SCRIPT SAMPLE

This sample is an excerpt of a
Concord Theatricals title.

Samples of Concord Theatricals titles are for perusal and cannot be used for performance or downloaded, printed, and distributed in any way.

concord
theatricals

WE COULD ALL BE PERFECT

by Hannah Morley

SAMUEL FRENCH

Copyright © 2023 by Hannah Morley
Cover design © 2023 Emilie Chen
All Rights Reserved

WE COULD ALL BE PERFECT is fully protected under the copyright laws of the British Commonwealth, including Canada, the United States of America, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television, online/digital production, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-00039-3

concordtheatricals.co.uk
concordtheatricals.com

FOR AMATEUR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

United Kingdom and World
excluding North America
licensing@concordtheatricals.co.uk
020-7054-7298

Each title is subject to availability from Concord Theatricals, depending upon country of performance.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *WE COULD ALL BE PERFECT* is subject to a licensing fee. The purchase, renting, lending or use of this book does not constitute a licence to perform this title(s), which licence must be obtained from the appropriate agent prior to any performance. Performance of this title(s) without a licence is a violation of copyright law and may subject the producer and/or presenter of such performances to penalties. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to the appropriate agent before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre. A licensing fee must be paid whether the title is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged.

This work is published by Samuel French, an imprint of Concord Theatricals Ltd.

For Professional Rights enquiries, contact Concord Theatricals, Aldwych House, 71-91 Aldwych, London WC2B 4NH.

No one shall make any changes in this title for the purpose of production. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, scanned, uploaded, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now

known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, digital, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall share this title, or part of this title, to any social media or file hosting websites.

The moral right of Hannah Morley to be identified as author of this work has been asserted in accordance with Section 77 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

USE OF COPYRIGHTED MUSIC

A licence issued by Concord Theatricals to perform this play does not include permission to use the incidental music specified in this publication. In the United Kingdom: Where the place of performance is already licensed by the PERFORMING RIGHT SOCIETY (PRS) a return of the music used must be made to them. If the place of performance is not so licensed then application should be made to PRS for Music (www.prsformusic.com). A separate and additional licence from PHONOGRAPHIC PERFORMANCE LTD (www.ppluk.com) may be needed whenever commercial recordings are used. Outside the United Kingdom: Please contact the appropriate music licensing authority in your territory for the rights to any incidental music.

USE OF COPYRIGHTED THIRD-PARTY MATERIALS

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted third-party materials (e.g., artworks, logos) in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permission is obtained by the licensee, then the licensee must use only original materials that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for clearances of all third-party copyrighted materials, and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play(s) and their licensing agent, Concord Theatricals Ltd., against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of such copyrighted third-party materials by licensees.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

NOTE

This script may have changed during rehearsals and may differ from the final production.

WE COULD ALL BE PERFECT was first produced by the Sheffield Theatres in Sheffield, UK, on 23rd September 2023. The performance was directed by Ruby Clarke and assistant directed by Rebecca Solomon, with dramaturgy by Grace Gummer, movement direction by DK Fashola, sets by Rūta Irbīte, lighting design by Jessie Addinall, and sound design by Annie May Fletcher. The casting director was Nadine Rennie. The cast was as follows:

FORK *(and as cast)* . . . . . Anshula Bain
WAR *(and as cast)* . . . . . Heather Forster
INCEL *(and as cast)* . . . . . Rosa Hesmondhalgh
SECRET *(and as cast)* . . . . . Alice Walker
LESSONS *(and as cast)* . . . . . Jada-Li Warrican

ABOUT SHEFFIELD THEATRES

SHEFFIELD THEATRES

Sheffield Theatres is home to three theatres: the Crucible, the Sheffield landmark with a world-famous reputation; the Playhouse, an intimate, versatile space for getting closer to the action; and the gleaming Lyceum, the beautiful proscenium that hosts the best of the UK's touring shows.

Having held the title "Regional Theatre of the Year" on four separate occasions, Sheffield Theatres is the ticket to big names and local heroes, timeless treasures and new voices. Committed to investing in the creative leaders of the future, Sheffield Theatres' dedicated talent development hub, The Bank, supports a new cohort of emerging theatre-makers every year.

