

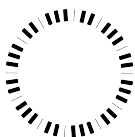
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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

WARHEADS

by Tarek Skylar and
Ross Berkeley Simpson

Featuring spoken word by
Suli Breaks

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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WARHEADS was first produced by Theatre Peckham and The Bernie Grant Arts Centre in October 2018 (funded by Arts Council England). Directed by Toby Clarke, Producer Tarek (Taz) Skylar, Sound Designer Roly Botha, Lighting Designer Pablo Fernandez Baz. The cast was as follows:

MILES Taz Skylar
DEEKS Stevie Raine
TENA Jahannah James
MORY.....Jaz Hutchins
PHILIPA..... Sarah Naudi
TEMBE Suli Breaks

WARHEADS was produced by Park Theatre (Park90) in August 2019. Directed by Toby Clarke, Movement Director Sean Hollands, Producers Tarek (Taz) Skylar and Siobhan Walsh (As True Maverick Media) in co-production with Park Theatre, Associate Producer Markus Kartal, Sound Designer Roly Botha, Assistant Sound Designer Anja Urban, Lighting Designer Pablo Fernandez Baz. The cast was as follows:

MILES Taz Skylar
DEEKS Craig Fairbrass
TENA Klariza Clayton
MORY..... Hassan Najib
PHILIPA..... Sophie Couch
TEMBE Joseph Connolly

CHARACTERS

MILES WEPPLER – 22 – Caucasian and must have peroxide bleached hair.

“MORY” MORLOCK – 24 – Black.

TENA ROBINSON – 23 – Caucasian.

TEMBE – 25 – Any ethnicity but must be of the LGBTQ community.

PHILIPA KEYS – 26 – The therapist – any ethnicity.

CAPTAIN DEEKS – 40’s – Any ethnicity.

AUTHOR’S NOTES

The set consists of sturdy wooden boxes, which can be moved around quickly, to form the various locations where scenes take place. The transitions between scenes are part of the story telling. How we get the boxes into place and the story we tell through movement, whilst doing it, is as important as the text itself.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The journey this story has been on, all the way from conception to you reading it right now, would not have been possible without a group of angels, whose names I want to highlight:

Hassan & Gwendoline Yassin – For being the most amazing parents an unhinged boy could ever ask for.

Suli Breaks – For bending over backwards to help me get this show off the ground – asking nothing in return – and throwing yourself into a discipline which was completely unknown for you.

Ross Berkeley Simpson – For being the best writing partner I could have ever dreamt up. Your talent and the blind trust you put in me and my vision, were imperative to the journey of this piece.

Siobhan Walsh – For believing in me before anyone else did and sticking by my side when many were against.

Marz Lord – For being the guardian angel who connected our show to Park Theatre.

Jez Bond – For taking a big risk on a misfit show.

The entire team at Park Theatre – For being an absolute dream to work with.

Louise Goodman & Joe Smith at Stage One – For all their guidance, support and belief.

Robin Keynes – For being a dream mentor.

Craig Fairbrass – For choosing this to be his first play and being an inspiring figure to look up to.

Arts Council England – For giving us a chance the first time around.

Toby Clarke – For putting up with my incendiary habits and being a brilliant director.

Marcus Kartal – For being a relentless associate producer.

Jonathan Hull – For his sincere efforts to assist a cash-poor production, with any and all legal queries.

Livi Shean, Will Hollinshead & Tish Jones – For their never-ending rallying and encouragement.

Clair Dobbs – For acting as my surrogate mother, with unbelievable kindness.

Charlie Gavshon – For being my big brother, guardian, motivator and creative partner.

Alec Drysdale & Holly Marston – For being my new wonderful mentors and gracious champions going forward.

Steven Greenhalgh & Charlie Coulthard – For giving this piece a new lease of life as a published play.

