistant: *The Unknown Island* (Gate Theatre), *L'heure Espagnole* and *Gianni Schicci* (Opera Nationale de Lorraine).

## GERMMA ORLEANS-THOMPSON

Germma Orleans-Thompson is a theatre-maker and producer. She graduated from the Drama and Theatre Studies BA at the University of Kent in 2017 and moved to London two months later to become the Participation Intern at the Almeida Theatre from 2017-2018. As a freelance producer, she has worked on *You Must Learn To Understand* (Almeida Theatre, Battersea Arts Centre). She is the co-founder of Sculptress Theatre Company, a duo who break boundaries by creating work that is not judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their hearts. Sculptress Theatre is a Creative Talent company, funded by Creative Youth.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This play was developed live in rehearsals with the members of the 2017/18 Almeida Young Company (19-25); it benefitted from a collective consciousness, with countless important perspectives. Thanks to the original actors for being vigorous and generous, and pointing me in the right direction when I was missing a trick.

Thanks too to Almeida Participation; Dani Parr, Ross Crosby, and Germma Orleans-Thompson, for putting your support and weight behind this production.

We're extremely grateful to Jon Ronson, whose book *So You've Been Publicly Shamed* acted as our starting point, and gave us such huge scope for research. Thanks for giving us an insight into your process and storytelling.

The most gratitude goes to Michael Bryher, who not only developed the story, but whose fearless direction made this piece suddenly click into something more than the sum of its parts. He chipped and chiselled away at this play until it worked, and it made me a better writer. Thank you Mike.

## FIRST PERFORMANCE

*Cacophony* was first performed at the Almeida Theatre
26-28 July 2018 with the following cast:

Abi – **Annie Hawkins**
Cookie – **Tiwalade Ibirogba Olulode**
Tash – **Helena Morais**
Tolu – **Eddie Boyce-Rodgers**
Tobias – **Ben Quashie**
Will – **Corey Peterson**
Daisy – **Charlie Dylan**
Rosa – **Hannah Donelon**
Joanna – **Lucy Shafi**
Seb – **David Bankole**
March Organiser 1 – **Ashley Rose**
Iggy/Reluctant Friend/Headteacher/Paparazzi – **Tim Dennett**
Stacey/Enthusiastic Protestor/Bystander
– **Lauren McGarvey**
Publicist/March Organiser 2 – **Khanyiso Mtwana**
March Organiser 3/Fan – **Lao Lee**
Rum and Coke/Volunteer/Radio Presenter
– **Simeon Blake-Hall**
Journalist/Father – **Samson Cox-Vinell**

## CREATIVE TEAM

Story developed by Molly Taylor and Michael Bryher
Created with the Almeida Young Company

Writer Molly Taylor
Director Michael Bryher
Designer Khadija Raza
Sound Designer George Lumkin
Lighting Designer Katie Nicoll
Movement Direction Edd Mitton
Assistant Director Germma Orleans-Thompson
Producer Ross Crosby

*Cacophony* opened at The Yard Theatre on
19th February–22 February 2019 with the following cast:

Abi – **Annie Hawkins**
Cookie – **Tiwalade Ibirogba Oluode**
Tash – **Helena Morais**
Tolu – **Sonny Poon Tip**
Tobias – **Ben Quashie**
Will – **Corey Peterson**
Daisy – **Charlie Dylan**
Rosa – **Lauren McGarvery**
Joanna – **Lucy Shafi**
Seb – **David Bankole**
March Organiser 1 – **Ashley Rose**
Iggy/Reluctant Friend/Headteacher/Paparazzi – **Tim Dennett**
Stacey/Mother/Bystander – **Bridget Rudder**
March Organiser 2/Fan – **Caroline Elms**
March Organiser 3/Publicist – **Sasha Venmore Rowland**
Rum and Coke/Volunteer/Radio Presenter – **James Bullen**
Journalist/Enthusiastic Protestor – **Adam Hasyim Cranfield**

*To Sam, with love.*

## CHARACTERS

**ABI** – A woman in her early 20s

**COOKIE**
**TASH**
**TOLU**
**TOBIAS**
**WILL**
**STACEY**
**IGGY**
} Abi's friends and flatmates

**SEB** – Abi's boyfriend

**JOANNA**
**DAISY**
} Abi's siblings

**MO 1**
**MO 2**
**MO 3**
} March organisers

**ROSA** – A woman in her 30s

**PUBLICIST**
**PAPARAZZI**
**JOURNALIST**
**RADIO PRESENTER**
**HEADTEACHER**
**BYSTANDER**
**FAN**
**VOLUNTEER**
**RUM AND COKE**
**FATHER**

