

Defining Dawn

by

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Set: On one side Dawn's room. Her room is an expression of her personality, fragmented. A bed, a cheap student type desk with a computer on it. A chair. Fluffy stuffed toys. Hanging up, a large image of the Red Army Faction (aka Baader-Meinhof gang) symbol, five pointed star with superimposed Heckler & Koch machine pistol. Also, smaller photographs of members of the R.A.F., Ulrike Meinhof with her hands on her head. Irene Goergens and Ingrid Schubert looking cool and attractive. Andreas Baader asleep or possibly dead, hanging over Dawn's bed.

On the other side Dawn's parents space. A domestic sitting room. Very ordinary. Comfy chairs. A television. A coffee table. Drab and unimaginative; repressed feeling. Up stage, a swivel chair, located between the parent's space and Dawn's space, will be occupied by the social worker, at times this will become ROBIN'S interview room, at others it is just a neutral place. The social worker swivels in the chair to face now one space, now the other, to indicate whose space she is sharing at a given moment. Scene transitions should be seamless, with no break in action/speech, unless indicated otherwise.

All the actors remain on stage throughout. The set should be open and abstract, essentially one space, with no fixed boundaries between areas.

Cast:

DAWN HOLMES	Early twenties.
FRANCIS HOLMES	Dawn's father, middle aged.
ALICE HOLMES	Dawn's mother, middle aged.
ROBIN CRAWFORD	Psychiatric social worker, a woman, early 30s.

Dialogue placed side by side is to be spoken simultaneously or overlap.

- at the end of a sentence indicates words cut off by next speaker.

. . . indicates hesitation.

Scenes marked 'Now' should have a different lighting scheme (less naturalistic, as if the present is less real than the past) to indicate they take place in a different situation to scenes marked 'Then'.

At the start Dawn and her parents are already in their respective spaces. As the audience enters the parents are watching T.V., Dawn reads a book on the Baader-Meinhof. Industrial, metallic sounding percussive music, such as the instrumental passages in 'Joy' by P.J.Harvey on a loop.

N.B. The opening three speeches must start simultaneously and run concurrently.

Scene 1 (Then.) The family home.

DAWN

ALICE

FRANCIS

Every summer we'd go to Margate. I used to like to go to Dreamland. I didn't go for the rides. They had this man, he guessed your weight, and every year I'd go and have my weight guessed, and he always got it right. He felt you all over, quickly, efficiently, impersonally, he felt your bones through your skin. I wasn't gambling, I knew I'd lose, I went to be felt all over impersonally. When he felt my bones I knew, for the first time, I really existed.

ROBIN

[ROBIN enters the acting area from the direction of the auditorium. As she enters ALICE and FRANCIS see her and stop talking, DAWN continues a little longer, then stops. Silence. Robin hesitates for a moment, then sits in the swivel chair located between the parent's space and Dawn's space. Dawn's parents thankfully watch T.V. whenever they are not being interviewed. The man occasionally scans the Daily

Express newspaper. The woman occasionally reads a Maeve Binchy novel or knits. Slowly Robin swivels the chair to face Dawn, who begins to speak.]

DAWN I dreamed I was dead.

ROBIN What happened?

DAWN In the dream?

ROBIN Yes.

DAWN I was dead, but I didn't know I was dead and I couldn't understand why everyone was ignoring me. I'd go up to people and say hello and they'd just look through me. As if I wasn't there. I was dead, you see. I could see them but they, they couldn't see me.

ROBIN Because you were –

DAWN Dead. Yes, because . . . because . . . that's the only explanation. I'd speak and nobody would hear me, I . . . I could hear my voice but I wasn't making a sound. I couldn't reach them, I couldn't touch them, they would pass right through me.

ROBIN Like a, ghost?

DAWN Yes. I was so lonely. I tried . . . I kept trying to, communicate, but I couldn't . . . to tell them I was there . . . but no one would listen.

ROBIN Then what happened?

DAWN I woke up.

Scene 2 (Then.) [ROBIN turns to the parents' area.]

ROBIN The first time Dawn had to be hospitalised, what did you think?

ALICE Well . . .

FRANCIS It was a nasty shock.

ALICE You can say that again.

FRANCIS It was a surprise.

ALICE We had no inkling you see.

FRANCIS None at all.

ALICE None.

ROBIN You didn't think Dawn had been acting strangely before -

ALICE Well, it all depends what you mean by strange.

FRANCIS You get used to it.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS Take it for granted. All kids are strange, if you ask me.

ROBIN Yes but -

FRANCIS They're an ungrateful lot. You do everything for them.

ALICE Everything.

FRANCIS And get no thanks.

ALICE No thanks.

FRANCIS And you keep hoping it's going to get better.

ALICE Yes, better.

FRANCIS Easier.

ALICE Certainly easier.

FRANCIS And it never does.

ALICE No.

FRANCIS It never bloody does. [Pause.] It makes you wonder.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS It makes you wonder why you bother. [Pause.] Why have
them in the first place. Why not just . . . just, you know.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS It's true isn't it?

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS Everything I say.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS It's true. Every bloody word.

ALICE Yes.

ROBIN How are things now?

FRANCIS Better.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS I'd say, on the whole, things are better.

ALICE When she came out of hospital we were a bit worried at first, weren't we.

FRANCIS Yes.

ROBIN Worried about?

ALICE Well, we weren't sure if we could cope, or she . . . Dawn, if Dawn could cope.

ROBIN And how is it?

ALICE We're managing, aren't we.

FRANCIS Managing, yes, managing, we always manage, somehow.

ROBIN Any particular, difficulties?

ALICE Not really.

FRANCIS No.

ALICE You know what Dawn's like.

FRANCIS She flies off the handle sometimes.

ALICE We just ignore her, you know, let her get on with it.

ROBIN And does that work?

ALICE What?

ROBIN Ignoring her – does that work?

ALICE Yes, I suppose it does. She calms down eventually.

FRANCIS The more you argue the worse it gets.

ALICE It works for us. We just want a quiet life. [To FRANCIS.] It's getting better though, isn't it?

FRANCIS Yes.

ALICE She's better now.

FRANCIS Yes, much better.

ALICE [Ingratiatingly to ROBIN.] Thanks to you. [Pause.] I must say, you've done wonders with her. She talks now, and everything.

ROBIN Good.

ALICE It gave us such a shock when she wouldn't talk, or eat, or, anything. What's it you called it?

ROBIN Catatonic withdrawal.

ALICE That's it.

ROBIN It doesn't usually last long, but it's best to admit people who are in that condition.

FRANCIS I told you she'd come round.

ALICE We couldn't just leave her!

FRANCIS She'd come round eventually.

ALICE She wasn't speaking, she wasn't eating, she was messing the sheets, she'd just do it, where she was lying.