*I want to dedicate this play to a childhood friend of mine,
who's no longer with us.*

*His life choices and behaviours injected this piece with life. And his
spirit ignited the performances night after night.*

If I could say one last thing to you buddy, it would be this:

*“I love you. And I'm going to make you proud.
We're not done down here yet. We've only just begun.”*

Scene One

(A single spotlight on WEPPLER, standing centre stage. DEEKS, TENA, TEMBE and MORLOCK all stand in a circle around him. Sounds of radio chatter and atmospheric music rise in volume. As the various sounds climax, the lights come up and WEPPLER is now lying prostrate on the ground, working on an IED – chaos happening all around him.)*

MORLOCK. Come on, bruv!

WEPPLER. What?!

MORLOCK. What you mean? Fucking what, man! Get a fucking move on.

WEPPLER. I'm busy here, bro!

MORLOCK. You know they're promised extra virgins for killing men like us!

WEPPLER. Don't use my own quote against me, Mory...

MORLOCK. Now mate, or I'm leaving...

WEPPLER. What do you mean you're fucking leaving?!

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(Lights down. Atmospheric music plays as the scene quickly shifts. Lights up. WEPPLER sits opposite PHILIPA, the young THERAPIST.)*

PHILIPA. So what do you think is causing your symptoms?

WEPPLER. What's *causing* my symptoms?

PHILIPA. Yes.

WEPPLER. What symptoms?

PHILIPA. Your symptoms.

WEPPLER. My symptoms?

PHILIPA. Yes, your symptoms.

WEPPLER. I don't have any symptoms. Who told you I had symptoms?

PHILIPA. You told me you had symptoms.

WEPPLER. I told you I had symptoms?

PHILIPA. Yes, you told me you had symptoms.

WEPPLER. I'm sorry, my love, when did I tell you I had symptoms?

PHILIPA. Before. At the beginning of the session. You said you saw symptoms last night.

WEPPLER. Yeah the band... *Symptoms* is a rock band. I went to their concert last night in Camden.

PHILIPA. Miles, I just want to make sure you know... There's no judgement in this space.

WEPPLER. Okay...

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PHILIPA. I'm just saying, you're free to express anything you feel like—

(Beat. WEPPLER considers this.)

WEPPLER. Like discomfort?

PHILIPA. Discomfort. Okay.

And *what's* the discomfort exactly?

WEPPLER. Discomfort. You know. Discomfort, init? Like general discomfort.

PHILIPA. Difficulty sleeping?

WEPPLER. Sure.

PHILIPA. Being easily angered?

WEPPLER. You could say that.

PHILIPA. Hyperarousal.

WEPPLER. Little bit. Not gonna lie.

PHILIPA. And what do you think is causing that?

WEPPLER. See I googled it, yeah? I use Google all the time. And Google said it was the tap water that's causing my discomfort...

PHILIPA. I'm sorry... *What* do you think is causing it?

WEPPLER. The tap water. I know. Weird init.

(PHILIPPA realising he's having her on.)

PHILIPPA. I see. And do you think anything else might be causing it?

WEPPLER. Bruv... are you alright? I just told you it's the tap water – I mean, I've been using a new washing powder lately, but I really don't think that's it.

PHILIPA. Have you heard of PTSD?

(Snap to WEPPLER's flat.)

(He sits playing COD with MORY.)

WEPPLER. *(To MORLOCK.)* Bruv, is she taking the piss? Have I heard of PTSD? What, because I signed up for the front line I probably don't know ACRONYMS, is it? Cause all we did for three months, bruv, was talk about food, girls, and PTS fucking D. I know exactly what it is... so when she has the audacity to say...

(Snap back to THERAPIST's office.)

PHILIPA. Have you heard of PTSD?

(Snap back to WEPPLER's flat.)

WEPPLER. I just say...

(Snap back to THERAPIST's office.)

Nah. I don't think I have, you know. Could you explain it to me please?

PHILIPA. PTSD stands for –

WEPPLER. Penis tiny sexually disappointing.

PHILIPA. No, it stands for –

WEPPLER. Preschool therapist slurps dong.

PHILIPA. Miles –

WEPPLER. Power tennis super donkey.

