

Belong

Devised by participants in Lodestar Theatre Company's
Breathe / Wake / Belong project
Liverpool Shakespeare Festival 2011

First performed at St. George's Hall, Liverpool in the summer of 2011

Please contact Lodestar Theatre Company via <http://lodestartheatre.co.uk> if you are interested in performing this work

Prologue I

Sx1 white riot from beginning- fade up to full

A riot! 2 gangs front up to each other until they are dispersed.

Music.

It peaks and morphs into a courtroom.

A Judge bangs loudly with his hammer.

JUDGE Order! Order.

 Right!

 You have all been very naughty.

JUDGE 2: Very naughty indeed!

JUDGE It is our job today, in front of these good people to sentence
you to a serious punishment.

JUDGE Very serious indeedy.

JUDGE 2 (*Banging his hammer*) I sentence you all to death!

Uproar! The people shout at the judges and each other! The Judges seem surprised.

BAR' 1 Your Honor, that's not actually allowed.

JUDGE 2 What?! Why not?

BAR' 1 Some of these defendants have committed minimal crimes.

JUDE We were on a peaceful demonstration!

LEAH So was I! You've got no right to hold us here!

JUDGE 2 You are all in GANGS!

JUDGE And people in gangs do very bad things.

JUDGE 3 Very bad indeed.

JUDGE 2 Gangs are gangs!

JUDGE And criminality is criminality.

BAR 2 But one of my clients merely stole a lolly ice.

EMMA (*Shouting*) And I didn't even like it! It was half melted!

BAR 2 And another simply sat on a shop floor and drank tea!

JUDGE You are all the same to us.

JUDGE 2 Today's lolly ice thief is tomorrows armed robber!

JUDGE And sitting on shop floors is harmful to the economy!

ALL JUDGES Here, here!!

BAR 2 They are *individuals* Your Honor, some were merely in the vicinity of a crime.

JUDGE 3 Then they should have moved away from the vicinity then shouldn't they?

BAR 2 I believe they then would have been charged for running away?

BAR And some *could not* move away. They *live* in the vicinity.

JUDGE 3 They should move house then!

All the judges find this funny. This riles the crowd and they start shouting screaming again.

JUDGE You're all sentenced to be locked up without charge!
Take them down!!

More shouting

Prologue II

The Chorus

ADAM So they were locked up? Every one of them?

EMILY Yes

ADAM Wow.

JASMINE I know.

ANDREW And how did they take it? Being locked up?

EMILY Some better than others.

JASMINE Some didn't care.

EMILY For some it was a better life than the one they had outside.

ADAM Really?

EMILY Yes.

ANDREW Some took it bad.

ADAM Bad?

JASMINE *Very* bad.

ADAM Oh dear.

Leah is sat- head in hands.

 What happened to her?

EMILY She realised they could be there forever and, well she,

ANDREW What?

EMILY She got to a place where she decided enough was enough.

ADAM Oh no.

EMILY Yes.

JASMINE Did she go a bit? (*gestures madness*)

ANDREW Once that happens, (*gestures going a bit mad*)

JASMINE I know,

ANDREW Once a person goes there,

JASMINE It's very hard to,

ADAM Move away?

Change back?

Ask for help?

EMILY I suppose.

JASMINE And some people, well they're just like that.

ADAM What?

ANDREW A bit more susceptible to...

ADAM What?

EMILY Going into one

ADAM The dark side?

ANDREW Than the next person.

ADAM That's not their fault though,

ANDREW No

EMILY Not at all. Some people are just more

ADAM Sensitive?

Aware?

JASMINE Conscious?

ADAM Tender?

EMILY Fragile.

ANDREW And then what? What happened to her?

ADAM And the rest of them?

EMILY They were forgotten about.
Ignored.

ADAM Forever?

EMILY Not forever no. Until room had to be made for more just like them.
And then,

JASMINE What?

ANDREW Then what?

EMILY Then they had to think.

ADAM The people?
The sensitive girl?

EMILY No.
The ones who sent them there, who locked them away.

ANDREW *Think?*

EMILY Yes.
Gather some thoughts.

Scene One

The Whigs.

A white board with the word THINK written in the middle.

WHIG 2 I believe it's about belonging. Not having a sense of it. Not in some superficial way but really, you know...

WHIG What?

WHIG 2 Really *knowing* it. Knowing that you belong somewhere.

WHIG What?

WHIG 2 Belonging is a fundamental need. Without it...

Well....
We're all a bit screwed aren't we?

WHIG And that's it is it? All *this* because of that?
Because they don't belong.

WHIG 2 Maybe if they had something to do.
A reason to be.

WHIG What about jobs?
 Could they get jobs?

 Or School then. Couldn't they just go back to school and stay there?

Whig 2 shakes her head.

WHIG Oh dear.

WHIG 2 What about a play?

WHIG *A play?*

WHIG 2 A play!
 They could all work together and then show the rest of the city what they've done.

WHIG What would be the point of that?

WHIG 2 They'd have to work together.

WHIG I see.

WHIG 2 Take responsibility.

WHIG And that would give them this sense of...

WHIG 2 Yes! Belonging?
 What is there that gives someone a greater sense of belonging than being in a play.

Scene Two

The Tories

TORY Kill them, that's what I say. Murder the lot of them.

TORY 2 No, no, no, no, no, no...

TORY No?