FRANCIS Make her clean it up.

ALICE You couldn't make her do anything. It was like talking to a vegetable, you know, you can't have forgotten, you were just as scared as me, it was as if you weren't there, it was as if she wasn't there. Still, she's better now.

FRANCIS Much better.

ROBIN

Good.

[ROBIN swivels to face the front and jots down some notes.

FRANCIS buries his head in the newspaper.

Scene 3 (Now.)

[Pause. ROBIN addresses the audience.]

ROBIN

What's the point? What's the point? I get up. I wash . . . this skin, this . . . skin, which is no longer, comfortable, doesn't seem, right, anymore. I put on my clothes. Go to work. Eat. Each day I do these things. And all the time I feel, am I entitled to this? Why do I continue to do this? Why?

I keep going over it in my mind. The past, the then and now.

The present. How much now illuminates then. Casting a different light. Making obvious the hidden.

I feel a fool. I didn't see it coming. Her obsession with . . . but that is just what it seemed.

The truth is, the present changes the past. Then I was just doing a job, well or ill, now I'm a fool, a culpable fool.

The police, naturally, wanted to speak to me. I could read their thoughts. Huh, sounds like something Dawn would have said. But it was written on their faces so clearly. It said, why didn't you, the one who is suppose to know, stop this, do something.

[Pause.]

They knew it all, could see it clearly, because they hadn't been there.

Scene 4 (Then.) [DAWN enters the sitting room.]

ALICE What was it like at the day centre today?

DAWN Okay.

ALICE Got on all right, did you?

DAWN Yeah.

ALICE Make friends?

DAWN Friends?

ALICE Yes, are they friendly?

DAWN S'ppose so. [Pause.] They've got a metal workshop!

ALICE Really. That's nice.

DAWN I'm making a sculpture.

ALICE That's nice, dear. What sort of sculpture?

DAWN It's sort of half round.

ALICE Oh, one of those abstracts, is it.

DAWN It's hollow.

ALICE That's nice.

DAWN It's hard but they're helping me with it.

ALICE I'm sure you'll get it right in the end. It's amazing what a little perseverance can do. [Pause.] Dawn?

DAWN Yes?

ALICE You like Ms. Crawford, don't you.

DAWN Yes. She's interested in me.

ALICE Yes, I'm sure she is.

DAWN She likes me.

ALICE Yes, yes, lots of people like you.

DAWN No they don't.

ALICE Yes they do. [Pause.] Anyway, I was wondering, what sort of

things do you talk about with Ms. Crawford?

DAWN Stuff.

ALICE Yes. And?

DAWN Just stuff.

ALICE I wouldn't want you giving her the wrong idea about us.

DAWN [Silence.]

ALICE People often jump to wrong conclusions, don't they.

DAWN [Silence.]

ALICE Anyway, I'm glad we've had this little chat.

Scene 5 (Then.) [Robin's interview room. Robin and Dawn sit in silence.]

ROBIN You don't have to talk to me. [Beat.] We can just sit here.

 [Robin and Dawn sit in silence.]

DAWN [Silence.]

ROBIN But if there is anything. [Beat.] Anything on your mind,
 whatever it is, you can tell me.

DAWN My parents didn't want me.

ROBIN What makes you think that?

DAWN I know. I know.

ROBIN How do you know?

DAWN I heard. When I was in the womb I heard them talking.

ROBIN In the womb?

DAWN Yes, yes, I remember, I have memories.

ROBIN In the womb?

DAWN Yes, yes, I remember them talking, talking about getting rid of,
 'it'; talking about an abortion.

ROBIN What did they say?

DAWN They couldn't decide. They kept talking it over and they

couldn't make up their minds. They didn't know what to do, so I'm here. But they didn't want me, they just couldn't decide.

ROBIN How does that make you feel?

DAWN I feel angry.

ROBIN That they didn't want you?

DAWN That they couldn't make up their minds. [Beat.] Why couldn't they decide?

ROBIN It can't be easy.

DAWN S'ppose not.

ROBIN And you remember being in the womb.

DAWN Yes.

ROBIN [Beat.] What was it like?

DAWN I don't remember.

ROBIN You must have some kind of -

DAWN If I think about it I can't breathe, I feel trapped, stifled. I don't want to think about it.

ROBIN That's okay, you don't have to talk about it if you don't want to.

DAWN [Silence.]

ROBIN Let's talk about some other childhood memories.

DAWN [Silence.]

ROBIN Think of something nice.

DAWN Nice?

ROBIN Something pleasant [beat] from your past.

DAWN I can't remember anything.

ROBIN There must be something. Something vivid?

DAWN [Pause.] I suppose I remember Dreamland.

ROBIN What's dreamland?

DAWN Dreamland is this amusement park in Margate. Every summer we used to go on holiday to Margate. My parents didn't like Dreamland, too noisy, but I did.

ROBIN What did you like about it?

DAWN They had this man, he guessed your weight, and every year I'd go and have my weight guessed, and he always got it right. He felt you all over, quickly, efficiently, impersonally, he felt your bones through your skin. When he felt my bones I knew, for the first time, I really existed.

Scene 6 (Then.) The sitting room. [Pause. ROBIN turns to the parent's area.]

ROBIN What was she like as a child?

FRANCIS She was always a good girl.

ALICE Good girl.

FRANCIS Wasn't she.

ALICE Yes, she was a good girl.

FRANCIS Never misbehaved much, did she.

ALICE No.

FRANCIS Just the usual.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS The usual things: nothing special.

ALICE No.

ROBIN Did she have many friends?

FRANCIS Friends?

ROBIN Friends.

FRANCIS I suppose so.

ALICE Yes, yes she had lots of friends.

FRANCIS Popular.

ALICE She was popular.

ROBIN What kind of friends?

ALICE She knew lots of people at the church, didn't she.

FRANCIS Yes, lots. She loved to go to church. When she stopped going the vicar said he didn't know how he was going to cope without her.

ALICE She helped in the Sunday school – with the little ones.

ROBIN I see.

FRANCIS She had lots of friends. She was normal.

ALICE Normal.

FRANCIS Perfectly normal.

ALICE Like us.

FRANCIS I always thought she took after your mother.

ALICE Really?

FRANCIS Yes.

ALICE Do you think so?

FRANCIS Umm.

ALICE I hadn't noticed. I suppose –

FRANCIS Anyway, she was normal.

ROBIN No signs –

FRANCIS No signs at all.

ALICE None.

ROBIN I see. Did she often have friends round to the house?

ALICE No.

FRANCIS She could have.

ALICE Of course she could have.

FRANCIS But she didn't

ALICE Didn't want to.

ROBIN Why do you think that was?

ALICE I don't know.

