Acting Edition

ARE YOU WATCHING?

by Georgie Dettmer

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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NOTE

This edition reflects a rehearsal draft of the script and may differ from the final production.

CHARACTERS

GIRL 1
GIRL 2

JOURNALIST
SCIENTIST
ASSISTANT

THE STAR/WIFE
AGENT
PC
HUSBAND
DIRECTOR
CREW 1

MOTHER
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER
DETECTIVE

BOYFRIEND
GIRLFRIEND

FATHER
SON

CONTENT CREATOR
BOY

AUTHOR'S NOTES

NOTES ON FORMATTING

Spacing indicates beats and thought pattern.

... indicates a physical gesture.

(Words in brackets) indicate what they might have said but don't.

Scenes with A and B can be performed simultaneously.

NOTES ON PERFORMANCE

We should get the sense that everything is happening everywhere and all at once.

The actors should not be able to see the audience. The audience should know this.

Make it fast and make it funny.

Trigger warnings include in-depth discussion of violent pornography, AI sexual abuse imagery, sexual violence, bodily harm including warfare and AI child sexual abuse imagery.

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And, of course, always and infinitely, to my mum, Bernadette. For everything, always.

For Peter and Bernadette,
Forever and always

In preset, a **HUSBAND** *and* **WIFE**, *at breakfast. It's quiet except for the stirring of spoons and the Blue Tits outside.*

They have freshly pressed coffee. It's so fresh you could probably smell it.

They are comfortable with one another.

One pours the other some coffee. The other pours milk into their cups.

They read newspapers.

When we are ready, the seal goes up.

Darkness.

The main frame lights up.

We've logged on.

One

A sleepover. Two **GIRLS**, *spinning something for us and for themselves. We watch them.*

GIRL 1. But that's the maddest thing cos then he

GIRL 2. Who?

GIRL 1. Her husband. Then he invites this man 'round

GIRL 2. What?

GIRL 1. Like a man, like a man he met off the internet

GIRL 2. So he doesn't know this guy?

GIRL 1. Never met him. But also there's men he does know

GIRL 2. So a mixture?

GIRL 1. Yeah like a, like a fucking pick 'n' mix of men he does and doesn't know but this man, this man he doesn't know, he found him off a chat room

GIRL 2. A what?

GIRL 1. A room online where you chat about shit

GIRL 2. About raping old people?

GIRL 1. All sorts of stuff. So the husband invites the guy to come 'round but he's not sure about it

GIRL 2. Because it's?

GIRL 1. Because he doesn't know

GIRL 2. If he should?

GIRL 1. If he fancies her?

GIRL 2. What?

GIRL 1. So they arrange to go to a supermarket. Same time, same aisle, he's telling this guy, this stranger – my wife's the one in the dress – see if you like her and we can go from there

GIRL 2. Like how?

GIRL 1. Could he be into it?

GIRL 2. Into her?

GIRL 1. Into the whole thing. And he is. So the stranger agrees to meet one evening, at their house, come over, park round the corner, don't wear any perfume or deodorant.

GIRL 2. What?

GIRL 1. He can't have any strong smells on him

GIRL 2. That's

GIRL 1. But that's, no wait, so when he's given some sort of signal, I don't know, a text maybe, this guy comes over and finds the wife lying there.

GIRL 2. She's asleep?

GIRL 1. She's unconscious, she's been drugged

GIRL 2. By her husband?

GIRL 1. Her husband yep. He puts a little bit of something in her coffee or tea and she's knocked out. Lifeless. Kind of like she's not there at all. The guy comes in, camera's on, takes his shit off and when he's just about to do it, she let's rip a snore.

GIRL 2. The wife?

GIRL 1. Conked out on the bed and she lets out a Giant Fucking Snore. And he freaks out, the guy, the guy that came in, something clicks and he freaks out and he's like wait this is wrong this is

GIRL 2. Fucked.

GIRL 1. Yeah and then he leaves and he calls the police and that's how they found him.

Cut.

Two

A clean, clinical room.

SCIENTIST. Thank you so much for agreeing to join us. You're participation in our experiment will be invaluable to the future of Sex Science.

JOURNALIST. Pleasure

SCIENTIST. Today will consist of four tests where we will show you various types of material. Whilst we do this, we will be monitoring your responses, tracking your state of arousal.

JOURNALIST. What kind of material?

SCIENTIST. There'll be a variety

JOURNALIST. Of what?

SCIENTIST. A variety of material.

JOURNALIST. Of pornography?