TORY 2 No.
 It's obvious. Torture them.
 Beat them and punch them. Stretch them and stick their heads in water.

TORY What for?

TORY 2 What for?

TORY What information do we want from them? From the torture?

TORY 2 Not information.
No.

TORY Oh.
What then? What would the torture be for?

TORY 2 Frighten.
Terrify.
Paralyse.

TORY A *deterrent* more than a punishment?

TORY 2 Both.

TORY Right, yes, I see.
Excellent.

TORY 3 Pinch them.

TORY Sorry?

TORY 2 Pinch?

TORY 3 Yes pinch. A strong pinch is very effective.

TORY 2 For children maybe.

TORY 3 Exactly! Some of these are extremely young. Tiny.

TORY 2 How tiny?

TORY 3 I believe the youngest is... How old? How old is our youngest?

TORY Newborn.

TORY 3 Really?

TORY 2 No, no, no, no, no, no, no

TORY No?

TORY 2 *Un*born. Still in the womb. But their Mothers, they're already, well,
they're...

TORY 3 Ruffians?

TORY Hooligans?

TORY 3 Looters?

TORY Thugs?

TORY 3 Evil?

TORY 2 To put it quite simply, they've had it.

TORY Oh, right, I see.

TORY 3 Well in that case.

TORY And what about the Fathers? Are they the same breed as the Mothers?

TORY 2 Oh, I imagine so.
 Highly likely yes.

TORY 3 Well in that case.

 Let's do it.

Scene Three

The Chorus

EMILY And so the sensitive girl sat there, not knowing when she'd be free to sit in peaceful protest again.

 And that's when it came to her.

ADAM Like a bolt of lightening?

ANDREW An overpowering light?

JASMINE An epiphany?

EMILY No.
 It came to her in a very simple way. Without fuss or fantastic images. Without a doubt or an afterthought of any kind.

JASMINE She just....?

EMILY Yes.
 She just knew what the answer was. And that she would absolutely do it.

ANDREW Simple as that?

EMILY Simple as that.

ADAM Wow. So she just went for it?

ANDREW Planned it down to the hour and minute.

JASMINE And how did it go? According to plan?

EMILY This is the thing.
 This is why the story gets mixed up.

ANDREW Confused?

ADAM Complicated.

EMILY She planned it but she didn't realise.
 She didn't realise things would happen,

ADAM Things?

EMILY To change her mind about wanting to do it

ANDREW About wanting to turn herself off?

JASMINE About ending it yeah.

ANDREW She should have done it straight away, should she?

JASMINE There and then. Immediately. Then...

ANDREW It would have been over with.

JASMINE Done with.

ANDREW Finished.

ADAM So what happened? To change her mind?

ANDREW Back down?

JASMINE Lose her nerve?

EMILY An unexpected emotion called hope hit her and
 she lost it.

ADAM The will?

JASMINE To do it?

ANDREW Yes.
 The urgency.

ADAM So that's good?

JASMINE I suppose.

ADAM As long as she doesn't change back. To wanting to end it.

Leah walks around the space. She is confused and dazed. She stops and crouches forward. Gets up and again and walks around as The Chorus look on.

ADAM And this is her?

ANDREW Yes.

ADAM The sensitive girl?

EMILY This is Leah.

ADAM And she's one of *them* is she? From one of the
Gangs? Are we calling them?

JASMINE Groups? Rioters? Criminals?

ANDREW Family's? I thought they were from feuding family's?

EMILY Whatever. She's the one who it's all about.

ANDREW Not just her though.

EMILY No. There's the boy as well.

ADAM Is he sensitive too?

JASMINE Tender and fragile?

ADAM Aware?

EMILY Yes, definitely aware.

ANDREW Of what?

ADAM That there was something else out there.

ANDREW Something better?

ADAM Something safer?

EMILY Something with a tiny bit of hope.

JASMINE For himself?

ANDREW For his gang?

EMILY For everyone.

ADAM So he's pretty important then?

EMILY Yes.

ADAM And where are they now? In the story I mean?

ANDREW They're there aren't they.
Him trying to make people be hopeful.

JASMINE And her being confused.

EMILY Stuck between his hopefulness and her despair.

ADAM So what happens?
Which way does she go?

ANDREW Well that's the story isn't it?
That's why we're here.

Scene Four

MATT This is shit! I'm not doing it.

JOE You're shit you mean.

MATT What d'ya say ya little fart?

JOE Don't call me a little fart. Ya little fart.

EMMA Why not? You are a little fart.

JOE Eh shut ya mouth curly head.

EMMA I'll knock you out in a minute, tango face.

JOE Will ya yeah?

EMMA Yeah I will! You gonna stop me?

KIRA No I will now get back in ya hole ya scruffy little mole.

EMMA Come on then!

KIRA Come on!

PAT Mole? How is she a mole?

They stop.

KIRA What?

PAT She looks nothing a mole.

KIRA Oh whose talking to you?

PAT I'm just saying you've called her a mole and she looks nothing like one.

DENNIS I think it's more to with the hole than the mole.

Beat

PAT/ KIRA/
EMMA *What?!*

DENNIS And mole was just an add on to that.

MATT Shut it four eyes.

JUDE Alright that's enough. Can we just calm it down?

JESS Yeah Jude's trying to speak. Be quiet!

SARAH I've had enough. I'd rather do the time than spend another day with these.

JOE D'you think we wanna be here with you lot? Cos we don't/

SHELLY I know! I've had enough too. I don't want to do the stupid play.