PHILIPA. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

(Beat.)

For people like you, who have been through a lot, it's quite common. It's re-experiencing the trauma through unwanted flashbacks and nightmares. Avoidance of things that remind you of the trauma, be that people, places or things.

(**WEPPLER** *watches TENA stand up and walk towards him. He can see her, but PHILIPA can't.*)

Hyperarousal – as in difficulty sleeping, being easily angered... sometimes talking to oneself or to others who aren't there.

WEPPLER. (*To TENA.*) Well she did get that right.

PHILIPA. You're not the first patient I've talked to about this. Around eighteen per cent of veterans have some sort of PTSD.

WEPPLER. (*To TENA.*) In fact, she got a lot right. I should've listened. Fuck. I should have listened to a lot of people actually. Instead of just replaying things in my head. Like this.

PHILIPA. Do you think you could be experiencing any of those symptoms?

WEPPLER. (*Thinks about it.*) Nah.

*(Lights down. Music comes up. We see WEPPLER, TENA, MORLOCK and TEMBE moving the furniture for their home into the room, as a feel good song plays in the background.)**

Yo Tem! D'you have a boy round last night?

TENA. You didn't hear them?

WEPPLER. You should have brought him down to meet us, bro!

TEMBE. He had his hands full!

WEPPLER. He had his *what* full?

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TEMBE. Connect Four! We were playing Connect Four!

WEPLER. Mory, you ready? We're going to be late!

MORY. Coming!

WEPLER. Love, Tem. See you in a bit, T!

Scene Two

(Messy living room in a shared house. TENA ROBINSON runs lines with TEMBE.)

TENA. March to assault thy country than to tread –
Trust to't, thou shalt not – on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world.

TEMBE. Yes!

TENA. Ay, and mine,
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
Living to time.

TEMBE. Yes!

(Then in an overly theatrical, Shakespearean voice.)

Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.
I have sat too long.

TENA. Nay, go not from us thus.
If it were so that our requested did tend
To save the...

(TEMBE tries to communicate the next word through charades.)

The fuck is that?!

TEMBE. RO-MANS ...

TENA. Tem! I can't do this!

TEMBE. Yes you can!

TENA. I don't even know what half these words mean!

TEMBE. Nobody knows what they mean!

TENA. Yes they do!

TEMBE. I can guarantee you Debby at the back will even laugh and she has no idea what they mean!

TENA. Fuck Shakespeare!

TEMBE. D'you want a pizza to cheer you up?

TENA. What kind of pizza?

TEMBE. What kind of pizza do you want?

TENA. What kind of pizza you getting?

TEMBE. Obviously the good kind!

TENA. From the Turkish man on Turnpike Lane?

TEMBE. Yeah.

TENA. Large pepperoni, please!

TEMBE. Do you think Wepp and Mory will want some?

TENA. They always want pizza after training night.

TEMBE. So three pepperonis, yeah?

TENA. YES!

*(MILES WEPPLER and "MORY" MORLOCK
come in wearing their army uniforms. They
don't look too happy.)*

WEPPLER. Hey babe!

TENA. Hey!

WEPPLER. How you doing? You okay?

TENA. I just ordered you some pizza.

WEPPLER. Aww. Bless. From Sepp's?

TENA. No from the Turkish guy on Turnpike lane.

WEPPLER. Ahh.

TENA. What? That's your favourite, right?

WEPPLER. Was my favourite, yeah. But didn't you notice – you weren't there – that when we went in there, in uniform, last week, we got a different reaction from him all of a sudden?

MORLOCK. I didn't notice that.

WEPPLER. You didn't see it? The way he looked at us was weird, man. And...

Turkish guy down the road ain't even Turkish. He's Iranian or Syrian or something like that.

MORLOCK. He's Spanish bruv.

TENA. Alright, Sepp's next time.

MORLOCK. Melissa's calling. I'll take it outside.

WEPPLER. Safe.

MORLOCK. Good luck.

WEPPLER. Safe.