FRANCIS You'd have to ask her, wouldn't you.

DAWN They never liked my friends.

FRANCIS She had some funny friends.

ALICE But we put up with them.

DAWN It's a wonder I had any.

ALICE For her sake.

DAWN Any at all.

FRANCIS Bloody peculiar friends.

DAWN They were so hostile.

FRANCIS What was the name of that funny boy?

DAWN Couldn't wait to get out.

FRANCIS Never spoke.

ALICE Michael.

DAWN Got so I didn't want to take anyone home.

FRANCIS Michael! That's it. He never spoke.

DAWN In the end.

FRANCIS We had to put up with a lot.

DAWN It was like living in a prison.

FRANCIS They wouldn't even say hello.

ALICE Never spoke, most of them.

DAWN H.M. Prison Priory Gardens.

FRANCIS Just hear them thundering up the stairs. Always slammed the door.

ALICE Made me jump.

FRANCIS Then the music would start up.

DAWN I just wanted to be left alone.

FRANCIS Always loud, way too loud. Thumping away. Unnecessary, wasn't it?

DAWN Be myself.

ALICE Unnecessary, yes. Gave me a headache.

FRANCIS I tried to talk to them. I did didn't I?

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS But you couldn't get anywhere.

DAWN Be left alone.

FRANCIS They just weren't interested.

DAWN Be myself.

Scene 7 (Then.) [Memories. Brief very bright light on stage, like an exaggerated camera flash, followed by projection of photograph onto back wall. The photographs do not correspond to the description by Dawn but are instead worrying or traumatic images suggestive of physical, emotional or psychological vulnerability. For instance:]

SFX

DAWN

[Flash!, a frightened little Jewish boy holding up his hands as a Nazi soldier stands nearby with his gun.]

Dawn aged 5. It is winter. She wears a long overcoat with big buttons all the way down the front, and a woolly hat. She peers up at the camera reluctantly, shy, about to turn away.

SFX

DAWN

[Flash! Burnt Vietnamese girl running naked down a road after a napalm

Dawn aged 10. On the beach. She wears a one-piece swimsuit made of

attack.]

material which makes bobbly patterns all over her torso. It is her favourite thing. Waves lap her feet, the water froths around her ankles like little bracelets.

SFX

DAWN

[Flash! Close up of corpse's head with mouth open, revealing teeth.]

Dawn aged 8. She squints at the camera. The glare from the sun blinds her. Her mouth forms an involuntary sneer, revealing perfectly formed small white teeth.

SFX

DAWN

[Flash! Detail from the Isenheim Altarpiece, John the Baptist's finger points gracefully at Christ's mutilated torso.]

Dawn aged 14. She is wearing make up and the kind of outfit regarded as fashionable at the time. She's on her way to the school disco. She is smiling but her eyes look worried.

SFX

DAWN

[Flash! A condemned man in handcuffs looks out defiantly at the photographer (Alexander Gardner portrait of Lewis Payne 1865).]

Dawn aged 17. She sits on a bench and glances up at the camera. Her hair is short. Her expression is blank. It says, you can photograph me if you want, but I won't be here, not me, not when you want me.

Scene 8 (Then.)

[Robin's interview room.]

ROBIN

I hear you're getting on well at the day centre.

[Pause. Dawn does not respond.]

Do you enjoy it?

DAWN Yeah.

ROBIN Good.

DAWN [Dawn hesitates then quickly pulls out a package and shyly hands it to Robin.]
I made you something.

ROBIN Thank you, Dawn. That's very thoughtful of you.

DAWN [Pause.] Aren't you going to open it?

ROBIN Yes. Of course.
[Robin opens the package. It is a roughly sculpted clay figurine of a naked woman with exaggerated breasts and genitalia.]
It's lovely, thank you.

DAWN I knew you'd like it.

ROBIN Yes, it's lovely.

DAWN I made it specially for you.

ROBIN Thanks. [Pause.] Shall we start?

DAWN Okay.

ROBIN How have you been getting on with your parents?

DAWN [Silence.]

ROBIN Has anything been bothering you . . . any thoughts.

DAWN Yes.

ROBIN Go on.

DAWN I've been thinking about those wild boys?

ROBIN What?

DAWN Children who, somehow, you know, have been abandoned in the wild and brought up by animals, or something.

ROBIN Hard to believe.

DAWN But it's true, it does happen.

ROBIN Yes, but –

FRANCIS May I illustrate?

ROBIN What?

FRANCIS My point, I'd just like to illustrate my point.

ROBIN Certainly.

FRANCIS Every Sunday I wash my car.

ROBIN Really.

FRANCIS Yes, every Sunday, without fail. That's routine. You should see the state of some people's cars, never get washed from one month to the next. That's my point. If you don't have a routine everything goes to pot.

ROBIN About your daughter –

FRANCIS She's another example.

ROBIN What?

FRANCIS Never could get her into a routine, could we?

ALICE No.

FRANCIS Her school work was all over the place.

ALICE Still, she did it.

FRANCIS Yes, she did it, eventually, but she had no routine.

DAWN [SFX during DAWN's speech. Projected onto the back wall, speeded up footage from a CCTV camera: people hurrying along, cars speeding by.]

Surveillance, surveillance, you're under surveillance, wherever you go whatever you do, you're under surveillance. As you walk down the street, stand at the corner and look left and right, you're on candid camera, you're caught in the lens, you're a bug on their windshield; watchable, rewindable, admissible in

evidence. As you tap in your PIN number there's a little lens, clocking you from an unflattering angle. Surveillance, surveillance, always surveillance, you're under surveillance. And it's all for your own good.

FRANCIS I blame her friends. She had some peculiar friends.

DAWN Sometimes I feel like an advert.

FRANCIS They probably got her interested in all that stuff.

DAWN But I'm always the before and never the after.

ALICE She'd never've thought of it on her own.

DAWN I'm the girl with split ends.

ALICE It was that boyfriend.

DAWN I'm the girl with dry hair.

FRANCIS He put all kinds of ideas into her head.

DAWN I'm the girl with greasy skin.

ALICE I started to get worried when I found all those books, in her room.

DAWN They were always spying on me.

ROBIN What sort of books?

DAWN It was like living in enemy territory.

ALICE History books, I suppose you'd call them.

ROBIN That doesn't sound . . . unusual.

ALICE Well, they were all a certain type of book.

ROBIN Yes – and?

ALICE She was obsessed with revolutionaries, terrorists, this Baader-Meinhof thing, all that kind; that's what the books were about.

DAWN Sometimes I feel like a pipe-bomb.

ROBIN I see.

DAWN Full of nails.

ALICE It got me worried.

DAWN Just full of nails, waiting to burst out.

ALICE It wasn't normal.

DAWN It's easy.