Sheffield Theatres has a reputation for bold new work. Starting life in the Crucible in 2019, the award winning *Life of Pi* transferred to the West End in 2021 and to Broadway in 2023. This success follows hit musical *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* which also transferred to the West End, toured the UK and enjoyed a feature film release internationally on Amazon Prime in 2021. Both *Life of Pi* and *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* return home to Sheffield Theatres as part of their 2023 – 24 UK and Ireland tours. Last year, *ROCK / PAPER / SCISSORS* was staged across all three theatres to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Crucible and Playhouse, winning Best Directors at the UK Theatre Awards 2022. Also during the anniversary year, the acclaimed *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* opened the newly named Tanya Moiseiwitsch Playhouse in September 2022. The show transferred to the West End in June 2023. Most recently, Sheffield Theatres, in co-production with the National Theatre and Various Productions, revived *Standing at the Sky's Edge*, returning the show to the Crucible before transferring to the Olivier Theatre and winning two Olivier awards including Best New Musical. The show transfers to the West End in February 2024.

Crucible Lyceum Playhouse 55 Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 1DA
sheffieldtheatres.co.uk

CAST

ANSHULA BAIN

Anshula trained at The National Youth Theatre, Royal Exchange Youth Company and Almeida Youth Company.

Theatre credits include: *Tartuffe* (Birmingham Rep); *Lotus Beauty* (Hampstead Theatre); *Imaam Imraan* (National Youth Theatre); *Jabala and the Jinn* (Lyric Hammersmith / UK Tour).

HEATHER FORSTER

Heather trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Theatre credits include: *The Book of Dust* (Bridge Theatre).

Television credits include: *Call The Midwife*, *Casualty*, *Doctors* (BBC One); *DI Ray*, *Grace* (ITV).

Film credits include: *The Colour Room.*

ROSA HESMONDHALGH

Rosa is an actor and writer from West Yorkshire. She trained at London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

Theatre credits include: *Children of the Night* (CAST); *Madame Ovary* (Edinburgh Fringe / UK Tour / Storyhouse); *The Snow Queen* (The Yvonne Arnaud); *Trial By Laughter* (UK Tour); *A Christmas Carol* (Hull Truck).

Television credits include: *Bridgerton* Season 3 (Netflix); *The Long Shadow* (ITV).

Radio and audio credits include: *Requiem*, *Just a Woman* (BBC Radio 4); *Sour Hall* (Audible).

ALICE WALKER

Alice trained at Collage Voices and at Rose Bruford South West (formerly the Academy of Live and Recorded Arts). She is a member of Theatre Royal Stratford East Young Talented with Royal Academy of Dramatic Art & Guildhall, and the Theatre Royal Stratford East Young Company.

Television credits include: *Doc Martin*, *Grantchester* (ITV).

Film credits include: *Midas Man.*

JADA-LI WARRICAN

Jada-Li is a classically trained Actor and Singer and has a BA (Hons) in Acting from the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

Theatre credits include: *Sky Comedy Rep* (The Rep, Birmingham); *Our Town Needs A Nandos* (Liverpool Everyman); *Generations* (The Crescent Theatre); *Leave Taking* (The Curve Leicester).

Television credits include: *Doctors* (BBC); *Champion* (Netflix / BBC).

CREATIVES

HANNAH MORLEY – Writer

Hannah Morley is a writer and actor originally from Doncaster.

In 2019, Hannah won a Channel 4 Playwrights Award and became Writer in Residence at The Finborough Theatre, where her play *Petrichor* received a rehearsed reading as part of Vibrant Festival. *Petrichor* also won the Radius Prize and was longlisted for the Bruntwood Prize.

Hannah has also been a member of Soho Theatre's Writers Lab and the BBC Writersroom London Voices development group, and has previously worked with Sheffield Theatres through the Open Script Submission Window scheme.

Her episode of BBC Radio 3 anthology series *The A-Z of Things* was broadcast in 2022.

We Could All Be Perfect is Hannah's debut stage production.

Acting credits include: *Apartment 7A* (Paramount); *Coronation Street* (ITV); *The Strongbox* (VAULT).