JUDE We've been through this.

LEAH Every day.

JUDE Since we started.

LEAH We haven't got any choice.

EMMA Shut up Leah. You don't do anything anyway.

SARAH I know! You just sit there ignoring everyone with a big face on.

LEAH No I don't.

SARAH Yeah you do! Misery arse.

SHELLY And we have got a choice, know all.

JUDE What?

SHELLY Leave the city.

JUDE What d'you think happens when you're banished from the city?
Wake up will you's! There is no other city.
Don't you get it? They've had enough.

RUTH So what's the point of this then?

KIRA Yeah, why are we even doing this stupid play if all's they want is to
get rid of us?

JUDE The point is to show them we're not the thick, evil, scumbags they
think we are, and that we can actually do something worthwhile?

ELLIE Are there any dancers in it?

JONNY Can't we just get on with it?

SARAH Yeah, are we doing it or not?

ELLIE Ballet dancers?

SARAH It's getting boring now.

JO You're boring. Why don't you just bore off?

SARAH That doesn't even mean anything.

JO It does. It means you're the most boring bird I've ever met in my life
and that you bore everyone as soon as you open you're ugly m-

SARAH Ugly?

RUTH Yeah ugly.

JONNY You can talk. State of your head!

ELLIE Are there any dancers in it? I wanna be a dancer.
Jude?

SHELLY When's the Juliet auditions then?

SARAH Yeah, I've been waiting all day!

SHELLY I don't know what you're waiting for, you look nothing like Juliet.

RUTH *(Standing exactly the same as Shelly)* I know yeah. Nothing at all.

SARAH Why don't I?

SHELLY Cos you don't. State of ya!

RUTH I know yeah. State!

SARAH What's it got to do with *you* footy face!

SHELLY Ignore her. The part's so mine.

RUTH Soooo yours. I know yeah.

MATT God you are so thick.

RUTH You what?!

MATT You! You're thick. You just repeat everything she says.

SARAH I know yeah. Shelly's shadow!

SHELLY Shut ya face ghost boy.

SARAH *Ghost boy?!*

SHELLY Yeah, he's like a stoned ghost!

RUTH Mmm, I noticed that as well. I know yeah.

SARAH Oh do one will ya's.

JUDE Hey, where are you going?

Ellie is heading off.

ELLIE I'm not being in it.
Nobody listens to me because I've got a quiet voice.

JUDE I'm sorry, I didn't mean to ignore you.
What were you saying?

KIRA That she wants to do stupid ballet in the play.

JUDE Well I don't know about ballet but you can definitely do some sort of dance.

KIRA I'm not doing no ballet-

EMMA Neither am I!

JONNY Would we have to wear dresses?

RUTH Like tu tu's?

MATT Forget that-

SARAH I'd do it-

SHELLY God, you're all so small minded/

This builds into everyone shouting and screaming at each other- AGAIN!

Scene Five

The Chorus 2

ADAM And that's where it started?

EMILY Not where it started no.

ANDREW That's somewhere in the middle.
Not the beginning.

JASMINE So what got them there? All together in a room?

ANDREW Instead of being locked up?

JASMINE Was it a test?

ADAM A treat?

JASMINE An alternative punishment?

EMILY No.
It was just an idea. To move them on. To just...
Do something,

anything,

with them.

ANDREW Mmm.

JASMINE You get the sense they want to hurt each other.
Or someone else.

EMILY Anybody.

ANDREW Angry are they? About being locked away.

JASMINE Misunderstood?

ANDREW Uncared for?

ADAM Unloved?
Spoilt?

JASMINE Overindulged?

EMILY Bored?
Hopeless?

ANDREW Thick?

JASMINE Brain dead?

EMILY Lonely?

ANDREW Frightened?

JASMINE Terrified?

ADAM Of what?
The world?

ANDREW The future?

JASMINE Their parents?

ANDREW The city?
Of being banished.

ADAM Of dying?

ANDREW Of each other?

EMILY Of themselves.

Sx 2 Holiday- so the word 'Holiday' plays as the tories appear. (8 sec in)

Scene Six

The TORIES 2

*They are surrounded by bottles of expensive wine, toy money and fancy cakes.
They're all stuffed.*

TORY 3 What's next then? On the old agenda?

TORY More wine?

They all laugh ridiculously.

TORY 2 Good one.

TORY Thanks.

They all pick up there glasses.

TORY Bottoms up!

And drink.

TORY Right, what were you saying?

TORY 3 Oh nothing. Just whether there was anything else before we head off.

TORY Can't think of anything.
Sebastian?

TORY 2 Don't think so.

TORY Sebastian thinks not Judith, so unless you've got anything?

TORY 3 No, no, unless you wanted to look over the,
Oh no, forget it.

TORY What?

TORY 3 It's nothing.

TORY 2 Come on Jud, spit it out.

TORY 3 I was just wondering whether Gideon wanted to discuss the,

TORY 2 Come on, what?

TORY 3 The,
 country?

Silence

TORY 3 You see! I knew it was a stupid idea! Take no notice of me. Time for a little sleepy weepy I think.

TORY *(Sighing)* I suppose there is the issue of the ‘you know who.’

TORY 2 What? Who?

TORY The, *(big sigh)* youth.

TORY 3 Mmmmm.

TORY 2 Didn’t we discuss them just,
 last year?

TORY 3 We locked them up.

