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Swansea University

2019

Never Go Crooked

A theatrical exploration of
Hybristophilia

Submitted to Swansea University in fulfilment of the
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Elinor Martin

Summary

The stage play *Never Go Crooked* is a dramatic exploration of the plight of a young woman, Jennifer, who is dangerously drawn to a man, who is serving a prison sentence for the murder of his partner. The play takes the form of a series of direct-to-the-audience addresses by Jennifer, her sister Heather, her friend Claire and her mother Rose. These are inter-cut with active scenes from the memories of each of these women, and with the after-death presence of the murdered woman, Maria. The primary dramaturgical device is that Jennifer, Rose, Heather and Claire are each speaking individually to a psychologist who has been assigned the task of investigating Jennifer's behaviour. The audience is addressed as if it is the psychologist.

Dramatic tension and forward motion in the play is created through our knowledge that the man, Leon really did kill Maria, and that, whatever her motivation, Jennifer is placing herself in an increasingly hazardous situation. She is safe provided Leon remains in prison, but can we be sure of that? Thus, the play has a present tense (the addresses to audience) a past timeframe (the memory scenes) and a projected future of danger, all haunted by Maria's presence. It should be noted that early drafts of the play had Leon as a present character. In the final draft he is an unseen threat. Thus all on stage characters are women.

The Dramaturgical section of this thesis considers the best possible methods of portraying the story. For example, while naturalism works most successfully for the dialogue, the staging required a different approach, tending towards magic realism. As is made clear in the exegesis, the primary motivation for writing *Never Go Crooked* was to highlight the condition sometimes known as Bonnie and Clyde syndrome, or, more technically, Hybristophilia.

Declaration and Statements

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed (candidate)

Date

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed (candidate)

Date

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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Date



“Never go crooked. It’s for the love of a man that I’m gonna have to die. I don’t know when, but I know it can’t be long”.

**–Bonnie Parker, 1934,
origin of the term “Bonnie and Clyde syndrome.”**

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Definitions

For this purpose of this thesis I will be using these definitions:

Paraphilia: A condition characterized by abnormal sexual desires, typically involving extreme or dangerous activities.

Hybristophilia: A paraphilia in which sexual arousal and romantic interest are contingent upon being with a partner known to have committed an outrage (e.g. cheating, lying, known infidelities) or crime—such as rape, murder, or armed robbery. Colloquially known as Bonnie and Clyde syndrome. Adjective version: hybristophile

Active/Passive hybristophile: An active hybristophile takes part in the crimes of her partner, a passive hybristophile does not. Passive hybristophiles tend towards denying the crimes of those they love.

Syndrome: As Hybristophilia is not a recognised condition within the ICD-10 I will be referring to it as a syndrome; a characteristic combination of opinions, emotions, or behaviour.

Disorder: A derangement or abnormality of function; a morbid physical or mental state.

Alpha Male Persona: A personality type which displays a fixation on taking control, often through violence. They will become threatened by any perceived attempt to take that control away.

ICD-10: The 10th revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, a list of recognised diseases and medical conditions.

Naturalism: A literary and theatrical genre started in late nineteenth century. Naturalism is a type of extreme realism which focuses on the psychology of its characters and the ways in which society, their upbringing and environment forms their inner selves. Not simply portraying the world as it is but implying why it might be that way.

Realism: A form in theatre which focuses on portraying life as it truly is; free from metaphor and fantasy. *

Magic-Realism: A form which generally portrays life in a realistic manner but also contains magical or fantastical elements. These elements are often used to represent elements of life which cannot be portrayed through realistic means.

***Note:** There is considerable argument about the use of the terms Naturalism and Realism in theatre, especially since they are often used synonymously in modern practice, and because the terminology began with the novelist Zola, as a literary, rather than a theatrical, term.

Perhaps the simplest explanation is to be found on pediainfo.com:

While Realism and Naturalism are two separate literary movements, they are closely linked and sometimes used interchangeably. This is because both movements portray life as it is. These movements depicted believable, natural or real everyday activities and experiences. However, there exists a significant difference between realism and naturalism. Realism sought to represent real life whereas naturalism sought to represent life in a more scientific, almost clinical manner than realism.

Introduction

Bonnie Parker is known to the world for one thing; falling in love with a dangerous man. She and Clyde Barrow were at the core of a 1930s US gang of murderous bank and store robbers who were eventually killed by law officers in 1934. She has been portrayed in different lights since her death though one thing remains clear: she loved Clyde Barrow and was willing to do what ever it took to be with him. (Parker, 1934) Bonnie knew the danger of what she was doing but it didn't matter; she was a hybristophile, not the first and definitely not the last.

The issue which brought the play *Never Go Crooked* into being was the lack of debate concerning the syndrome known as Hybristophilia, in which people (usually, but not always, women) are attracted to dangerous, often criminal, partners. This pattern of behaviour is colloquially known as “Bonnie and Clyde syndrome” after the historic couple of those names. There has been relatively little research into the syndrome which, though it is a regularly observed behavioural phenomenon, is not a clinically recognised mental illness within the ICD-10. Hybristophilia predominantly affects women, and the few research sources on the subject sometimes refer to a perceived lack of concern for research into women's behavioural health when the issues raised differ from patterns experienced by men. With reference to hybristophilic behaviour, for example, Cleveland notes:

Research supporting [the higher rates of male aggression] however, has focused on operationalizations emphasizing overt physical/verbal aggression which are typical forms of male aggression. By contrast female aggression is typically social/relational and includes exclusion, gossip and/or friendship manipulation.

(Cleveland, 2013, section 1)

A primary source for information on hybristophilia is Sheila Isenberg. She refers to the gender issues within the debate on the status of hybristophiles, commenting: “Many criminal justice experts and mental-health specialists - generally male – tend to dismiss these women as suffering from a personality disorder.” (Isenberg, 1991, p.48) Isenberg hoped that her book *Women Who Love Men Who Kill*, would lead to further research and a more enlightened discussion on the subject. Similarly, I hope that *Never Go Crooked* will help raise public consciousness and broaden the debate. In doing so, it would follow a long-established pattern of addressing women's issues through drama – a literary tradition with a significant history.

The essay section of this thesis will outline my methodology used for creating and staging this play and the ways in which the decisions made during its creation were reached. The approach to best make these decisions was to examine theatre throughout history from a scholastic point of view and make the best decisions for the play based on this research.

Literature has, throughout history, been a significant catalyst for encouraging further debate on difficult or complex subjects, potentially resonating with audiences in a way formal research cannot always do. Literature connects with its consumers on an emotional level as well as intellectually. This is especially so in stage drama, with the immediacy of the form enhancing the emotional/informational impact.

Currently, we expect to see women's issues addressed by women writers, directors and performers. Indeed, my own play is written for an entirely female cast, a decision having been made during its development to drop the one male character. However, in the past, women's issues have often been raised by male artists when the women themselves would have had little or no power to bring these issues to light.

The history of theatre is a history of changing socio-economic conditions. Women's concerns have been addressed over the centuries with differing levels of success, subtlety and empathy. Looking back on the long journey of Western theatre, we can see stage-plays as time capsules, showcasing the conditions in which their characters had to live. This is particularly the case in the portrayal of women.

Never Go Crooked, is a play that deals exclusively with women and women's issues, utilising a range of theatrical conventions, drawing on the experimentation of my predecessors – particularly those of the past 150 years – and, I hope, building on them. To consider where *Never Go Crooked* sits within the tradition and genres of theatre, it is useful to examine some of the stepping-stones of theatre practice I used when developing the play.

Choice of stylistic genre

In finding a theatrical style which might explore the issue of Hybristophilia most effectively, I considered a range of methodologies, from the direct and didactic approach sometimes used in Theatre-in-Education, via the subjective story-telling of Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed to the more symbolic and metaphorical investigations found in forms of Physical Theatre. My research into theatre and its traditions (see bibliography) led me to the conclusion that in giving voice to the characters I wished to portray in *Never Go Crooked*, Naturalism was the most effective primary genre. Thus, my characters speak in conventional contemporary language, and their thoughts and actions are psychologically underpinned. In this way, the play aims to depict a close approximation of life in the way in which the characters live, speak and interact with each other. More broadly, Naturalism in drama is sometimes described as the theatre of ideas and as such is often most effective at exploring the ideas of the human condition and the human mind. For the 19th Century novelist Emile Zola a Naturalistic work had to be realistic and be a reflection of human behaviour and psychology; the characters should be complete human beings who act according to their upbringing and environment and the staging should not be flamboyant or extravagant but should reflect the world in which the characters live [Madsen, 1962]. Over time, Naturalism has proved to be an effective method of displaying the everyday struggles with which the characters contend. It is an effective form for producing audience empathy and in particular when the subject matter is psychological, it can be useful in allowing them to more clearly see the inner workings of the characters' mind. For the character portrayal in *Never Go Crooked* a Naturalistic definition fits better than Realism, which only aims to reflect the world as it is, Naturalism delves deeper into the reasons behind the characters' thoughts and actions. It explores the social and political reasoning behind why the characters do what they do. Strindberg describes true Naturalism as a form "Which seeks out those points in life where great conflicts occur, which rejoices in seeing what cannot be seen every day" [Williams, 2013] that is precisely what I am attempting to do in *Never Go Crooked*.

However, whilst the dialogue, situation and characterisation of *Never Go Crooked* use naturalistic techniques, the action, staging and the play's after-death elements do not. They draw much more deeply on theatricality (see the following section on dramaturgy) and on the imaginative power of dramatic presentation. I attempted to strike a balance: Plays which depend too heavily on spectacle or metaphor can confuse an issue and make it less clear what is important within a performance. Yet the power of a ghostly presence is considerable, and I wanted to use the ghostly presence of Maria to draw us through the drama. It is an approach used by many, from Shakespeare to modern television series such as *Dexter*: Here ghosts are used as a tool to display a characters' inner feelings, memories or challenges. The character of Dexter in the novel, recalls memories and emotion through traditional narration in order to portray his memories to the audience; in the

televised series the character of his father's ghost follows him and speaks with him as though he is truly there. In *Never Go Crooked* Maria continuously re-lives her memories of the time she has dies, and does so for the audience rather than the other characters. This, I feel, is a way in which the naturalistic form can be shaped for a modern audience. "Conventions are changed, not because of some other view of the world, or other creative purpose, is now proposed, but because existing conventions are no longer *true enough*." [Williams, 2013]

Depictions of Women in Early Theatrical Naturalism

The emergence of Naturalism within theatre, (a move away from Romanticism which depends on symbolic representation and idealised vision of the world) provided a means by which issues affecting women might be addressed in a clearer and more sympathetic way.

Although it is not necessary for the theatre as a medium of entertainment to concern itself seriously with social problems, or to look for plays of permanent literary value, there are times when, perhaps in memory of its religious origins, the tide turns against triviality and too great a divorce between reality and illusion. Audiences then demand – or perhaps it would be truer to say, are willing to accept – plays of social protest criticism, even of propaganda.

[Hartnoll, 2012 p.214]

The expectations of early Naturalism demanded that characters be portrayed as individuals, rather than generic “types”, thus providing an opportunity for women to be depicted in a manner allowing the audience to truly connect with who they were; or at least how the dramatists believed them to be. The dramatists at this time were, of course, almost exclusively male. The two dramatists at the forefront of the naturalist movement or “theatre of ideas” [Hartnoll, 2012 p.214] were Chekhov and Ibsen. Both depicted their characters, particularly women, in a new and sympathetic way, at least when compared to what had come before. Chekhov’s *Three Sisters* was valuable to my own process, both in terms of its use of theatrical techniques, and in the prominence it gives to its female characters. *Three Sisters* focuses on the Prozorov sisters: Olga, Masha and Irina. It depicts their fall from minor aristocracy and their struggle to come to terms with the rising middle class. Each sister depicts a different ideal of womanhood. Though they do retain some stereotypical characteristics, they are depicted as complex people whose lives change as they react to changing circumstances.

Olga is the oldest, the one who has taken up a career rather than having a husband or living on inherited money. Whether this is through preference or necessity is unclear, though she implies it may not be her choice, “I shouldn’t complain, but it does seem to me that if I’d married and stayed home all day, life would have been better.” [Chekhov, 2008 edition, P.4] She is destined to become the headmistress at a young age but seems to wish for any life other than her own. Above all, she has romanticised her childhood and memories of the place associated with her dead parents: “I’m left with only one dream, and it grows stronger and stronger... To go to Moscow, yes soon. In Moscow the leaves would be out now. Moscow would be in bloom.” [Chekhov, 2008 edition, p.3] Like her sisters, she is simply lost. Moscow is seen as the goal that will fix all their woes. But it is just a dream. Being the oldest sibling, she is expected to care for the others and be the sensible one, especially after the death of their one remaining parent, her father. It would also be likely that their

father's death would have affected her in a different way than it did her sisters. It is, perhaps, this familial relationship she craves rather than a husband or children of her own.

The second sister, Masha, is unhappily married. Her illicit relationship with the dashing but emotionally suspect professional soldier, Colonel Vershinin is an escapist fantasy she has created for herself – Chekhov's depiction, perhaps, of the rise of romantic freedom sought by women of the time. "No Olga, you're the silly one. I love him – It's my fate, my destiny... And he loves me... It's terrifying, but is it wrong?" [Chekhov, 2008 edition, p.76]. There are echoes, of course, of the central character in *Never Go Crooked*, who is drawn to an unsuitable man, she sees the danger, but rationalises her behaviour.

Irina shows a level of optimism that the other sisters can't match; she is excited about the prospect of getting to work but also shows an interest in finding love. But like the other sisters, her self-deception is her downfall – again *Never Go Crooked* echoes this trait. She is unable to find happiness in any of the jobs she tries. She wishes to find love but is dissatisfied with any of the men available.

Thus, in *Three Sisters* audiences are being shown the women's struggles through a lens of realism – an unfamiliar (and uncomfortable) experience for audiences used to shallow melodrama. While the representations may not be perfect, they are shaped by the world in which the characters are based. Chekhov represents the women as dissatisfied because their lives are difficult and they have so much to work against. The men often talk down to them, as though they are children. This they take in their stride; they are so used to being seen this way.

Chekhov's approach to Naturalism and his approach to the characters of Olga, Masha and Irina – their self-deception and their desire for male approval – provided much food for thought as I developed the women at the core of *Never Go Crooked*. Though his portrayal of these women may have not been perfect they were a huge step in the right directions for the portrayal of women in theatre.

In *A Doll's House*, Ibsen's Portrayal of Nora seems to be even more politically charged than that of the three sisters of Chekhov's play. At the beginning of the play Nora appears to be feeding into the stereotypical portrayal of women of the time. She is shallow and concerned about money but in a seemingly frivolous way, "I'd wrap the money up in some pretty gilt paper and hang it on the Christmas tree. Wouldn't that be fun?" [Ibsen, 2008 edition, p.4]. She is overly concerned with appearance, both her own and that of her home and family. These aspects appear to be her only thoughts in life. At the beginning she seems very childlike, Torvald speaks down to her constantly and she seems, at least initially, to relate to and appreciate the way he talks to her. She plays along willingly, "Ah, if you only knew how many expenses the likes of us sky-larks and squirrels have, Torvald!" [Ibsen, 2008 edition, p.4], leaving the power of the family lying entirely with him. She is

portrayed as motherly, happily playing with the children but at the same time acting as a child herself. In this portrayal she appears to wish to fill all of the traditional feminine roles at once; beautiful and seductive, motherly and caring and childlike and innocent at the same time. The play soon shows the audience, however, that this portrayal is a complete fiction. Through her interactions with other characters the audience are gradually allowed to witness a far more complete and realistic woman that is the true Nora.

The most significant pairing in the play is between Nora and Torvald; seemingly a happy marriage, which despite initial issues is stronger than ever. Torvald is clearly the head of the household. He is initially portrayed as the one who is taking care of Nora who is weak and quite unable to look after herself. He pushes his dominance by belittling Nora as though he needs to constantly remind her of her place. He calls her “spend thrift”, “little bird” and a “squirrel” continuously throughout the play, he appears to not want a wife but rather a pet and her response seems to be one of submission. In fact Torvald is not even capable of keeping his own affairs in order. This power relationship, and its eventual disintegration, had a profound effect on my thinking as I wrote *Never Go Crooked*. Torvald cares only for himself. Nora looking after him is simply expected and not to be noted upon. A woman’s efforts are not noticed in the world of this play unless they go wrong or are in some way inadequate. Leon’s attitude towards women in *Never Go Crooked* links quite closely with Torvald’s. He sees women as unable to look after themselves. He wants to protect them from the world by forcing them to submit to him. Though society would not allow him to do this in the way that Torvald does in *A Doll’s House* he finds his own way; by asserting his physical dominance. While Jennifer believes Leon to be the personification of the new and considerate man of modern society, his attitudes actually link far more closely with the attitudes of the past. He is a man so offended by his political power being shared with women that he must dominate them in other ways.

Nora decides that she cannot live in her world; a world in which nothing she does matters. Ibsen is showing the audience how it feels to be a woman of the time, always expected to hold a family together and yet never appreciated for doing so. Nora decides she can do much more with her life than simply take care of a cold and indifferent man. The alternative ending which was initially demanded when they play was performed in Germany completely changed all that. Nora returns to Torvald when she sees her children, as a mother she cannot leave them. Ibsen was greatly disappointed with this ending, as Nora throws all she has learned away. In a way the requirement for this re-written ending proved the very point he was making; that women were seen as nothing more than care takers and mothers and their own selves need to be set aside for their children. Within *Never Go Crooked*, Jennifer, like Nora, wishes to break free of the stereotypes of womanhood, she seeks a different path with a man who cannot –because of his imprisonment – control her.

But the man she chooses wishes nothing more than control, with fatal consequences. Both Jennifer and Nora venture into the unknown to escape what is expected of them but while the success of Nora's venture may be unknown it is fairly clear that Jennifer's cannot end well for her.

Women in 20th Century Theatre

As class divisions blurred in the later half of the twentieth century, theatre in the UK and Europe was beginning to be seen by a far wider variety of people. This brought about a need to portray characters and lifestyles from the perspective of ordinary people – not just those in society who were more comfortably off. John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1956), depicts the life of a struggling couple – Alison, from a middle-class background, and working class Jimmy. I would argue that the portrayal of Alison in *Look Back in Anger* demonstrates the need for plays like *Never Go Crooked* to be seen.

The representations of gender in *Look Back in Anger* begin much in the same way as those in *A Doll's House*; Alison is seen as care taker and required to look after the men in her life and is not considered to be particularly note worthy by doing so. Jimmy thinks that a woman's place is to be there to care for her man and despite Alison doing just that he doesn't even see that this is happening, "I ought to find a woman who'll just look after me", [Osborne, 1968, p.83]. To him a woman has no place having interests of her own and should simply be there to look after his interests. Similarly, he speaks of his mother, "My mother looked after [my father] without complaining and that was about all... But I was the only one who cared", [Osborne, 1968, P.58]. This type of attitude is displayed by Jimmy throughout the play, his actions are noble and for what he considers the right cause. His arrogance is a match for Leon's and his anger, aggression and dismissal of others implies a character that could very well end up exactly where Leon does: in prison. He speaks proudly of the ways in which he mistreats Alison and yet he himself plays the victim, "Why... do we let these women bleed us to death?" [Osborne, 1968, P.84]. In this he acts just like Leon, who blamed Maria for the issues in their relationship despite him being the one stopping her from seeing her loved ones. Alison seems completely miserable in her situation, yet appears trapped within it. Jimmy's belittling language and aggressive personality seem to create an atmosphere of fear for Alison from which she cannot escape. Though she does have some support from Cliff it is not until a real, if out-dated, support system comes along, in Helena and in Alison's father, that she feels the strength to escape her situation. The characters that support Alison throughout this play are constantly mocked by Jimmy, just as Leon tells Maria that her own friends and family cannot be trusted. This is a facet of many abusive relationships. If the abuser can cut off all contact between the abused and those who may support them, control can more easily be maintained.

The final act of *Look Back in Anger* is difficult for a modern audience to accept. As a story of an abusive relationship, the first two acts work really well. Osborne writes little to endear the audience towards Jimmy or to imply that there is much worth salvaging within his relationship with

Alison. Yet, at the end of the second act and into the third act Helena, despite giving no indication that this is how she feels, confesses her attraction to Jimmy and the third act depicts their brief affair. *Never Go Crooked* is written to challenge this attitude and show that while some women may be attracted to the “Jimmys” of the world, those who seek this type of relationship have underlying issues that need to be addressed and are in fact not the norm. The other characters within my play are trying to do all they can to help Jennifer out of her dangerous relationship so that she will be safe. All the other women within the play see Leon as a danger to her and not something to be desired. *Look Back in Anger*, however, seems to imply that the Jimmy – Alison – Helena power relationship is just “how things are”. Despite these attitudes being of the time *Look Back in Anger* was written they are still prevalent today. *Never Go Crooked* came into being, so that we can consider what might make some women desire men like Leon or Jimmy, because it is not the norm and should not be dismissed as such. Incidentally, it is interesting that the (predominantly male) critics of the time seemed more drawn to the class politics of *Look Back in Anger* than they were in the gender politics.

By the end of the twentieth century, attitudes towards women had changed considerably. Yet still a lot of the same assumptions about women remained. Caryl Churchill’s *Top Girls* is a feminist play with an all female cast which tackled female issues in a unique and different manner, using a mixture of realism and surreal twists. The non linear structure and disconnects, together with speech patterns which are full of interruptions and multiple conversations going on at one time, are challenging but create a remarkable truth. This play is particularly effective with its representations of women.