RUBY CLARKE – Director

Ruby is a Sheffield based director, dramaturg and writer with a particular interest in new writing. Ruby is the New Work Coordinator for Sheffield Theatres, managing the literary department and working as dramaturg for all in-house productions.

For Sheffield Theatres, credits include: *A Series of Public Apologies* (National Theatre Connections). As co-director: *Stuff* (National Theatre Connections).

Other theatre credits include: *Children of the Night* (CAST); *Made of Nowhere* (Camden Fringe Festival); *Quicksand*, *The Mercy Seat* (York Theatre Royal); *Timon of Athens* (International Shakespeare Festival).

RŪTA IRBĪTE – Designer

Rūta is a London-based performance designer. She trained in Performance Design and Practice and MA in Material Futures at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design.

Rūta was a shortlisted finalist for the Linbury Prize for Stage Design 2013.

Theatre credits include: *Say Yes To Tess* (Leeds Playhouse); *Blow Down* (Leeds Playhouse / Yorkshire tour); *SAP* (Soho Theatre and National Tour); *Pink Lemonade* (Bush Theatre / Contact); *And The Rest of Me Floats* (Bush Theatre); *Groove* (Oxford House / Contact); *Fitter* (Soho Theatre); *Hotter* (Soho Theatre); *Slime* (National Tour); *Open Court*, *Primetime* (Royal Court).

Other credits include: *REPLAY* (Southbank Centre).

JESSIE ADDINALL – Lighting Designer

Jessie is a Hull based lighting designer. They are also associate lighting designer for *The Roaring Girls* and were an Association of Lighting Production and Design Lumiere (2020)

Theatre credits include: *MODEST* (Middle Child / Milk Presents); *Brief Encounter* (The New Wolsey / Salisbury Playhouse); *Children of the Night* (CAST); *Ladies Day* (The New Vic / The Octagon Theatre); *Jack, Mum and The Beanstalk*, *Teechers Leavers '22*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hull and High Water*, *Everything I Own*, *Prince Charming's Christmas Cracker*, *TEN*, *Paragon Dreams*, *Ladies Unleashed* (Hull Truck Theatre); *Macbeth* & *Twelfth Night* (Leeds Conservatoire); *The Whispering Jungle* (Concrete Youth); *The Hound of The Baskervilles* (ERT Theatre); *we used to be closer than this*, *The Canary and The Crow*, *Us Against Whatever* (Middle Child); *Ducklings* (The Herd); *Beauty Queen of Leenane* (Hull Truck Theatre / Queens Theatre); *Beach Body Ready* (The Roaring Girls); *The Ugly Duckling* (The Herd in Association with Hull Truck).

Associate credits include: *Dogs* (Liverpool Playhouse); *71 Coltman Street* (Hull Truck Theatre); *Megalith* (Mechanimal); *Shedding a Skin* (SOHO Theatre).

ANNIE MAY FLETCHER – Sound Designer

Annie is a Yorkshire-based sound designer and composer. She was nominated for a WhatsOnStage Award 2023, shortlisted for the Evening Standard Future Theatre Fund 2021, and was the 2018-19 Laboratory Sound Designer at Nuffield Southampton Theatres. Annie trained at London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

For Sheffield Theatres, credits include: *Rock/Paper/Scissors*, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*.

Other theatre credits include: *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* (Theatre Royal Haymarket / Lyric Hammersmith); *Hope Has A Happy Meal* (Royal Court Theatre); *A PASSIONATE WOMAN, DECADES* (Leeds Playhouse); *NT Public Acts' The Odyssey: The Cyclops*, *Children Of The Night* (CAST); *Beauty Queen Of Leenane* (Theatre by the Lake); *Hedwig & The Angry Inch* (Leeds Playhouse / HOME Mcr); *A Christmas Carol*, *An Adventure, and Importance Of Being Earnest* (Bolton Octagon); *Endurance* (Battersea Arts Centre / HOME Mcr); *The Arc and Splintered* (Soho Theatre); *Brilliant Jerks* (Southwark Playhouse); *Autopilot* (Pleasance, Edinburgh); *The Survivors' Guide To Living* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *Some People Feel The Rain* (The Den – for Royal Exchange); *The Understudy Live* (Palace Theatre).