TORY 2 That’s right yes. Good.

TORY 3 But now they have to be moved. There’s no room for them all.

TORY 2 Can’t we lock them up in their own homes? Chain them to the televisions?

Laugh, laugh, laugh

TORY 3 I suppose.

TORY All the mess they made- it wasn’t near us was it? Nobody *we know* was affected. It was all just *them*.
 So I say just leave them.

TORY 2 Spot on old chap.

TORY 3 Yes but people may not like you anymore if they think you don’t care. You may lose, your...
 place.

TORY But I *don’t* care about them and their stupid, pointless lives. Do you?

TORY 3 Me!?! No! Of course not.

TORY Sebastian?

TORY 2 Not at all Gideon.

TORY 3 I don't want to lose all my wine and two houses though Gideon. Do you?

TORY Christ no!

TORY 3 So shall we throw a few ideas around then? See if we can come up with something that makes us *seem* like we care about them?

TORY Why not just banish them?

TORY 2 Here, here.

TORY Send them all to...
You know where.

They laugh about the fact being banished means being secretly killed.

TORY 3 I say invent something new.

TORY 2 I have an invention.

TORY Oh yes?

TORY 2 Mmm, a whip.

TORY 3 A whip?

TORY 2 Not just any old whip old boy. Oh no. This whip, well, It's a whip and a half.

TORY Go on.

TORY 2 It's a whip with 15 separate lashes.
Cat with 9 tails.

TORY Sounds perfect.

TORY 3 I think that may have been tried before.

TORY Right.

TORY 3 And it may be seen as slightly harsh.

TORY 2 Harsh is good. Teach the little bastards a lesson.

TORY 3 The Whigs have some ideas, *apparently*.
Something about a play.

TORY Oh who cares what they think!

TORY 3 It would make us look as though we really, *really* cared. If we worked together.

TORY Arhhh do we have to?

TORY 3 They're not so bad Gideon.

TORY 2 I can't tell the difference between them and us!

TORY 3 Exactly!

Sx 3 holiday loud from beginning so they're off by 8 sec. quick fade down.

Scene Seven

The Chorus 3

ADAM So just to be clear.
The gangs,
The ones who were locked away? (*Confused*) What did they do? In the first place?

ANDREW Different things.

ADAM At different times?

JASMINE In different places

EMILY Yes.

ADAM But what sort of things?

ANDREW Murdered old people and stole from the blind?

EMILY No.

ADAM Kicked over bins and stood on the rubbish.

EMILY Maybe.

JASMINE Smashed up burger bars.

ANDREW Yes.
Nicked chewing gum and smashed up shops.

EMILY Possibly.

ADAM Burnt buildings and fired invisible guns.

EMILY Yes.

JASMINE Planned riots with technology?

EMILY A bit.

ANDREW Planned everything for themselves.

ADAM And planned nothing,
For anybody else.

EMILY No.

ANDREW No?

EMILY No.

ADAM So who did that then?

Silence

Who created numerous wars and looted the land?

Silence

Offered money to poor people who could never pay it back?

Silence

Spied on people and sold their stories for gold?

Silence

Who did all that?

Scene Eight

CUT

Scene Nine

Everyone talking amongst themselves.

JUDE Right, then, shall we start?

Pause.

Everyone still talking.

Everyone?

And still

(Shouting) Hello!

They quiet down.

Okay, thanks.

Well first of all I'd like to say thanks to everyone for agreeing to do the play. I know not everyone was keen.

JO You can say that again! I don't see what good putting a big ancient play on is gonna do.

JUDE You say that now but you'll be surprised how powerful a bond a creative journey can form.

Beat

JO What are ya on about?

RUTH I know yeah!

JUDE I mean its fun to put on plays. It makes you, forget your problems.

JO This play *is* my problem.

RUTH I know yeah.

JUDE How about you just give it a go, sorry what's your name?

JO Jo.

JUDE Well Jo I think you'll find-

LEAH What?

That drama is a powerful tool for the people? And can give rise to previous unheard voices?

JUDE Well, I do think-

LEAH What? That you're actually doing any of us any good by playing along with this? Their stupid game?

JUDE I think 'doing' something is better than doing nothing.

LEAH And whose been doing nothing?
Some people here have been doing their own thing.
Things that have an impact.
That hit them where it hurts.

JUDE Yeah, I heard about you.
Don't you sit in posh tea shops and throw paint on hotel windows?

LEAH No, not just that.

JUDE Start a couple of fires do you? Or get some idiot to do it for you?

LEAH I'd rather do that than do what you're doing.

JUDE I'm trying to create something positive. Show everyone people like us
are worth something.
Get a bit of hope instilled in people.

LEAH What for?

JUDE What for?

LEAH Yeah, what's the point?

JUDE Right, you're cheery aren't you.

LEAH No I'm not and nor' should you be.

JUDE So what's your answer? A revolution?

LEAH Every generation needs a new revolution.

JUDE Yeah, well people have different ideas about what that means.

LEAH You're just naive.

JUDE You're just angry.

LEAH Yeah, too right I'm angry.
Theatre?! This is what we get to do? Put on a stupid Shakespeare
play?

JUDE It's a start.

LEAH It's a joke.

JUDE Those who hate most fervently must once have loved deeply.

Beat.

She's taken back at his perceptive accuracy.

SARAH Have you's finished ya debate?

EMMA I thought we were here to audition?

JUDE We are.