The opening of the play portrays a number of great and important women from history having a meal together with the protagonist of the play, Marlene. They speak of all they have done and why their gender mattered to that aspect of their lives. They are women who have made a real change to the ways in which women are viewed within the world and Marlene, an ambitious executive, counts herself amongst their number. Her promotion leads her to think that she is as important to society as these women who made significant changes to their societies. Much like Marlene, Jennifer feels that her battle is equal to any social battles that have come before her. She has a belief that her right to choose her own partner is being challenged when others attempt to warn her of the dangers. She cannot see that her relationship in no way empowers her but rather leaves her in a vulnerable position out of which she cannot escape. Marlene cannot see how all that she has pushed aside in order to ruthlessly pursue her career might be aspects of her life that she will miss or regret losing. This portrayal could be read as women being unable to manage in a predominantly male career world, but it seems more a portrayal of the struggles that women must endure. To be seen as successful in a masculine setting they must abandon all else or they will be

seen as distracted or lose their position, as they may have a child, for example. This is a sacrifice that men are not expected to make. Jennifer and Marlene might be fighting their battles in the “wrong” way but their right to choose their lives and how they must live is their own to make.

A significant aspect of *Top Girls* with regards to the representations of women is its wide range of characters. Plays, even those fighting against stereotypes of their time, seem to still attempt to fit their female characters into types. They are characters that are being used to make a point rather than well rounded humans. *Top Girls* does not have this issue. The characters within it are varied and all seem to have their own flaws and strengths. Angie and Kit’s scene together shows a truly candid conversation between two girls. They are open and honest with each other, at times cruel and often quite shocking.

ANGIE: I’m going to kill my mother and you’re going to watch.

KIT: I’m not playing.

ANGIE: You’re scared of blood.

KIT puts her hand under her dress, brings it out with blood on her finger.

KIT: There, see, I got my own blood, so.

ANGIE takes KIT’S hand and licks her finger.

ANGIE: Now I’m a cannibal. I might turn into a vampire now.

[Churchill, 1985, p.90]

While this is a much more accurate portrayal of how children would speak to each other, girls are rarely depicted as speaking in this manner on stage. Similarly the other women in Marlene’s office speak about men in a tone in which men often speak about women, “He knows his place, he’s not after calling himself a manager, he’s just a poor little bod wants a better commission and a bit of sunshine.” [Churchill, 1985, p.101]. They too are willing to be rude and antagonistic and do not hold back. The other women who come to the agency all display vastly different characters as well. The important thing that this play is attempting to put across to its audience is that women cannot be pigeonholed in a negative or positive way, they are varied and complex. No character within this play is entirely good or entirely bad. This was the representation that I wished to achieve with *Never Go Crooked*. While Jennifer might be the character the others are attempting to help, none of them are perfect either. Jennifer is intelligent and organised, but her life lacks purpose and she is tired of normality. Heather might be the most emotionally intelligent character but she cannot get past her issues with her sister. Rose is a good mother and she does what she can for her daughters, yet she cannot help but have a favourite daughter and she attempts to push her religion on others. Claire is well educated, in a successful relationship and she has a successful career, yet she is so concerned with what others think of her and fearful of being seen as boring that it will allow her to jeopardise her entire life. Similarly Marlene is so concerned with succeeding in her career that she has grown to look down on anyone fulfilling traditional female roles and seems to believe the only

way to succeed is to abandon all else, as she does with Angie.

Women in Current Theatre

Whilst some stereotypes are proving worryingly persistent, many plays of the twenty first century have moved away from representation of women or men as gender types and rather show a move towards a focus of the psychology of their character, regardless of gender. The American play *Becky Shaw* [Gionfriddo, 2011], is an interesting exploration of the ways in which mental health issues affect a varied group of individuals, each with their own issues and views on life.

The play opens with Max and Suzanna, two characters who both display some deep seated issues which they are unwilling or unable to address. What is interesting about these two characters however is that they seem to display a very similar character dynamic to that shown between Torvald and Nora in *A Doll's House*. Max speaks to Suzanna in a very belittling way just as Torvald did to Nora, "I'm not judging you, I'm disciplining you", [Gionfriddo, 2011, P.9]. He treats both her and her mother, Susan, as though they are his property. He displays a controlling nature to rival any of the characters we have looked at so far. His manipulation and use of his knowledge of accounting to control and belittle those around him is very similar to the ways in which Leon manipulates both Maria and Jennifer in my own play. While his actions may be more subtle than the demeaning nicknames that Torvald uses, what he is doing is the same. He uses his powers of manipulation to sleep with Suzanna as she states he "Told [Her] it would not change anything" [Gionfriddo, 2011, P. 57], and later attempts to use it to break up Suzanna and Andrew and to abandon Becky. He appears to have issues with control, much like both Leon and Jennifer within *Never Go Crooked* and similarly to those two it has made him overly aggressive and emotionally closed off, he considers empathy a weak female trait, "Women and empathy", [Gionfriddo, 2011, P.35]. Suzanna is a different character though; she shows a desire to escape this type of manipulation that she has experienced throughout her life. She moves on with her life and finds a different type of man; while her husband Andrew is in no way perfect and seems to be attracted to her emotional damage, as he laments that she "Is much healthier now" [Gionfriddo, 2011, P. 62], and appears instead to be dragged into Becky's emotional damage, he still helps her to move and grow. Suzanna, much like Jennifer expects the men in her life to solve her problems, and as such runs from Andrew when their relationship gets hard, however unlike Jennifer, she realises at the end that these men cannot solve her problems; she must work on them herself. She is the only character in the play who displays true character growth. Though her relationship with Andrew is far from perfect, she escapes the far more damaging relationship she has with Max. It could however be debated that she only does this because Andrew tells her to do so and she is therefore still allowing men to control her life, but as he too must break contact with the damaging Becky, it seems that they are both making the conscious decision to cut damaging people from their lives. This is the end that the

characters of *Never Go Crooked* wish for Jennifer.

The true exploration into female mental illness in this play comes from the titular character Becky Shaw. She seems to display a level of manipulation to rival Max. She reveals a great deal about herself through the ways in which she makes the other characters feel. Becky is a prime example of female aggression as it is laid out in Gavin and Porter's books. According to *Female Aggression* (Gavin & Porter, 2015), women's aggressive tendencies seem to lean towards "indirect aggression". They are far more likely to resort to spreading harmful rumours, derogatory speech or otherwise undermining the character of the victim of their aggression. This is indirect as it is often not easy to assign blame when this type of aggression is used, but it is no less aggressive for that. The fact that a woman may use indirect aggression and a man direct also does not necessarily mean that the man is any more dangerous. Becky uses manipulation and emotional blackmail to control those around her just as Max uses his wealth and influence. She appears initially meek and innocent:

"Suzanna: Don't show him any weakness...

Becky: Do I seem weak... So far?" [Gionfriddo, 2011, P.45]

The audience is soon shown however, that this innocence is a fiction, one she creates to keep the men in her life with her. She allows men to think that she is unable to look after herself so that they will not risk leaving her, "I think I led her on and I'm afraid she'll do something if I walk away." [Gionfriddo, 2011, P.85] Her manipulation works on Andrew and nearly ends his marriage because of it, but Suzanna's growth means that they are able to move past it, perhaps because Suzanna too was being manipulated so it was easier for them to recognise the pattern. Max's lack of empathy allowed him to ignore Becky, even if her suicide attempts were real, he simply didn't care and as such the two are left alone together at the end. The desire to control everyone is a theme both within this play and in *Never Go Crooked*. Manipulation, as Gavin and Porter state is a lot harder to identify than physical aggression but it can cause huge issues; in *Becky Shaw* it almost leads to the break up of a marriage, and in *Never Go Crooked* it led to the death of Maria and potentially that of Jennifer. While Jennifer herself uses her manipulative nature to get people to see life her way, she does not become a danger, but with Leon unable to use physical aggression and as such resorting to manipulation becomes far more of a threat. It is important that it is understood that manipulation and trickery can be just as dangerous as more physical forms of aggression and that is why more research needs to be done on the type of people who are more likely to display these traits.

Another play which deals mainly with mental health is *Julie* [Stenham, dir Cracknell, 2018]. This is an interesting re-imagining of August Strindberg's *Miss Julie* [Strindberg, 1889]. Both these

plays are about a young woman committing suicide but each tackles the issues in a different way. Both plays are very much a product of their times, one looking at the role of women in the time it was set and the other looking more towards class and mental health. Both of these issues were vastly important in the creation of *Never Go Crooked*.

Miss Julie is a play from the late nineteenth century and depicts the repercussions when an upper class woman, Miss Julie, gets drunk and ends up bedding her servant, Jean. The effect of this is that they must flee the country or else Miss Julie must end her life so great is the shame of ruining herself in this way. While this ending seems extreme to today's audience, the belief that women were required to be "pure" in order to be of value to society coupled with the class divide made this act unspeakable. There is simply no way that Miss Julie's father would accept her as she is now. In the original version of the play it is Jean who suggests that she should kill herself when he realises there is no hope of her getting her father's money. Miss Julie is confident and playful; she uses her power to get what she wants from Jean and feels so secure in her position that she sees no harm in it. It is only the morning after that the true repercussions dawn on her. As a woman she is nothing more than her sexual status. The other female character in the play, Christine, depicts the other side of womanhood; she is meek and submissive and allows Miss Julie to get what she wants. When she discovers what has happened however she becomes cold and scathing, she has no interest in protecting Miss Julie after she has ruined her relationship with Jean. Jean himself, once again is quite controlling, allowing Miss Julie to believe she has the upper hand in their relationship. *Miss Julie* is so much a play of its time it is hard to relate to with a modern mind set. Miss Julie, like Jennifer in *Never Go Crooked*, gives up all she has, including her life, just to be with a man. Jean, like Leon uses women to get what he wants. For Jean, however, his goals are more nuanced than simply to dominate the women. Christine seems meek and submissive but changes when she feels that her trust has been betrayed. In this she is similar to Claire; a good friend and helpful to Jennifer but angry and bitter when she feels she is being used. However, the difference in period and style make comparisons between *Miss Julie* and *Never Go Crooked* somewhat tenuous. The modern *Julie* provides closer links.

Julie [Stenham, dir Cracknell, 2018] portrays the same events only happening in the modern age. It too is a play of its time but as such is far more relevant to contemporary writing. In this version as well as a wealth and class divide there is also a race divide, though Julie is adamant that that is not an issue for either herself or her father. Christine is a far more well rounded character, not only a servant but studying and looking after her child. Jean's turn on Julie seems to come from anger more than a form of manipulation and most importantly he does not suggest for a second that Julie should kill herself. The mental issues are far more prevalent with this play; in the original play all the audience is shown is the servant's quarters in which the events take place, the

party from which Miss Julie is escaping is merely background noise. The modern version however features a multi layered stage, similar to that which would be used for the regular conventional version of *Never Go Crooked*. In the upper section away from the main action the audience is shown the party, from which, despite it being her own birthday Julie is isolated. She cannot feel connected to the people who are supposedly her friends. She feels she is friends with Christine but Christine is only an employee of Julie's father and feels looked down upon by her. Julie also talks about how she has no aims in life, she has been given everything she asks for and as such has not truly decided what she wants. She is alone and without purpose. She feels she has found a potential love in Jean and though she is spoiled and rather clueless her feelings appear genuine. In this version the relationship is not pursued, simply because it seems hopeless. Christine's reaction is similar to that in the original. She tells Julie that she is spoiled and selfish and thus ends the illusion of their friendship. Losing the final two people Julie believed cared about her is too much and as such she takes her own life. The play ends with Christine discovering this and attempting to help, but the audience is aware that it is too late and so she too has to live with this guilt. The portrayal of the mental health issues caused by an individuals lack of purpose in life are very relevant to *Never Go Crooked*. Julie takes her own life, but Jennifer falls for someone who will do it for her. Jennifer is terrified of being normal and ordinary just like Julie but also like Julie she does not know what she can do about it. Both are isolated from their friends, though at least for Jennifer hers are truly trying to help her, Julie does not appear to have even that support. Both plays are portrayals of the dangers that leaving mental health problems unchecked can cause.

My intention, in this introductory section, is to demonstrate that *Never Go Crooked* is part of a continuum in which twentieth and twenty-first century theatre has been a useful vehicle for examination of social issues affecting women. The specific issues addressed in *Never Go Crooked* differ from those addressed in the sample plays I have selected, but there are also thematic similarities. *Never Go Crooked* brings to light issues that truly have been in-sufficiently considered in the past. Its purpose is to encourage its audience to question what it means to be a hybristophile. Is it a mental condition which should be recognised through official diagnosis? Is it a symptom of wider mental illnesses such as depression? Do these women merely not see themselves as worthy of anything better? Or do they truly believe that they are helping some of the lowest people in society and their love can make these men better people? Jennifer is simply one woman who has these desires but there are many real women who are putting themselves in danger for the love of a certain type of man. At present society does not have a focused idea as to why, and all too often the women do not seek help. I hope this play may contribute to improving this situation. The research I have done in the process of this essay has shown that the most effective method to achieve this goal

would be through a combination of naturalistic dialogue; so that the audience can truly get to know the characters with whom they must relate, and more fantastical performance so that they can see more of what is happening beneath the service; issues the characters can't, or won't put into words.

The Play:

Never Go Crooked

Character list

Jennifer	31	Female	Protagonist and hybristophile in love with Leon
Heather	28	Female	Jennifer's younger sister
Rose	55	Female	Jennifer's Mother
Claire	31	Female	Jennifer's best friend, met in university.
Maria	26	Female	Leon's deceased first victim.

Performance outline

The ideal performance for this play would be help within the Cork County Gaol as outlined in the location section of the Dramaturgical treatment following the play script. However, for this script the staging will be set in a two layer stage connected by stairs. These sections represent the Psychologists office (lower level) and the waiting room (upper level), the neat home/arranged garden section (Lower) and the forest or wilderness (upper). Maria is unable to leave the upper level and connect with those inside. The painting remains at the back of the stage on the upper level; it remains throughout the play.

The play is to be performed as if the characters are talking to a psychologist hired to help Jennifer realise the danger she is facing. The audience will take the role of the psychologist; they are the ones who are expected to decide what Jennifer's (and the other character's) issues truly are. As such this will not be stated within the play.

The shadow figure, if it is used within a staging, is the figure that Maria can use to reach out to the others. It begins to appear only around Jennifer until it becomes clear that she is oblivious to it. Throughout the play it becomes clear that Heather, as the only one who truly connects and empathises with Jennifer, is the one who is aware of the shadow.

Never Go Crooked

JENNIFER enters the performance area, it's mostly dark apart from one point of light.. She is wearing head phones and a hooded jumper. Light music can be heard. JENNIFER sits in the light. She seems cold, perhaps afraid. She looks around and takes her headphones off. The music fades. JENNIFER pulls her hood up and zips up her jumper tight. A twig can be heard cracking, she gets up to look but no further sounds occur. She sits again, takes out a letter and glances over it.

JENNIFER: Where are you, Leon? I'm sure this is where you said. Coed y Mynydd Ddu.
She is shivering as she holds the letter. She holds it to her chest for a while and then places it carefully back in her pocket. Another crack of twigs can be heard behind her; louder this time. JENNIFER gets up and looks. As she does the wind can be heard and her light goes out. When the lights come up again MARIA walks across the upper level. She speaks as she walks across.

MARIA: It's dark here and cold. I've never liked the dark. I can see his face over me. Looking down on me. It's dark and cold and I can't breathe, my throat hurts so much and I can't make a sound. Is this a dream? Maybe it isn't a dream. Maybe it's never been a dream. I can feel something falling onto me, soil? It's on my face. In my mouth. What's he doing?

I was no better than anyone else, he said. I couldn't handle the world. He said he couldn't protect me if I wouldn't let him.

Then he was carrying me. Why was he carrying me? Where are we now? It's dark and cold and damp. I can hear the wind in the trees, the birds. It might be nice, but the pain... What is happening? I want to know what is happening. So cold. Him above me. Can't breath. Can't move. Find me. Someone needs to find me. Someone needs to know.

MARIA exits. Lights up on JENNIFER. In the darkness JENNIFER has removed her hoody; when the lights return she is dressed neatly in a suit. She is relaxed. She is still holding the letter but quickly puts it in her pocket without trying to bring attention to it. She speaks directly to the audience/psychologist

JENNIFER: I know you've already decided the type of person I am. Everyone thinks they know me. You should understand, you won't stop me. You may be a professional but I know what I'm doing.

She paces back and forth as she speaks, confident in her posture but the pacing hints at some doubts in herself.

JENNIFER: You just want me to see it for myself, correct? I think it's pretty arrogant of anyone to claim to know someone, yet you've already decided everything about both me. And about Leon. My partner. *[BEAT]* Yes he is my partner.

She reaches into her pocket grasps the letter but then decides against pulling it out and returns to pacing.

JENNIFER: ...And what about you. Sitting there. So professional. Notebook. Very nice pen. Mont Blanc. Expensive. Designer suit, kitten heels. Since when did psychiatrists become fashion icons? Status, I suppose. Confidence. Well, bullshit. But Mum worries, so I will talk to you; so you can convince her it's all fine. Which, I assume, means I have to convince you, Yes?

She takes a seat and pulls out the letter but she doesn't open it, just holds it gently to herself.

JENNIFER: The conclusion most people draw is that I must have been abused as a child. That's what's happened to most women who pursue 'uncouth' men, right? So everyone has to fit the pattern. Women who like older men have father issues; women who like what you consider dangerous men were beaten, obviously.

ROSE enters behind JENNIFER and sits with secateurs and begins to clip some flowers.

JENNIFER: My childhood did have its issues, of course. But nothing more than normal.

JENNIFER stares at the audience/psychologist as if in challenge, but then she softens. As she does she turns and walks to ROSE; she sits on the floor next to ROSE'S chair and picks up a small plastic trowel. She is a girl now, aged about 14.

JENNIFER: Mum, what happens now?

ROSE stops humming and looks towards JENNIFER and stares a while as though considering her question.

ROSE: It's okay. We'll just have to plant some more.

JENNIFER looks up at her in confusion, but on seeing the flower in ROSE'S hands she understands.

JENNIFER: I didn't mean the flowers. I meant you and me... And Heather.

Rose puts aside the flowers

ROSE: We can do these later.

JENNIFER becomes agitated.

JENNIFER: Mum, we're nearly all out of crisps; biscuits too, and juice. You promised me I could get those nice new school shoes I wanted but you haven't taken me. Heather is going to need new uniform too. Why won't you take us to the shops?

ROSE: Jennifer, honey, those things: the shopping, getting you all your school clothes and your stationery; your father did those things. I can't get you girls organised like him.

JENNIFER, now openly upset stares at ROSE but ROSE refuses to look her in the eye. Instead she twirls the broken flower around and begins to hum again.

JENNIFER: Daddy can't do that any more.

ROSE: No.

ROSE turns away from JENNIFER a bit more and hums louder.

JENNIFER: He's gone.

ROSE drops the flower and gets up to leave, still refusing to look at JENNIFER.

ROSE: It was always us, Jenny. Never just me.

JENNIFER wipes her eyes with the back of her sleeve, she gets up and approaches ROSE. She hugs her, but ROSE stands perfectly still.

JENNIFER: If I get Heather to accept her uniform and not complain, can we go to the shops then?

Though ROSE doesn't respond verbally she now looks at JENNIFER.

JENNIFER: And when we get back, I can make food. Stir fry. I can do that.

ROSE relaxes and gives JENNIFER a grateful hug.

ROSE: Of course you can sweetie. You're an angel.

ROSE exits the stage, JENNIFER begins to follow her but after a few steps she stops and stares after her. She turns and addresses the audience/psychologist.

JENNIFER: Mum needed help, that's all. A lot of it, but that was okay; there was nothing wrong with our relationships. No, it didn't mean I 'grew up too fast', I did 'learn to be a child'. Look, what's the point of this? I'm not going to give Leon up, just because my family are worried. Who asked you to take an interest anyway? The prison governor? No, I bet it was Heather. Or Claire. Or Mum. Was it Mum? Sister, friend, mother what does it matter? I love Leon and when he gets out we'll be together. You can explore my past as much as you like. I know what I'm doing.

JENNIFER looks at the discarded flower on the floor picks it up and follows ROSE off stage.

HEATHER enters. She is determined and appears angry, or as though she wishes to seem angry. She addresses the audience/psychologist.

HEATHER: Don't feel bad, she does that with everyone; makes you believe she's all hurt and innocent, I mean.

HEATHER begins to fidget, seemingly uncomfortable but determined to continue none the less.

HEATHER: Maybe it's because I'm her sister, but believe me, I'm the only one she's real with. Everyone else thinks she's this perfect robot that Dad invented in his image or whatever. That's why people were so shocked when she went with... I wasn't.

HEATHER'S anger subsides a bit; she seems to feel guilty for what she is saying.

HEATHER: People think I hate her; of course I don't. I've always worried about her, it's just everyone else is blinded by her disguise. I knew something... something not right... was sure to happen.

HEATHER approaches the audience/psychologist.

HEATHER: When I was little I hated spending time with Jennifer. Mum insisted she was a great influence. Because she was so like Dad, apparently that was a good thing. Weird, she wanted to run our lives but at the same time she wanted to make us as uncomfortable as possible. That makes her sound like a total bitch, but it wasn't that. She just didn't understand how to function like a normal human. There were these blackberries once..

A child again, JENNIFER enters the upper level, carrying a tub of blackberries. She eats a few and reaches out as though to pick more. She reaches far over the side of the stairway, standing on one leg; she topples a bit. HEATHER reaches JENNIFER and stands looking up at her. JENNIFER is further up the bush reaching awkwardly over the top.