Associate credits include: *Salty Irina* (Paines Plough Roundabout); *Carousel* (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre); *Enough* (Traverse Theatre); *How Not To Drown* (Glasgow Tron / Lawrence Batley Theatre); *The Audience* (Nuffield Southampton Theatres).

Digital credits include: *The Entertainment* (Summerhall Digital Fringe); *15 Glimpses* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *Found Fettle* (Theatre by the Lake); *Oh Woman!* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *A Passion Play* (45North); *Luna The Jaguar* (Greenpeace UK); *Toast, The Understudy* (Lawrence Batley Theatre).

NADINE RENNIE CDG – Casting Director

Nadine has over twenty years' experience as a Casting Director for theatre. She was in-house Casting Director at Soho Theatre for over fifteen years. Nadine is a member of the Casting Directors Guild and currently sits on the Committee

For Sheffield Theatres, credits include: *Run Sister Run, The Last King of Scotland.*

For Soho Theatre, credits include: *Soft Animals*, *The One*, *Blueberry Toast*, *Girls*, *Roller Diner*, *Made In India*, *Only The Brave*, *The Night Before Christmas*, *Fury*, *Karagula*, *Kite*, *First Love is the Revolution*, *Fleabag*, *Blood*, *Lampedusa*, *Death of a Comedian*, *Beached*, *Address Unknown*, *Pastoral*, *God's Property*, *Realism*, *Mongrel Island*, *Bea*, *Bagpuss*, *Tales of the Harrow Road*, *Ivan and the Dogs*, *Dandy in the Underworld*, *Behud*, *Shraddha*, *Dreams of Violence*, *Iya-lle*, *Soho Streets*, *Invasion*, *This Isn't Romance*, *Roaring Trade*, *On Emotion*, *The Long Road*, *Piranha Heights*, *Wedding Day*, *A Couple Of Poor Polish Speaking Romanians*, *Joe Guy*, *Pure Gold*, *Moonwalking in Chinatown*, *Baghdad Wedding*, *The Christ Of Coldharbour Lane*, *Leaves of Glass*, *An Oak Tree*, *That Pesky Rat*, *On Religion*, *Behna (sisters)*, *White Open Spaces*, *The Estate. Assistant casting credits: Shrieks of Laughter*, *Other Hands*, *Blue Eyes & Heels*, *Shoreditch Madonna*, *A Night at the Dogs*, *Colder Than Here.*

Freelance casting credits include: *Leaves of Glass* (Park Theatre); *Breeding* (Kings Head Theatre); *The Breach*, *What Fatima Did…* (Hampstead Theatre); *Bacon* (Finborough); *Britannicus* (Lyric Hammersmith); *He Said, She Said*, *Cape*, *Random*, *The Thief* (Synergy Theatre); *Super High Resolution*, *Whitewash*, *God's Dice* (Soho Theatre); *Es & Flo* (WMC and Kiln Theatre); *Further Than The Furthest Thing* (Minack Theatre); *Agatha* (Theatre503); *The Special Relationship* (Synergy Theatre / Soho Theatre); *Seeds*, *Random*, *There Are No Beginnings* (Leeds Playhouse); *The Rage of Narcissus* (Pleasance Theatre London); *The Little Prince* (Stratford Circus / UK Tour); *Little Baby Jesus* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Typical* (Edinburgh Festival 2019 / Soho Theatre); *The Glass Menagerie*, *Hoard* (Arcola Theatre); *There Is A Field*, *The Monkey*, *Glory Whispers* (Synergy Theatre/Theatre 503); *Good Dog* (WPT then touring); *Brighton Rock* (Pilot Theatre / UK Tour); *A Raisin in the Sun* (Synergy Theatre / HMP Thameside); *Girls Like That* (Synergy Theatre / Unicorn Theatre); *Den of Thieves*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (Synergy Theatre / HMP Brixton); *Egusi Soup* (Menagerie Theatre); *Rift* (Brewhouse, Somerset); *Coasting* (Bristol

Old Vic); *St Joan* (The Script Factory / BAFTA); *Charged* (Clean Break); *Town* (Royal & Derngate); *Pressure Drop* (On Theatre at The Wellcome Collection); *Jesus Hopped The 'A' Train* (Synergy Theatre / Trafalgar Studios); *Orphans* (Paines Plough / B.Rep / Traverse Theatre); *Beau Jest* (Hackney Theatre); *The Butterfly Club* (Southwark Playhouse).

