

## **THE ACTOR'S NIGHTMARE**

GEORGE: Oh, don't go. Maybe someone else will come out in a minute. Of course, sometimes people have soliloquies in Shakespeare. Let's just wait a moment more and maybe someone will come... Oh dear... To be or not to be, that is the question. Line. Line! Ohhhh. Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I. Whether tis nobler in the mind's eye to kill oneself, or not killing oneself, to sleep a great deal. We are such stuff as dreams are made of; and our lives are rounded by a little sleep... Line! When you call for a line, the stage manager normally gives you your next line, to refresh your memory. Line!

## **REASONS TO BE PRETTY**

STEPH: Not saying this is full of profound insight or anything but any woman I know, like, my age or younger, she's gonna be super upset if she heard what I did. That her boyfriend thinks her face is "OK." You can't swallow that down and find a way to come up smiling or anything, you know what I'm saying? There is just no good way to take that! (*Beat.*) *Why* do we feel that way, though, I wonder? Is it maybe TV or magazines or something, our moms telling us that we're pretty no matter what we look like ... I'm not sure. I just know that women throw everything they've got into their physical being, and a main part of that — *the* main part — is the face. (*Beat.*) I go nuts if I still break out on my chin or anything, carry tweezers in my purse, and I'm not even, like, all crazy about it like a lot of my friends are ... and every one of them, the ones that I've called, at least, they all said to dump him. They did. Because if he's willing to say that, even to a friend, then you can bet he's probably thinking even more than you know about.

## **BEAUTIFUL THING**

SANDRA: You know what they'll do, don't you? They'll put you into care. They'll say, "She's an unfit mother, bang 'im into one o'them 'omes. Coz I mean, she can't even get him to do his PE." ... Anyone been calling you names?... Stumpy? Anyone called you that?... I told you it'd stop. I told you you'd grow. You never take the blindest bit o' notice of me.

STE: Last week, right. I went Woolwich. Comin' out of a shop and there's this geezer in the gutter, pissed out of his skull, lying there. And everyone was just walking past him. I had to step over him. (*Pause.*) And it was my old man. (*Pause.*) Got me thinking on the bus. Why be scared of a bloke who's dead to the world?

TONY: (Talking to his girlfriend's teenage son.) Your mum told me straight. You know. Problems. Been there. Mm. Walking through the park, game going on, my heart, you know, races. Scared, Jamie. Scared of the ball coming, you know, near me. Hey, we can fight this one together. Fancy a knockabout? (*A pause for the response.*) No, me neither. But sometime, yeah?... D'you mind if I go in?

## **THE COUNTRY CLUB**

ZIP: You're joking right? For started you're in a restricted country club talking civil rights. Doesn't that make you feel a little- you know, just because we sit here at the club while the country is falling apart doesn't mean we have to be in denial and whatnot. Passion and rage are always with us. I think you should always have things to hate and to... love. They're both out there. And... I don't know. It's just things. Things happen and... Nothing. Nothing has happened.

CHLOE: I mean you care so much about us. I mean, the fact that you would remember our two-month anniversary and suggest that we go to the very spot where we met, for me it shows a big amount of creative energy... I'm so touched. But, I mean, I can't go on like this. It's a sin. You don't know about sin. You all act like sin is... a stroke you missed on a gold course of something. I was brought up right. A sin is something. And this is a sin.

## MIND GAMES

ADRIAN: Do you ever feel like you're not really there? Like if you tried to touch something, your hand would pass through it? Every day, you toy with the idea that you could scream and no one would hear you. You could strip naked and no one would see. You could stand up in math class and throw a desk across the room, and no one would flinch. Until one day, your feet inch forward. You turn at the waist. You rise from your chair, and you briefly consider chickening out. But then the smooth surface of the desk is in your hands, and there's no turning back. You throw that desk. And it's nothing like you imagined it would be.

OLIVE: I've really missed you, Adrian. Every morning, I wake up and I feel so cold. I want you to join me. *(pause)* What do you need time for? If you're waiting for a better offer, it's not coming. Your mom doesn't want you for a son. She wants a drugged-up zombie to play house with! *(long pause)* I may be dead, but that doesn't change the fact that I know every inch of you. I have you memorized. No one at school can see you. Your mom can't see you. Not even your therapist can see you, not like I can. So who's real in this situation? Huh? Me or them?