JENNIFER: You know, you could get in there. There are some really good ones I can't get to. You're smaller.

HEATHER looks into up at the stairway and reaches out; quickly pulling her hand back when she gets scratched.

HEATHER: Ow! I don't want to. It hurts.

JENNIFER: If you want me to make a crumble we need the best blackberries.

HEATHER: But the pricklers.

JENNIFER: To get the best ones you have to push past the thorns, you have to work for it or it isn't worth it.

HEATHER becomes upset, JENNIFER gets annoyed.

HEATHER: I don't want it that much. Why can't mum help you?

JENNIFER: Don't be such a baby, you can fit in there without touching the pricklers.

HEATHER: I don't want to.

JENNIFER: Fine.

JENNIFER sighs and throws the tub to HEATHER, who awkwardly grabs at it, then sits down on the floor and starts eating some. JENNIFER begins throwing berries blindly towards HEATHER and the tub.

JENNIFER: You just hold those now, I need you to hold them up so I don't miss, now.

HEATHER: Okay.

HEATHER continues to eat the blackberries.

JENNIFER: Are you even helping? Come here! You need to help.

JENNIFER grabs HEATHER'S arm and pulls her towards the stairs. HEATHER pulls away but JENNIFER is stronger. The brambles cut HEATHER.

HEATHER: Ow! No, Jenny it hurts.

JENNIFER: Grow up! It's only juice. It's fine.

HEATHER pushes JENNIFER and she falls. HEATHER looks at the cut on her hand and then turns to JENNIFER.

HEATHER: Jenny are you okay?

HEATHER stands staring at the bush; she begins to cry. JENNIFER crawls slowly out from behind the bush, her clothes covered in red stains. HEATHER stares shocked as JENNIFER gets up and slowly, stiffly walks off stage.

HEATHER: Jenny? Doesn't it hurt?

HEATHER continues to stare after JENNIFER leaves.

HEATHER: If it hurts you should cry.

HEATHER looks at her juice stained fingers and then up at the audience/psychologist. She puts the tub down and walks to the front of the stage.

HEATHER: Showing emotion wasn't something Miss Perfect could manage. I could never look at her the same way, you know.

It was creepy.

HEATHER looks at her juice stained hands and looks up at the audience/psychologist.

HEATHER: I'm pretty sure it was blood.

She nods to herself.

HEATHER: She was cut up really bad.

HEATHER looks at her hands again and nods to herself.

HEATHER: She enjoys the strangest things. Nothing is worth it unless it's as difficult as she can possibly make it.

The light rises on the painting as JENNIFER enters the upper level where the picture hangs. She stands and stares at it a while.

JENNIFER: There was an exhibition in the library where I work. A community outreach thing. They'd asked prisoners to paint or draw or collage whatever they felt like. To raise awareness, maybe? Or to make people realise that art can come from anywhere? I'm not really sure.

She approaches the painting and feels the paint.

JENNIFER: Everyone else thought the whole thing rather gaudy, in poor taste. I suppose, for the most part, it was. These were no artists; their stuff was sort of creepy, and badly done. But this one grabbed me.

She looks around to see if she is being watched. JENNIFER reaches out as though to take the painting but then thinks better of it and instead takes a picture with her phone.

JENNIFER: I'm not sure what it was about it. Whatever you might think of intuition or clairvoyance or -- call it what you want -- I knew, knew without a shadow of a doubt, that whoever painted it had something to say. To me. Something to say to me.

She looks at her phone a while then smiles as she puts it away..

JENNIFER: Don't get me wrong it was hardly high art but I suppose if I could feel the artist's emotions, then he was definitely on the right path. Don't assume that I was blinded by some uncanny infatuation with this painting. I just knew that whoever painted such a picture was sensitive and, I thought, yes...completely alone. Yes. *[Pause]* When I decided to contact him I didn't care what he was -- shoplifter or murderer, I didn't think about it. But I had to meet this person, convince him that if he kept at his art he could be better than just some criminal. Maybe I thought I could save him. Or save me. I don't know.

JENNIFER approaches the audience/psychologist.

JENNIFER: I went there. To the prison. I didn't bother telling anyone; what would be the point? We know what they'd say, yes? I gave them my address and that was supposed to be that. I was going to have a prison pen-pal and it would be a nice thing to do – to help someone so obviously suffering.

JENNIFER clutches the letter in her pocket.

JENNIFER: Every one of us has a very small number of people who can understand our thoughts, our feelings. Maybe only one. You have to be open with yourself or you'll never find them. Him. It turned out my artist was supposed to have killed some woman. I knew that wasn't possible. He wasn't that person, couldn't be.

Lights down on JENNIFER.

CLAIRE enters; she looks frazzled and a little bit nervous. She makes a vague attempt to tidy herself the gives it a lost cause and awkwardly sits on the edge of one of the chairs. As she talks she occasionally chews on the draw string on her jumper.

CLAIRE: Jennifer is my best friend, yes, or was, I'm not sure.

She twitches nervously.

CLAIRE: She's never been one to take my advice on men and she is definitely not going to start now.

BEAT

CLAIRE: I would like nothing more than to go back to how we used to be. It's just the way it goes though, isn't it? You make great friends at uni but then when you're grown up and can't go out to play anymore it fizzles.

The more Claire talks the more comfortable she becomes in herself.

CLAIRE: She's like one of my kids -- I have two, a boy and a girl -- desperately trying to argue that they shouldn't have to eat their broccoli. If you question a decision she's made don't be surprised if she holds her breath until you give in.

BEAT

CLAIRE: So, what are we trying to do here? Trying to convince her that what she's doing is a threat to herself and others? Good luck with that. Or diagnose her as... what? Criminally infatuated?

CLAIRE looks down as though ashamed of what she has just said. She takes a deep breath and continues trying to sound calmer. JENNIFER enters and sits behind CLAIRE. She places a book on the table and spreads out a few sheets of paper around it.

CLAIRE: When she came to university; when I met her she was... I honestly thought she was a member of some super strict religion. I took it upon myself to make her enjoy life. But don't think that had anything to do with how she is now. This guy – this Leon I mean. What I did, that was just necessary to make her bearable. She was just scared of letting go, letting people into her bubble -- probably scared they wouldn't like what they saw there. But eventually she became fun to be around. Yeah.

CLAIRE and JENNIFER are students. JENNIFER is working. Claire pulls a bottle of wine and a pack of cards from her bag. She holds them out to JENNIFER until she looks up from her work.

JENNIFER: No, Claire not tonight. I thought we were just going to have a quiet one tonight. I have a 9am lecture remember?

CLAIRE opens the wine, ignoring JENNIFER'S protests.

CLAIRE: Please, no one expects you to show up for any lectures that start before 11. Nope, no two ways about it, the girls are coming over, you need to get drunk.

JENNIFER closes her book reluctantly and places it neatly by her side. Claire immediately grabs it and throws it across the room.

JENNIFER: Was that necessary?

CLAIRE: Yes.

JENNIFER gets up and walks towards the book CLAIRE grabs her by the shoulders and sits her down again.

CLAIRE: Jen, listen to me; you don't have to be one hundred percent on message all the time. Just because the book is over there instead of right next to you, doesn't mean it's going to go missing. You're not going to fail your course just because you missed a single lecture. Okay, so relax and drink.

CLAIRE swigs from the bottle then hands it to JENNIFER who will not stop staring at the book on the floor until CLAIRE places herself firmly in her line of sight. CLAIRE pushes the wine bottle into her hand.

JENNIFER: Fine. You really think one swig is going to get me drunk?

CLAIRE: Of course not. This is just for us before the others get here.

JENNIFER stares at CLAIRE suspiciously.

JENNIFER: So, what are those for? *[She gestures to the cards]*

CLAIRE: Games.

JENNIFER: What?

CLAIRE sends a confused look towards JENNIFER.

CLAIRE: Drinking games, my dear.
Have you really never done this before?

JENNIFER: I don't really drink, I don't like the-

CLAIRE: Loss of control? I knew it. You've been at uni for, what, three weeks now? And not once have you left anything out of place, or been late or anything. You're a control freak and I, my good lady, am going to fix you.

JENNIFER: There is nothing wrong with me. And I was going to say I don't like the taste.

CLAIRE: Okay, be that way, but you are running a serious risk of becoming chronically boring.

JENNIFER slams down the bottle , shocking CLAIRE, who did not expect her to take this so seriously.

JENNIFER: I'm not boring. Don't say that! Never say that! Just because I'm not an idiot who relishes binge drinking and-

CLAIRE: Okay, okay. I know you're not boring but sweetie, university is about so much more than just studying. It's where you get the chance to try anything, everything. You have all the freedom of being an adult and none of the responsibility. Don't waste that being safe and sensible.

JENNIFER sighs and shrugs.

JENNIFER: Fine. Show me how your game works.

CLAIRE smiles triumphantly and spreads her cards out in a circle. The lights fade on JENNIFER, CLAIRE addresses the audience/psychologist.

CLAIRE: I'm not saying I didn't see patterns in her behaviour; I did. You study the law and suddenly everyone's a criminal, you know how it is. I should have thought though... There's a word for it I think... A word for what she has. The boys she chose were... different. They were all odd in a way. I should have done more. There must have been something... I thought I was being paranoid. But this guy, this Leon. Well, you can see why we're worried.

CLAIRE exits MARIA walks across the upper walkway talking as she does.

MARIA: I see his face in the dark, we're in the car. It's dark and really, really cold. Far too cold. He doesn't seem to be cold. My head is against the window; it hurts all the way through me. But I can't move. He says it wasn't his fault, says that this was what's best for me, says I had pleaded with him to save me. Did I need saving? What will my parents say when they find out? My poor mum and dad. I'm so angry I could scream, but I can't. My head's against this glass, I'm cold. My mouth won't open.

MARIA exits. JENNIFER is sitting neatly on the lower level facing the audience/psychologist. JENNIFER tidies things up as she talks.

JENNIFER: You know how it is when you meet someone new. Our first few letters were awkward. These were hardly ideal circumstances after all, but I wanted to know more. It wasn't long before our writing relaxed, just like a first date when the conversation starts painfully but then you find you have nothing to worry about ... They were just letters. It's not like I had anything to lose.

JENNIFER pulls a letter from her bag and looks at it. She smiles shyly to herself and places the letter neatly on the table. She talks while smoothing the letter out. HEATHER enters the upper level she tidies up the plants around the stairs and then sits.

JENNIFER: Heather always knew. Knew there was something different about how I was. After the letters started I mean. She started avoiding me but that just made it easier. Explaining to everyone at that point would have been stupid. I had to figure out why he was in there, why he had been blamed. Until I did I couldn't tell anyone. I think it would have finished mum.

JENNIFER exits as HEATHERS enters.

HEATHER: There was always something in the way she held herself, like she was imitating human functions without truly understanding them. When we were little Mum was so happy that we spent so much time together and we were so close, but really I was kinda worried what she'd do if I said no. It made me want to be completely different from her.

Heather laughs to herself.

HEATHER: It was a shame really because what she was, apart from fucking creepy, was an upstanding, law abiding citizen. But you know once I broke out of her pattern, once I realised I didn't have to let her control and manipulate me like she did with everyone else, things became much easier. We almost became friends again. Though I still felt like I'd be on suicide watch one day. But apparently her crazy took another form. Or who knows maybe this whole so-called loving a prisoner thing is just an elaborate suicide. *That* would be just like her. Can you be law-abiding and creepy at the same time? She could. Even when we were kids.

JENNIFER enters as a child with papers and crayons she sits on the floor with them around her. She begins drawing something on one of the sheets of papers. She stops and looks at it for a while, she then makes a frustrated noise and throws it away grabbing another sheet starting again.

JENNIFER: I'm never going to get it right.

JENNIFER cries out in frustration throwing the pencil she is holding away. Then scurrying after it and putting it back in the pack. HEATHER approaches her, stops and looks around at the papers.

HEATHER: Mum! Jenny's made a mess!

JENNIFER gets annoyed and screams stopping HEATHER in her tracks.

JENNIFER: It's not my fault. I need to get it right. It needs to be good.

HEATHER grabs one of the sheets.

HEATHER: What are you doing that's so important.

JENNIFER gets up and tries to grab the sheet back.

JENNIFER: It doesn't matter to you. You wouldn't understand.

HEATHER: What even is this?

JENNIFER makes another grab for the sheet which HEATHER runs to the other side of the stage..

JENNIFER: I told you, you wouldn't understand. You're not smart enough.

HEATHER: I'm smarter than you, just 'cause your older doesn't mean you're smart. I'm telling mum you're making a mess and being nasty.

JENNIFER: That's not fair! You don't even know what I'm doing.
It's important.

HEATHER starts to rip up the paper; JENNIFER goes to grab it back when she can't she gives up and sits down, pulling all the sheets into her arms.

JENNIFER: It doesn't matter.
That one was all wrong anyway so it doesn't matter.

HEATHER: Tell me what it is and maybe I won't tell mum.
Maybe. If it's not stupid.

JENNIFER: No! You can't know, you won't get it.

HEATHER: Why are you such a freak? Just tell me what it is.

JENNIFER: It's a picture.

HEATHER crumples up the paper she was holding and throws it at JENNIFER.

HEATHER: I can see that much stupid.

JENNIFER gets frustrated and shrieks just for a second then takes a deep breath.

JENNIFER: I wanted to draw out my life. Draw out what it will be like, but it's not going right. I can't get it right.

HEATHER: You're so dumb.
If it's your imagination it can look anyway you want it to.

JENNIFER shakes her head drawing another quick sketch.

JENNIFER: No! It has to be perfect. It's not coming out right.
It's not how it's supposed to look.

JENNIFER looks through the papers and then throws them down.

HEATHER: So what?

JENNIFER: You don't understand; I said you wouldn't. It needs to be perfect or it won't happen like it should.

HEATHER: You're so weird. I'm telling mum what you've done. Telling her about the mess.

JENNIFER: [*Leaving the room*] Yes that's right, you tell mum. Fuck-bum!

HEATHER: What? I don't even know what that means.

JENNIFER: No, you wouldn't. Baby girl. Child. [*exits shouting*] Fuck-bum! Fuck-bum.

HEATHER: [*To audience/psychologist*] That's how she was. Weird. Really weird sometimes.

CLAIRE enters.

CLAIRE: Oh sorry. I thought, this time... I thought it was my appointment... with the...

HEATHER: With the psychologist. It's not a dirty word, Claire.

CLAIRE: No, I just, I don't even know if this can help her.

HEATHER: It's fine. I'm finished, anyway. For now. *[To audience/psychologist]* All right? I'll make another appointment. Nice suit by the way. Yeah.

CLAIRE: OK. So. Jennifer at uni. She met her first boyfriend because of me, her first *real* boyfriend anyway. I swear she hadn't even drunk a thimble of alcohol before we met; she was too busy babying a mother and sister. But yeah, I think I let her be happy for the first time in her life. I think she didn't realise she wasn't already. I mean you can't miss what you've never had right? Then one night I lost her... in a pub, she just didn't come home.

*HEATHER enters behind Claire she is on the phone trying to ring a number that won't answer
CLAIRE begins pacing back and forth.*

CLAIRE: It's my fault. She didn't even want to go.

HEATHER: She's still not answering. *[To self]* This is the kind of thing university has been doing to her God knows what it'll do to me. We're going to have to call the police.

CLAIRE: She's only been gone a few hours, Heather.
We shouldn't worry yet, right?

CLAIRE stares at HEATHER waiting for her to agree, when JENNIFER enters; she is as immaculate as ever.

JENNIFER: Oh, hello, you two are up early.

HEATHER: Try still up. Where the hell were you? Why weren't you answering your phone?

JENNIFER stops abruptly confused about the situation. CLAIRE and HEATHER both approach her.

JENNIFER: I lost it.

HEATHER: Please, you have never lost anything in your life.

HEATHER reaches into JENNIFER'S bag and pulls out her phone.

CLAIRE: We were really worried about you, sweetie. You can't just disappear like that.

JENNIFER: But I thought the point of us going out was to have fun.
Go out and meet new people and be fun.

CLAIRE: Fun is one thing but you can't have it at the expense of people who care about you.

JENNIFER shrugs she isn't upset but is more confused..

JENNIFER: Well, if you must know, I met a man.
I was spending time with him.

CLAIRE takes JENNIFER by the shoulders and looks at her while HEATHER throws her arms up and sits by the wall.

CLAIRE: That's great sweetie, it really is but you have to understand that you can't just leave your friends like that. You have to tell us where you're going.

HEATHER: And you really can't just run off with some random guy, he might...I dunno... just want to harvest your organs.

CLAIRE shoots HEATHER a look but HEATHER ignores her.

JENNIFER: I thought the point was to have fun, be reckless.
Ignore all the rules.

CLAIRE: No, you're right it is. But that's not all there is to it, you have to keep yourself safe and let your friends know where you are.

HEATHER: And don't ignore your sister when she rings you.

CLAIRE: Right, unless she deserves it.

HEATHER is about to berate CLAIRE when she adds:

CLAIRE: Which in this case she really didn't. But you're safe, that's good and you met someone that's very good.

JENNIFER gets excited

JENNIFER: Yes, While I was waiting for you, to leave that God-awful last pub ... at least it was the last one I was in, maybe you went in more ... he literally ran into me.

CLAIRE: How very romantic.

HEATHER calms a bit.

HEATHER: So you're run into and it's all cute and awkward, right?

JENNIFER thinks for a moment then shakes her head and continues.

JENNIFER: Not exactly, no. He was running. I thought it must have been from the police, because they were right there behind him. So, I kissed him to make it look like we'd been there all along and they just went on by. It was like something in a movie.

CLAIRE: Yes, a really, really awful one. So, you just kiss a random man who, runs directly into you. Was he mad?

JENNIFER: Why would he be mad?

CLAIRE: I couldn't possibly imagine.

CLAIRE looks at HEATHER who simply shrugs.

JENNIFER: After it was all over we got talking and he said the police thought he had robbed a shop -- an off licence I think -- but that's not important. They'd been chasing him and I saved him from them.

HEATHER: But he hadn't, right?

JENNIFER: Sorry?

HEATHER: He hadn't stolen anything; he was wrongly accused or whatever?

JENNIFER: Oh, I don't know I didn't ask.

HEATHER and CLAIRE share another look; both are very worried now.

CLAIRE: You didn't ask? What was wrong were you scared?

JENNIFER: No, we were just having a good time I didn't want to ruin it by asking awkward questions. You know, I'm trying to be less boring. I like this staying out all night thing. We should definitely do it more. Better get a move on I have a lecture soon. Don't want to miss it.

JENNIFER walks off stage as CLAIRE and HEATHER stay staring at each other in silence HEATHER follows JENNIFER after a beat but remains in the upper area. CLAIRE turns to the audience/psychologist. CLAIRE pauses as she considers her importance in JENNIFER'S life.

CLAIRE: That was a sign, I suppose. Not the full Leon, but a step on the way. When it ended she was wrecked. She reverted. Trying to cut out the world. I let it happen. But was it my responsibility to stop her? That's her family's job, right? As though they could do anything for her, far more likely to make it worse, I think. I don't know, people deal with break ups differently. She had a few more flings in our university days but nothing lasted. I didn't think anything of it, not then. Sure she had weird taste but no one ever died from bad taste, right?

ROSE enters. Lights down on CLAIRE.

ROSE: She always tried so hard, Jennifer. It seems that she's always looking for her special skill. She can never just be adequate at something she always has to be the best but it's just very difficult for her and she gets very stressed about it all. I think her relationship with this man, this Leon, is something she thought she could be the best at. How many women can there possibly be to take on a challenge like that?

ROSE exits. JENNIFER enters.

JENNIFER: Leon and I manage to make our relationship work the same way as any couple; through work and tolerance. No one has a perfect relationship; ours has troubles many don't but also avoids troubles many have. It will always be work. I don't think there is such a thing as "meant for each other." The idea that humans are designed to be together in a romantic sense is absurd. We are herd animals, tribal and I suppose inevitably everyone will be better suited to a certain few than others. The really important relationships are those with friends, those that last without having to be cultivated. They just *are*.

She stops and gives a slight grin.

JENNIFER: I'm not one for all that fate and pre-determination talk but I think: if any relationships are 'meant to be' it's the platonic ones. Claire has always supported my decisions, or at least, if not, given a logical reason not to. So I thought she'd be the most likely to understand. She'd stand by me, surely, if I could find a way of telling her about Leon.

Lights down on JENNIFER, up on CLAIRE.

CLAIRE: After uni? Well, as is to be expected there was a long time when we didn't really see much of each other. She got a job in the library, a bit beneath her I'd say but she always said she was saving up to go back and do her PhD, to take her education all the way. I got my job and we just grew apart; pretty normal.

CLAIRE approaches the audience/psychologist.

CLAIRE: What was unexpected though was how we suddenly started spending time together again. I mean we would always meet for the occasional meal and things like that but then all of a sudden it was like we were back in uni going out for drinks, meeting for coffee, even going shopping together. She didn't say it but it was as though, if she wanted a friend, I was her only option. University had been good for her because there were designated working periods and then designated free time; the correct time to socialise. At the library when people attempted to socialise with her during work time she couldn't take it. The audacity; she could not talk to them when there were books to be put away. Didn't they know there were rules? *[Beat]* They say these things they always start with the parents, don't they? Eh?

CLAIRE laughs but there is no humour in it. Lights down on her up on HEATHER.

HEATHER: When we were little she was always Dad's little pet, she wouldn't leave his side. She would always try to 'be' him, when he went to work or whatever. Mum always thought it was cute. Actually it was pretty bloody weird, I mean what kind of little girl wants to be a dull middle aged man? Way to dream Jenny. It was obvious how much his death was going to mess her up. I never understood her love for him. Mum was the one who cared. Who knows maybe he was different with her. Maybe he just hated me. Family.