LEAH Count me out.

EMMA Shut up then so the ones that want to, can.

LEAH My pleasure.

Sitting down in the corner

JUDE Shall we start then?
Do you want to go first?

EMMA Me?! I'm not going first.

JUDE Er, right.

JOE I will. I don't mind.

JUDE Fantastic.
Here's the script.

JOE I won't be needing that!

JUDE Oh, right.
Okay then.

JOE Romeo, Romeo, where are ya lad?
Forget your last name and sack off your Dad,
Or if you don't want to but still wanna marry me,
I'll change me name to Smith.

The gangs laugh loudly.

JUDE That was actually really good.

MATT Good? He's a lad and asking where Romeo is!

SARAH Pure gay!

JOE You said to prepare any bit from it. You didn't say which.

JUDE It was a good interpretation.

JESS Can I do mine now?

KIRA I'm next-

EMMA I am actually.

JUDE Everyone will get to read. Let's just stay calm.
I've got Dennis next, reading for Tylbalt.
Dennis?

JO Go on.

Pushes Dennis, who has a severe stammer.

DENNIS *(Clears his throat- not very confident)* To move is to stir, and to be
valiant is to stand: therefore if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

JUDE That was great Dennis but how about reading some of Tylbalt's lines?

DENNIS I wasn't really fussed on any of them to be honest.

JUDE Right okay, lets if we can find something of Tylbalt in you?
How about Act One Scene Five Dennis?
Where he first sees Romeo?
Let's have a crack at that shall we? *(Handing him the script)*

DENNIS *(Very non aggressive)* What dares the slave
Come hither, covered with an antic face,
To flear and scorn at our solemnity?

Sniggers from the others. Beat

JUDE Sooo,
He's erm, he's quite aggressive at this point yeah?

DENNIS Yes.

JUDE Could you try it that way? With a bit of aggression?

DENNIS I'll try.
(Exactly the same) Now by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

JUDE Okay.
Thanks, yeah, thank you Dennis.

PAT That was absolutely crap.

JO Rubbish.

MATT Garbage.

RUTH Leave him alone!

PAT Can't we just do a normal play?

JUDE This is a normal play.

PAT With normal words and that.

JUDE They chose this play because the themes are relevant to us.

RUTH What does theme mean?

JUDE It means what the play is about.

RUTH The story?

JUDE No. Yes.
Sort of...

JESS It's the subject of the play. Not the story but what the story is actually about.

SHELLY Oooh, Miss theatre boff there.

ELLIE It's not exactly rocket science!

Leah is sitting away from the group. But has begun to look over a little.

JUDE Why don't you come into the group more Leah?

LEAH Cos I don't want to.

SARAH We're not good enough for her.

SHELLY She's got problems that girl.

EMMA Just leave her! She's got a face like a slapped arse anyway!

Leah ignores them and stays away from the main group.

RUTH I still don't know what a theme is.

JUDE The story of this play is two people falling in love. It's a love story. But a big theme of the play is holding grudges. And what a waste of time it is. And how if something doesn't break a grudge, it can go on and on until something really awful happens.

Pause.

They take this in.

EMMA I wanna be the nurse.

KIRA So do I.

EMMA Tough tities, I said it first.

KIRA D'ya wanna step outside girl?

JUDE Alright, alright, why don't we hear you read?

EMMA Read what?

JUDE The nurse?

EMMA What, now?

JUDE That's what we're supposed to be doing?

KIRA I'll read. In fact I know it off by heart.

JUDE Great. Go ahead then.

KIRA Right I'm doing the bit where she's giving Romeo loads for being a bad faggot.

They laugh.

JUDE Act Three Scene Three.

KIRA In the priest's house yeah.

EMMA I was gonna do that bit.

JUDE The Friars.

KIRA Whatever.

Right, *(Clears her throat)*
(Shouts) OOOOH! Woeful sympathy:
precious predicament, even so lies she,

Emma dives in front of her

EMMA blubbering and weeping,

KIRA weeping and blubbering,

EMMA Stand up, stand up,

KIRA stand and you be a man,
For Juliet's sake,

EMMA for her sake rise and stand!

They stand nose to nose in a stare off.

JUDE *(Coming between them)* Yeah, right, great.
That was really, er
Clear.

JONNY She nearly burst me ear drum!

JO I thought it was brilliant.

SHELLY Curly head's obviously gonna get the part. All the best parts will go to you's.

JUDE I've already said it will be fair.
It's about everyone being included.

RUTH I think one of us should be the director as well-

JUDE We've been through this, I'm happy to work with any of you.
The whole point of doing this is to forget about 'them' and 'us'.

RUTH We'll all end up being servant and slaves.

JESS There are no slaves in it!

JOE Whose talking to you blondie?

JESS I can say what I want midget gem boy!

JOE What did you just call me?!-

JESS You heard!

PAT Arh, this is messed up!

JOE I know, I don't even know whose on whose side anymore.

JESS In the play you mean?

SHELLY Well I wanna be Juliet.

EMMA I wanna be the nurse!

JOE No I mean in real life!

JUDE I think that's the point of what we're trying to do.

JOE What?

LEAH To stop it! With the sides, the gangs,
This.

JUDE It's all irrelevant.

RUTH What does that mean?

JOE Pointless.

JUDE Insane.

LEAH Worthless.

A moment between Jude and Leah.

RUTH I thought this was instead of staying locked up?