ALICE She was obsessed.

DAWN You can download instructions

ALICE It was unhealthy.

DAWN On how to make one.

ALICE That's what I thought.

DAWN From the internet.

ALICE You thought so too, didn't you?

DAWN But who needs instructions?

FRANCIS Yes, I thought it was very odd.

DAWN When you're a pipe-bomb waiting to go off.

ALICE I don't know why she found it so interesting.

DAWN I'm Dawn [beat] download me.

ALICE [Pause.] I used to try and draw her out of herself. Get her away from those morbid thoughts.

[Sudden flashback. To DAWN, as if calling up the stairs of their home.]

Dawn! Why don't you come down the shops with me?

DAWN No thanks.

ALICE Come on, it'll do you good.

DAWN I don't think so.

ALICE Come on, you'll like it.

DAWN I don't want to go shopping!

FRANCIS Well it sounded critical!

ROBIN What did you think of Dawn's boyfriend?

FRANCIS I never liked him.

ROBIN Any particular reason?

ALICE It was him, that boy, he turned her mind. She was never the same after she met him.

FRANCIS He put all kinds of stupid ideas into her head.

ALICE They used to sit up in her room for hours.

FRANCIS Never knew what they were up to.

ROBIN Did she go out with him for long?

FRANCIS No, I suppose it wasn't that long.

ALICE It felt long enough.

ROBIN But you think he had a big influence over her.

FRANCIS Yes, I do. Well, I'm speculating, naturally, I don't know what they spoke about when they were alone together, it wasn't as if we spied on them or anything, but I never trusted him, there was just something about him.

ROBIN Anything in particular?

FRANCIS Well, as I said before, he never spoke, you couldn't get anything out of him. [ROBIN swivels to face the audience and makes notes. ALICE reads.]

Scene 10 (Then.) [Thoughts.]

DAWN [To herself.] I'm walking down a long corridor, so long I can't see the end. All the rooms are empty. Nobody there at all. I've arrived too late for the party and there's no one to tell me where to go. I'm never the right girl in the right place. [Pause.] I can't remember why I'm here, but I know there must be a reason.

There's always a reason. Isn't there.

FRANCIS

[To himself.] Some bastard's gone and scratched the car. I noticed it when I was polishing her up this morning. Bastard! It makes you wonder if it's worth trying, having standards, nobody else does. [Pause.] I looked at the car, and I felt so sad. That scratch, it really got to me. Then I said to myself, it's just a car, just a car. [Pause.] But it's the only thing in my life that's really mine. [Pause.] I'd do it all differently now. If I had the chance. I'd just do my own thing. I wouldn't get married. I wouldn't have kids. I'd just do things for myself. Carefree. Be carefree. What a thing! What a word! Carefree. [Pause.] I wish things could be all right. Just all right, that's all I ask.

FRANCIS

It isn't a lot to ask for, is it?

ROBIN

[To herself.] Sometimes I think, why bother? What difference is it going to

ROBIN

make? Is anyone going to come out happier; saner; more . . . complete? Why delve into all this . . . all this . . . mayhem. You can't cure people of life, can you. The more I learn the less I know. Isn't that funny? Big joke. I should laugh, but I don't.

ALICE

[To herself. During this speech Dawn cradles the "sculpture" she is making at the day centre in her arms like a baby.]
When you get married everyone expects you to have a baby, want a baby, need a baby. But they don't warn you what it's like, they don't tell you anything. And you can't imagine.

DAWN

[Pause. Rocking the "sculpture" like a baby. To herself.]
It's my baby. I can feel it growing inside, it's waiting for the moment, the right moment. I'm looking after it. Nurturing it. My

gift, it's my secret gift.

[She hears someone approach and hides the "sculpture". She turns the pages of a photograph album on her desk.]

ROBIN [Turning to DAWN.] Hello Dawn, what've you got there?

DAWN It's my photographs.

ROBIN Really.

DAWN My favourites.

ROBIN Can I see them?

DAWN No.

ROBIN Why not? Are they secret?

DAWN No.

ROBIN Family photos?

DAWN My family. Baader-Meinhof family.

ROBIN Let me see them?

DAWN You don't want to see them.

ROBIN Yes I do. Show them to me.

DAWN D'you really want to see them?

ROBIN Yes, of course.

DAWN All right.

[As they look at the photograph album the relevant photograph is projected onto the back wall.]

This is Irene Goergens, she's so pretty, I wish I was as pretty as her, she's good at driving getaway cars and rescuing people.

ROBIN I see.

DAWN They all have their own special skills, see. This is Gudrun Ensslin, she was good at starting fires and blowing things up.

ROBIN Really.

DAWN And this is Holger Meins. He was good at robbing banks, shooting the police and blowing things up! [Pause.] He starved himself to death in prison.

ROBIN Oh dear, such a waste.

DAWN He rejected everything, everything.

ROBIN Tell me, Dawn, what is it you find so attractive about them?

DAWN They broke the rules.

ROBIN Is that good?

DAWN Yes. Yes, it's good for me. I always followed the rules, that's where I went wrong.

ROBIN What goes wrong, when you follow the rules?

DAWN You don't exist, not anymore, when you follow the rules all the time. That's what I did. I had no existence, I had to follow the rules, so that people wouldn't notice, mustn't let people notice you're different, they're easy to fool, they were fooled, they believed I existed, but I knew I didn't, not really.

ROBIN There are lots of rules, aren't there Dawn.

DAWN Yes.

ROBIN But they're not all the same. The rules the Baader-Meinhof broke, they were different rules. They killed people.

DAWN Yes.

ROBIN What do you think about that?

DAWN [Silence.]

ROBIN I think what they did was futile. What do you think?

DAWN I like it.

ROBIN Why?

DAWN They didn't play the game.

ROBIN What game?

DAWN Everyone plays the game. What's in it for me, what chance
have I got, what are the odds?

ROBIN You think that's what people do?

DAWN Oh, that's what people do.

ROBIN But they didn't?

DAWN They had impossible odds and did it anyway. They took on the
whole country. They didn't care about what the odds were,
they just did it.

ROBIN Isn't that unrealistic?

DAWN Yes!

ROBIN And you find this –

DAWN I like it, I like it that they didn't care that what they were doing
was . . . was destined to fail . . . was, was attempting the
impossible.

ROBIN But they murdered people . . . terrorised a whole nation.

DAWN Yes!

ROBIN And you think that is . . . heroic?

DAWN Yes! They didn't care if they died. They just did it!

[ROBIN turns to the parent's area. DAWN to the audience.]

DAWN Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin liked burning down
department stores. All those goodies, all that merchandise,
consumer durables, fashion accessories, soft furnishing,
lingerie, all those bargains, objects of desire, all gone. Knocked
down, cut price, limited offer, special discount, everything must
go, sale, sale, sale!