Lights up on JENNIFER as a teenager, sitting reading a book and writing some notes. She is wrapped in a blanket. HEATHER, who has been out drinking, collapses besides her pulling the blanket over her own legs. JENNIFER pulls it off her.

HEATHER: Ah, look at you, nerdy nerd. What are you doing up so late?

JENNIFER moves away pulling the blanket tight around her so that HEATHER can't get it.

JENNIFER: Homework. I was waiting for you to come back.

HEATHER reaches out and ruffles JENNIFER'S hair JENNIFER hits her hand away.

HEATHER: Aww, aren't you just the best. Getting all lonely are we?

HEATHER reaches out to take JENNIFER'S book. JENNIFER hugs it to her chest and turns away from HEATHER.

JENNIFER: I need to sleep properly. If you're going to be wandering in at four a.m. there is no point in me even trying.

HEATHER: What the hell? Because I'll disturb you for like five minutes that's just... Don't act like that, I'm allowed to have fun.

JENNIFER pushes HEATHER away so she needs to steady herself.

JENNIFER: Not illegal fun you're not. Not all the time either. It's all you do.

HEATHER scoffs at her as she straightens herself awkwardly.

HEATHER: Please, when do I ever get to have fun? I've got you and mum clinging on to me all the time. You can't do shit without me. And there is nothing illegal about what I'm doing so you can stop worrying about/

JENNIFER: /You're 15.

HEATHER shrugs and waves her hand dismissively at JENNIFER.

HEATHER: That? Drinking age is just random and stupid. Like I'm going to be that much more mature in three years compared to now. I mean, look at you.

JENNIFER gets up clutching her books to herself. She stands and looms over HEATHER as best she can.

JENNIFER: You're never going to be mature because you don't care about anything; you're practically a child.

HEATHER tries to stand up but as she slips back to the floor she gives up and stays where she is.

HEATHER: Hey, you, just because I didn't deal with Dad's death like it was the end of the world. I hate to break it to you sis but teenagers are supposed to have fun. Not sit around doing homework at four in the morning.

JENNIFER steps forward she becomes angry and shrill.

JENNIFER: Because you know so much about life, avoiding it with drugs.

HEATHER: Well, I suppose you'd know all about avoiding life, I mean you can't... Can't wait to... Retire. I've not done any drugs so it shows what you know, idiot. Being all judgy and shit won't bring you any closer to Dad.

JENNIFER: Why don't you even care? It's like losing him means nothing to you.

HEATHER finally manages to push herself up and stands awkwardly and confronts JENNIFER.

HEATHER: How dare you, of course it means something. But I'm not going to let it control my entire existence. Holding on to him like some sort of ... thing, it's not going to help. You've got to realise he wasn't the saint you remember.

JENNIFER grabs her blanket and starts to walk off stage.

JENNIFER: You just didn't bother to know him; you don't even care at all.

As JENNIFER leaves the stage HEATHER leans back against the wall her balance unsure.

HEATHER runs her hands through her hair in frustration.

ROSE enters and gingerly approaches the front of the stage.

ROSE: Jennifer always takes credit for taking over when her father died. I don't think she realises how cruel that can sound. She needed to distract herself with menial tasks; tasks that used to be left to him. But that is not how we all cope.

Beat.

ROSE: He was a great man; brilliant father and loving husband but he was so meek. How could she go from loving him to loving that... He was convicted you know, for murder. That Leon.

Beat

After their father died, Heather managed to talk about the situation rather than avoid it, though she was so young. But not Jennifer. Finding Faith was my way; knowing that I would see him again and to discover why he had to leave us.

ROSE sits writing letters she hums quietly to herself JENNIFER approaches her.

ROSE: Jenny? Can you help me with these please?

JENNIFER: What are you doing?

ROSE: Just writing some thank you notes, for everyone
... everyone who was so kind after your father.

JENNIFER: I don't want to say things... I can do something else. I can't/

ROSE: /Oh my dear no. I've written them all, I wouldn't ask you...
I just want some help writing some envelopes.

JENNIFER: Oh, okay I'll do that. Shall I get Heather to help too?

ROSE: No, she's too young to deal with this, just let's us grown-ups do it okay?

JENNIFER: Yes, that sounds like a good idea.

ROSE gets up and suddenly hugs JENNIFER and kisses the top of her head.

ROSE: You are all right aren't you Jenny? You will be okay?

JENNIFER: Mum, please I can handle some envelope writing.

ROSE: Oh, yes I know that my dear, but would you like to talk?
To talk about it.

JENNIFER: I don't see what there is to talk about.

ROSE: But Heather says...

JENNIFER begins writing the envelopes again, she does not look at ROSE.

JENNIFER: *[Calmly]* She should know how I feel. You should know how I feel. You should both feel the same way.

JENNIFER silently continues writing envelopes as ROSE exits and the lights fade. HEATHER enters approaches the front of the stage.

HEATHER: She was fourteen when he died. I was eleven. Before his death she was just creepy. After, she was creepy and controlling. Like an old doll you find in an attic in an abandoned house that decides to kill everyone. I just imagine her sitting lifeless covered in cobwebs. The point is, everyone thinks she changed when she met this man, this Leon, that he lured her in and brainwashed her into loving him. Truth is she was well on her way before he was on the scene -- even when she leaving us for uni.

The lights rise on JENNIFER packing her bags HEATHER approaches and begins going through her bags.

JENNIFER: What do you think you're doing?

HEATHER: I'm looking for my CD player I know you've got it.
Mum said you've still got it.

JENNIFER grabs her bag away from HEATHER and continues packing.

JENNIFER: Mum was wrong. Don't touch my stuff okay. It's private.

HEATHER: Oh yeah? Why is it private, because you have my CD player isn't it? Give it back.

JENNIFER: Fine. Be a total brat; I've got it.
Just let me find it and you can have it back.

HEATHER: Whatever. You're hiding something.

JENNIFER: I'm not hiding anything.
I'm quite open about how much I hate you.

HEATHER: Fine. I hope when I'm your age I manage to be less dull.

JENNIFER: Keep talking to me like that you won't make it to my age.

HEATHER gets up to leave but just as she is about to walk out she grabs the bag and runs out of the room.

JENNIFER: Mum!

As JENNIFER shouts a bottle of wine falls out of the bag HEATHER and JENNIFER both stare at it in shock. ROSE calls from the other room.

ROSE: What is it Jenny?

JENNIFER: Nothing. Never mind.

ROSE: Are you sure? Do you need help packing?

JENNIFER: No! No, I'm fine I just couldn't find something I've got it now.

HEATHER picks up the bottle.

JENNIFER: Here, take your CD player.

JENNIFER tries to pass it to HEATHER.

HEATHER: That's okay, I don't want it any more.

I think I'll keep this instead. Lady never-drink. My arse.

HEATHER runs off with the wine. JENNIFER follows her. ROSE enters.

ROSE: As they grew up, Heather had her studies and her job and now she has her partner, soon a family I'm sure. Jennifer never had any of that. Acceptance was always a problem for her, it's what she's still striving for. The Church would have been a good place for her. She would have been accepted there. She'll always be accepted here at home of course. **Beat**
A lot of kind people go into places where poor souls are mistreated, prisons and bad places. They help them cope with their lives. I think...I think that must have been what Jenny was doing with this Leon. Trying to help the less fortunate.
She does try. She has always tried so hard.

ROSE arranges flowers. JENNIFER enters and begins plaiting ROSE'S hair.

JENNIFER: Mr. Mason told me that if I can keep my writing at that level all year. I'm practically guaranteed the top marks of the whole class. I've been writing some practice essays.

ROSE, only slightly listening nods her head absently.

ROSE: That's great Jenny. Were your friends impressed?

JENNIFER undoes the plait pretending to focus completely on the hair.

JENNIFER: I just can't get this right. How do you do this?

ROSE: You'll get it.

As JENNIFER starts to re-do the plait HEATHER enters and stares at them.

HEATHER: What the hell are you doing?

ROSE: Jennifer wanted to learn to do French plaits.

ROSE cuts a couple more flowers. HEATHER becomes annoyed.

HEATHER: Why are you supporting this mum? You're just enabling her.

ROSE: It's just a hairstyle Heather.

HEATHER raises her voice.

HEATHER: How can you not see it. She's not right, you need to get her seen. This isn't good for her.

JENNIFER: What's the matter I just wanted to learn something new.

HEATHER pulls JENNIFER away from ROSE..

HEATHER: Jen, listen to me you've got to stop this weird shit.

JENNIFER: I don't have to do anything.

ROSE: Leave her alone, Heather. Just let her be as she is.

HEATHER gets even more frustrated.

HEATHER: You're supposed to be my sister everyone expects me to look up to you, but they don't know how much you terrify me.

ROSE: Heather please, Jennifer doesn't have it as easy as you. Let her be different. Her friends like her that way.

HEATHER: Oh mum, she doesn't have any friends.

ROSE makes to leave.

ROSE: You're both just as God made you. When you learn to accept that I'll listen to you both.

ROSE kisses them both on the forehead and, taking her flowers with her, hums as she leaves.

JENNIFER and HEATHER stare at each other.

JENNIFER: It has nothing to do with you.

HEATHER: People are always asking me why you're always on your own. Why you never talk to anyone. It's like they blame me.

JENNIFER shrugs and turns away awkwardly.

JENNIFER: It's not my fault I'm not popular. It's because I work hard. People don't like that.

HEATHER pulls JENNIFER to look at her.

HEATHER: Please Jen, you've got to be nicer to people. Then people ... someone... will like you. They will...

JENNIFER pulls free from HEATHER'S grasp and starts to walk off stage. Ready to run when she needed to.

JENNIFER: Everyone in school is unbearable. They are just...so dull. Dull. Dull. There's no excitement.

JENNIFER runs off stage. MARIA enters the top stage.

MARIA: He was so exciting. And strong. He said he wanted to protect me. To protect me from the world. But did I need protecting

JENNIFER: The letters; they have been...are... so important. We discussed using e-mail but decided letters would be more personal. At first they were exciting in the way a crime thriller is; I had to know what would happen next. His letters got... well, they got sexual a lot sooner than I was entirely comfortable with. But that's understandable isn't it? He's been cooped up with some horrible men for so long. He knew I was interested too. And yes, I was. But it was just letters, it's not as though real sex was an option for us.

Lights down on JENNIFER up on HEATHER. .

HEATHER: I had been looking after her cat, I did it now and then when she went away. That's when I found the letters.

HEATHER produces the folder of letters. She frantically looks over the letters.

HEATHER: What the hell have you been doing this time Jennifer?

She approaches the front of the stage.

HEATHER: They were just wrong; creepy as hell. I mean even if that guy hadn't been killing people, lock him up for his sick mind. It was all in metaphor and riddles as well, like he was playing with her.

Beat.

HEATHER: She was keeping them in a folder, a dated folder, with her replies all drafted out next to each one. Never have such sick thoughts been so well organised Had she wanted me to find them? They were just left out and she asked me to come over. Maybe she was bragging? I don't know.

Lights up on JENNIFER.

JENNIFER: Going to see him, visit him, in prison I don't think I'd ever been so excited by anything before. All the other 'exciting' things I'd done were planned by others; there would always be a hint of dread tainting any anticipation. But this was me. My decision. My excitement.

MARIA enters on the upper level.

MARIA: I can't breath. There is no breath. Only fading thought. I never needed protection. There were people who loved me, love me. But the thrill... the thrill.

The birds the wind, I know where this is. Coed Y Mynnydd Ddu. Coed y mynnydd ddu.

JENNIFER: Don't look at me like that. Look at yourself – designer suit, Little notepad. Calm and controlled. When I visited him the excitement was on my terms. I chose what happened and when it happened. There were other women there, visiting their no hope partners, but the excitement was different for me than those other women; different, like always. Everyone else, they found ways... they were touching each other, I swear some of them were even... yes, they all found ways. The heat was unbelievable in there. But because of that Leon and I kept our eyes fixed on each other. It was like the perfect first date.

MARIA: No breath. Only fading thought. *Whispers* Coed y Mynydd Ddu, Coed y Mynydd Ddu, Coed y Mynydd Ddu

Blackout.

End of ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

HEATHER, CLAIRE and JENNIFER (during the university years) stand hand-in-hand, on the edge of a cliff, ready to run and jump into the sea.

CLAIRE: You won't get hurt, I promise.

HEATHER: We won't get hurt? Jumping off a cliff?

CLAIRE: Into the sea, sweetie, people do it all the time.

HEATHER: Water can hurt people you know, it has... I dunno, surface tension and stuff.

JENNIFER: Wow, Science for Dummies.

CLAIRE: Look, guys, seriously. It's fun, OK. Just give it a go.

JENNIFER: How?

CLAIRE: *[To audience/psychologist]* Risk. That's what this is all about. The three of us had different views, even as kids. Risk and consequences.

CLAIRE: What you do is take a good long run up –

JENNIFER pulls herself out of CLAIRE'S grip. She asks with genuine curiosity.

JENNIFER: No, I mean how is it fun?

CLAIRE becomes confused, HEATHER looks at her amused by the situation.

CLAIRE: It's exhilarating, it's a rush. Like a really good rollercoaster.

JENNIFER shrugs.

JENNIFER: I don't like roller coasters.

HEATHER laughs at this and begins to head off stage.

HEATHER: Give up Claire, you'll never get her to enjoy something so illogical.

CLAIRE runs off in pursuit.

CLAIRE: Really? She's not the one who is running away.

JENNIFER looks over the edge and then calls out to them.

JENNIFER: I'm willing to give it a try. Are we still going to try?

CLAIRE: *(to the audience/psychologist)* Risk and consequence.

JENNIFER turns to the audience/psychologist.

JENNIFER: What you have to understand is, Leon is no murderer. He can be dark, yes, and he's strong, that's true. But he can't have done what they say, not intentionally anyway. He doesn't have the necessary detachment. You could tell from the way he reacted to the appalling behaviour of his cell-mates, you could tell by how he talked to and about others; he cared about people. If you care about people you can't kill them.

Beat

I wonder how long it had been since anyone had believed in him, or even bothered to listen to him.

MARIA enters on the upper level and lights fade on JENNIFER.

MARIA: No breath. Just memories. He is different. He is special. He thought I was too. But he changed. Something wasn't safe. The way he contradicted himself ... changed what he was saying to fit the story he wanted to hear. All gone now. Gone.

Lights up on JENNIFER

JENNIFER: After Heather found the letters, she confronted me. I told her to mind her own business, but she did rattle me a bit. So I decided to back off for a while, put Leon out of my mind. I went back to a more or less normal life. But what do they say? Absence makes the heart grow fonder, yes? So I started to do some research. I had to find out all I could on my own. I was sure he hadn't done it, or perhaps it had been an accident, but there was no way he could tell me without some sort of bias so I had to be in control of the information flow. I don't believe a lot of what people say until I've decided for myself. It's like Leon says, people like to make their lives as convenient as possible. Sometimes lying is the easiest way.

Lights down on JENNIFER. ROSE enters the lower stage and approaches the audience/psychologist.

ROSE: Jenny never thought I knew what was going on with her. She wouldn't listen if you told her she couldn't do something. She had to find out for herself. Her worst challenge was always with boys... men now I suppose. She never really knew what she was doing. It's a failure on my part really, I should have been more aware. I think Heather saw more than me.

ROSE sits at the table she pulls out a book, humming to herself. HEATHER enters, plucks a few petals and rubs them between her fingers.

HEATHER: Heard from Jennifer recently?

ROSE: Yes, she's getting on well, I think.

HEATHER: She's told you about Leon?

ROSE: I don't remember that name, no.

HEATHER: If she'd told you, you'd remember.

ROSE: She's not getting married is she?

HEATHER can't help but let out a laugh.

HEATHER: I think she'd find *that* a bit difficult.

ROSE looks up at HEATHER confused, but HEATHER doesn't elaborate.

HEATHER: Mum, do you remember when we were in school, a boy called James?

ROSE scoffs at this.

ROSE: Oh yes, quite vividly. He attacked that boy who was bullying Jennifer. He got suspended and started sneaking into our garden to see her. He'd throw those stones at her window and I still think he tried to break in here that one time-

HEATHER: Yes! That's when I called the police on him.

ROSE: What's that got to do with Leon? Is there a connection?

HEATHER: Too fucking right there's a connection.

ROSE: Heather!

HEATHER: Sorry but this is important, you have to see.

ROSE: I do remember Heather. Jenny was so blinded by what she saw as James's heroism that she fell in love with him.

HEATHER gains enthusiasm as ROSE begins to understand.

HEATHER: That's the thing see, I don't think she was blinded.

ROSE: I don't...

HEATHER: It wasn't because he was heroic. It was because he was dangerous. Honestly she's not right.

ROSE: Oh well, here's a song I haven't heard you sing in a while.

HEATHER: Mum! She broke up with James as soon as he got his grades up and started behaving better. They went to the same university and she ignored him because he was boring.

HEATHER approaches the audience/psychologist.

HEATHER: Most people think that the women who seek out relationships with prisoners are some sort of masochistic thrill seekers, or have such low self-esteem that they think abuse is a sign of love. I suppose that could be the case for some but others, I imagine are like Jen. Sure, she was attracted by the danger but what she really got off on was the structure involved with a relationship like that. Imagine having to clear a date with some prison official. For most women it would be unbearable but for her it was a control-dream come true. I think she was up for all the research involved too. Got to love a relationship with homework assignments. Like when we were kids.

JENNIFER enters she is carrying a pile of papers and an address book. She starts to write a letter. HEATHER enters and starts messing around with the papers.

JENNIFER: Heather. No.

HEATHER stops playing with the papers and stares at her.

HEATHER: No?

JENNIFER: No, it means stop.

HEATHER: Maybe, if you're a dog.

JENNIFER: Will you just stop.

HEATHER grabs the paper on which JENNIFER is writing.

HEATHER: Why what is it? Some sort of *home* work assignment?

JENNIFER: Uh, yes, so it's of no interest to you I'm sure.

JENNIFER goes to grab the sheet back but HEATHER jumps up and walks away with it.

JENNIFER: Heather, no!

HEATHER: I'm not a dog, stop it.

JENNIFER: If you're not a dog then stop acting like one, give it back.

HEATHER stares at the sheet a while.

HEATHER: What type of teacher would make you write a love letter as homework.

JENNIFER: It's not a love letter..

HEATHER: It is a love letter! What kind of person writes love letters today?

JENNIFER gets angry and rips the letter from HEATHER tearing it in the process.

JENNIFER: I don't expect you to understand.

HEATHER drops her mocking tone and seems slightly concerned.

HEATHER: You're not actually planning on sending that are you? No boy will ever take you seriously if you send that.

JENNIFER: Please, not everyone is as illiterate as you. What do you know?

HEATHER: I know no one sends letters and that teenage boys don't appreciate poetry. I know that that letter will make you a joke.

JENNIFER: That's just stupid, it's sophisticated. Any one would appreciate the effort. I know I would. But anyway it's doesn't matter because it's not a love letter.

HEATHER laughs, though there is no humour to it.

HEATHER: Of course, you know everything after all.
Enjoy your rejection from society.

HEATHER turns her back angrily on JENNIFER and approaches stage-front. JENNIFER glances at the letter, smooths it out and moves to the upper stage.

HEATHER: After I'd found her letters from Leon, I spent a lot of time trying to find out what she'd been researching. Was she trying to prove his innocence? I'm not sure. I think it might have been that she just needed to know.

Lights up on JENNIFER.

JENNIFER: Leon talks about the convenience of lies and I can see his point. It looked to me as if they'd decided he was guilty even before it went to court. Perhaps the investigation missed things, important things. I don't know what exactly but people are being wrongly accused all the time. I had to dig deeper; find out if there was any way to get the actual facts. I was really desperate to see him but I would not let my 'urges' control me. I knew he wouldn't respect me if I did. I couldn't let other people's warped view of the world deter me.

Lights down on JENNIFER, up on ROSE.

ROSE: It's the same old story. Jennifer had simply taken on a challenge she wasn't capable of completing. Locked away, Leon couldn't hurt her. The guards wouldn't let anything happen to a young woman like her. If it wasn't safe I'm sure they wouldn't let people visit. If she had visited the zoo I wouldn't have been worried about her getting eaten by lions now would I? No, prisoners are in jail to repent their sins and are not allowed out until they are safe to do so. I thought: "No real relationship can come from this type of arrangement, she'll get bored and move on before we know it."

Lights up on a live scene, ROSE is arranging flowers. HEATHER enters.

HEATHER: Need any help?

ROSE doesn't look over.

ROSE: That's okay, Cariad. You relax.

JENNIFER enters she is dressed immaculately and is happily oblivious to everything around her.

JENNIFER: Hello, everyone I'm here.

Startled, HEATHER clenches her fists. She takes a deep breath and attempts to calm herself but can't help but glare at JENNIFER.

ROSE: Jennifer so good to see you, please sit both of you I have something I want to talk about.

JENNIFER sits.

JENNIFER: Sorry I haven't been around recently, I've been... busy.

HEATHER glares at her.

ROSE: I wanted to tell you both, I've met someone. A man at church. We've been seeing each other a while but I think you two should meet him.

HEATHER jumps up and hugs her.

HEATHER: Mum, that's great. It's been too long since Dad... It's time you found someone.

JENNIFER: Mum, I... I'm not sure that's such a brilliant idea.

HEATHER glares at JENNIFER

ROSE: I'm not sure I understand what you mean Jenny?

HEATHER: Ignore her mum, She's just being a bitch.

ROSE: Heather!