KIRA Or whatever else they've got planned for us.

JUDE It is, sort of.
But it can be a real thing as well.
For us.

Pause

If you want it.

ELLIE When are we doing the dancing?

Scene Ten

The Chorus

And did they? Want it?

Do they?

Can we wait? Hang on a minute?

For what?

The boy.

The director.

What about him?

He seems,
too

normal?

Different than the rest of them.

Is he in the right play?

Have we made a mistake?

Not a mistake no.
He's just ready.

For what?

For something else.

For life?

For love?

But how,
how did they get there? How did he get to be so ready? So together?

Was he not part of a gang before?

A mob?

A criminal family?

Yes.

No.

Not really.

Kind of.

But only out of boredom?

Of Fear?

And/or desperation?

Hopelessness.

Okay.

Right.

And the rest of them? Where are the rest of them up to with the whole, gang thing?

Well they've begun to see haven't they?
They've felt something different.

Something else.

Something more?

What have they seen?

Their future?

Their world?

Themselves.

So they want it then?

What?

It? The real thing?

I think they do
Yes.

Yes.

Beat

Who doesn't?

Scene Eleven

Sx 4 use somebody come in quite high.

Music-Use Somebody

*The play within the play. The party scene. The two gangs dancing... Until **Matt** stops dancing and turns off the music. Leah is sitting away from them. And Jude is watching with his script.*

The dance goes wrong, they all disperse.

Everyone is tired, especially Jude.

JONNY I'm too tired to do it again.

JUDE We have to.

JONNY You're not the one who's doing it!

JUDE No, I'm the one whose been doing *everything!*

KIRA Everything?

JESS Yeah, he has!

KIRA As if!

SARAH I hate this-

JUDE *(Shouting)* Arrh!! Can you's stop it? Just...
I can't do it,
I can't handle you lot anymore.

JO Fine.
Someone else can do it!

JUDE Like who?

Beat

LEAH I'll direct.

They stop.

LEAH I'll do it.

JESS But Jude's not really leaving are ya?
Anyway how would you know what to do? All's you've done in sat in
the corner.

LEAH And all's you lot do is moan.

JUDE It's fine if she wants to direct.

JESS?! What?

LEAH I'll do it with you.
Help you.

JESS What?

JO You can't have two directors.

JUDE/ LEAH You can.

SHELLY Oh God! I don't care who directs, can we just get on with my bit?

It's decided.

JUDE *(less tired now)* Okay.
Right.
Shall we do Act I Scene 5?

Music- Use Somebody

The party scene. The two gangs dancing.

JOE (Romeo) O she doth teach the torches to burn bright:
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night,
Did my heart love till now, forswear it sight,
For I never saw true beauty till this night

DENNIS (Tylbalt) This by his voice, should be a Montague.
Fetch me my rapier boy, what dares the slave
Come hither, covered with an antic face,
To flear and scorn at us?
Now by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead, I hold it not a sin.

Romeo (Joe) *runs off after noticing Tylbalt (Dennis) is onto him.*

SHELLY (Juliet) Come hither Nurse, who is yond boy?

Both Kira and Emma rush over.

Him, whose rushing out of the door?

EMMA (Nurse) The son and heir of old Tiberio.

KIRA (Nurse) Marry that I think be young Petruchio.

SHELLY Who's that there? Who didn't dance?

KIRA I know not.

EMMA His name is Romeo, and a Montague,
The only son of your great enemy.

SHELLY My only love sprung from my only hate,
Too early seen, unknown, and known too late.

Jude claps loudly.

JUDE Okay much better, let's have a break.
Fantastic!

They're all pleased with themselves.

We might just be ready for tomorrow.
We'll move onto Act II after the break.

Everyone leaves. Leah hangs back and then goes to leave too. Jude grabs her hand and pulls her back.

JUDE Thanks.

Leah *shrugs*.

I've never heard you speak.
I mean the lines.
Say something.
Be Juliet.

LEAH No.

JUDE Why not?

LEAH I hate my voice.
It's too...

JUDE What?

Beat

LEAH Me.

JUDE Everyone was supposed to audition to be part of the company?

LEAH You didn't!

JUDE I will if you will.

He hands her a copy of the play, after finding a specific page.

Long pause.

LEAH Wilt thou be gone?

It is not yet near day:

Oh forget it, I don't want to...

She throws down the book and goes to leave.

JUDE Go on.

You're good.

Beat

LEAH *(Without picking up the play)*
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear,
Nightly she sings on yond pomegranate tree,
Believe me love, it was the nightingale.

A moment. He stares at her. She goes to move away. He begins to speak and she stops.

JUDE
It was the lark, the herald of the morn:
No nightingale: look love what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Sx 5 blue skies. Fade up loud and fade out

Scene Twelve

What a lovely story.

A love story? Then?

They do their play and there are no more riots?

A happy ending? And some beautiful dancing?

They could open a theatre of their own.
The directors get married?

Have lots of children who don't become criminals.

Do more plays!

Become famous,

And rich.

And live happily ever after.

No.

No?

That's not it.
No.

That's not what happens.
What happens then?

What?

How does it go?

Does it go horribly wrong?

Do they all murder each other and blow up the world?

Cause chaos and batter their neighbours?

Do they behave like animals and eat their own children?

No.

No?

No.

Thank god.

Beat

They begin to develop.

What, grow?

Up here. (*Taps her head*)
They begin to develop what's up here.