## Scene One – Where did it begin?

*The cast are sat amongst the audience, in the round. The floor is a shiny reflective black, an oil slick that has cleared everything in its path. The space is empty, a hollow gap where* **ABI** *should be.*

**COOKIE** *enters the space, and places a chair centre stage.* **TASH** *joins her.*

**TASH** I need you to take me through it. How did it happen... can we go back? When was the last time you saw her?

*Everyone is trying to identify when, but no one answers.*

**COOKIE** She was wearing that blue oversized hoodie she used to wear.

**TOLU** With the coffee stain on the sleeve.

**COOKIE** Yeah. She was coming out of the flat.

**TOBIAS** No, that was a photo.

**COOKIE** Was it?

**TOBIAS** Yeah.

**TOLU** She's looking at the camera, with her hair scraped back.

**TASH** I've seen that photo in the paper.

**TOLU** She's on her own.

**TASH** Yeah.

**JOANNA** She looked tired.

**DAISY** She'd been round to see us, hadn't she?

**JOANNA** Yeah.

**SEB** She was standing in my bedroom. Not saying anything.

**TASH** But when did it start?

*Beat.*

**COOKIE** I reckon it started back when we were about thirteen or fourteen. PSHE. Remember?

*Cast members sweep into the space and recreate the school scene with their chairs.* **ABI***'s remains empty.*

We had been campaigning to get rid of the school skirts, protesting for weeks, rolling them up round our arses to make a point.

**ROSA***, on a chair, twigs.*

**ROSA** Hang on, this was all a long time before I ever met Abi. So I shouldn't be here.

*She leaves the space.*

**COOKIE** Abi's parents had a printer, remember Tash, and we went round to hers to print out the posters?

**TASH** Yeah. But that's too far back.

*Chairs are cleared by actors who go back to their positions amongst the audience.*

**SEB** *is alone with the empty chair.*

**SEB** For me it was the second night we spent together. She was tired and restless and all of a sudden she asked if she could use my laptop and started typing away. I watched her.

**TASH** At what point?

**SEB** That was the day after.

**MO 1** Oh right, well we weren't about yet.

**JOURNALIST** Me neither.

**RADIO PRESENTER** I hadn't met her yet.

**PAPARAZZI** Nah.

**JOANNA** *and* **DAISY** *suddenly in the space.*

**JOANNA** For us it started a long time before any of this. When we were kids.

**DAISY** Yeah, she used to play hide and seek with me, but she was too good at hiding.

**JOANNA** Yeah you used to come in crying, saying you'd lost her.

**TASH** *trying to make sense.*

**TASH** Yeah – but. I can't. Can we go back to the BBQ? That's the last thing I remember.

**DAISY** We weren't there, were we?

**DAISY** *and* **JOANNA** *gone.*

**TOLU, WILL, TOBIAS, STACEY, COOKIE, IGGY** *in the space.*

**TASH** It was Tolu's birthday.

**TOLU** Guys, this is Stacey.

**STACEY** Am I going out with you at this point?

**TOLU** Yeah.

**TOBIAS** You weren't sitting there.

**IGGY** No, Abi was sitting there.

*The chair becomes empty, waiting for her.*

**COOKIE** *(to* **TOBIAS***)* You were upstairs.

**TOBIAS** Was I?

**TOBIAS** *out of the space.*

**WILL** Anyone thought about offering me a drink?

**TOLU** You live here mate, you can get your own.

**WILL** Fine.

**TASH** Yes. Yes, I remember this.

**ABI** *somehow in the in-between space, they are back to where it all began.*

*(to* **ABI***)* Abi, is this going to be OK?