DR. FOSTER: Do you read a lot, Adrian? *(pause)* Then you know a little something about character motivation. Characters don't do things blindly. There's always a reason. Great novels are built around discovering that reason. Have you read *Harry Potter*? You spend the entire series trying to figure out Severus Snape. You know what he's done, but you don't know why until the last book. I want to know the real reason, Adrian. And I'm willing to wait seven books to find out.

MRS. ROSS: I think that's everything. You didn't touch any of the food while I was gone, did you? Are you sure? Because I'm fairly certain that slice of bread was facing a different direction when I left. *(pause)* The cheese grater! I forgot the cheese grater! I'll be right back. Don't look so upset, hon. You know I like seeing a smiling face. *(re-entering with grater)* There we go! That's definitely everything. Everything we could possibly need to enjoy a meal is sitting on this table. *(beat)* Am I forgetting something, Adrian?

STUDENT: *(on the phone)* Hey, where are you? You were supposed to meet me for lunch. *(pause)* No way. Who? *(pause)* Adrian? The quiet kid? *(long pause)* Sounds like he really flipped shit. Send the video to the group chat. *(STUDENT hangs up and opens the video)* Oh my god, this video is priceless. Time to post a screenshot on Instagram. #meltdown #mental #follow4follow

## CHARACTERS

### **BEAUTIFUL THING**

All lower-class Britons in the '90s.

**SANDRA:** Thirty-five. Proud bartender trying to make ends meet. Mom. Very cheeky.

**TONY:** Twenty-seven. Artist.

**STE:** Sixteen. Footballer (that's British for soccer player.)

### **THE COUNTRY CLUB**

**Soos** (Susan): A sophisticated, recently divorced, indecisive women trying to figure out her life back in her hometown

**Pooker** (Patricia): A sarcastic country club member. Always stays calm and collected in any situation

**Froggy** (Louise): A controlling, rich country club member. Married to Bri. Very high energy

**Bri** (Brian): Quiet, well groomed gentleman. Not an original country club member. Married to Froggy

**Zip** (Thomas Muller (the third)): Charming, handsome, and flirty young man. Best friend to Hutch

**Hutch** (Gregg Hutchenson): Friendly, alcoholic. Disheveled version of Zip. Engaged to Chloe

**Chloe:** Beautiful, direct, and exotic. New to the country club and engaged to Hutch

### **MIND GAMES**

**ADRIAN:** Average-looking teenage boy; thoughtful and observant; always on the outside looking in; unsure of who he truly is; has a mental breakdown at school

**OLIVE:** Striking teenage girl; attractive in a non-traditional way; addictive yet toxic personality; manipulative of Adrian; committed suicide six months before; appears as a hallucination

**MRS. ROSS:** Adrian's mother; high-strung; suffers from obsessive compulsions; only sees her son as she wants to see him; tries to maintain the illusion that she and Adrian are a happy family

**DR. FOSTER:** Adrian's young therapist; easy-going and intelligent; not easily fooled by lies or excuses; determined to uncover the real reason behind Adrian's meltdown

**STUDENTS 1-5:** Students at Adrian's high school who spread the news of his meltdown; catty and gossipy; varying degrees of basic; comedic relief

### **REASONS TO BE PRETTY**

**STEPH:** Mostly furious. Her face may or may not be "regular."

**GREG:** Spends most of his life trying to explain what he really means to other people.

**KENT:** Crude. A jerk, mostly. Thinks he's more than perfect.

**CARLY:** Kent's wife. Spreads gossip.

### **ACTOR'S NIGHTMARE**

**GEORGE:** A man who finds himself backstage under mysterious circumstances.

**MEG:** The stage manager. Capable.

**SARAH:** A grand actress.

**ELLEN:** An actress who is not as grand as Sarah.

**HENRY:** A grand actor.

**THE EXECUTIONER:** Self-explanatory.

**THE ANNOUNCER:** A voice over the loudspeaker.