Oh.

And well,

What?

that's not good.

No?

I thought it was.

I thought it was good to develop what's up there. (*Taps head*)

For other people yes.

People who are supposed to use that. (*taps head*)

People who already have voices.

But not them?

No not them.
They're supposed to stay criminals.

Ants who stay on the floor and carry the elephants.

So the plan

to make them happier

to stop them being angry

and be better human beings.

That was...

What was that?

It was an illusion.

A fantasy?

A dream?

Beat

A big trick.

Scene Thirteen

TORY *Must* we go and see their play?

TORY 2 I simply can't go.
I'm simply too, too busy.

TORY Me too, simply.

TORY 2 And I simply don't want to be bored to death.

TORY Well said old son.

TORY 2 Let the Whigs go.

TORY 3 There is *something* we may want to look out for with all this.

TORY What's that then?

TORY 3 Well, I don't know if it's true. I'm sure it's not but, well, I have heard that these 'youths' have started to...

TORY 2 What?

TORY Spit it out old girl.

TORY 3 There have been several reports that they've calmed down.

TORY Oh, well, aren't we the clever ones?!

TORY 2 Aren't we just!

They celebrate with a laugh.

TORY 3 Yes, but...

TORY But what.

TORY 3 Apparently I've heard some of them are actually happy.

Beat

TORY 2 Happy?

TORY 3 I'm afraid so.

TORY Oh let them. It won't last.

TORY 2 Didn't the Whigs say happy people *don't* do naughty things?

TORY Something like that.

TORY 3 The country can't afford everyone to be happy. We've always relied on these types to, well, do what we want them to do.

TORY Indeed. For the sake of the country itself.

TORY 3 That's right.

TORY 2 They can't all turn out to be good and 'happy'.
We need to make sure all the prisons are at capacity don't we?
Can't lose out on the profit for the sake of a load of nobodies
'happiness'!

TORY Absolutely!

TORY 3 That's not all though. There have also been reports of a small number of them,

She sighs

Beginning to,
think.

TORY 2 Think?

TORY 3 Yes. Have thoughts.

TORY 2 I didn't know they could think.

TORY 3 It seems some of them are quite good at it.

TORY Right, that's it.
We can't have that.

TORY 2 Indeed. It may lead,
Well, god knows where!
No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

TORY No.
Mmm, indeed.
Right then, what shall we do.

TORY 3 Shall we, have a little think?

TORY 2 What now?

TORY 3 About what to do yes.

TORY 2 No! No need for that!
Let's just get them back to where they belong.

TORY Yes, I agree.

TORY 3 But this is the thing.
They seem to think they 'belong' where they are now.

TORY 2 What, making plays up and 'thinking'?

TORY 3 Yes.

TORY 2 I told you we should have whipped them.

Scene Fourteen

The actors are getting ready for their dress rehearsal. Warming up.

RUTH Er, Jude.
I've made this.

She hands him a programme.

I hope I've spelt everyone's name right.

JUDE That's really great Ruth thanks.

RUTH I wrote a something on the back.

JUDE "We must infuse our lives with art. Our national leaders must be informed that we want them to use our taxes to support street theatre in order to oppose street gangs"

 That's lovely.
 Did you write it?

RUTH Me?! No!

JUDE Well, it's just great and so is the programme.

RUTH I know yeah.

JUDE Thank you.

She goes.

LEAH You okay?

JUDE Look at this.

Hands her the programme.

LEAH She's spelt Capulet wrong!

JUDE Read the back,

She reads the quote.

LEAH Maya Angelou.

JUDE Who?

LEAH "I've learnt that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

 That's what you've done.
 People will never forget this.

She takes his hand- they go to kiss. Two policemen enter.

KIRA A! get out, we're getting changed!

LEAH You can't come in here, the actors are getting ready.

POLICE We'd like to see the director.

LEAH What do you want?

POLICE Are you the director?

LEAH What d'you want with the director?

POLICE 2 Or whoever's in charge.

LEAH You'll have to wait outside-

JUDE I'm the director.
Can I help you?

POLICE Are you in charge of this lot?

LEAH 'This lot?'

JUDE This is my company yes.

POLICE As of today this building will be closed.
And everyone here will be locked up again.

Uproar from everyone.

JUDE Ssshhhh!
Everyone, quiet.

Officer I think there's been some mistake.
We have a performance tonight.
For the city. For the people of the city.

POLICE 2 We've got our orders.

JUDE Why though?

POLICE It seems some of your actors have been committing crimes.

LEAH What crimes?

POLICE Crimes of various kinds.

LEAH Where?

JUDE And when?

JOE We've all been here.

POLICE 2 We're just following orders.

Doing our job.

LEAH Everyone's been here. Together.

SARAH Working!

POLICE There have been reports of 'criminality' in the area.
And you were all specifically told if any form of criminality took place
within 20 miles-

JUDE 20 miles?!!!

POLICE Then that'd be it.

LEAH It's a set up.
They're setting up us.

POLICE 2 We're just following orders.

Doing our job.

LEAH *(Almost to herself)* I knew it,

SARAH What are they on about?

RUTH We've all been here.

LEAH Can't you see what they're doing?

JUDE *Everyone* has been here,
under this roof, together!

POLICE Due to your previous history, nothing you say can be taken as truth
without absolute proof.

JOE What d'you mean by that?

JESS He means we're all a gang of lying, criminals.