**ABI** What do you mean?

**TASH** It's just. It's good to see you.

**ABI** Why are you being weird?

## Scene Two – BBQ party

*The garden of* **ABI***'s flat, a BBQ to celebrate* **TOLU***'s birthday. Music coming from the kitchen, a stream of people who enter, drink, go back into the house. Friday night crackle. Shit bottled beers. People talking over each other and zoning into other conversations. Some of the party are well acquainted, some less so.* **TOLU** *is looking after his new girlfriend.*

**COOKIE** He's been acquitted.

**TASH** Has he??

**ABI** Yeah.

**TASH** You are kidding.

**WILL** Who?

**ABI** Mark Rendell – that QPR player.

**WILL** What you talking about?

**COOKIE** The rape trial?

**TASH** Got no respect for a system that is entirely rigged against listening to women.

**WILL** I hear you sista!

**TASH** Why should we have any respect for justice when – sorry – are you taking the piss?

**WILL** Yeah.

**ABI** Seven men on the jury. Just saying.

**COOKIE** You've got to name that shit. Name it.

**TASH** God this is so depressing *(checking the story on her phone).*

**IGGY** *enters.*

**IGGY** Does anyone want anything for tonight? I'm gonna call him now.

**ABI** Ah yeah maybe.

**COOKIE** No thanks.

**TOLU** *(to* **IGGY***)* Yes mate.

**WILL** Is it a proper night?

**ABI** Might be.

**WILL** Come on then!

**IGGY** *on the phone.*

**TOLU** *introducing* **STACEY.**

**TOLU** Guys, this is Stacey – Stacey – everyone.

*They greet her hello.*

**COOKIE** Hey.

**STACEY** No, hi, yeah, nice flat, cute garden, it's sweet.

**COOKIE** I don't actually live here – these guys do –

**TOLU** She squats.

**STACEY** Do you for real?

**TOLU** No.

**COOKIE** I'm just waiting for Tobias to move out. Then I'm in.

**TOLU** Can we make that happen?

**WILL** Here you go darling.

**TASH** *(consulting her phone)* So the march outside the court tomorrow –

**ABI** Yeah.

**TASH** Are we all up for it?

**COOKIE** Definitely. Walk the hangover off.

**TASH** Nice one.

**TOLU** Stacey's just about to go hiking in Kilimanjaro, aren't you Stace?

**STACEY** Yeah. A charity thing.

**TASH** That's cool.

**ABI** Hey – was it your interview this morning?

**TASH** Yeah. Went well.

**COOKIE** Yeah?

**TASH** I have a horrible feeling they are going to offer it to me. I was hearing myself answering the questions and I was like – why are you being so enthusiastic?