Scene 11 (Now.) Sitting Room.

FRANCIS I nearly didn't answer the door. I thought it was reporters again. Then I thought it might be the police.

ROBIN Thank you for seeing me. [Awkward pause.] I had to come. To see you. Again.

FRANCIS It seems strange. Seeing you. Now. It was always about Dawn.

ROBIN Yes.

ALICE It's still about Dawn.

ROBIN I wanted to see if I could help.

FRANCIS Help?

ROBIN Yes. I know it seems . . . I know it's -

ALICE Past help.

ROBIN If this is too painful for you, I could always -

FRANCIS No. Stay. Stay if you like. [Pause.] I don't know what we can say now.

ALICE There's no point talking about it. It's over.

ROBIN Sometimes talking can help.

ALICE We've done talking. Talking did no good.

FRANCIS Don't upset yourself, Alice. [To ROBIN.] We all did our best. We did. You did. It's all that can be expected, isn't it.

ROBIN Yes.

ALICE You know what it was like. You know what Dawn was like. You know she didn't mean any harm, not really. She was just, she was very confused about things.

ROBIN That's right.

ALICE You ask yourself. Could I have done anything, done something different, something to make a difference. But you don't know,

do you, you never know; that's the problem, you go through life
. . . not knowing.

FRANCIS Don't upset yourself.

ALICE I can't stop thinking about it; I don't want to think about it but I
just can't –

FRANCIS There, there –

ALICE Stop. I can't, always, I'm always –

FRANCIS Don't distress yourself.

ALICE What am I supposed to do! Don't distress yourself! Don't,
don't, oh God, what, then, can I do?

FRANCIS I didn't mean –

ALICE You'd just like me to shut up.

FRANCIS Now then –

ALICE But I don't want to shut up. I don't want to shut up and I don't
want to have to say anything, I just wish things were . . . right . .
. the way they're supposed to be.

Scene 12 (Then.) [DAWN in her room. To the audience.]

DAWN Everybody's made of glass. But you can't tell them or they
think you're mad. They're like those little glass animals in
mum's cabinet. I can see right through them. But I mustn't
touch them. If I touch them they'll break.

ROBIN [Enter ROBIN.] Your parents are worried about you.

DAWN They worry about everything.

ROBIN Why do you think they're worried?

DAWN It's what they're supposed to do.

ROBIN What?

DAWN It's what's expected. They always do what's expected.

ROBIN Do you think that's all it is?

DAWN Parents are supposed to worry. That's what they're there for. If they don't worry they don't care, do they.

ROBIN What do you think bothers them most?

DAWN I won't do what they want.

ROBIN And that's it?

DAWN I always have to do what they want. If I don't I'm not Dawn any more.

ROBIN What?

DAWN If I don't do what they say I'm not Dawn. They say, that's not our Dawn, Dawn isn't like that, our Dawn wouldn't behave like that, our Dawn wouldn't dress like that, our Dawn wouldn't speak like that, our Dawn.

ROBIN But you're not their Dawn.

DAWN No, I'm not, I'm not their Dawn. [Pause.] I'm not your Dawn either.

ROBIN Whose Dawn are you?

DAWN I don't know.

ROBIN Does it worry you?

DAWN I want to find out, I do. I will find out.

ROBIN Do you want me to help you?

DAWN No. [Pause.] Can I ask you a question?

ROBIN Yes, of course you can.

DAWN Do you like your job?

ROBIN I beg your pardon?

DAWN This. Your job. Do you like it?

ROBIN Yes. I suppose I do. I find it . . . interesting.

DAWN Interesting?

ROBIN Yes.

DAWN I don't.

ROBIN What?

DAWN I don't find your job interesting.

ROBIN Well, you're not supposed to –

DAWN I want to stop now.

Scene 13 (Then.) Sitting room.

ROBIN Why do you think Dawn is interested in the Baader-Meinhof gang?

ALICE I suppose she thinks it's exciting.

FRANCIS She wants to shock.

ALICE I don't know what she sees in them. I don't think they're very glamorous. They all had spots.

FRANCIS Dawn had spots.

ALICE Yes, maybe that's it. [Pause.] I suppose they were quite exciting.

FRANCIS Murdering people!

ALICE Well, driving around in stolen cars, planting bombs, shooting guns, like Bonnie and Clyde.

FRANCIS They want to grow up, all of them.

ROBIN What are your memories of Dawn, as a little girl?

FRANCIS She was such a lovely child, our Dawn. So many happy memories; playing in the sand, running round the garden, I used to love watching her.

ALICE She was such a lovely child. She used to love playing with her Father.

FRANCIS Yes.

ALICE You always played a lot. She preferred playing with you, I remember feeling jealous, you looked so happy together. Then it suddenly stopped.

FRANCIS Did it?

ALICE Yes, I remember, I remember Dawn coming up to me and saying, Why won't Daddy play with me any more?

FRANCIS Did she? Did she say that?

ALICE Yes, I must have told you.

FRANCIS I don't remember.

ALICE She was quite upset, at the time. But she didn't give up, she kept climbing up, wanting to play, but you pushed her away.

FRANCIS I was probably busy.

ALICE She was quite upset. She used to like playing with you so much. [To ROBIN.] Then he suddenly stopped.

FRANCIS I don't remember this.

ALICE I do.

FRANCIS You can't keep playing forever.

ALICE It wasn't that.

FRANCIS What?

ALICE She used to climb all over you. I remember her saying, I'm going to climb on Daddy.

FRANCIS She thought I was a mountain.

ALICE You were a mountain, her mountain.

FRANCIS Yes, well.

ALICE But then you wouldn't let her climb on you any more.

FRANCIS Well, it's not always easy, is it, being climbed on.

ALICE Of course, we never saw eye to eye on how to bring up Dawn.

FRANCIS What?

ALICE We had different approaches.

FRANCIS It's news to me.

ALICE Well, you don't listen do you?

FRANCIS Not listen?

ALICE No. I know you don't listen so I've given up trying.

FRANCIS Of course I listen.

ALICE No.

FRANCIS This is ridiculous.

ALICE Once you've made up your mind.

FRANCIS I do nothing but listen.

ALICE An earthquake couldn't shake it.

FRANCIS Nothing but listen to nonsense.

ALICE He's so stubborn.

FRANCIS Listen, listen, listen.

ALICE You're not listening now!

FRANCIS If there was something worth listening to I'd listen!

ROBIN [Awkward silence.]

What were things like in the early days, bringing up Dawn?

ALICE Oh, all right, no problems really. She was a good baby.

FRANCIS Yes, she slept a lot, didn't she.

ALICE Yes, she was quite easy, you could say.