Television credits include: *Dixi* (CBBC, first three series).

GRACE GUMMER – Dramaturg

Grace is currently Playwright Mentor at Sheffield Theatres. She has been literary associate at the Royal Court, resident director at the NT New Work Department and she was the recipient of the NT Women of Tomorrow Directors' award (2020), and WGGB Olwen Wymark Theatre Encouragement Award (2021).

Theatre credits include:

As Dramaturg: *Invisible Animal* (Omnibus Clapham); *Re:Home* (The Yard).

As Director: *Athena* (The Yard); *Living Newspaper 6* (Royal Court); *Sunrise Farm* (Audible x London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art); *Germ Free Adolescent* (The Bunker); *Roman Candle* (Theatre503 / 53two); *Butter* (Vaults Festival).

Associate director: *Glass, Kill, Bluebeard, Imp* and *Bad Roads* (Royal Court).

Assistant director: *Beyond Caring* (The Yard / NT Shed).

REBECCA SOLOMON – Assistant Director

Rebecca is a director, theatre maker, multi-disciplinary aerialist and movement specialist. Having trained at Gravity Circus School, Rebecca has been working as a performer and creative practitioner in theatre and aerial dance since 2015. She joined The Circus Village's Creative Lab as a director and is currently part of the 2023 Sheffield Theatres' Bank Cohort.

For Sheffield Theatres, credits include: *Second-hand Child.*

Aerial/Theatre performance credits include: *MOBO Awards* (OVO Arena Wembley); *Disco Inferno* (Camp Bestival); *Hive City Legacy* (London Roundhouse / HOME Mcr); *Red Palace* (The Vaults).

Dance/Movement performance credits include: *Parade* (Autin Dance Theatre); *Swing Sister Swing* (Arts Depot London / Bath Theatre Royal / Liverpool Everyman).

DK FASHOLA – Movement Director

Fashola is a multidisciplinary performer, theatre maker and movement director who specialises in multi-form storytelling; fusing movement, poetic multi-layered text and theatre in unexpected ways. Fashola is the Artistic Director of Initiative.dkf, which won Eclipse Award 2020, Albany Theatre Artists of Change in 2020-2021 and Tamasha Associate artists in 2019-2020. Fashola's play *Fragments* won Eclipse Award 2020.

Theatre credits include: *Dat U Yh?* (Brixton House); *Much Ado* (Royal Shakespeare Company); *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* (Royal Exchange Manchester); *Lava* (Bush Theatre); *Othello* (National Youth Theatre Rep); *Birds & Bees Film* (Theatre Centre); *Scalped* (Without Walls National Tour).

Choreography credits include: Wizkid (*Dis Love*, music video); Tiwa Savage (*Savage on Tour*, tour choreography); Flavour N'abania (One Africa Fest); Mr Eazi (*Pour Me Water*, official dance video).

ANITA GILBERT – Voice Coach

Anita studied Acting at Academy of Live and Recorded Arts and MA Professional Voice Practice from The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Alongside Theatre, screen work and clients, Anita lectures at leading drama schools, and is co-author of *The Jobbing Actor*, published by Nick Hern Books.

For Sheffield Theatres, credits include: *Typical Girls, Rock/Paper/Scissors*.

Other theatre credits include: *Brassed Off*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Homegirl*, *Extra Time*, *Abi*, *What Fatima Did*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *Treasure Island*, *The Little Mermaid*, *4 Walls* (Derby Theatre); *Lark Rise to Candleford* (Everyman Theatre Cheltenham); *Under the Greenwood Tree* (The Everyman: The Irving Studio Theatre / The Kings Theatre Gloucester).