**COOKIE** It's hard in an interview though.

**TASH** Hopefully they saw through it.

**ABI** Fingers crossed.

**WILL** Just do it for a bit and then leave.

**TASH** I can't be arsed, I want a straight no.

**TOBIAS** *enters, a bit flustered.*

**TOBIAS** Who's responsible for the girl on my bed?

**COOKIE** Who is it?

**TOBIAS** Not a clue.

**IGGY** *(faux shock-horror)* Shit! Did she get past the sign?

**TOBIAS** Yeah.

**ABI** What sign?

**TOBIAS** 'DO NOT ENTER'.

**ABI** Jokes.

**TOBIAS** Anyone she belong to?

**ABI** No idea who she is.

**TOBIAS** Fuck's sake.

**WILL** What she look like?

**TOBIAS** Dunno, she's face down. Blue hair at the ends.

**IGGY** Ah. Cheyanne. That's Cheyanne.

**TOBIAS** Well do you want to get her off my bed?

**IGGY** Not particularly.

**TOLU** She's just having a disco nap, leave her.

**TOBIAS** I did say, guys, I did say if we were having a party then I wanted my room out-of-bounds.

**TOLU** You did say that, you did. He said that, didn't he?

**ABI** He did. You did say that, Tobes.

**TOLU** We'll all be out of here soon anyway, so just leave her for now.

**ABI** We'll get rid of her when we go.

**COOKIE** What's up with her?

**TOBIAS** She's wrecked.

**COOKIE** Shame.

**TOBIAS** I really don't want some stranger conked out on my bed, OK? If I'm going to go to bed.

**WILL** You wouldn't be strangers then though, would you?

**ABI** You not coming out, Tobes?

**TOBIAS** Dunno.

**ABI** You are! You have to come out.

**TOLU** It's my birthday!

**ABI** It's his birthday!

**TOBIAS** I know, I'm celebrating it now, aren't I?

**ABI** Are you?? Come on, come and sit here and have a drink with us.

**STACEY** I can go and check if you like.

**TOLU** She'll be fine.

**STACEY** I'm quite good with drunk people. I can get through to them.

**IGGY** You're actually *not allowed* to enter his room, Stacey.

**TOLU** True.

**TOBIAS** *goes back to deal with the problem.* **TASH** *still consulting her phone.*

**TASH** Have you read all these WhatsApp messages from Mark Rendell's phone?

**COOKIE** From the trial?

**TASH** Unbelievable.

**ABI** What do they say?

**TASH** Read. *(Hands her phone over)*

**COOKIE** That he can be acquitted with that evidence.

**IGGY** What messages?

**TASH** Vile and quite incriminating stuff about the girl, that he sent the following day.

**WILL** Is it?

**COOKIE** They're disgusting.

**IGGY, WILL** *and* **STACEY** *intermittently look, along with* **ABI.**

**STACEY** That doesn't mean he raped her.

**COOKIE** Have you read them?

**TASH** It looks very much like Mark Rendell is a rapist.

**TOLU** So what's the plan then, guys? Is your guy coming here?

**IGGY** Yeah.

**COOKIE** If you stack up that evidence then you've got a really compelling case for a man who is using his power to sexually subordinate women.

**STACEY** Or you've got some guy with shit WhatsApp banter.

**WILL** Don't get me wrong – he does sound like a dick.

**STACEY** Being a dick doesn't make him a rapist.

**WILL** Exactly.

**ABI** Yeah but –

**WILL** But, like, beyond reasonable doubt. There is reasonable doubt. Does he deserve a jail sentence?

**COOKIE** He deserves a lobotomy.

**TASH** Is the plan to meet at the court then, what time?

**ABI** Ten? Half ten?

**STACEY** If he's been acquitted, what's the march for?

**COOKIE** It's for us, Stacey, it's for us.

**STACEY** Are you personally invested?

**COOKIE** What?

**STACEY** No, I'm just asking.

**COOKIE** Yes, I'm definitely 'personally invested'.

**STACEY** Oh OK.

**COOKIE** Some dickhead footballer with all that money and all that power and everything that comes with it –

**WILL** He plays for QPR!

**COOKIE** Oh right!

**ABI** What has that got to do with it?

**TASH** He's only a lower league rapist, Abi.

**ABI** Oh. Right. Fine then.

**WILL** He's not a rapist!

**COOKIE** His whole career is about being held up as an untouchable thing – untouchable.

**WILL** He's been acquitted!

**COOKIE** That's not the point!

**WILL** Jury of public opinion, is it?

**TOLU** Anyone need anything?

**STACEY** I'm not quite sure what the point is, to be honest.

**TOLU** Top up? Anyone?

**TASH** Just because he's been acquitted doesn't mean it ceases to be an issue, and you shouldn't be so fixated on the acquittal because the system in the first instance is at fault.