FRANCIS It was only later.

ALICE A lot later.

FRANCIS I often wonder whether that thing you had didn't affect Dawn more than we realised at the time.

ALICE What?

FRANCIS The thing.

ALICE Oh, I shouldn't think so.

ROBIN What sort of 'thing' was this?

ALICE It was nothing, really.

FRANCIS It was serious at the time.

ALICE Well, I was very ill, I was laid up, wasn't I, after having Dawn.

FRANCIS She couldn't cope.

ALICE I was ill.

FRANCIS Dawn stayed with Alice's mother for a bit.

ALICE I was so ill. I couldn't get out of bed; I just lay there.

FRANCIS I was busy working, of course.

ALICE It was a nightmare. It couldn't have happened at a worse time.

FRANCIS I used to go around and visit Dawn every evening, after work.

ALICE Gradually I got better.

FRANCIS Then I'd come home and look after Alice.

ALICE Then we had Dawn home again.

FRANCIS It was all go then.

ALICE It's not something I like to remember.

ROBIN Interesting. [Pause.] Would it be all right if I went up and saw
Dawn now?

ALICE Yes, of course.

Scene 14 [Exit ROBIN. ALICE hesitates, waiting until she is sure ROBIN
is out of earshot. To FRANCIS.]

ALICE Why did you tell her that!

FRANCIS I thought it might help.

ALICE Some help you are.

FRANCIS She was going to ask anyway, I could tell.

ALICE Just because somebody asks doesn't mean you have to tell them!

FRANCIS I'm sorry.

ALICE We never speak of it, you know we never speak of it.

FRANCIS Sorry.

ALICE It's no use saying sorry, not now, you've told her now.

FRANCIS [Faintly.] Sorry.

ROBIN [ROBIN swivels so she is facing the front. To herself.]

I nearly didn't take on this case.

It came at a time . . . a time when I was . . . questioning . . . after the break-up with Kay.

God that was a mess.

There's something intriguing about Dawn.

At a . . . at a personal level she both attracts and repels. She reminds me of a feral cat, one of those strays that turn up and want food and affection but are too nervous, to untrusting, to get it.

I'm aware, of course, of certain feelings . . . feelings which she . . . we . . .

Typical examples of transference, in many ways.

DAWN [To the audience.]

Robin said she'll take me to Margate! We'll walk along the beach. There won't be anyone around. No one at all. Not a soul. We'll have the beach to ourselves. And she'll hold me. She'll touch me, all over, and I'll know it's real. All real.

Always. The sun will set. The sea. The sea . . . the sea, it will

keep coming and going, and we'll be there, forever, on the beach, just the two of us. And she'll show me everything. And I'll learn everything. It will all be all right. That's how it'll be.

Scene 15 (Then.) [ROBIN turns to parent's area.]

FRANCIS We've discussed this and there's something we think we should tell you.

ROBIN Yes?

FRANCIS Well, I know this must sound odd but . . . Dawn is telepathic.
[Pause.] She can read people's thoughts.

ROBIN Read thoughts?

FRANCIS Yes, we tested her, didn't we.

DAWN Everybody's watching you.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS We did some experiments.

DAWN All the time.

ROBIN What kind of experiments?

ALICE We had to keep an eye on her.

DAWN All the time.

FRANCIS We started to worry what she might do.

ALICE You can't be too careful.

FRANCIS

DAWN

It was all for her own good

It was all for my own good.

ROBIN What kind of experiments?

FRANCIS Well, I'd be reading the newspaper, like this, and Dawn would be in the room. But I was only pretending to read, really I'd be directing my thoughts at her. It might be, oh, it might be, say she was biting her nails – she had a habit of biting her nails a

lot – and I'd think: Stop that! And Dawn, she'd say: Stop, stop, stop it, stop doing it. [To ALICE.] That's right, isn't it.

ALICE Yes.

ROBIN I see.

FRANCIS Other times I really would be reading the newspaper, to myself, in my head, not aloud, and Dawn would say: Same old news, same old things. And that was just the thought that was going through my head at the time. [Pause.] Uncanny, isn't it.

Scene 16 [Robin's interview room.]

DAWN The Baader-Meinhof group believed in Free Love.

ROBIN Did they.

DAWN They lived in a commune. One happy family. Doing it.

ROBIN Those kind of ideas are rather out of date, these days, aren't they.

DAWN They thought the family was just another part of the State apparatus of repression. They chose their family, they didn't just get stuck with it like everyone else. My parents think sex is bad.

ROBIN What makes you think that?

DAWN It's obvious. The way they talk about it. The way they look when something comes on the tele.

ROBIN Perhaps it's a subject they find embarrassing.

DAWN Yeah.

ROBIN It embarrasses lots of people.

DAWN But not you.

ROBIN Pardon?

DAWN It doesn't embarrass you.

ROBIN No.

DAWN Because you're a professional. It's your job, isn't it, to delve, to creep and crawl into all those places, all those filthy dirty hidden little places where people don't want to go.

ROBIN I wouldn't put it like that.

DAWN You're a sort of sewer worker, really.

ROBIN No.

DAWN Dirty job but someone's got to do it, eh?

ROBIN There's nothing dirty about sex.

DAWN No?

(Pause.)

I don't suppose anything shocks you. I expect you've heard it all, seen it all, all that stuff. What sort of things do your clients, your "customers" get up to?

ROBIN It's confidential.

DAWN Shame. I could do with a good story. Go on, just a quick one.

ROBIN You wouldn't like it if I told other people about our conversations, would you.

DAWN No.

ROBIN That's why they're confidential.

DAWN Nice isn't it. Knowing it's all "confidential". Nice and cosy, you and me.

ROBIN Exactly.

DAWN Do you think I'm attractive?

ROBIN You're a very pretty young woman.

DAWN D'you think so? Really? You're not just saying that.

ROBIN No.

DAWN People say things just because it's what they think you want to hear.

ROBIN You're very attractive.

DAWN You wouldn't lie to me?

ROBIN No.

DAWN D'you want to kiss me?

ROBIN What?

DAWN Kiss me. You can, if you like.

ROBIN No.

DAWN I thought you said I was attractive!

ROBIN You are attractive.

DAWN Go on then.

ROBIN It would not be right.

DAWN Why not?

ROBIN It would be . . . it's not something.

DAWN Bet you want to really.

ROBIN Regardless of what I may or may not want, which is beside the point -

DAWN Go on.

ROBIN It's against the rules.

DAWN I won't tell. No one'd know. It'd be "confidential".

ROBIN No.

DAWN You're not a man.

ROBIN What?

DAWN You're not a man. No one will suspect.

ROBIN I like you Dawn, I do like you, and I want to help you -

DAWN Kiss me.

ROBIN I can't do that.