Television credits include: *Hollyoaks* (Channel 4).

Film credits include: *Bonny Chip* (short).

RACHAEL WALTON – Intimacy Coach

Rachael is a theatre and film director, performer and writer. She co-founded and led Third Angel (1995–2023), a theatre, film and installation company. Rachael is an experienced educator and has taught at numerous universities across the UK and at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon.

For Sheffield Theatres, credits include: *Presumption*, *What I Heard About the World*, *Inherited Cities*, *Partus*, *The Department of Distractions*.

Performance credits include: *The Killing Show*, *Experiment Zero* (UK Tour); *Where from Here* (UK Tour / European Tour); *Presumption* (European Tour); *Partus* (UK Tour); *The Life and Loves of a Nobody* (UK Tour); *The Department of Distractions* (UK Tour).

Other theatre credits include:

As Director: *The Lad Lit Project,* (UK Tour); *Cape Wrath* (UK Tour); *600 People* (Northern Stage / Alphabetti Theatre); *The Life and Loves of a Nobody* (UK Tour); *What I Heard About the World* (UK Tour / International Tour); *Presumption* (European Tour).

As Co-Director: *Experiment Zero, Hang Up,* (UK Tour); *Where from Here* (UK Tour / Edinburgh Fringe Festival / European Tour); *Believe the*

Worst (UK Tour); *Stage an Execution,* (Nationaltheatre Mannheim); *The Department of Distractions* (UK Tour).

Film & Video credits include: *Pistola Junta, Jelly Dolly, Happy, Popcorn.*

Book Titles include: *The Department of Distractions*, *There's A Room: Three Performance Texts by Third Angel* (Oberon).

Other credits include: *Shallow Water* (Ferens Art Gallery Commission, UK Tour / European Tour); *Senseless* (Arnolfini / Sheffield Museums); *Saved* (UK Tour / Switzerland); *The Desire Paths* (UK Tour); *The Distraction Agents* (interactive puzzle).

NOTES ON THE TEXT

“ / ” indicates the point where dialogue overlaps.

Blank space between dialogue indicates a pause. The bigger the blank space, the longer the pause.

In **The Perfectionists**, a line across the page indicates a jump forward in time

It doesn’t all happen here. It doesn’t all happen now.
Scenes marked “Now” can take place any time between the arrival of smartphones and the present day.
Scenes marked “Before now” can take place any time between the beginning of humanity and then.
“Soon” does what it says on the tin.

Not all of the characters are teenage girls, but everyone can be played by one. There is at least one teenage girl in every scene.
If your cast includes more than five teenage girls, they should all be onstage and involved in **The Perfectionists**.
Girl is a trans narrative. It should be cast appropriately or cut.

Everyone is feeling everything very strongly at all times, even if they don’t want us to know. This is the superpower. The girls are at times deeply weird, deeply obnoxious, deeply ridiculous, and should be taken deeply seriously.

When in doubt with dialogue, try it faster.
Turn up the volume.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

So, I've been thinking about teenage girls for a while (there's literally no way to write that without sounding creepy, sorry) and I have this theory… I reckon if you took everything it is to be a person in the world and boiled it down to its most concentrated form, it would look somthing like a fourteen-year-old girl. The teen girls I've encountered in my life are some of the most kind, cruel, funny, ridiculous, self-conscious, self-loathing, vain, vulnerable, sex-obsessed, brave, terrifying, awful, wonderful people I've met. Always trying, always caring, often despite themselves.

Humanity undiluted.

Maybe this is one reason why, as a society, we don't seem to like them much. They mirror back to us everything we'd see if we cut ourselves open and looked inside, in all its weird, raw discomfort. Or maybe I only think that because I used to be one.

This play came about when two thoughts collided. The first, is that I think one experience perhaps unique to teenage girls is the sudden awareness of being looked at. One moment you're walking down the road in your school uniform shovelling wine gums down your throat undisturbed, the next you realise you're being watched from cars. You can feel eyes on you. It's a surreal experience and nobody really tells you it's going to happen. It's enough to make you paranoid. It certainly makes you self-conscious. The second thought was a curiosity about the link between teenage girls and revolutions. Scroll through TikTok, open any history book, and wherever you find a revolution there's usually a teen girl visible near the centre of it.