JENNIFER turns on HEATHER and scoffs.

JENNIFER: Come on you can't seriously think she wants this do you?
He's just a crutch.

ROSE: Jenny, no, that's not true.

HEATHER: Why the hell does she need a crutch? It's about fucking time she moved on with her life.

ROSE: Heather, I really wish you would stop that language.

JENNIFER: She doesn't care about this new man she is just using him as a pathetic substitute for Dad.

ROSE: Jenny, now I will always love your father but/

HEATHER: /Please, she's been over that for years. She's not like you.

ROSE: Now, Heather I wouldn't say that I/

JENNIFER: /You can't just stop loving someone like that. That's not how it works.

ROSE: You don't have to stop loving someone to accept that they are gone Jenny.

HEATHER: It's been twenty fucking years get over it.

ROSE separates herself from the conversation; she begins tidying the flowers.

JENNIFER: Easy for you considering you never cared in the first place.

JENNIFER storms off stage. Heather calls after her.

HEATHER: What the hell did you just say! You think I don't care just because I don't whine. Come back. Don't you see how bad you've made mum feel?

MARIA enters the upper stage. Lights fade on the lower.

MARIA: I remember it got difficult when he started talking about my parents, my sister. They were controlling me. He said they were part of the cruel world too; that hurt me. But I loved him.

Lights up on JENNIFER, below, to the audience/psychologist.

JENNIFER: I'm telling you now: I did not go into this blind; I considered all possibilities long before everyone else.

Lights down on JENNIFER, up on MARIA.

MARIA: He wanted me to move in with him. It felt too early for that. He seemed to be so level headed. But I said no – not yet anyway – it was as though I'd destroyed him, taken his breath away.

Lights down on MARIA, up on JENNIFER.

JENNIFER: The letter I wrote to Leon about my research received a quick reply: 'We can't discuss this on paper; we have to meet. I used up the rest of my leave to get to see him that time. I was excited.

MARIA exits and CLAIRE enters.

JENNIFER: It's so hard to hide a new relationship. It was time to tell Claire.

JENNIFER approaches CLAIRE. She laughs as she sits next to her.

CLAIRE: You seem happy. You finally got your PhD interview; you've been meaning to do that for-

JENNIFER: I did, but no, it's not that.

CLAIRE: Oh? You got promoted then? Staying where you are?

JENNIFER giggles CLAIRE seems confused and uncomfortable.

JENNIFER: No, stop guessing. I met someone.

CLAIRE: That literally would have been my next guess. I know it's been hard for you with me and Ethan, but now you don't need to feel awkward because we've got the same thing.

JENNIFER scoffs

JENNIFER: Oh, Claire it's hardly the same as your... marriage. No, no. Leon -- he is just so interesting! You're going to love this/

CLAIRE becomes irritated she prepares to leave.

CLAIRE: Oh, well I wouldn't want my uninteresting husband to cramp your style so maybe it's best if I just/

JENNIFER grabs CLAIRE'S arm suddenly serious.

JENNIFER: No, please I need your help.

You're the only person I can talk to about this.

Beat.

JENNIFER: He's in prison Claire I need your help

to see if we can get him out.

CLAIRE: I'm sorry?

JENNIFER: He's a prisoner. He's... in jail.

CLAIRE: What... What for?

JENNIFER: That's not important

CLAIRE stares at her dumbfounded.

JENNIFER: It's not important because he didn't do it.

I need you to help with legal stuff.

CLAIRE: Legal stuff?

JENNIFER: Maybe, get him an appeal?

We can get him out if I can prove his innocence.

CLAIRE: You want me to-

An alarm goes off and JENNIFER looks at her phone.

JENNIFER: I have to go, I have a meeting with him and you know.

They're rare, I can't waste them.

JENNIFER gives CLAIRE an awkward hug.

JENNIFER: I'll email you with everything I know

and you can go from there.

JENNIFER exits and CLAIRE stares after her for a while. She approaches the front of the stage.

CLAIRE: She had no right to ask me to do that for her. How can someone be so selfish? She has some pretty warped perspectives. She told me I'd become boring. Can you believe that? From the woman who schedules spontaneity! Because I'm happy that means I'm boring. Just because I don't go from planning my meals a year in advance to stalking a convicted murderer!

CLAIRE stays on stage MARIA walks across the upper stage.

MARIA: We had our first real argument. I'd been giving into him, letting him have his way because it just seemed easier. This time though, this time he just went too far. He's insulted my family calling them fake and shallow. He tried to convince me they talked about me behind my back, that they hated me. My family don't hate me. I wish I was with them now.

HEATHER enters wearing head phones. CLAIRE straight away pulls them out.

CLAIRE: We need to talk, now.

HEATHER lazily places her headphones carefully down.

HEATHER: I didn't know we had that kind of relationship that needed us to talk.

CLAIRE seems hurt but continues none the less.

CLAIRE: Fine. But we both care about your sister don't we.

HEATHER shrugs this off though she is truly concerned.

HEATHER: That's debatable.

CLAIRE: You know don't you?

HEATHER nods slowly

CLAIRE: You need to talk to her. She doesn't understand what she's doing.

HEATHER begins to get angry.

HEATHER: She knows exactly what she's doing.

She goes to put in her phones but hesitates.

HEATHER: She's never listened to me before.
She just lies her way out of things.

CLAIRE: She's going to get herself in deep trouble if we don't help. Maybe instead of judging her you can fucking help.

HEATHER: You can't help someone who goes out of their bloody way

to look for trouble.

CLAIRE: Are you going to help her or not?

HEATHER: Of course but it's not like I haven't tried before. She wants dangerous men and you know that.

CLAIRE stands silently for a beat.

CLAIRE: So she can help them? Change them?

HEATHER shrugs.

HEATHER: Maybe. All I know is that's her thing. She thinks she has control but she's just an idiot.

HEATHER, as if giving up.

HEATHER: She won't listen to us.

CLAIRE: No, no she just won't talk about it with you because you're her sister. You don't get her but I do. I can help.

CLAIRE, to the audience/psychologist.

CLAIRE: I couldn't help myself, I looked into Leon's case. I've looked, and everything about the trial was done properly. Though it was pretty clear-cut they still did do a thorough investigation. He said she fell down the stairs and he panicked but there wasn't the slightest hint of a fall anywhere in the house. I mean a fall, one hard enough to kill a healthy young woman, is going to leave at least a little bit of a mark on the wall paper but there wasn't anything. They never found the body but her blood was in his car. There is no way he's innocent. Just no way. But when should I tell her? There was no good time.

JENNIFER enters the lower stag, throws down a pile of books and slumps. CLAIRE turns and walks over to her.

CLAIRE: Tough day?

JENNIFER scoffs but doesn't answer.

CLAIRE: Want to talk about it?

CLAIRE pokes at JENNIFER playfully until JENNIFER slaps her hands away.

JENNIFER: I'm withdrawing.

CLAIRE: What are you talking about.

JENNIFER: This PhD thing is ridiculous. I can't take it anymore. How can a University be so set against scholarship.

CLAIRE: You've completely lost me now.

JENNIFER: My thesis proposal, idiot, they've completely rejected it.

CLAIRE is angry.

CLAIRE: Well, maybe you should have tried proposing something that wasn't bat shit crazy.

JENNIFER: What the hell is the point in researching something that has already been researched?

CLAIRE: Seriously sweetie, just follow their guidance – read the rules and fit in with them.

JENNIFER gets increasingly frustrated and fidgety.

JENNIFER: I don't want to, they are boring.
They need to let me do what I've proposed. They have to!

CLAIRE approaches the front of the stage, she is upset.

CLAIRE: Every idea she has, everything she puts her mind to becomes a deep passion for her. She is right and she won't accept anything else. So, what that means is that every time you disagree with her, you are crushing her dreams. How can you convince someone like that they are in danger? How can we possibly convince her that we care for her and he... Leon...can't.

Lights down on Claire. MARIA enters upper stage. JENNIFER addresses audience/psychologist.

JENNIFER: I'd been in a bit of stupor; my sleep had been disturbed; My dreams repeated over and over again. Can I tell you about it? Dream analysis is something you do right? It's not only a Freudian thing is it? Aren't dreams just uncontrolled, free thought? (*Lights fade on Jennifer*)

MARIA: I just thought we should wait. He told me he thought I knew, like he did, that being together, living together, was right. He told me I shouldn't be scared. I suppose it wasn't such a bad idea. I did love him. He said we were stronger than most couples and there was no need to be afraid. I wasn't afraid. We found a nice little place. Small terraced house. Two beds upstairs, living room down the stairs.

Lights up on CLAIRE.

CLAIRE: My research uncovered something else. Not about Leon, about Jennifer. Uncovered may be too strong a word. "Indicated" may be fairer.

HEATHER enters. Active scene.

HEATHER: Hybristophilia? What the hell's that?

CLAIRE: It's a psychological syndrome. It's when women are drawn to really dangerous men. Like Bonnie Parker – you know, Bonnie and Clyde.

HEATHER: Great. So now she's a crazy with a label.

CLAIRE exits. HEATHER addresses the audience/psychologist.

HEATHER: Claire was 'investigating' long before she told me what she'd found. 'Let's look at this sensibly', she said. 'Even assuming that this guy is one hundred percent innocent -- framed by some evil conspiracy or something, even assuming all that -- he is still in prison, there is no way they can be together. They will be stuck, separated by bars and guards. And that's a good thing because this guy is not innocent.'

JENNIFER enters. Active scene.

JENNIFER: Heather, it was all blown out of proportion. It was an accident, he told me.

HEATHER: And it's ok. Seeing him in prison. Visiting?

JENNIFER: Yes, Heather, it's been great, you wouldn't believe it. He's perfect and our meetings have been going well. And we still write letters. He writes to me all the time.

HEATHER is shocked by this.

HEATHER: Really? You, you're happy?

JENNIFER: Yes, Heather I really am. I know it's weird and different but it's really important to me.

JENNIFER awkwardly hugs HEATHER and exits.

HEATHER: My main thought was to be as supportive as possible. The thing is I don't know what to do. I don't know who she is. She seems really sure that she's in love, more so than with any of her old boyfriends. I don't know, maybe she needs someone to explain to her how insane she's being. I can't do it. Claire can't do it, Mum can't do it.

HEATHER exits. ROSE enters and approaches the audience/psychologist.

ROSE: Heather had suggested that perhaps I go and speak to him, plead with this Leon to leave my daughter alone. I couldn't see it working. Would a man in prison listen to a mother? It did make me think though, what of *his* mother? Is she alive? Does she pray for him still? I can't imagine the pain she must be feeling knowing what her son has done. Does she hate everyone for saying horrible things about him, or blame him for being so cruel? Does she know about Jennifer? If so, is she happy that he is trying again, or scared for her. Maybe she sits at home mourning the son she might have had. Everyone is so concerned about what Jennifer is going through but it is her choice, a bad one perhaps but hers, no one seems to care how this affects Heather and me.

JENNIFER enters and sits neatly next to the table. ROSE turns and approaches carefully.

JENNIFER: What was it you wanted to talk about.

Beat.

JENNIFER: Mum?

ROSE sits opposite JENNIFER and begins arranging flowers.

ROSE: Heather told me you had a new man friend.

JENNIFER: She did? Well, yes his name is Leon, he's a bit unconventional but you know that's just like me isn't it?

ROSE: I suppose.... Actually I wanted to talk to you about your father.

JENNIFER: I don't see what Dad has to do with anything.

ROSE: I just feel it's been nearly twenty years and I still feel like we've never really talked about it.

JENNIFER becomes uncomfortable.

JENNIFER: Is this about your new partner. Mister 'nice church man'.

ROSE: Your father was very important to you wasn't he?

JENNIFER: Of course he was. He was my father.

Beat.

JENNIFER: I'm fine. It's been twenty years Mum.

ROSE: Don't you want to talk about all the good times we had together?

JENNIFER: No.

ROSE: Jenny, you know your "relationship" with this Leon. Might it have something to do with your father? Your difficulty with relationships, I mean.

JENNIFER: I have no issues with relationships Mum. Just because my partner has a difficult situation you think I have some issues?

ROSE: Your situation is more than just difficult Jenny, it's dangerous.

JENNIFER: Mum, you're the one with issues. You couldn't deal with losing Dad, face it.

Beat.

JENNIFER: There is no danger Mum. I'm fine. You need to accept that you are wrong on this. Trust me. I am an adult. I can make my own life-choices.

ROSE: I don't know. Maybe it's my fault. ***(beat)*** Jenny, I think you've made a bad decision.

JENNIFER leaves, climbing to the upper level.

JENNIFER: Listen. You know nothing about me. That's your fault. You lost Dad and hated me for reminding you of him. The end.

ROSE walks to the front of the stage.

ROSE: She will be okay I'm sure. There are systems in place. She's a good girl, she just doesn't know what she is doing, God. Please protect her. Please let her be OK.

She looks upwards.

ROSE: She's not a bad person, she doesn't deserve...
Please protect her.

Lights down on ROSE, up on JENNIFER.

JENNIFER: Dad was always the one I needed to talk to. He always knew what to say. If he had still been around there would have been no need to explain, no need to convince him that Leon was right for me. He always trusted me to make my own choices; no one else ever has. Until Leon.

Beat

JENNIFER: I have a theory: No one really believes in the idea of the inherently "evil" murderer but it makes it easier; easier to lock them away and forget about them. No one wants to think normal humans are capable of horrors because that means we all are. So, do I believe Leon did what they say he did? Honestly, I don't know. I've looked for firm evidence, tried to fit his story into everything, try to get it to add up. But I just don't know. Does that change how I see him? No. He's still who he is. Maybe he killed her. Maybe it was an accident, or self defence. Maybe it was her fault. Who knows what's real, what's fake. And who cares? What no-one can fake is what we have. Leon and me. That's real.

HEATHER and ROSE emerge from the shadows.

JENNIFER: Hello, you two what are you doing here?

CLAIRE: Jen, we wanted to talk to you about... a few things.

HEATHER: You know what we want to talk about Jennifer, right?

JENNIFER: You two have been working together then? On the research? Finding out what happened?

CLAIRE and HEATHER look at each other unsure how to continue.

CLAIRE: In a way, yes. Jen, I've got to tell you I found out everything about this Leon and his case pretty quickly and...look there's nothing to suggest that he didn't do it.

JENNIFER: Of course, if it was easy to prove his innocence it would have been done by now.

CLAIRE: Look, Jen, I'm sorry but it seems ... unlikely to me that he that he's innocent.

Beat.

HEATHER: Whether he is or not, what we're trying to say is... It's going to be very hard to prove he didn't do it. So chances are he will not be getting out of prison anytime soon.

CLAIRE: So, given the situation...Jen it will be really hard for you to maintain any sort of relationship.

JENNIFER remains silent for a while CLAIRE and HEATHER brace themselves for her response.

JENNIFER: You're right.

HEATHER: Yeah?

JENNIFER: It's going to be hard, but I think it'll be worth it.

CLAIRE: Sweetie, I really think you need to think about this for a while. How can this relationship possibly work?

HEATHER: You can't have a proper relationship with him. I'm sure you really do love him but you need to let it go.

JENNIFER: No, you don't understand. Our relationship works just as it is.

CLAIRE: Maybe for now but eventually you're going to want more.

JENNIFER: We'll be fine, really.

CLAIRE: You're putting yourself in dang/er

HEATHER stops CLAIRE from talking.

HEATHER: It's not fair.

JENNIFER: What?

HEATHER: It's not fair on him. How do you think he feels? He's trapped in there with all those awful people and he has to see you but he can't... be with you.

CLAIRE: Yes, exactly, it's just cruel for him.

JENNIFER: No, that's stupid. He's happy with how things are.

HEATHER: You really think it's enough for him?

CLAIRE: It's not fair.

JENNIFER stands up and stares at the other two. She seems unsure.

JENNIFER: I don't know what you are trying to do but I don't like it. You can't understand, that's fine. But just trust me. I know what I'm doing, okay. We'll be fine.

HEATHER approaches the audience/psychologist.

HEATHER: When I finally went to see Leon I must admit he was good. I can see how he did it, how he drew them in, probably how he tricked the girl he killed. Maria, her name was.

MARIA appears on the upper level and looks down on Heather

He's smooth, he plays the pity thing pretty well. 'Oh, I'm so innocent, I've been framed', I can see how desperate women could be swayed by that. And I mean, well, he's hot which is probably the only real reason she likes him, probably the only reason anyone falls for convicts. She might act like it's all about seeing the inner beauty or whatever. but you know it's just because they like the look. I couldn't see what else Jen liked about him though. He spent the whole time we were talking trying to carefully control the conversation -- not forcefully but subtly. He's the kind of person who'd make you do something then convince you it was your idea. Maybe he didn't kill that girl, maybe he convinced her to kill herself. Sorry, no, I shouldn't joke about that, Jen is in real trouble here.

JENNIFER joins Maria on the Upper level

MARIA: It's like it's now. It's like it's in the present. This guy comes to see me in work. He comes back to the labs to talk about his test. It's late and I'm the only one there so I don't mind. It's not allowed but it's OK. He is only asking about his own tests, no one else's so that's OK. He looks like he's been in a fight. He says this drunk guy was messing around with some girl, he just tried to separate them and the guy just kicked off. I suppose that's why he wanted the test? Very smart of him actually. We talk for a while. He is so... I don't know what the word is really. But he was genuinely interested in me and my job. I don't know... Maybe it's stupid, but I'm seeing him again. His name is Leon. *(beat)* How did he get in without an access card?

Lights fade on MARIA and rise on JENNIFER..

JENNIFER: If he could get out I know we could make it work. But maybe that wouldn't be for the best. Maybe it would be like when you meet your hero and it's never how you thought -- they're too short or have grey in their hair and it just feels wrong. Maybe we are better with the fantasy. Maybe we'll never be able to tell what's for the best; what's right. Maybe that's what life is all about: not knowing.

Lights fade on JENNIFER , up on MARIA.

MARIA: I like this spot it's always so relaxing and quiet. I've always liked to come here, just to be alone. When I brought Leon here – to share it – he loved it. Coed Y Mynydd ddu. I think there's someone here, moving around behind the trees, like they are trying to avoid me. But I'm not going anywhere. No.

Lights fade on MARIA. Lights up on ROSE below, addressing the audience/psychologist.

ROSE: Thank you for doing this. Will there be a report? What is the next step?

Lights up on HEATHER.

HEATHER: Will she get some help? Advice or something?

Lights up on CLAIRE.

CLAIRE: I did do my best for her. You do see that, right?

ROSE: I do love her.

HEATHER: She will be safe?

MARIA on upper level.

MARIA: Dark and cold. No breath. Someone needs to know.
They need to know. Don't avoid me.

Lights up on HEATHER and ROSE on the lower stage. Active scene

HEATHER: Mum, hybristophilia's not a disease, they can't just give her tablets, it's a syndrome – it's just the way some people are. If she doesn't want to face that...

ROSE: But it's been six months, I thought they'd tell us something; that there'd be something – something we could do. Has she called you?

HEATHER: No, nothing. Well, once. She said "it's just Leon and me now".

CLAIRE rushes in.

CLAIRE: He's out!

HEATHER: What?

CLAIRE: I just heard. Leon has been released.

HEATHER: But how? Your research.

You said there was no doubt – he killed that girl.

CLAIRE: Some cock-up in proceedings. Apparently the prosecution didn't share all the evidence with the defence – phone records and so on. They've declared a mistrial. It was Jennifer – it's what she must have been doing all this – she kept digging. Digging until she found a mistake in the process. What has she done!

HEATHER: But that doesn't mean he didn't do it. They still know that he did it but they let him... on some technicality.

CLAIRE: That's how it works.

HEATHER: Even if he's a danger? My God.

ROSE: But surely he will be brought back in? They can arrest him again? Start again. What must that poor girl's parents think.

CLAIRE: I don't know. I think so. But it won't be so easy.

HEATHER: And meanwhile he's free.

CLAIRE: Yes.

ROSE: They'll be all right, won't they? She does love him. Him as well, he wouldn't hurt someone he loves...

Lights fade on the ROSE, HEATHER and CLAIRE. They rise on JENNIFER, dressed as in the opening. She looks at the letter.

JENNIFER: Coed Y Mynydd ddu. A romantic meeting. Coed Y Mynydd ddu. The woods on the black mountain.

She shivers and turns at a noise behind her. She recognises someone and smiles.

JENNIFER: You made it? Fantastic.

Lights up on MARIA.

MARIA: Someone needs to find me. Someone needs to know.

JENNIFER: I wasn't sure I'd found the right place. But your directions were spot on. Coed y Mynydd ddu.

MARIA: No breath. I have no breath!

Fade to black.

Dramaturgical Treatment

Introduction

The dramaturgical section of this thesis concerns possible methods of performance and staging of *Never Go Crooked*. The location, staging, lighting, sound and other presentational details have been considered, always in support of the characters' psychological state, which is at the heart of this script. For the purpose of the script as presented here, I wrote the stage directions for the optimal location with optimal equipment but for the dramaturgical treatment I also considered how the staging would appear if this was not possible. In order to make any of these decisions I had to consider a number of different theatrical approaches as I was developing the script; research into site-specific and site-sensitive theatre, and the theory which surrounds them, was required as well as to more effectively create a site-sensitive work of my own. It was also important to consider plays which are similar in subject matter or performance to *Never Go Crooked*. In particular I looked into plays and productions that focus on the mind and psychological issues. A number of performances served as research for this aspect of my play. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, [Haddon, adapted by Stephens, dir. Elliott, 2013] focused a lot on the working of an atypical mind. Much of this exploration is done through staging. In Marianne Elliott's production designed by Bunny Christie the entire stage was used to reflect the mind of the protagonist; attempting to reflect much of his thoughts and feelings through a complex lighting system with the walls and floor of the stage. While it was seemingly a simple staging with a few boxes and lines upon the floor to separate sections of the staging (different houses for example). However, the staging in fact contains more complex boundaries created through light and physical properties allowing the audience to more accurately understand what is happening with the mind and life of the protagonist. This staging however, was very large and technical. It is something that requires a lot of set pieces and a very specific stage space. This can only really be suitable for a long running performance in a single location, as this performance had. However, the idea of using lighting and sound to represent the aspects of a person that cannot be spoken or acted was an incredibly helpful insight into the type of lighting and sound I would need to use for my own work.