RUTH That it's always us, who do EVERYTHING?

JUDE I'm sure there's been some misunderstanding.

POLICE No.
There has not.

POLICE 2 We're just following orders.

LEAH I knew it.

I knew this would happen.
This is what they do.
It's all been a lie!
Don't you see?
They made us think we could do something-

JUDE We *are* doing something.

LEAH Open your eyes!
They know perfectly well we haven't committed any crimes.
They just wanna stop this. Us! Working together. Being together.

POLICE So unless the culprits own up you will all be restored back to your
previous place.

EMMA We're getting locked up again?

POLICE We're just doing our job.

KIRA What for?!

POLICE 2 Following orders.

They all talk at once.

JUDE Hang on. So if someone owns up then,
It's just them who you'll take?

POLICE Er...

POLICE 2 If you know who done it then you must tell us.

SARAH *It? What's it?*

POLICE The crimes.

POLICE 2 Which have been committed.

SARAH But nobody here has done anything!

JUDE Me.

LEAH What?

JUDE It was me.
I did whatever it is that's been done.

LEAH No you didn't, he didn't-

JUDE I did.

It was me.
Can they do the play *now*?

POLICE Er,

JUDE Can they still do the play?

POLICE 2 We're just doing our job.

LEAH Is that all you can say?

JUDE Well!!?
Answer me!
Can they still perform?

LEAH Jude *please*.

POLICE You admit you have committed criminal acts?

JUDE Absolutely.
Definitely.
And I acted alone.

POLICE You better come with us then.

LEAH You don't believe him do you?

POLICE 2 We're just following orders.

LEAH Ask him what he's done then? He doesn't even know!

JUDE Make sure they warm up.
They can do a line run once they're dressed.

LEAH They'll banish you!

JUDE They need you to keep it together.

LEAH What about us?

JUDE Show everyone what we've done.
People will see,
See what we can do.
What we can be.

LEAH But you won't.

Beat

JUDE I already seen it.

I know it.

Sx 6 lissies murmur slow fade up

They hug.

One by one every member of the cast hugs Jude.

POLICE This way please.

JUDE Hang on.

Goes back and picks up his script.

Silence.

He walks out with them. Just as he exits turns back and holds up the script to the others.

Scene Fifteen

ADAM That's,

None of them can speak.

EMILY Yes.

ADAM That can't be it?
That can't be how things go.

EMILY Yes. It is.

ANDREW It is how things go.
All the time.

JASMINE Every day.

ANDREW Not just here but in other places too.

ADAM Shouldn't we be doing something then?
Something to change things? Help them.

JASMINE How?

ADAM I don't know but we can't just,
accept it.

ANDREW Maybe we could get together, form a group

JASMINE A gang?

ANDREW and think of,
stuff.

JASMINE About this?

ANDREW About this yes. And everything.

JASMINE Everything?

ANDREW Yes.

JASMINE And then we could,
what could we do?

ANDREW We could...

He thinks

ADAM But what about this?
The sensitive girl and the play?

Scene Sixteen

Leah is trying her best to keep morale up, and keep her emotions in check.

LEAH Okay, is everyone here?
Yes?

JOE I think so.

KIRA Yes.

JESS This is everyone yeah.

LEAH Right, so,
Er, a line run? Shall we do a line run and then we'll do some gentle
breathing exercises that Dennis suggested.

SARAH Where shall we go from? We haven't got time to do it all.

LEAH Right yeah, sorry.

JOE Why don't we go from Act II Sc II, after they've met?

LEAH Yeah fine, do that.

JOE (Romeo) By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am.

My name, dear saint is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I written it, I would tear the world.

SHELLY (Juliet) My ears have (*Her voice cracks and sounds weird, she tries to begin again*)
My ears have yet not dru'
Drunk

It's no good her voice is gone. She tries to continue but nothing comes out.

JESS Oh my god! She's lost her voice!

DENNIS She can't speak!

KIRA What are we gonna do now?

EMMA Can't we do it? Will we have to cancel it?

LEAH Are you ok Shelly?
Are you ill?

She goes to speak but can only whisper. She whispers in Ruth's ear.

RUTH She's lost her voice.

The others groan.

PAT We can se that.

SARAH What are we gonna do?

JESS Can't one of the nurses be Juliet?

EMMA/
KIRA No!

JOE They don't know her lines.

SARAH Nobody does.

JO Leah does.

JOE Do you?

JO I've heard you. You know the whole play.

LEAH I can't do it.

JO Why not?

JOE If you don't then none of us can.

JO Go on Leah.

EMMA Please?

They all plead with her.

LEAH Ok! Alright!
 But I'll be rubbish!

JOE No you won't.
 You'll be great.

SARAH Quick Shelly, give her your costume.

A pre show rush of activity as lights fade.

Epilogue

CAPULET Oh brother Montague, give me thy hand.
 This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
 Can I demand.

MONTAGUE But I can give thee more,
 For I will raise her statue in pure gold,
 That whiles Verona by that name is known,
 There shall no figure at such rate be set
 As that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie,
 Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

Sx7 applause

Epilogue II

The Chorus

ANDREW As glooming peace this morning with it brings,
 The sun for sorrow will not show his head.

JASMINE Go hence

EMILY to have more talk of these sad things;

JASMINE Some shall be pardoned;

EMILY Some shall be punished:

ADAM For never was a story of more woe
 Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

Sx 8 paperplanes

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