**WILL** I'm not fixated on it, it's just a fact.

**COOKIE** Do you have complete trust in the court system?

**STACEY** *gets up and wanders inside.*

**TOLU** Guys, not being funny, I'm all up for debate but it's my birthday –

**ABI** *(to* **IGGY***)* Did you get the –

**IGGY** All done, on its way.

**TOLU** And I'm trying to get laid here so...less rapey maybe?

**WILL** It won't happen for you tonight, mate.

**TOLU** What?

**WILL** It's jam sandwich time.

**ABI** Will!

**WILL** I can smell it.

**TOLU** You're fucking disgusting.

**TOBIAS** *enters, fuming.*

**TOBIAS** She's been sick next to my bin.

**IGGY** Shit.

**TOBIAS** Not *in* my bin. Right next to my bin. Still passed out.

**COOKIE** Look, we'll help clean up.

**TOLU** Not now we won't, we need to be making a move –

**ABI** Take her up some water. Look, I'll come up.

**ABI** *and* **TOBIAS** *exit.*

**IGGY** *has been studying the phone and the WhatsApp messages.*

**IGGY** Some women like to be degraded.

*Pause.*

**COOKIE** What?

**IGGY** I'm not saying he's innocent, I'm just saying.

**STACEY** Well if they want to be degraded then that's fine, but don't go round the next day saying you've been raped.

**WILL** The point is, there wasn't enough proof to convict.

**TOLU** Are we getting the bus or an Uber?

**IGGY** Saying that, I think he did it.

**WILL** They sent WhatsApp messages and that does not make them rapists –

**TOLU** Guys are we getting an Uber or what?

**WILL** That's what the court is there for.

**TOLU** *(to himself)* Yes, Uber, thanks Tolu.

**ABI** *and* **STACEY** *re-enter.*

**ABI** Cheyanne is out of it.

**COOKIE** But the court is failing these women.

**TASH** Look, I know it's complicated –

**WILL** It's over.

**TASH** But –

**COOKIE** It is to you.

**WILL** No, it just is, Cookie!

**STACEY** I don't know enough about the trial, to be honest –

**TOLU** Can we just –

**ABI** I can believe that what he thought was consensual wasn't.

**TASH** Yes, and that's what's scary.

**COOKIE** That doesn't make him innocent!

**WILL** I'm just saying –

**COOKIE** Go on, what?

**WILL** I'm just saying that those –

**COOKIE** Say it.

**WILL** I'm going to, I'm just –

**COOKIE** Say it, you've got the floor – say it. I'm intrigued.

**WILL** I'm trying!

**STACEY** Shut up, Cookie, let him speak.

**WILL** There's so many people jumping on the bandwagon because it's topical.

**COOKIE** It's not topical, Will, it's the opposite of topical! It's fucking old, mate, it's ancient.

**TOLU** Uber is four minutes away –

**STACEY** Did you just get the one? We need two.

**COOKIE** It's not a fucking bandwagon.

**TOLU** Anyone got Uber on their phone?

**ABI** I have.

**TOLU** Drink up, everyone!

**TASH** The point is, Will, just listen – what is happening when a man can rape a woman and he doesn't realise he's raping her?

**WILL** He didn't!

**COOKIE** Fuck's sake.

**WILL** Listen, listen yeah – sorry but – going back to your interview, yeah. All the signs are there that you want it, but you're claiming you don't want it – even though that's not what you're saying to them. Am I right though? Am I right? Can you see this, yeah?

*He has scored a goal.*

**ABI** Fuck off, Will.

**TOBIAS** *returns.*

**TOBIAS** No moving her.

**IGGY** What?

**TOBIAS** No. Tried shaking her.

**COOKIE** Don't.

**TOBIAS** She's paralytic –

**COOKIE** Doesn't matter, don't touch her.

**ABI** Guys, that's the other Uber booked.

**TOLU** Who is coming in the first one?

**STACEY** Me.

**IGGY** Me too.

**WILL** She's on his bed, how is he supposed to not touch her??

**ABI** Cookie, get your stuff –

**WILL** He's just trying to wake her up!

**COOKIE** I know what he's trying to do, I'm just giving him some advice!

**TOLU** *(to* **TASH***)* Are you coming with us?

**TASH** I might give it a miss, you know.

**ABI** No, you have to come!

**TOLU** I'm calling time! It's here, come on!

**COOKIE** I'm coming. *(To* **TASH***)* You staying?

**TASH** Yeah.

**ABI** You sure?

**TASH** Yeah, I'm knackered.

**TOLU** Move people!

**ABI** But I'll see you tomorrow? At the march.

**TASH** Definitely.

**ABI** OK, good, love you.

**COOKIE** Meet you outside the court?

**TASH** Yeah.

**COOKIE** Half ten. Don't be late.

**TASH** It's not me that's going out!

**ABI** *(to* **TASH***)* Don't clean up the sick.

*They say goodbyes speedily and exit.*

## Scene Three – Night out

*The world of the previous scene blends into this; the people at the BBQ become bodies on a dancefloor and it morphs directly into the world of the club night, like everyone in the place has the same pulse.*

*The DJ booth is unseen, but every so often avid dancers direct their energy to it, as if conversing silently with the DJ, fully-focused.*

*Someone passes a bottle of water to a mate, that person takes it, opens it, swigs it, and pours a bit over their head. Their friend wipes the water off their face, laughing.*

*Someone is properly fucked – or in a trance; stood, barely half-bouncing to the beat, feet planted. They stay upright, every so often pumping their fist in time to the music for a moment. As solid as a totem.*

*Someone asks a friend 'You feeling anything yet?'*

*Someone arrives with their hands straining around three or four rum and cokes, thrilled by their own offering – as if bringing a birthday cake to a table, as if they are the saviour of the party. Majestic. No one has ordered rum and coke. Someone takes one off him to be polite. Other people wave him away. He offers one to a passing girl he doesn't know –* **ABI** *– who takes it.*

**ABI** For me?

**RUM AND COKE** Why not?

**ABI** Cheers! *(They clink glasses, she drinks, winces)*

*He celebrates as if he's just crossed a finish line.*

**RUM AND COKE** What's your name?

**ABI** Abi.

**RUM AND COKE** Amy?

**ABI** Abi!

**RUM AND COKE** I can't hear you!

**ABI** Who cares? Thanks for the drink *(she holds it aloft)*

**RUM AND COKE** What?

**ABI** The drink?

**RUM AND COKE** *(gesturing to his own)* No, I've got one!

*She gives him a thumbs up. She's ready to move on. He's not. He's found a friend.*