SCIENTIST. We have considered what kind of material we will show you comprehensively.

JOURNALIST. Right of course sorry

ASSISTANT. Following the tests, we will hold a closing interview, and after the conclusion of our experiment you will receive payment for your participation. Can I confirm your authorised medications are: seventy-five milligrams of sertraline and 300 milligrams of lithium?

JOURNALIST. Yep that's correct.

ASSISTANT. Daily?

JOURNALIST. Yep.

ASSISTANT. And can I confirm you did not ingest caffeine, alcohol, narcotic substances, any unauthorised medication, artificial sugar or acidic substances forty-eight hours before?

JOURNALIST. Nope

ASSISTANT. Okay. Can I take your phone?

JOURNALIST. Take it?

ASSISTANT. You will be able to collect your phone at the end of the experiment at four p.m. today.

The **ASSISTANT** *brings out a small plastic bag for the mobile phone.*

JOURNALIST. Yes I'm just gonna

She checks her phone and goes to hand it to the **ASSISTANT**. *Then she checks it again.*

Sorry actually let me I just need to let this editor know I'll be offline for a bit

SCIENTIST. Editor?

JOURNALIST. For an article I'm writing. Not on this. Don't worry!

SCIENTIST. Did you say you were a journalist in your application?

JOURNALIST. Well no but I write about one piece every three months and most of the time I'm nannying or catering so I didn't think it mattered?

SCIENTIST. You're aware of the confidentiality clause in the contract?

JOURNALIST. Oh yeah, yeah.

SCIENTIST. Any breaking of that confidentiality leads to forfeit of renumeration.

JOURNALIST. Yeah, course, I'm not here for that I'm look:

She drops her phone in the bag and puts both her hands up in the air.

No phone! Just to check, how much is the payment again?

SCIENTIST. Five thousand pounds.

JOURNALIST. Great! Cool! Not a typo then?

SCIENTIST. No. No typos. We'll be tracking your responses via biometric data. My colleague will attach these two pads at your wrists.

The **ASSISTANT** *applies them.*

SCIENTIST. Two at your temples.

She applies them.

ASSISTANT. And then we'll insert this.

She holds up a small, vibrator-like, metal insert.

Cut.

Three

A living room. A **FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER [OFFICER]** *sits with the* **MOTHER** *whilst the* **COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER [CM]** *is taking notes.*

CM. So how many hours?

MOTHER. Twenty-three.

CM. And the last time you saw her?

MOTHER. Twenty-three hours ago.

CM. Right, yeah, just as in – specifically.

MOTHER. Sorry, yeah uh the last time I saw her was at drop off yesterday. I dropped her off at 8.20, 8.30? She texted me at four when she left school. I came home at six, she wasn't here. I rang her phone and it didn't go through. I called the police and

CM. Okay, okay, I've got that

He writes that down.

OFFICER. I've been speaking with the detective in charge of your daughter's case and he's going to send any new information straight over to us so you'll be first to know if anything changes.

CM. We're getting the press releases out, are you alright for me to use this pic of her?

He holds up a photo.

MOTHER. How did you

CM. Got this one off Facebook. Makes her look even younger, I think that's a good thing.

OFFICER. It'll make people stop and take notice.

MOTHER. Okay

CM. We'll use this for the main publicity

MOTHER. Publicity?

CM. For the conferences, news pieces

MOTHER. Right

OFFICER. We'd encourage you not to talk to the tabloids, we want there to be some kind of control, some order for you

MOTHER. Right

OFFICER. I know this is all overwhelming so we can answer any questions for you. I'm more on the family-facing side and

CM. I'm public. We've got a media briefing at the end of the day so I'll be preparing you for that.

MOTHER. A briefing about?

CM. The case, your daughter, potential suspects

MOTHER. Do they have potential suspects?

OFFICER. No, no they don't, yet.

CM. Sorry, yeah, just like – we'll be updating the public as it happens.

MOTHER. Because?

CM. It helps. To get it into the consciousness.

OFFICER. Which will come with its own set of challenges that we can navigate together.

CM. We've just got to move fast because the sooner this all gets out there, the better. For her. "More eyes, more spies, surprise!"

MOTHER. What?

CM. Something we learnt at Uni. The more eyes there are on something, the more info you have and then hopefully that leads to a surprise. A nice one.

OFFICER. Justin's new to the force but he's been trained and has some exciting ideas about your daughter's case.

CM. I need to take a few photos, quotes, build a story around her. We're gonna find your daughter.

OFFICER. They're going to try.

Cut.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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