Another play I looked at for insight into the mind was *The Hard Problem*, (Stoppard, dir. Hytner, 2015). This seemed to be a more scientific and less emotional play in content. However, the staging, designed by Bob Crowley focused entirely on the outer world and did not look at all on the inner mind. The only aspect of this particular performance that in anyway connected with the inner mind was a large brain display in which lights travelled to reflect the electronic pulses as the brain works. This prop however, had little to do with the play itself and seemed simply a decorative piece

which, had it been absent, would have made little to no change to the overall performance. It was used as though a logo, displayed between scenes as a link, as is sometimes used in television. If anything, it broke the flow of the play rather than enhanced it. While the story contains studies into the brain and the inner mind it is superficial and has no major impact to the story as a whole. It is not the driving force but rather the background to a more conventional story of relationships. There was little in the story or staging that allowed the audience further depth into the human mind, as such there was little to help advance my own staging.

A play that offered great insight into how the workings of the mind can be performed was a site-sensitive piece, *The Trench* (Lansley, 2012). The play used far less conventional methods to display a truly troubled mind dealing with a deep trauma. While I did not see a performance of this play the script is published in a way that suggests a fully-conceived dramaturgy, with diagrams and thorough stage directions. Not only was this helpful in writing my script in a way that incorporated my dramaturgical treatment, but it also allowed me to visualise ways in which to depict a troubled mind through stage craft. The play depicts the confused imagining and memories of a dying first world war soldier through the use of physical properties and light and shadow. The depictions of the protagonist's wife via a puppet as he descends into death is particularly interesting; it spoke of how those closest to us are the things we cling to in the most difficult times. This was particularly pertinent to my play as Jennifer rejects those who care about her and turns towards danger and her own madness while Maria sees her own end and thinks of her family and how they tried to help in her final vain attempts to escape. This made the idea of using puppetry for this play particularly attractive and it was almost the direction it took. In the event I held back but the style of staging used in this play was still helpful in creating the world I wished to create however, used on a far smaller scale. The idea of using silhouettes to create both character and atmosphere is one I adopted for the depiction of Maria's "ghost"; the silent part of her who wants nothing more than to prevent a repeat of what happened to her.

There are a few plays I saw during my research which I found particularly insightful into how I wanted my final play to appear on the stage. A very simplistic staging can be very effective. A good example of this is the National Theatre production of, *A View from the Bridge*. (Miller, dir. Hove 2015) In this production, designed by Jan Versweyveld, the stage was plain and white with no features except a door at the back of the stage. The only physical property used was a chair. With a staging this simple the audience know that everything they are shown is of vital importance and this gives each small aspect great significance, keeping the focus on the story. With a well-established play such as this with actors at the top of their craft there is no need for much else. For my play however, such total simplicity would be insufficient. Much of my intent needs to be brought forth

from the staging rather than the dialogue but it was a useful discipline to see how minimalist a stage play can be and yet remain effective.

The other end of the staging spectrum lies *Beyond the Beautiful Forever*, (Boo & Hare, dir. Norris, 2015). This staging, designed by Katrina Lindsay, contained huge set pieces spanning the entire stage. The stage as a whole rotated to create different scenes and entirely different sections of the created world. While this staging might seem impressive and appear to engage the audience this much focus on creating a world visually and moving between so many characters actually draws attention away from the story and makes it feel like a spectacle rather than a focused play. With regards to my own work this production allowed me to see the difficulties involved in attempting a staging that is too complex.

The final production I wish to highlight here is a staging in-between the two previously mentioned. *Man to Man* (Karge & Wood, 2015) directed by Bruce Guthrie and Scott Graham, is a small production using only one character but the staging is clearly set out and contains a few more complex set pieces. While the performance is very active and involves both inside and outside sections, the performance seems to extend the dialogue rather than distract from it. While the performance itself was more active than the performance of my own play the set pieces and their uses allowed me to see how a staging of my own play might look. The house area with the windows and outer area helped me with the idea of the main psychologist's office and the waiting room area/the forest area. It helped me to visualise how this might work on stage. This play also utilised small sections of stage that protruded allowing the performer to climb the set with ease, this would allow scenes such as the blackberry scene in my own play to work safely. While many of these ideas were already forming in my imagination for my own staging, this production solidified the ideas and gave my confidence in pursuing my dramaturgical treatment.

The one aspect of my dramaturgical treatment that has remained the same from the play's inception was the idea of a location production. The use of a non-traditional location for a performance makes the audience assess the significance of the setting. The play can reflect the space or, as with mine the space can reflect the play; this made *Never Go Crooked* site-sensitive. During my research I was impressed by a production of *In to the Woods*, (Lapine & Sondheim, dir. Shearer, 2010), designed by Soutra Gilmour performed in an outside theatre at the edge of a wooded area. The connection between the performance and the location amplified the affect and makes the performance seem more vivid. The performance made good use of the surrounding woodland and used it to conceal physical properties, increasing their effect on the audience. While the performance was a musical and as such more of a spectacle than my own play, the power of the pertinent location was undeniable. The connection the audience feel with a performance in a suitable location is an aspect I

wish to achieve with my production. The Cork County Gaol would perfectly mirror the action on stage as the surrounding woodland did for *Into the Woods*.

Traditional staging

If this play were to be performed in a conventional theatre venue, it would require a set suitable to meet a range of essential functions. In my imagination, the staging might be similar to the approach used in *Man to Man* (Karge/Wood, 2015). This production used a single room set but one in which the outer fringes could still be seen by the audience. For my play, a small section in the centre of the stage could be marked off to create the psychologist's office. From this location the characters would speak directly to the audience, as if audience members were a consoler/therapist or unseen medical/legal observers. To accentuate this effect, a frame structure might signify an observation-room two-way mirror. Specific furnishings would show the audience which room is being represented at any time. I envisage the backgrounds as light grey or white to create a cold, sterile feeling. [See Appendix 3 p. 148]

In the marginal spaces at the sides of the stage I imagine a simple vine design and silhouetted trees. This space will represent both the forest and outdoor sections of the play and also the waiting room for the office. A few of the scenes in the play take place within a woodland or forest setting, an intentional writer's choice, evoking the uncontrollability of nature. The forest is a world which Jennifer loves and attempts to control (as in the blackberry scene) but simply cannot. For Maria the forest is death. She will never leave this area; forever stuck where she has been abandoned.

The use of nature to represent the character's inner feelings is a common trope in theatre. For example in *Lovesong* (Morgan, 2015) a tree is used to represent the characters' relationship, the changing leaves representing the changes in their lives. In my play the forest represents the contradictory nature of their personalities. Jennifer longs for control and does everything in her power to obtain it, yet the things she loves are often those which can't be controlled. Leon, though no longer a character himself is represented by the forest; he longs for freedom yet will not help himself by admitting what he has done, trapping himself within his own mind. This forest section of the stage will also serve as the "waiting room" area for the office in which confessions will be witnessed by other characters. Here the characters must organise their thoughts before presenting them to others. This means that in this section the characters will be at their most honest as they believe themselves. Maria, has great desire to leave this section but she will never be able to get the help she longs for from the psychologist's office, and never able to give the help she needs to save Jennifer.

Though these ideas relating to staging within a conventional theatre offer some interesting dramaturgical possibilities, I believe the play would almost certainly benefit more from site-specific non-theatrical location setting. Site-specific plays use a chosen location to amplify the content in a

variety of ways, and I can envisage several location-based approaches which might be applicable to this project. A good example of site-specific theatre in action is National Theatre Wales' production for the Green Man festival *Green Man//Red Woman* (Tyler, 2016) a performance which took place over the course of the festival, recreating fairy stories and folklore. The performers used the energy of the festival to evoke the magic theme for their performances and the woodland setting lent itself perfectly to a fairy tale performance. In *Green Man//Red Woman* the performance was used to highlight the location rather than the other way around, and that would not be the intention with my project. In order to create a piece of site-sensitive or site-specific theatre it is important that a dramaturge considers what that means and what connotations it would build.

Site-Specific and Site-Sensitive Performance

There is a tradition in theatre of site-specific performance; performances based around a certain location, or type of location. Site specific theatre is defined as:

The locations in which a play is set create a sense of place, forming the audience expectations, emotions and even comfort level before the action even begins. While my play is not inspired by any specific location during the writing process there was always an awareness of place. I had within my mind; even before the play had been formed, an idea of the perfect type of location to produce the atmosphere for the world I hoped to create. In doing so what I began to develop was a not a piece of site-specific theatre, but rather a piece of site sensitive theatre,

A piece of performance which has been designed to work only in a particular non-theatre space. The space may have been adapted to fit into the themes or style of the production. A site-sensitive piece, on the other hand, will not adapt the space, but work with its style and history to create a piece of performance.

[www.theatrecrafts.com]

Never Go Crooked, does not require a specific location to work but the location feeds into the atmosphere and helps to create a world for its audience. Site specific or site sensitive theatre both follow a similar traditional of performance.

In the process of making a piece of theatre site specific a dramaturge is immediately forming audience expectation. This type of theatre allows the audience more access to the performance and can be a helpful tool in creating an immersive world. The audience are a part of the world, a character within the action. Whether the play will be interactive or not the audience need to feel invested in the world. Staging a play outside of a traditional theatre space can be an effective tool in achieving this. There are traditions in a conventional theatre space which may not be in play when the play is performed elsewhere. “At site, in places unmarked by the conventions of the auditorium and social decorum, performance may have enhanced opportunities to do this.” [Pearson, 2010, p.141]

In order to create an immersive world many dramaturges chose to create site specific plays. Doing so creates presumptions about what the play means, these presumptions will depend on the location in which the play is set. Nick Kaye in *Site Specific art* talks of art created for a certain location being destroyed if it is removed from its intended place “To move the site-specific work is to *re-place* it, to make it *something else*” [Kaye, 2008, p2]. For site –sensitive plays the location is a reflection on the play and not the other way around, so it can be performed in a different location

without losing meaning. However, the staging still needs to reflect the world of the play in order to keep the immersion. The staging as such needs to create a sense of place even if the play cannot be performed in the ideal location. An example of this type of performance is *The Trench* by Oliver Lansley [Lansley, 2012], as long as the audience understand where they are it doesn't matter if the location is real or a stylised staging of the desired location. For *The Trench* any staging needs evoke the feeling of a trench, but as long as the danger and claustrophobia of being within that situation is communicated to the audience it does not matter how that feeling is created. According to Jason Warren in *Creating Worlds*, there are three elements to be taken into account when creating immersive theatre. These are elegance, flavour and reward.

Elegance refers to how seamless a performance is, the less of the mechanics of the play itself the audience are aware of the more elegant it becomes. "If you've used the space well, the audience won't spend time at the end talking about the mechanics and techniques you've applied to it" [Warren, 2017, p.18] Site specific performance has an advantage in this respect as there is less need to create a stage through which the audience have the potential to see the workings of the dramaturge and designers. The less like a play and more like a genuine experience the play seems the more elegant it would be considered. It creates a certain atmosphere that traditional theatre cannot, or perhaps would struggle to do so given the mindset of the audience. This again can be achieved to a degree of success simply through site specific performance given that if an audience is placed in a conventional theatre they will immediately be placed in the mind set of an audience of a play, however in another location this mindset does not necessarily occur and they are more likely to be open to different types of experience. For example *Pandemonium: The True Cost of Coal* by Brif Gof [Pearson, 2010,p.62] an imagining of the consequences of the Senghenydd mining disaster of 1913. The play was created in 1987, shortly after the miner's strike of 1984. It is performed within a chapel. The audience take on the role of the congregation which would be a slightly different role to that of the traditional theatre audience. "Morrison Tabernacle is a functioning chapel. In *Pandaemonium* the fabric of the building is untouched, its ascribed function undisturbed...Performance adopts the practices of the chapel." [Pearson, 2010, p62/63] Through the creation of the world of the play they should feel a part of the story rather than an audience to it. The way in which the dialogue of the play is delivered to them rather than for their entertainment should help with this immersion level. Elegance applies to all plays when, the goal of a play is to create a world or have an audience experience a connection with a specific location; the more elegantly this is done the less they will feel they are being pushed.

Warren's second requirement for immersive theatre is flavour; small aspects create and flesh out the world of the play. Once again, these aspects are easier to implement with an interactive audience, or an audience that can freely explore the set, as there can be world building items set

around the staging area that the audience can look at or read but it doesn't particularly matter if they miss them; they are re-enforcing the world but aren't necessary in order to understand or appreciate it. These aspects will be present in non-explorative plays. If a play is non-interactive these elements still apply. For site-specific theatre they may be simple things that occur as soon as the audience enter the performance space. They can often begin before the performance itself has started.

The final aspect is reward. The reward that the audience get from performing a certain task or engaging in a certain way cannot truly be implemented in a play which does not require interaction from the audience. Clear rewards cannot be given as there is no way of telling how the audience will truly engage with the play when their decisions can't be recorded. There are small ways in which small rewards of deeper understanding can be gained within non-interactive plays, however. For example, a dramaturge can place aspects of the play within the audience in order to create discomfort for them. While this idea was disregarded for my own work as the dramaturgical treatment was developed this type of aspect could be utilised to allow the audience something more from the play. Items such as articles could be created and placed amongst the audience that they would not have to interact with but in doing so they can further their own experience. Aspects like this will in turn help them truly feel a part of the world of the play. Site-specific plays in particular often contain aspects that can be viewed or not without the overarching narrative being lost. A good example of this is contained with Owen Sheers's *Mamatz* [Sheers, 2017] in which an entire Skype conversation has been scripted and performed, which would allow the audience greater insight into the world they are being shown, but it is an aside, simply happening in the background, from which the audience are quickly ushered away. If the audience do not hear this conversation, they will not have missed any of the story they are being told, but if they do they will have that small extra part of the play.

Site specific performances can often most successfully be utilised in performance of existing works. If the audience is more familiar with the play they may well be more willing to allow the time required to watch it done in a more experimental way, also if the audience are aware of the themes and motifs of a play it will be clearer to them what is being achieved by a change in location. A specific location that reflects a certain theme or an aspect of a well-known play that the dramaturge wishes to highlight will make it clear to the audience that this is the aspect on which they must focus. Original pieces like my own work do not have this preconceived knowledge and therefore the link between place and performance may not be immediately clear, but will allow the audience a fuller vision when they are completed. Often site specific performance are a reflection of the place in which the performance occurs, so that those who are visiting said place will either already have the knowledge required to appreciate the performance or be interested enough in the

location to be prepared to learn through the performance the history or mythology or whatever the performance would wish to inform upon. This second aspect is true of *Mametz* by Owen Sheers, a play that is telling the story of a location rather than using the location to flavour the play. The play is a portrayal of the battle of Mametz woods which took place during the First World War, “one of the Somme offensive’s bloodiest actions at Mametz wood where, in the summer of 1916, 4,000 men of the 38th (Welsh) Division were killed or wounded”, [Sheers, 2017, p.xi]. It was a theatrical adaptation of Sheers’ own poem *Mametz Wood*, the audience travel through the site; a field beside a wood and experience the performance as close to the battle as a performance is likely to get. For this piece it was necessary to stage it at the appropriate site, a traditional theatre would have been unable to portray the story as this performance does and as such it is site-specific. The play is staged as though it is a tour of a historical landmark, an atmosphere that would have been impossible to re-create in a conventional stage. This play is a part of a trend within *National Theatre Wales*, to create site-specific and new theatre around Wales, something that will likely create new interest and new audiences.

The connotation which can be brought through a specific location will remain even if the audience do not know the full story of the play. Though the audience may not enter the play assuming to see certain themes the location will still build an idea in their mind as to what the important aspects of the play are and the location will also create the correct atmosphere for the performance without any requirement for prior knowledge. The history of the location can also help a play. If the audience know about the location they can see the type of links that the play is trying to create, if there is a link between the story being told and the location an audience familiar with the location will notice this link, those less familiar will be intrigued what the link could be. “One can... argue the location, in reading, of an image, object, or event, its positioning in relation to political, aesthetic, geographical, institutional, or other discourses, all inform what ‘it’ can be said to *be*.” [Kaye, 2008, p.1]

It would be important however to make sure there are no references or themes in a play that would not work with the location and the history of the site. This would need to be thoroughly checked before the performance could be located at that site so there would not be any risk of cultural or historical insensitivity. It is important for the dramaturge to make sure that no one would assume by staging a play at a certain location that that location is in any way affiliated with what happens within the play. If this is not checked then it runs the risk of alienating the audience. It is possible, if the play fits well with a location; if it gives the location an advantage it wouldn’t otherwise get that the play could be performed in said location for exchanges other than monetary. [Warren, 2017] This means that there is a great advantage to the play as well as the site to make sure

it benefits the site rather than cast a bad light upon it. These are aspects which all need to be considered when creating a piece of site-specific or site sensitive theatre.

The use of a non-traditional theatre space creates issues and advantages when it comes to the audience. As there is not a decided upon notion of where the audience will be as there would be with a traditional theatre there can be an issue with the audience not truly engaging with the space, the temptation to remain separate from the performance will often be present as the audience are unlikely to realise their importance to the piece. However, the non-traditional positioning can help shape how the audience view the play and it can be used to benefit the performance in certain ways.

While much of the techniques for effective use of space are for more active performances, in which the audience are expected to explore or move rooms they can also be implemented in a more static performance to great effect. When deciding what you wish the audience to do it is first, according to Warren, important to create a “mission statement”, an idea of what you wish your play to achieve, Warren’s example, which applies most to my own work would be: “Creating an aesthetically exciting world for your audience to explore” [Warren, 2017, p.15] A location might challenge an audience, it might require them to step out of their comfort zones, it is asking them to fully engage with a world that they have not experienced before and in order to make this as easy for them as possible it is important that the space in which a play is set is utilised to its full potential.

When the audience is expected to move room from room, it is important for the dramaturge to attempt to predict the audience’s actions, at least to some extent. For example, the audience must be aware at what point the performance begins, this can often be before any actors appear within the staging area. Where they go and what they do matter as it determines what can be achieved by a play. Audiences are often reluctant to interact freely with a play; if a performance depends on this then everything must be set up to ease the audience into their role. Audience size makes a difference in this respect, large groups of people are more likely to act predictably and are therefore easier to move from location to location, whereas smaller groups are more likely to act in unexpected ways. Whether or not an audience would be expected to perform any complicated tasks a smaller audience would create more risk that the performance might not go as planned. Larger audiences are easier to relax into a situation as a large group tend to feel more secure in their actions as so many others are doing the same. As is stated by Warren, good theatre pays attention to its environment and with regards to the movement within my own play the way in which the location is set out itself will allow the audience and play to move as intended, there is unlikely to be ambiguity.

When the stage is not set out traditionally there can be an issue with boundaries being confused -

Where does the staging area end? Where must the audience locate themselves in order for them to get the best view? When the performance expects an amount of movement from the audience these aspects become an issue, when the audience is not expected to move freely they are less so but can still create issues, but can also be used to great advantage. The audience's instinct will often be to stay as far away from the performance area as they can, as they do not want to interfere with the action, as active participants this can cause problems. An area into which the audience does not want to step is known as a void and can cause issues if they are created in the wrong location. The spaces separated by the voids are known as zones, the areas into which the audience gather. These aspects are very important if the audience is required to move and interact with the performance. When the audience is seated there is unlikely to be voids created where they are not wanted as the audience will automatically gravitate towards where ever the seats are situated, often towards those that will allow the best view. This will mean that they must simply be situated within the best location for the greatest amount of people. If an audience is to move however, there are certain actions that a dramaturge can take to ensure voids are not created where they are not wanted. For example, placing items around which the audience can congregate, thus shrinking voids or eliminating them altogether, unless they are wanted.

Boundaries are what separate the sections of the performance, when the audience explore, they refer to where they will go and what they will do. "It's possibly worth noting that for hundreds of years the mainstream world of theatre has had the edge of the stage and the arms of the audience's seats as very clear physical boundaries." [Warren, 2017, p.28] With my play they will refer to the different levels of the stage. The performance for my play, whether on site or in a theatre will take place on two levels. It is important for the performance that these two sections are kept separate as they are what keep Jennifer from seeing her predicament. Boundaries can be created through light, through set pieces or through different floors or rooms. Lights and sound can be used to draw the audience to each section as needed. Actions can take place multiple locations at once and it will be up to the audience to decide what is truly important for their attention.

My play may not be the traditional site-specific piece, feeding off the history of a location to create a narrative, such as *Mametz*. nor using a location to elaborate on an existing and well-known story, as with *Green Man/Red Woman*, but it utilises much of the elements to create a unique world that will be a new experience for the audience. It takes elements from both site specific or site sensitive and traditional theatre in order to create something new and hopefully something that will be a benefit for the theatre world.