*Someone is hugging their friend and saying 'I think you're probably the most amazing person in my life, no honestly, every day at work I just think I wish I could do what you do.'*

*A beat drops, the crowd roar. The DJ gets a lot of love.*

*Someone is instructing a friend 'Just keep an eye on her tonight, she normally doesn't take stuff.' The friend is nodding vigorously and going 'Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah, I've got my eyes on her yeah.' S/he then goes to the person in question and says 'You OK, yeah, you're OK, come here' and embraces them.*

**RUM AND COKE** *is dancing to where* **ABI** *is, like she is the north star.*

*A friend to* **ABI** *'I'm fucked, I think I'm gonna go home.'* **ABI** *pleads 'nooooooooo!'*

*Bottles of water pass between people. Random acts of kindness. Glowsticks.*

*Someone is putting glitter on someone's face.*

*Someone's rucksack isn't zipped up properly.*

*Someone fucking loves this track.*

*Someone has lost an earring. Everyone is involved. People scouring the floor, addicted to helping, eyes everywhere 'What are we looking for??'*

**RUM AND COKE** *is trying to engage* **ABI** *in more shit chat. She is polite. He tries to grab her hands as if to dance with her, but it looks so out of place. She's embarrassed for him.*

*His friend –* **SEB** *– has been watching.* **ABI** *wriggles away from* **RUM AND COKE.**

**SEB** You OK?

**ABI** Yeah.

**SEB** He bothering you?

**ABI** Bit intense.

**SEB** He's harmless. Clueless.

**RUM AND COKE** *trying to dance to where they are,* **SEB** *mimes throwing a bone to a dog – there, there boy, fetch! As if to say – you've had a go now piss off.* **RUM AND COKE** *gives him the finger, but friendly.*

**RUM AND COKE** You wankerrrrrrrr.

**SEB** I fucking love you mate.

**RUM AND COKE** I love your fucking…mum.

*He reacts as if this is the finest punchline ever, a blaze of glory. He gestures to* **SEB**, *but talks to* **ABI.**

He's got crabs.

**SEB** I have.

**ABI** S'OK, I'm a cancer. I like crabs.

**RUM AND COKE** *(to* **SEB***)* She's got fucking cancer man.

**RUM AND COKE** *hugs* **ABI** *as if she's terminally ill, a dying Madonna.*

You're so fucking brave.

**SEB** Go and get me a drink.

**RUM AND COKE** *gestures 'drinks for everyone.'*

**SEB** *and* **ABI** *dance, gaze, dance, gaze. Giggle at nothing. Magnets.*

*The space glows.*

**COOKIE** *is leaving, grabs* **ABI** *to kiss goodbye.*

**COOKIE** Tomorrow? You know where?

**ABI** Yeah. Or send me a pin.

**COOKIE** Outside the courts.

**ABI** Yeah.

**COOKIE** Love you.

**ABI** Message me when you get in.

**COOKIE** I won't.

**ABI** Love you.

*Sparkling space. Hands in the air. Tune vibrates. The crest of any night, the best night, the night when you could fall in love at a pin drop.*

*Someone tells someone their hair is fucking beautiful.*

**SEB** You smoke?

**ABI** No. Do you?

**SEB** No.

**ABI** You want to go outside?

**SEB** Yeah.

*Someone shouts – 'Fucking epic night'.*

**ABI** I like your face.

**SEB** My face?

**ABI** Yeah. You've got a good face.

**SEB** Moisturising, innit. Nivea. Thank you.

**ABI** You're welcome.

**SEB** Yours isn't too bad either.

**ABI** Yeah?

**SEB** Yeah.

**SEB** *touches her face as the crowd swells, she closes her eyes.*

*Someone crashes into their moment, literally, danced off their feet.*

*Someone, pumped, gurns at* **ABI** *and* **SEB**, *they laugh in sync.* **SEB** *takes* **ABI***'s hand and weaves her through the crowd.* **TOBIAS** *clocks them and grabs her other hand.*

**TOBIAS** You OK?

**ABI** Yeah!

**TOBIAS** You going?

**ABI** No! Just getting some fresh are. With... *(To* **SEB***)* I don't know your name.

**SEB** I don't know yours.

**ABI** Right then. With him.

**TOBIAS** OK, but don't say bye without bye, yeah?

**ABI** No, don't worry.

**SEB** I'm Seb.

**ABI** Abi.

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