(MORLOCK goes outside. TENA goes straight for WEPPLER's belt. She obviously wants to get laid. He obviously has something he needs to get off his chest first.)

TENA. I want dick!

WEPPLER. Whoa, whoa, whoa. In the living room, T?

TENA. What? They're both upstairs...

WEPPLER. I need to tell you something first...

(TENA eases off, and tries a more subtle persuasion strategy.)

TENA. How was training?

WEPPLER. Training was good. How was your day?

TENA. Really, really good.

WEPPLER. I'm really really glad.

TENA. I'm really really glad, you're glad.

WEPPLER. How was rehearsals?

TENA. I had a day off rehearsals today, I told you that.

WEPPLER. Oh yeah, you did, sorry...

TENA. That's why I said come back as soon as you can because I wanted –

(She goes for the belt again.)

WEPPLER. Yeah – about that – just, quickly before this happens – I had a meeting with the captain today after PT –

TENA. Wait... hold on a second. I haven't seen you all day. Can you just come over here...

WEPPLER. Mm... yeah...

TENA. What's wrong?

WEPPLER. Nothing.

TENA. Do you want me to take my top off?

WEPPLER. ... Yeah...

(MORY enters.)

MORLOCK. *(Offstage.)* Yo, Wepp!

WEPPLER. What's up, bruv?

MORLOCK. *(Offstage.)* I need to talk to you.

TENA. Really? Right now?!

MORLOCK. I'm sorry, alright? Wepp.

WEPPLER. *(To MORLOCK.)* Bro – alright – what she say?

MORLOCK. I'm not going.

WEPPLER. What do you mean you're not going?

(Under his breath.)

Shut-the-fuck-up.

MORLOCK. I can't come with you, man. I'm not doing it.

WEPPLER. What do you mean you're not doing it? Shut-the-fuck-up.

MORLOCK. I'm *not* going, man.

TENA. Going where?

WEPPLER. Babe... just give me one second, please – Shut-the-fuck-up.

TENA. Going where?

MORLOCK. Melissa just broke up with me, init.

WEPPLER. You're fucking with me!

TENA. Hello!

WEPPLER. She broke up with you?

MORLOCK. She broke up with me when I told her. Literally.
Told her we was going and then boom – broken up.

TENA. Told her what?!

WEPPLER. Babe, just one second please!

TENA. NO, NOW! You need to tell me what's going on.
Now.

MORLOCK. Me and Weppler are going to Afghanistan.

WEPPLER. Are you trying to fucking kill me, bro...?

(Beat.)

TENA. Going where? Going where Miles? GOING WHERE?!

WEPPLER. The captain spoke to us today after training. And he offered us a slot on the next tour. And I was gonna tell you before but then you was gonna take your top off and I got real distracted. But basically me and Morlock said yeah.

(**TEMBE** enters.)

TEMBE. (*Add lib is needed.*) HELLOO HELLOO HELLOO, ladies. You excited for the new episode of *Stranger Things*? Heard the new episode's fucked, man. Mate, I hope they bring back Bob, he was so lovely that boy.

WEPPLER. Now's not really a good time, Tem...

TEMBE. Oh shit... what's up?

TENA. They're going on the next tour.

TEMBE. Oh shit! For real? That's mad! Like war? Like real war? Like Mad Max and that?

(**TEMBE** realises...)

I think I'll go watch it upstairs.

(**TEMBE** exits upstairs.)

WEPPLER. Tena.

TENA. You said that RESERVISTS didn't have to go.

WEPPLER. I know. I know. I know I said Reservists didn't have to go. But everything happened so quick – ask him. The captain said “We need more men out there” and then he started telling us about the salary—

TENA. Yeah but that doesn't mean you have to go.

WEPPLER. Please don't get mad. Don't get mad. Please. I wanted to tell you before. I wanted to sit you down and have a proper chat about it. Look, we got internet down there. I asked the captain. I can FaceTime you every day.

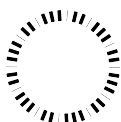
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