The girls in this play are revolutionaries, big and small, but they're also artists. They create, define and improve. They work on perfecting themselves and the world. They find flaws and then strive for better. With this in mind, here are a couple of thoughts that I hope might be helpful in staging this play:

There are lots of moments of looking in the following scenes. Girls being looked at, looking at themselves, at each other and the world. Some of these might be more significant than they first appear. Similarly, each scene contains a revolution, but they might not all be the size you expect. The play deals in micro and macro. At one point in development, we separated the scenes into "violence", "lols", and "violence and lols". I reckon you can turn up the dial on both.

Writing this play, at first, was a bit of a nightmare. An overwhelmingly big thing in a small container. I tried to wrangle it, to tame it, to impose a more logical structure. I tried to confine it to one time period or place, to make it less weird, to make it easier to understand. I wanted its politics to be more realistic, to explain that it's not about men but power, or violence. I tried to fit every teen experience inside it; the scenes spilled over at the sides. What Ruby, Grace and I discovered during redrafting is that it probably helps to approach this play feeling first, rather than thinking.

The play is a bit of a teenage girl and, at first, I tried to dilute it. We learnt it's much better when you don't.

HM x

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My catchphrase during rehearsals was "I just can't get over how many people there are". I blurted it mid-conversation, voice-noted it to friends, I honestly got bored of hearing myself say it. There are so many people to thank for getting this play on the stage and this book in your hands. Here are the names of just some of them:

Thanks to Ruby Clarke, first and foremost. You talk about this play in a way that makes me want to follow you into battle – which, as a fainter who doesn't like conflict or being told what to do, is saying a lot. None of this would have happened without your passion, skill and perseverance. And to Grace Gummer, for your script wizardry and for inventing the fizzy fortnight. You got me across the finish line. Thank you.

Thank you to Robert Hastie and everyone at Sheffield Theatres. This theatre is where I first saw new writing as a teen. I'll forever be grateful that you lent me the stage for a while.

To Alice, Anshula, Heather, Jada-Li, Rosa, and the entire production team for your creativity and generosity in rehearsals. And to the actors who lent their talent and experience during R&D. I want to be all of you when I grow up.

To Grace Stone and Hippolyte Poirier for performing an early version of Send Nudes and not mentioning my bad directing; an act of diplomacy that's extremely out of character for at least one of you. And thanks for everything else too. To Dan Ireson, Neil McPherson, Melissa Dunne, Tommo Fowler for their early belief. To everyone at Concord Theatricals, the Finborough, Radius, BBC Writersroom, and the Channel 4 Playwrights Prize for their support. To Matt Hartley, Amy Rosenthal, and all at Arvon; the first scenes for this were written at Totleigh. To Debbie and Paul Mellors for leading me to acting. And to Mr Foster. Because back in Year 6 I said I would.

Most of all…Mum, Dad, Tom, and all my family. I love you. Thank you. Sorry the play is so weird. And to my friends. God knows how I got so lucky. If I could show thirteen-year-old me anything from the future, it would be you.

Instructions: This is a play for teenage girls.

1

Secret – Now

(Darkness.)

*(**A**'s face lit up by a screen. Hiding under her bed, recording herself on a phone. The camera is pointing directly up her nose at a deeply unflattering angle. Uncoordinated and unselfconscious.)*

(She breathes heavily like a psychopath.)

(Then –.)

A. Hellooooooo

can you see me?

what if it's what if it's what if it's this. what if it's that actually I'm completely fully invisible. like maybe it could be that
and this isn't even
like it's actually that

my best things are werewolves the colour turquoise dairylea lunchables God and the new boy in the flat downstairs I like hissss hair and also the way he moves his hands he's probably definitely the actual love of my life and we will be mermaids but I'm also going to be prime minister and president and do science

A.

my worst things are broccoli, fractions and war

sex

s

sex

bugger

I think I'm probably literally incredible

fuck

I'm sorry God.

Fuck.

*(**A** slaps a hand over her mouth to stifle a laugh.)*

I'm not even supposed to have this