Location

For my play, the chosen location would need to be oppressive, to evoke a feeling in the audience that something in the world they are witnessing is not quite right. Initially I liked the idea that a derelict building such as an old hospital or care home would be ideal, given the closed-in spaces and the general feeling of unease these places tend to create -- the idea being that the dilapidated surroundings would produce the feeling of the lives and the mental states of the characters falling apart. However, on reflection, I realised that this was not the journey my characters were taking. In fact, Jennifer becomes more cold and calculating. I decided that a functioning yet more sterile setting would be more successful at portraying this. A functioning hospital or care home would create this feeling, and on enquiry I found that both the Life Science Institute in Swansea University and Cardiff University's medical teaching facility have a space that offered considerable possibilities – an actual observation room. This is a small room in which a patient (often a child) may be observed through a two-way mirror. This would be particularly poignant for my play as it would help demonstrate each character's inner workings. In this observation room version, I imagine the observation in a performance to be sparsely furnished. Obviously, major set changes would not be possible but neither would they be necessary. The painting would still need to be central, however. [See Appendix 3, p.148] We would see the off-stage characters waiting for their turn to speak, as if waiting for an appointment—a useful device for heightening tension and illustrating unspoken character traits.

The audience seating arrangement would be quite simple – and restricted. There could be multiple rows but only around 4 people for each row. A small intimate audience is not necessarily a bad thing for this type of play. The observation room might even give them a sense that they are actually part of the healing process. As the audience takes the role of psychologist this would be an effective aspect to consider. I imagine the audience might be led to their seats by ushers dressed as medical staff to create the feeling of them being an official test group. The clinical feel of the room would, I believe, enhance the audience experience. Watching the performers without being seen is likely to provide the audience with a complex mixture of feelings. Are they intruding? Controlling the process? Or are they simply passive onlookers? Theatre as a form of voyeurism has interested past researchers. Though there are many forms of voyeurism this play would focus, mainly, on emotional voyeurism. “When the audience witnesses an intense scene where a character on stage removes all layers of protection and is left emotionally naked in the narrative (for example King Lear's final speech)” (Rodosthenous, 2015, p.17) It is this kind of exposure that the characters fear most and yet it is this that the audience, as the ones who must diagnose, are hoping for.

Jennifer is a character who wants to be in control of her situation at all times. She is

attracted to Leon because she believes she has complete control of such a dangerous person. The play shows how she struggles when this control is taken away from her. In my imagined Observation Room version, we would witness her telling her counsellor only what she wants; revealing only what will help her case – though in fact she is being watched at all times. Everything she does, everything she has done is being secretly observed. This unknowing lack of control on her part mimics her relationship with Leon. He uses his influence over her, his charm and intelligence to control her by manipulating that very desire to be in charge.

The relationship of the other characters to the observation room scenario would not be a portrayal of their own psychological issues but rather one of what they are doing to Jennifer. They all act as though they want to help her but their true motivations are revealed as the play progresses. When they are in the safety of their conversations with the doctor/audience they accidentally reveal far more about themselves than they believe. They do not know they are being watched, of course, and do not realise they are revealing their own issues and insecurities rather than simply commenting on Jennifer.

Finding and using a working hospital location presented major issues. So far, I have not been able to get permission to photograph the locations I wish to use. Such complications may prevent progress towards a full performance. Also there would be little to no room in which Maria was able to be kept separate from the other characters, given the very limited space this setting would allow. In this her character would lose the boundaries needed to isolate her and show her stripped power. The small audience could cause issues in the performance as well, as they are less predictable. Consequently I have pursued an alternative option, which has led to a location possibility which may prove to be more manageable.

Retaining my preference for oppressive locations, my thoughts turned first to Swansea Prison [See Appendix 4, p.149]. However, since Swansea is a working prison, issues of flexibility and permission are likely to arise, and I have come to the conclusion that a more practical proposition may be a heritage gaol.

A visit to Cork City Gaol – a tourist/heritage site in Ireland -- has convinced me that it would be the most workable location for the play, and I am currently negotiating to explore that possibility. Much like Swansea prison it has a large ornate guard tower as an entry point [See Appendix 4, p.149/150]. Behind this is the governor's garden. The entry to the actual prison is through a second guard tower very similar to the first. The entire outer section of the prison is quite ornate and it should create a good ambience for the play ahead. The attractive buildings and the secluded location will work together to create a mix of emotion, it would be especially effective if when the final audience member arrives in the first guard tower the gate behind them is closed, trapping them inside. The desired effect of this is that, despite the picturesque location, there is something not quite right

about the situation, creating a slight feeling of discomfort, or excited unease. This would of course relate to the feelings the characters within the play; Jennifer would know about the entrapment but also be more excited to see Leon, whereas Heather may be more excited by the adventure and danger of the situation, Claire and Leon when he was included would both simply feel trapped and helpless, though for very different reasons. It may be interesting to enquire at the end of the play how being trapped inside made the audience feel, particularly if there are “guards” posted.

The play itself could take place in a number of places within the prison. The Drum Chamber [See Appendix 4, p.151] is the area in which, in the past, Mass and other important ceremonies took place. There is plenty of room to watch the performance and the area has excellent acoustics. The area has multiple levels so the performance could take place either on the lower floor with the audience looking down (how the sermons would have been given originally). This option would give the audience the impression that they are judging the performers, like a jury, which would fit well into the themes of the play. Another possibility is to perform on the upper level, with the audience looking up. This is a less comfortable option; however, it would allow the actors more freedom of movement and mean that a larger audience would be able to fit in the area.

Perhaps the best option would be if the audience remains in the Drum Chamber and the performance takes place among the cells [See Appendix 4, p.151]. This would allow the actors to use the cells both as part of the performance and for scene and costume changes. The cells themselves are currently used in the prison for storage so doing this should not cause any issues. Another benefit of this approach is that the scenes are far more obviously set in a prison. The audience would never forget where they were and what that meant. This would truly take advantage of the site-sensitive nature of the play. There are also multiple levels which could be used as boundaries to create different zones of the play, allowing for scene overlap and avoiding clutter. A good example of the use of levels in performance is the National Theatre open air production of *Into the Woods*, (Lapine/Sondheim, 2010) and some of those techniques could inform our production. For example, that production used the levels to introduce each new scene while the previous one was still going on; this technique would be particularly useful when the characters transition into memory as well as keeping Maria and the other characters separate. [See Appendix, 4 p.150] The stairs and balcony could also be used. For example, for the blackberry scene the stairs could be used to represent the climbing of the blackberry bush. The other benefit from this position is that the actors can get to the stage from multiple places including behind the audience. Surprise entrances could be easily achieved. The upper levels of this drum chamber i.e. above the audience will also be a good place to put props or perhaps sounds and shadows in order to create the required atmosphere. One possible drawback with this location is that the audience will be in the best area for acoustics rather than the actors. Microphones may be required.

Staging the production in Cork Gaol means there would need less need for literal props or furnishings props as the location would tell the audience so much. The history of the location would work well with the play. For example, in the original prison there was a rule of complete silence. If the prisoners talked, they would be punished. Knowledge of this history amongst the audience would give the play an extra layer of discomfort as well as adding to the theme of control. This was said to have driven many of the inmates insane. Cork Gaol was known as “the women’s prison”, even though many men were incarcerated there in a separate wing – actually the one in which the play would take place. Setting the play within the men’s section of a women’s prison works well for the themes of the play. Though Jennifer is visiting Leon; he is the one actually imprisoned, she is imprisoning herself by choice. He is in the physical prison but she is in the optional one from which she refuses to escape. There is also the added benefit with this the prison setting of the Cork gaol becomes a representation of Leon himself in his absence. While the staging will be set up, though sparsely, to display the office of the psychologist the surrounding prison will continue to remind the audience why they are there. It will make itself the sixth character of the play and allow representations to come through with ease. Maria’s true suffering will be apparent as she is trapped within the representation of her own demise. The issue with creating a location piece in another country is the separation of culture. It is important that the play would not cause offence to the audience within the intended location. If the play is to be set within the city of Cork it would be important to thoroughly check that cultural boundaries are not crossed as this is not the purpose of the play. As the play doesn’t contain any culturally specific content this should not be an issue, the gaol was chosen due to being aesthetically perfect and not for cultural significance.

Physical properties

My initial idea for this play was that it would feature many physical devices- props, puppets and active staging. I envisaged only Jennifer and Leon as actual characters. Everyone else would be represented by puppets or staging manifestations. For example Rose would solely be represented through flowers; her relationship to Jennifer would only be shown by the way in which she reacts when she sees the flowers. This idea was inspired by *Windsong on the Blessed Bay* (Britton, 2016) in which puppets are used to tell tales. However, it soon became clear that this would not work for a play in which psychological realism is such a central theme.

I then explored the idea that the psychological issues faced by the characters would be portrayed through the use of puppets rather than the character his/herself. Each character would have a physical representation of the problems they face. Much like the puppets used in the play *The Trench* (Lansley, 2012) in which all of each character's problems are represented by demon like creatures. My characters would similarly be haunted by the demons they possess. However, this too seemed opposed to the tone of the play and I instead opted for a more subtle approach to the themes I wanted to explore. My props and physical representations were reduced to a few simple significant items.

The most important physical property will be Leon's painting. This is a brightly coloured painting of a naked woman surrounded by vines [See Appendix 5, p.152] it is rather tasteless and questionable but it is very important to the story and to both his character and Jennifer's. Apart from Jennifer, the live characters look at it with at the very least distaste and occasionally even disgust. To Jennifer it is the artistic and creative representation of Leon; it is what originally drew her to him and without it she never would have found him. She sees something of a troubled soul within the painting and has an uncontrollable desire to free it. To Leon the painting is his freedom; it is what he longs for. The woman to him, represents desire. However, there is more to the painting; something he didn't intend; it is in fact his confession. The woman stuck in the forest represents his victim, Maria.

Similar to the painting used in *Art* (Reza, 2011) a lot of the story will be worked around what different characters think of this painting. Unlike *Art* it is not necessarily the painting itself that causes the divide but what it represents and where it came from. A lot of the play was in fact inspired by the idea of the painting itself along with a public display of art created by prisoners, and my own curiosity about what it would mean if the two were related.

The audience should be able to see it even when the rest of the stage is dark, so it remains in their

minds as it does for Jennifer and Leon. At the end of the play the light should focus entirely on the painting, implying that soon it will represent Jennifer as well as Maria. Maria avoids looking at the painting at all cost; it is her end and she cannot bare to be reminded of it. It is also important that Jennifer references or just acknowledges the painting when she speaks of Maria or what Leon did, implying that the tortured soul she senses from this painting is perhaps a more literal one. Jennifer's longs to be with the painting when she can't be with Leon; occasionally it will distract her when she is with other characters. She wants to be with him and to her the painting is him. This will also show an unwitting camaraderie with Maria, who is more like Jennifer than she would admit.

Books are an important physical presence in my play. I imagine them strewn about the stage. If possible, a book shelf should be clearly visible to the audience, most effectively in the waiting room area. The characters will all flick through the books when they are attempting to avoid a topic or an awkward conversation. Jennifer will always be organising and tidying the books; sometimes perhaps even alphabetising them, Heather must always disorganise them; carelessly flick through them and throw them aside. Claire will always be reading them; they are her true connection with Jennifer. Claire and Jennifer share the pursuit of knowledge in their university connection.

I envisage flowers and vines visible on the stage. These will both represent the forest and what the woodland means for both Jennifer, Leon and Maria. There needs also be formal floral arrangements and not wild flowers. These represent both Rose and Heather and their relationship, one in which Jennifer has no part. Frequently Rose and Heather will be shown arranging flowers or gardening and when Jennifer attempts to join in she only breaks the rhythm or ruins the arrangement. She is not a part of this life. Their names are the clue. One reason for Jennifer's desire to be connected to nature is a feeble attempt to be a part of a family that didn't accept her when her father died. She is the disorganised wild plants, not the well arranged and cared-for flowers. This again, links to the representation of the wild nature of human relationships used in *Lovesong* (Morgan, 2015) In which it becomes an effective metaphor for uncontrolled and varied nature of the human character.

I prefer simple staging. For me it is generally more effective in focusing the narrative than huge spectacular arrangements. A particularly effective example of this was the National Theatre live production of *A View From a Bridge* (Miller, 2015 edition) This production used one chair. The rest was simply a plain white stage. For such a well written play it was all that was needed. While my play will require a little more than that, the main reference space should need little more than a table and a couple of chairs. These can be used to represent the prison meeting room, the doctor's office and all three of Jennifer's homes; family home, University home and adult home. The chairs and

table can be rearranged to represent each area but even that will not need to be done too much. The placement of the furniture should always be centre stage and it will be the main focus for the audience. The underlying psychological issues for the characters as well as the mood of the scene and the less traditional elements will be represented through sound and lighting.

Lighting

The lighting in the play will be another important aspect. It can be used to effectively give a sense of place, it can create boundaries and direct the audience and create the mood of the piece, “On the deepest sensual and symbolic level lighting designers can convey something of the feeling and even substance of the play.” (Pireddu, 2009, p.39). Originally, I had planned to use lights to reflect characters’ inner feeling but later decided this would take too greatly from the realism of the piece. I decided to use realistic lighting to reflect each play location instead; as these places are so important to the characterisation and the plot of the play as a whole it is important that they are recognisable. As each location represents different aspects of Jennifer's life as well as changes in her tone and identity the light will be able to be used to effect mood as well. While much of the choices to do with lighting will be made at a later date and depending on the facilities available the following is the way in which I envision it being used

The prison is the area that Jennifer is using to try and achieve a nonsensical goal. While her aims are not unrealistic or unachievable, they are not true aims. They are the confused dreams of a woman without any aim in life. The prison itself is also an oppressive place and a cage for everyone within; even those there by choice. The oppressive florescent light that would be needed for an accurate prison setting would achieve this feeling. The lights would need to be full and concentrated on the centre stage creating a feeling of inescapable light. However, the prison doubles as the doctor’s office, bright light would also work in this context as the created feeling is one of a medical examination; making the play feel clinical. It will need to be as bright as possible without actually interfering with the performers. This would create the impression of florescent lighting. The use of differentiating intensity is an effective way in which the lighting designer can indicate place and can “[Explore] the subtleties of creating visual interest and focus by manipulating the visual environment through the mastery of intensity control.”(Swift, 2004, p.61)

In contrast to the office, the forest represents Jennifer’s repressed self; the person she is struggling to control. It is also the area that truly represents Maria and the entirety of Leon’s dark past. It is also an entirely uncontrolled and uninhabited area; the trees will block out the sun and keep the area in a perpetual state of dusk. To represent this, the light needs to be low with only a few small points getting through to imply a canopy of trees. There needs to be just enough light to see the characters and set the scene; there also needs to be enough light to allow the shadow of Maria to just be seen by the audience. There would need to be manipulation of the contrast ratio; meaning the difference between the light and dark sections, (Swift, 2004, p. 65) to create this effect. The shadow created by the implied trees would require quite a high contrast ratio, as the tree can often block out light completely in some places while not at all in others. The differences in light between the two sections would create a boundary between the two, reminding the audience they

can not intersect.

The other areas that need to be represented show Jennifer's past and present life; they are the real areas in which her current life is being lived. These areas are her childhood home and current home, the library in which she works and her university; they are the areas in which she has been living her comfortable, normal life; the life that has been feeling unfulfilled to her; the one she is desperate to escape. These are the areas that will require both day and night settings but both would need soft, comfortable lighting that one would expect from a home scene, all this can be achieved through manipulation of intensity. Ideally it would be the type of light that is subtle enough that the audience wouldn't really notice it. While this world is the comfortable and easy one it is the life she cannot stand. Use of light can "create visual fatigue or boredom" (Swift, 2004, p.65); while I don't want to manipulate this too much and risk alienating the audience it will be useful to allow the audience to truly empathise with Jennifer's feeling. In contrast to this, occasionally the indoor scenes will also require more focused sections of lights; often the light would be coming from a more identifiable source such as Jennifer's torch in the scene in which she awaits Heather's return home in the night. This would require shifts in focus; the light will need to be focused on certain areas to imply different light sources.

The most difficult and most important task that the lighting needs to achieve is to create an image of Maria which will follow the characters through the story; as a shadow and a memory in herself; a method which originated in China and moved to European theatre in the 18th century (Robinson, 1995). She is not exactly a ghost but rather the void and memories that Leon created when he took her life. Her shadow form will be faint at times but she must follow certain roles in order for the audience to understand how she must work.

She is always there when the characters are pondering her life and also her death. When the characters are thinking, for example, of the danger that Jennifer is in or are simply thinking of the fate of the unfortunate girl who has gone before her. In these instances, she will be faint; barely visible for the audience, she is there but not as clearly as she will be when it is an aspect that truly affects her. She need also be present when ever the painting is being considered; it represents her and thus the two representations must be kept together, though her shadow should only appear when the painting is being thought upon or discussed as it is always present. Despite her true form being unable to look at it, the form she must take now cannot avoid it. Through this the audience will be able to see the link between the painting and her from the very beginning. The following is the first major section in which the shadow is featured; trying desperately to show Jennifer the true meaning of the painting and the dangers it hides.

The light rises on the painting as JENNIFER enters the upper level where the picture hangs. She stands and stares at it a while. The shadow appears as she does so and desperately tries to reach out to JENNIFER.

...

She approaches the painting and feels the paint.

...

She looks around to see if she is being watched. The shadow makes another attempt to be noticed but to no avail. JENNIFER reaches out as though to take the painting but then thinks better of it and instead takes a picture with her phone.

...

She returns to the lower level. She looks at her phone a while then smiles as she puts it away. The shadow attempts to grab the phone but cannot affect it.

...

JENNIFER approaches the audience, as she does the shadow despairs; she feels she has failed.

Jennifer will never be able to notice the shadow but the deeper she goes into her relationship the more clearly the shadow appears. However, seen by Heather as the one character who truly relates to Jennifer, but is also able to see the danger Jennifer is in. Occasionally she should direct her lines to the shadow when she needs answers that the Doctor simply could not know or when she feels truly afraid for Jennifer. In the final scene, and a small implication in the first scene, Jennifer sees the shadow with her in the woods. This will be the closing of the play in which Jennifer sees her face to face, implying that she has finally accepted what Leon has done and making the audience ask the question: Does it change anything?

Sound

In the original plan for this play music and sound effects were going to play a huge role in creating the scenes and showing the characters inner minds, as with the other aspects however, I decided that a more realistic setting would bring across the issues faced within the play far more effectively.

Though I want to imply the 'otherness' of the world within the play I want it to be done subtly and only through hints, use of music and sound effects I feel are too obvious for this end.

As with the lighting I too will use sound to create the locations the play is representing, this will not be a tool that is used too frequently but there are some aspects for which it will be incredibly useful to create the atmosphere. The prison when it originally appeared would have been greatly helped by the use of sound; when Leon and Jennifer meet it is important that the audience realise that they are never alone, this could be achieved in a number of ways but the most effective would be to have background sound of a large amount of other people surrounding them. This should take place during the prison visits by any of the other character and also, slightly quieter, when he is having his sessions with the "Psychologist". From this the audience will see that Leon can never truly be alone this could help the situation be better understood. Though this representation was removed from the final play the techniques involved can be utilised elsewhere within the performance.

The forest and outside scenes will also occasionally require some sound effects; this will be required to let the audience know that the scene is taking place outside as it might be unclear. As the natural world is such an important aspect for Jennifer's character it is important that it is represented correctly. To imply the outside woods there should be a light quiet sound of birds chirping and soft wind through the trees. These would have been used within Leon's dream sequences as well, though at these times they will be louder than others. This will be especially important as these scenes will not actually take place in the woodland section but within the counsellor's office; the normal sounds of the multitude of people will need to be silenced while he speaks of his dream

Jennifer's home and work locations will all be calm and quiet locations; these are the areas of her peaceful boring life that she wishes to escape and so the quieter they are the more uncomfortable she can get within them. Occasional sound effects can take place, for example, when Jennifer talks about Leon's painting for the first time the chatter from the other library workers could be heard. But generally, it should be a more tranquil atmosphere when these scenes are being used. Jennifer's discomfort at the quiet will then come through as she attempts to make more noise through her action in these scenes than the others.

Initially in my plan for the play whenever Maria's shadow appeared the sound of the forest would be heard very clearly linking the two together, however, as the play developed, it became clear that this would not only be distracting but also far too obvious a link. The audience will clearly be able

to see the link between Maria and the forest and as such the sound effect playing would soon become irritating and even patronising. Instead I decided that a better effect would be to have all the surrounding become muted when she is around, this I feel will be a far more subtle approach and will create an element of discomfort within the audience as they will know that she is coming. While Maria herself is onstage the nature sounds should trump the sounds of any other character's positions; no matter what Maria is speaking of she is always in the forest so this is the only sound that should sound for her, reminding the audience of her inescapable fate. The sound should become louder during her actual death scenes, growing as the lights fade. In the final moments of her final death scene the forest sounds should become oppressive, almost haunting seeming to completely smother her.

Costume

Costume choices need not be too strictly regimented as they can change depending on fashions of the time of performance. As this is a contemporary play this will be the most effective representation. However, a few guidelines need to be set so that the characterisations can be achieved correctly.

Jennifer is a very proper character even in her changing life with Leon and should dress as such; a shirt and modest skirt are the clothes in which I envision her. As Leon states she dresses as though she is going for a job interview. This must be made less neat when she is in the forest scenes but no major changes to her costume need be made, as she does not actually change who she is.

Heather and Claire are far more casual and this should be shown in the ways in which they present themselves. While Claire is a professional there are no scenes which actually take place within her work and so she will never need to be dressed too smartly. Heather purposefully avoids smart clothes so that she can remain the antithesis to her sister, for her a more “grunge” style outfit would be appropriate while Claire need only be casual but not actually untidy. Rose does not really require any specific style of outfit for her characterisation but she should always be dressed modestly and conservatively to imply her new found Christian calling, but as she is only ever seen within her own home, she does not need to be smart or “dressy”.