DAWN Then you can't help me.

ROBIN Dawn -

DAWN Just a kiss. That's all I want. It's just a little thing.

Scene 17 (Then.) [The sitting room.]

ALICE You like Ms. Crawford, don't you.

DAWN Her name's Robin.

ALICE I always think of that as a boy's name.

DAWN It's both.

ALICE Yes, I know it's both, but -

FRANCIS On first name terms are we? Very pally, I must say.

DAWN It's her name.

ALICE Yes, yes, of course it is. I expect they all call one another by their first names, don't they.

DAWN Robin.

FRANCIS She's Ms. bloody Crawford to me; always will be.

DAWN Like a bird.

FRANCIS She's not bloody bird-like if you ask me. Coming round here, snooping, stomping about in her trendy boots.

ALICE I thought she was very nice.

FRANCIS You think everybody's nice.

ALICE There's no need to -

FRANCIS Jack the bloody Ripper could come round and you'd say he was nice.

ALICE No need to have an argument.

FRANCIS I wasn't arguing, I was -

DAWN She is like a bird.

FRANCIS What?

DAWN She's free.

Scene 18 (Then.) [ROBIN'S interview room. ROBIN and DAWN.]

ROBIN Your parents tell me you've stopped going to the day centre.

DAWN [Silence.]

ROBIN They miss you, at the day centre. [Pause.] Didn't you like it?

DAWN No.

ROBIN I thought you liked it. Your mother said you looked forward to going.

DAWN I've changed my mind.

ROBIN Has something happened which you'd like to tell me about?

DAWN No.

ROBIN I thought you liked doing the metal work a lot.

DAWN It's too difficult.

ROBIN I'd like you to start going again.

DAWN I won't.

ROBIN If something's bothering you –

DAWN There's nothing, nothing 'bothering' me. I'm fine, fine, really. I just don't need it any more. I don't need to go. Why don't we go away?

ROBIN What?

DAWN I want to leave home. I've had enough.

ROBIN I'll see if I can get you a place in a hostel.

DAWN I don't want to live in a hostel. I want to move in with you.

ROBIN Really, Dawn, be realistic.

DAWN But I thought you liked me?

ROBIN I do.

DAWN Well then.

ROBIN I haven't got any room.

DAWN You promised.

ROBIN I said maybe. [beat.] We'll see.

DAWN That's what people always say.

ROBIN I can't say -

DAWN When they want to get out of something.

ROBIN I'm sorry. I'm not ready.

DAWN Why do people always lie? Why can't they be honest? I thought you were different.

ROBIN Dawn, listen -

DAWN No. You listen! You're the same as everyone else. You just like to pretend you're different. I hate you.

ROBIN Dawn, I . . .

[Exit DAWN.]

Scene 19 (Then.) [DAWN in her bedroom. She stares at herself in a mirror, adopting various provocative poses, running her fingers through her hair and along her body. As she performs in front of the mirror.]

DAWN We could've lived in Margate.

I would've looked after you.

Dreamland.

Real-land.

Dreamland.

We could've lived in Dreamland. And we'd be so real. I'd be real, you'd be real, *it* would all be real.

Real love, not fake love, not pretend love, but real love.

I'd feel your bones through your skin, and I'd know. I'd guess your weight. The weight of your soul. And it would be sooo heavy, so *heavy*. I'd never, ever, lift it, or leave it, I'd please it, never leave it.

(ANGRY) But now ... but now, now it'll never happen.

[DAWN smashes the mirror.]

I'll make you wish you never met me. Bet you do. Bet you do. Bet you do already.

(PLEADING) Don't leave me!

I'm hurting. Don't leave me. Can't you see? Can't you see? Can't you see?

(ANGRY) I'll show you. I'll twist your head off! I'll show you.

You can see what's inside of me, can't you, can't you. I'll show you what's inside of you!

I'll twist your head off. I'll twist your head off. I'll reach in, reach in, reach right in, and I'll pull out your soul see, yeah, I'll pull out

your soul and then you'll see, then you'll see, then you'll see *my* injuries, then you'll see *my* injuries!

Scene 20 (Then.) [ALICE and FRANCIS talk to ROBIN in the sitting room. DAWN is in her bedroom.]

ALICE We had to keep an eye on her.

FRANCIS You never knew what she might do.

ALICE It was for her own good.

FRANCIS For her protection.

ALICE Anything can happen, can't it, these days.

FRANCIS We had to keep a watch on her for her own good.

DAWN Spying, they were spying.

FRANCIS She accused us of spying on her.

DAWN Always spying.

FRANCIS Of course we denied it.

DAWN Undercover.

FRANCIS She was completely paranoid. Accusing us of something like that.

DAWN You have to learn to be cunning.

FRANCIS She wasn't to be trusted, you see, making wild accusations like that.

ROBIN Why did you feel you couldn't trust her.

FRANCIS She was always getting into trouble.

ALICE Well, I don't think it's a question of trust.

FRANCIS Unsuitable people.

ALICE I don't think we didn't trust her.

FRANCIS She used to let boys take advantage of her. She was too trusting.

ALICE Yes, she was very trusting.

FRANCIS Prepared to believe anything people told her.

ALICE I mean it's not all bad, but –

FRANCIS I used to tell her.

ALICE You can be too trusting, can't you.

FRANCIS People are always up to something.

ALICE Take it too far.

FRANCIS You've got to wise up to what they're up to.

ALICE Some people can be too suspicious.

FRANCIS What's that supposed to mean?

ALICE You make people nervous.

FRANCIS Who, me?

ALICE Yes, you're so suspicious of other people it makes them nervous.

FRANCIS No need to be nervous if they haven't got anything to hide.
[Trying to get ROBIN on his side.]
You understand that don't you.

ALICE All the same, you can carry it too far, sometimes.

FRANCIS It always comes down to my fault, doesn't it.

ALICE I didn't say that.

FRANCIS Well it sounded like it.

ALICE I didn't mean it that way.

FRANCIS [To ROBIN.] Don't you think it sounded like that?

DAWN I'm ticking. Can you hear it? The ticking. I can. I can hear it all the time. Sometimes you might think it isn't there. But it is. I know. I can feel it. Inside. The ticking inside. Like a clock. Weighing time.

Scene 21 (Then.) [ALICE, FRANCIS and ROBIN in the sitting room. DAWN in her bedroom.]

ALICE We think she's better now, don't we?

FRANCIS Yes, much better.

ALICE Thanks to you.

ROBIN It's still early days.

ALICE She thinks the world of you.

DAWN My computer's watching me. It's reporting back. It thinks it can get me. But it can't. I'm on to it. I know what it's up to. I know.

ALICE But things are much easier now. You've calmed her down.

ROBIN We'll have to see how things go.

FRANCIS If only she'd start going to the day centre again.

DAWN [To herself.] Men in suits. It's all down to men in suits. [Pause.] And women in suits, them too. [Pause.] What's under those suits? If you peel away the fabric what's underneath? If you peel away the skin, what's beneath the skin? I'd like to pluck out their heart and hold it up to them and say: look, you're just an animal after all, look at it throb, watch it pulsate, it's working hard, just like you.

ALICE Perhaps you could persuade her?

ROBIN She has to make her own decisions. It's good for her to feel independent.

DAWN [DAWN reads from a brochure.]
Industry leaders will be speaking on the subject of the new dawn in global markets. Key-note addresses from prominent politicians, leading industry experts and management gurus promises a most memorable annual global markets conference.

[Puts down brochure.]

Sounds perfect!

[While speaking DAWN gets out the “baby-bomb”, which she made at the day centre, and straps it to herself while describing it. She slips a maternity dress on over it and walks down into the audience.]

The baby bomb was invented by Dierk Hoff for the Baader-Meinhof gang. The bomb is shaped like a swollen belly. Strapped to the body of a female member of the gang it made her look pregnant and could be smuggled into targets without raising suspicion. No awkward packages to attract attention. Nobody suspects a pregnant woman. A pregnant woman has other things on her mind. Perfect. The perfect solution.

[Lights up in the auditorium, which becomes the venue for the Global Markets conference. The audience are the delegates. Video projection onto back wall of bar charts, graphs, business presentation style imagery, company logos, all switching rapidly. Echoey voice over of announcer.]

Recorded V.O.

Will delegates please make their way to seminar room 3 where the seminar on ‘The Global Economy, the Internet and You’ is about to begin.

In seminar room 2 ‘Financial Management for a New Century’ will begin at 3:30 p.m.

[Recordings of industry speak voices. The speakers at the conference. A mixture of American and British accents. Fade down when DAWN starts speaking so that the audience can hear her.]

Recorded V.O. Future proofing investment is the only way to maintain market share and increase productivity while at the same time maintaining flexibility in a market which is becoming ever more volatile.

We are not selling, we are building relationships. A self-renewing customer base is essential for constant growth.

Constant growth can only be leveraged by forcing your competitors out of business.

Recording V.O.

DAWN

[Volume fade down so we hear Dawn above the recording.]

[DAWN walks slowly through the audience.]

Renewal and resource management will underpin our continued efforts to ensure a cleaner, healthier and more profitable future for all our partners.

It's easy, everyone makes way for a pregnant woman. I'm a career girl, I know what's what. I want everything, and I know I'm entitled. I'm inheriting the earth, and it's about time. I want a job and a family, and I want to bring my baby into the world, my gift from me to you. It's a new Dawn! It's at moments like this

you think about everything. And it's all
clear, so clear. Everything you –

[SFX: Complete blackout. Loud sound effects of explosion,
followed by crackling of fire, followed by screaming and sounds
of panic and confusion. Simultaneously the video projection on
the back wall changes from business graphics to a ball of fire
heading straight towards the audience.]

Scene 22 (Now.) [Pause. When the lights come back up DAWN is once again on
the stage with the other characters. Lighting to suggest she is
a spectral presence. In DAWN's room the Baader-Meinhof
pictures are gone, only the stuffed toys remain. DAWN
observes the other characters but they cannot see her.
DAWN's parents are tearful, comforting one another. ROBIN
sits with them. DAWN continues, calmly:]

DAWN Everything you know, everything you see, everything you love,
everything you hate, everything.

FRANCIS There's always another day, isn't there.

DAWN [While the other characters are talking DAWN quietly counts to
herself, slowly.]

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

ALICE One day at a time.

FRANCIS That's what they say.

ALICE It's all you can do.

ROBIN I'm so sorry.

FRANCIS How could we know? How could anyone know?

ALICE She was very clever.

FRANCIS You feel so guilty. All those people dead, because of our

Dawn.

ALICE Too clever for her own good.

FRANCIS How can we face the neighbours?

ALICE Everybody knows.

FRANCIS They all stare.

ALICE I get pointed out to people at the supermarket.

FRANCIS They don't speak any more, just stare.

ALICE It's got so I don't like going shopping any more.

FRANCIS How could she do this to us?

ALICE She didn't mean to. She didn't mean any harm, not Dawn, not our Dawn.

DAWN When you're with somebody, when you're with somebody, then you know, you know what you are, when you're with somebody.

FRANCIS She was always good at science, chemistry, things like that.

ALICE She liked numbers, didn't she.

FRANCIS Yes, she liked numbers.

DAWN You know what you've got with a number.

ROBIN Well, thank you for seeing me.

FRANCIS It was good of you to come round.

ROBIN It was the least I could do. Let me know if you need any help.

FRANCIS Thanks, yes, we will.

ROBIN Do you want to talk some more?

FRANCIS No.

ALICE It won't bring Dawn back, will it.

ROBIN No.

FRANCIS Of course it won't.

ALICE Nothing will bring her back.

ROBIN Have you been referred for bereavement counselling?

ALICE What?

ROBIN Counselling, for bereavement.

ALICE Yes.

FRANCIS We don't want it.

ROBIN It's there. Whenever you need it. In circumstances like these it
can often be . . . very difficult.

ALICE Difficult. Yes, difficult.

ROBIN I'd better be going.

FRANCIS Goodbye. [To ALICE.] Alice.

ALICE Goodbye.

DAWN Don't go.

FRANCIS I suppose you've got a train to catch, or something.

ROBIN I've got the car.

[ROBIN gets up to leave. She is accompanied off the stage by
FRANCIS and ALICE during the following dialogue.]

DAWN Why're you leaving? I haven't finished yet.

ROBIN If I go now I'll avoid the traffic.

DAWN You can't go now.

FRANCIS Yes, traffic can be murder . . . can't it.

DAWN Listen to me!

ROBIN Yes.

DAWN Why doesn't somebody listen to me?

FRANCIS Specially round here.

DAWN You must listen to me.

FRANCIS It's never been the same

FRANCIS

DAWN

ever since they introduced the one way system. Please, don't go, listen. You mustn't leave me!

FRANCIS Every year it gets worse.

DAWN Don't leave me.

FRANCIS

DAWN

They say it's 'improvements'.

[Calling after them.]

[Exit all the characters. DAWN alone on stage.]

Please don't go. Listen to me. Look at me. Touch me. Touch me. You have to. Mum. Dad. Don't go. Don't ignore me. Robin, I don't want to be alone. Speak to me. Look at me. Talk to me. Please. Don't go. Don't. I'll be good. I promise. Just don't leave me. Don't –

[BLAZING WHITE LIGHT – CUT TO BLACK.]

END