Maria’s outfit should be simple, what she wears is not particularly important, although it may be effective to show some similarities between her dress and that of Jennifer as it implies Leon’s “type”, however this is not vitally important. What is important however is with each iteration her clothes become messier along with her hair as she is dragged through the woods by Leon. This should give the implication to the audience that the thoughts she is sharing are her dying reflections and also give her an air of hopelessness.

Performance Style

The visual style of the play will be partially dictated by the location, however the performance style is, in my mind unadorned naturalism. What is below the surface will become apparent but should not be underlined performatively. All the characters are hiding their inner thoughts and feelings. It is important that those feelings come through but I am confident that confident subtle performance will enable this to happen. Maria is of course, a different proposition.

There are, of course fantastical elements in my play. Issues may show themselves through “other” presences and changes in lighting or sound. However, what I hope to achieve is a play acted naturalistically, but with an atmosphere that implies something more. Each character will react to this “otherness” in different ways, but all together it should give an over arching feel of unease. I hope the general feel of the play would be one of magic-realism. The characters are real and the situation is entirely possible but the small aspects that are off balance will create a general feeling of something being wrong.

Even the soliloquies in my play are staged as though they are spoken naturally to a psychologist. While generally soliloquies are used to reveal the inner thoughts of a character. Shakespeare would frequently use them to allow the audience to see his characters plan and frustrations.

Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth within a dull, stale, tirèd bed
Go to th' creating a whole tribe of fops
Got 'tween a sleep and wake? Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
(Shakespeare, 1993, p.25)

This section from Edmund's soliloquy in *King Lear* shows what he is unwilling to show his father; his frustration at being illegitimate and how he wishes to seek penance for this slight; by undermining Edgar. There are examples in which the characters, though they speak directly to the audience, continue to hide these feelings. A good example of this is shown in the play *Art* [Reza, 2011], in which complex psychological issues are not admitted in the soliloquies but rather come out through dramatic juxtaposition manner of Performance is everything in this approach. A simple pause in a speech as though they themselves are not sure what they are saying, says a great deal, as this section in the blackberry scene of *Never Go Crooked*.

HEATHER: I think showing emotion wasn't something miss perfect could manage. I could never look at her the same way, you know, it was creepy.

HEATHER looks at her juice stained hands and looks up at the audience.

HEATHER: I'm pretty sure it was blood.

She nods to herself.

HEATHER: She was cut up really bad.

HEATHER looks at her hands again and nods to herself, she then walks off stage.

Unjustified or unlearned anger can also demonstrate that characters are unsure that they are in the right. A well known and successful example of an insecure and mentally unstable character using unjustified anger is in the character of Willy in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*:

Charley: I'm offering you a job.

Willy: I don't want your goddam job!

Charley: When the hell are you going to grow up?

Willy: (furiously) You big ignoramus, if you say that to me again I'll rap you on! I don't care how big you are! (He's ready for a fight.)

(Miller, 1994 edition)

Immediately following this outburst, admitting the mere suggestion that Willy might need help is taken as a personal slight as it undermines his authority and what he believes his life should be. Likewise my characters become threatened when they begin to notice they might be in the wrong. As they begin to perceive their position as unsure, they get defensive about it. This can be seen quite often in both Claire's and Heather's speeches. In other sections when the subject matter becomes too honest or confronting, or begins to reveal aspects of the character's personality she doesn't like (or perhaps cannot face) they will simply deflect the issue. As each character turns the conversation on to more comfortable ground, their speech style can relax a bit. This deflection can be particularly jarring for the audience who may be expecting the characters to confirm what the audience expect. A classic use of this withholding of information can be seen in *Three Sisters*. (Chekov, 2008 edition) The audience wants Tuzenbach to tell Irina of his duel and for her to convince him not to go. Instead he talks of trivial things.

...I shall still take part in life in one way or another. Good-bye, dear... [Kisses her hands]
The papers which you gave me are on my table under the calendar.
IRINA. I am coming with you.
TUZENBACH. [Nervously] No, no! [He goes quickly and stops in the avenue] Irina!
IRINA. What is it?
TUZENBACH. [Not knowing what to say] I haven't had any coffee to-day. Tell them to make me some.... [He goes out quickly.]
(Chekhov, 2008, p.80)

It can be used out of fear, as in the example from *Three Sisters*, or more often in my play out of a denial of any problem. An example of when this type of deflection has been used in my play is when Heather wants to talk to Rose about Heather and Jennifer's past partners.

HEATHER: Mum, do you remember when we were in school, a boy called James?

ROSE scoffs at this.

ROSE: Oh yes, quite vividly. This Leon has something to do with him does he?

HEATHER: No. Well, yes. Sort of.

ROSE: Oh Heather, if only she had your sense. She's such a poor judge of character.

HEATHER: No, I don't think that's exactly it. Listen do you remember how James and her met?

ROSE: Yes, you seem so happy with your life Heather maybe if you could find her a nice new job or something she'd be happy . If she-

HEATHER: Please Mum I'm trying to explain something. Please, it's important.

ROSE: I'm sorry, my love I won't interrupt again.

HEATHER considers giving up but continues.

HEATHER: So, James? How they met?

ROSE: Oh, Heather-

HEATHER: Mum!

Finally there are a few intended contradictions in what the characters say. In these sections it is important that the character reveals through performance that they are aware a contradiction has been made. The use of contradictory memories is also important to show the unreliability of all memory; they only remember things the way in which they want to remember them.

CLAIRE: When she came to university; when I met her she was... I honestly thought she was a member of some super strict religion. I took it upon myself to make her enjoy her life. But don't think that has anything to do with how she is now; it was just necessary to make her bearable. I didn't force her, it was what she wanted. She was just scared of not constantly being in control of every little thing. But once she got on with it she liked it she became fun to be around that's all.

In this first section of the play Claire takes credit for Jennifer becoming a more "interesting" person however throughout the play, through her childhood memories and the ways in which Heather talks about her the audience soon learn that Jennifer has always been an interesting person. If anything Claire simply attempted to make her conform to university student norms.

In the original draft before Leon was cut, he stood out from the other characters in that he was so sure of his own character and so actively denied all guilt. As other characters are making human mistakes he is working from a pre-meditated script and can therefore make none.

Now he has been replaced with Maria, she is the only truly honest character but for her there is no ulterior motive, she simply has nothing more she can lose and therefore no reason to hide. Her presence will always be open. She has no need to hide anything and in fact pleads to be heard.

Specific characterisations

Each Character has different issues as well as views on what Jennifer is going through and while these will be given life through the staging and lighting, much of what they are feeling and an appreciation of these issues is shown in their performance. Of course, every actor would bring their own interpretation to the role; here is how I see each character being performed.

Jennifer is wasting her own potential and her life for Leon. Clearly the audience know that and the other characters do as well but what we also need to be able to deduce is that Jennifer also knows it. Though she argues that Leon is innocent and that their relationship can succeed, she in fact believes none of that but refuses to admit it. Furthermore, the dysfunctional, dangerous and unworkable relationship is precisely what she wants; she wants to control the uncontrollable. This needs to be shown in the ways in which she speaks about her life and the ways in which she speaks about Leon. When she mentions her life before Leon, we need to be able to sense a hint of remorse. This might be shown through hesitancy in her speech or perhaps a thoughtful glance at an object that represents this life but quickly thrown aside. She had to make a choice to lose her former life. While what she says will imply that losing her old life was an unfortunate side effect of her new “happiness”, it was in fact a choice that she made to escape the mundane life that she claimed to love. The loss of the norm is what she is chasing. She has been doing this her whole life and every time she speaks of a relationship that has gone wrong, she needs to give a hint of happiness lost.

Her desire to control the uncontrollable is made fairly clear through the other characters’ observations of her but it must also be shown with everything she does. It can be implied through small actions such as constantly straightening set pieces and more effectively re-arranging pieces that other characters have set out, for example Rose’s flower arrangements. This will be effective not only to show Jennifer’s control but to illustrate the other characters’ discomfort around her.

Maria’s parts within the play are separate in style and location. She is trapped outside the psychologist’s office. She can never actually reach Jennifer. Her shadow, which was discussed in the lighting section, suggests hope that she might be able to reach Jennifer or someone who cares for her before it is too late. Maria’s lines depict her story in reverse running parallel to Jennifer’s. Her opening is that of her death scenes and her subsequent lines are being spoken post mortem, as such they are to be performed as though in a dream like stupor; like thoughts running through her head while she falls asleep. The death scene like an unwelcome but slightly distant nightmare. While this will be interpreted differently by each performer, for the purpose of this script I imagine it as a slightly curious, dreamy delivery that will flow without consideration perhaps even absently

but as though panic is narrowly being avoided. Maria is angry and upset about what has happened to her but as she sees Jennifer experiencing so much of the same, she wants to do all that is in her power to warn Jennifer of what the future might hold.

Heather claims that she is a better person than Jennifer and that she is the only one who “always knew” that Jennifer was different. But in truth she is jealous of Jennifer and her relationships with both their father and Leon. As Jennifer was always more intelligent and calmer, Heather takes on the role of the rebellious child. But through Jennifer’s relationship with Leon, Jennifer is now rebelling far more than Heather. Heather feels that Jennifer has taken her identity as well as already blaming her for taking her father. Heather’s resentment of Jennifer should be apparent whenever they are on stage together. Heather will be seen to purposely ignore Jennifer and occasionally rearrange her belongings simply to annoy her. Performing these actions will be particularly important in the scenes in which Heather is house sitting for Jennifer. As she talks, she could casually move everything around.

It is important for her character that Heather downplays, as much as possible, the danger that Jennifer is in. While she loves her sister and wishes to get her help, the reason for her organising the meetings with the psychologist in the first place, is that she still wants to maintain her role as the rebellious sister. To do this it is important that when she speaks in the earlier stages about the relationship between Leon and Jennifer she acts as though the potential dangers are boring or clichéd. She warns everyone about the danger to her sister but as well implies that the danger is of Jennifer’s own making. If they were happening to Heather, she would be perfectly safe. She is overly confident when she about Leon and also about her past rebellions. When she speaks of Jennifer’s questionable past boyfriends she is almost mocking. All of this will of course be juxtaposed with the memories in which the audience will see how greatly she cares, and fears, for Jennifer.

Claire is worried about the changes she sees in Jennifer but at the same time is resentful of how she lets them pull her away from their friendship. She fears that perhaps Jennifer is right and Claire did in fact choose an easy life rather than a fulfilling one. This realisation causes her great anger and unlike most of the characters she is not afraid to show it; even when it is in fact a deflection from another much deeper emotion. What she fears most however, is that she will actually have to show true emotional attachment and deal with real issues with her friend. As Jennifer’s friend their relationship has always been a casual one; one in which no big issues were discussed and no emotions were expressed but it also meant that Claire was the one Jennifer turned to when she was having issues with Leon’s incarceration; this puts Claire in the front for emotional support and she is not comfortable with that. This can easily be shown by her reluctance to help

Jennifer or even to tell her that what she is doing isn't normal.

Her anger with Heather is clear. Though she does want to help her friend she does not want to open up to any of them. She is the most honest and relaxed character when talking to the doctor. She is fine talking to strangers but when there is an emotional attachment, she has real issues. There is also a hope that by talking openly with the doctor it will pass the responsibility so that she can return to their superficial relationship. She accepts the task of helping prove Leon innocent readily. Though she knows it is impossible and she is entirely against the relationship, it means she does not have to help Jennifer emotionally if she is helping her intellectually. This will also help to create interesting character tension between her and Jennifer as while Claire is avoiding any meaningful conversation with Jennifer, Jennifer alludes to the two of them being soul mates

Rose always cared more for Heather than for Jennifer and resented Jennifer for how much her husband had loved her. She also partially blames Jennifer for his death. At the same time Rose is aware of how unfair it is that she has put so many burdens on her daughter's head. She turned to religion because of her guilt at these feeling and does her very best to hide them, though they must come through. The main way this will happen will be through an obvious difference between the way she relates with her daughters. With Heather she is warm and loving, always hugging her and comforting her. With Jennifer everything she says will be the words of a loving mother but they will not hold the warmth that they do for Heather.

For Rose it is actually a slight relief that Jennifer has found Leon. It keeps her physically and emotionally distant, so Rose doesn't feel the guilt for not loving her as much as her sister. Through the memories the audience see that Jennifer tries to over compensate, in turn causing Rose far more guilt. She occasionally acts in support of the relationship with Leon, as it works in her favour. At these times her guilt turns her more and more towards God. We may see a touch of a crucifix, or a quick silent prayer.

Conclusion

My motivation in pursuing this thesis was to investigate the syndrome hybristophilia through dramatic presentation in the belief that theatre might provide a forum in which this very destructive behavioural phenomenon could be usefully explored. This motivation was heightened during my research by the realisation that conventional studies on the subject were very limited, and that views on the classification of the syndrome were varied and contentious. Hence public recognition is not strong. The play I have written will, I believe, contribute to broader understanding of hybristophilia and those affected by it – both sufferers and those close to them. Finding a dramatic form suitable to present the issue has been a challenge. I believe the devices of direct address supported by dialogue scenes, and the presence of the victim, Maria, achieve an interesting balance between naturalism and a sense of something beyond the natural. I am pleased with the decision to cut the physical presence of Leon – oddly in a women’s play the one male – because of his manipulative aggression – tended to pull focus. The play is better balanced without him. There are wider issues: women’s psychological issues in general are under researched. Much of the research which has been done has been through a male dominated point of view. Increasingly it appears that women’s psychological issues materialise differently from men’s; conditions such as ADHD appear differently in girls and boys for example. Hopefully if these issues can be brought into the public eye, if more popular forms of presentations focus on women’s issues then more research might follow.

The changes I have made through my writing, both large and small have all been to more clearly move the focus of the play towards the psychological issues without losing any of the characterisation as it is through connections with the characters that audiences will take the issues to heart. While the focus may have shifted a few times, when characterisations weren’t fitting into the world I was trying to create it was always brought back to the matter at hand. Through research of both the disorder itself and stage craft the play has become a more subtle and effective exploration of the characters’ lives while never forcing the audience towards pre-formed view.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Changes made to the play

Throughout the creation of my play it has gone through many changes and iterations leading me to the play it ended up being. These changes came about due to a number of different influences and all remain important to the end product. Throughout the writing the ages of Jennifer and Heather changed a number of times, which was the younger and which the older sister was very important to the structure of the story and changed the dynamic of the pair vastly. When Heather was the older and Jennifer the younger it made for an interesting dynamic. It made Jennifer's controlling nature all the more unusual as it would seem that the older sister should be the one to take the responsibility over the younger. This age dynamic however, caused a few of the scenes to seem too awkward and forced, the logic of the play and the way in which their relationship is represented in the final form of the play works far more smoothly when Heather and not Jennifer is the younger. This meant that a number of scenes had to be re-written to account for this but it resulted in a more realistic and not overly exaggerated representation of the sisters.

There are a number of scenes to which this would make a major difference the most significant being the "Blackberry scene". This scene; one of the first written, was vital to the understanding of Jennifer and her relationship with her sister. When it was initially written Heather was the younger character and the scene worked as it does in the final draft. The relationship made sense and the girls reactions worked correctly for their age. When the decision was made to make Jennifer the younger sister this scene was the one that did not work well when changed. Their dialogue no longer flowed, Heather obeying Jennifer's orders despite her reluctance and the fact that Rose expected Jennifer to "Look after" Heather simply made little to no sense when the ages were swapped. Given the importance of this scene to the characters and the fact that the other scenes involving the two sisters either worked both ways or came across similar issues, their ages were returned to how they were when the play was first written. Another important aspect that had to be considered when deciding on the sister's ages was the psychological implications. While there is no clear indication that Jennifer's upbringing was directly responsible for her hybristophilia her control issues and lost childhood are far more likely to occur with her as the older sibling. Her need to fill the role that was abandoned with her father's death and the resulting loss of her innocence are very important for Jennifer's character profile. Without them her psychological issues have no explanation and the possibility that her paraphilia is due to trauma cannot be broached.

Jennifer as the older sister works more effectively for both the story and the character

development but having her shortly the younger also revealed some interesting aspects of her character. Forcing her to remain in control despite not having the responsibility to do so brought out some new aspects of her character. In the scene in which she waits for Heather to return home from her night out her character when she was younger was very similar to how it was when she was older. Her forceful attitude and attempts to police Heather's behaviour were more significant when she was the younger sister but in this scene, unlike many of the others her attitude did not seem forced or unbelievable. This showed that her character was the type that would attempt to control those even when she would not necessarily naturally be given authority over them. This was an interesting aspect of her character and allowed more depth of character to be brought out for later scenes. While I ultimately decided to write these scenes the other way the swap of ages was an interesting experiment which was beneficial to the final draft of the play.

Rose too has gone through a number of changes throughout the work. Initially she would have been an absent character; as Leon is in the end product. She would have been characterised through what Jennifer, Heather and occasionally Claire would have said about her creating a rather contrasting character as they all remembered her in very different ways. This representation however seemed to begin to imply overly that she was more responsible for Jennifer's condition than she actually became in the end product. She became the villain in her absence. This was not the representation that I wished for her however and she had a lot to say on the subject of Jennifer's situation; representations of a daughter that only her mother would be able to relay. Her turn to religion after the death of her husband was also a later development, she was not a bad mother and not an uncaring one but this turn alienated her from Jennifer unintentionally as it seemed that she was taking comfort in god and not her daughters. As an atheist Jennifer could not take the same comfort in religion that Rose did and she also could not see it as a comfort but rather turning away from herself and Heather and towards, what she sees, as an empty comfort. The final change made to Rose's character was making her a more complex character and therefore allowing the audience to sympathise with her side of the action. As she was a late addition to the play she was initially not as fleshed out as the other characters; this made her character seem quite distant as though she only really cared about her daughters as much as they directly affected her. While this representation remained in Jennifer's memories of Rose, her monologues and own memories shows that there is more to her character than it may seem. She tries her best for her daughters and though Jennifer might not feel that she cares for them, through Heather we can see that she is truly doing all she can.

In the first complete draft of the play Rose's interactions with Jennifer remained overly cold and it was hard to see that she truly cared about her. A few of the lines that implied this characterisation remained in the last draft but much of her speech had to be changed. As her

character expanded and she developed much of the indifferent and judgemental opinions she held towards Jennifer and Leon no longer fitted within her character arc. Her turn to religion was a true change in her and not simply something she clings to for comfort, so her wish for her daughters to join her in that changes from manipulation to a genuine concern for her children's well being. While she herself is far from perfect, the reason for some of the unfounded opinions she holds, she does just wish the best for her daughters. With the final draft and her character fully fleshed out she now shows a well rounded character complete with flaws, flaws which are required for Jennifer's own occasionally harsh opinions of her mother. Her addition to the play was imperative for it to be the complete story of Jennifer and allowed for the story to come through in a more natural way.

Claire has gone through many alterations throughout the process of my play mainly due to her purpose within the story changing throughout its creation. Initially, she would argue Jennifer's side of the story believing her situation to be a non issue and therefore no reason to fight against it. However, in this initial iteration she seemed cold, as though she did not care about Jennifer's well being at all and was rather just interested in the drama that the situation created. She was later changed to a jealous rival of Jennifer, worried that Jennifer was stealing her spotlight. However this made her seem petty, also jealousy had also been covered in a far more believable way with Heather's character. Thus she became as she ended up; a less subjective view of Jennifer, someone who cares about her and what happens to her but at the same time can remove the emotion from her judgements, at times at least. However, this means that her views of what Jennifer is going through are more distant and clinical and don't truly take into account Jennifer's circumstances or personality.

Claire's role as the only character that could help Jennifer with discovering the truth behind Leon's case was an aspect of the play from the very beginning. Before the play was even begun her profile stated that she was in law and as such would have insights that the other characters would not have access to. Her use of this knowledge, however, was the major change to her character. Initially she related all the information she found to Jennifer and as such all of that information is delivered to the audience from Claire as second hand evidence. This format however did not allow for any mystery and the information delivered was far too flat given its importance to the story. As such, while she finds out what Leon did and how and relates it to the audience, she does not allow Jennifer to learn all she knows. This not only allows her to keep the power related to that information to herself, while at the same time protecting Jennifer it also allows for the true story of what Leon did to come from its true source; from Maria.

In the initial plans for the play it would only have involved Jennifer and Leon and all other

characters would have been absent. However in this format the views and effects of the syndrome would have only been represented very narrowly. From Jennifer's own point of view there is nothing wrong with her; she falls in love with Leon as she would had they met under normal circumstances and as such it would have been difficult to show the problems she is causing without the play becoming overly stylised and the story less believable. With the addition of the other characters I was able to represent many different presumed causes of hybristophilia all of which in some way represent Jennifer's condition but none are the complete truth. Heather believes that Jennifer is overly controlling, believes that she needs to mould things to her will and the draw to dangerous men is simply a new challenge for her to control. She believes that this is due to the loss of her father, that he was controlling and she wants to replace him as the one in control. Being able to organise and control a powerful person capable of murder is a huge pull for Jennifer, according to Heather's interpretation. This is indeed an interest of Jennifer's but not the complete story she wants to control him but at the same time wants the stability and rigorous organisation involved in such a limited relationship as one with a prisoner. She likes control but, in a way, also likes to be controlled.

Rose believes that Jennifer never truly learned who she was. She was unable to find her niche and as such she had to create a niche, that Rose feels no one else would have an interest in and therefore no one else can be better than her at it. She believes that Jennifer's desire to find a purpose has led her to Leon in the vain hope that she might be able to fix him. While in some ways it is true that Jennifer has had little drive and has given up on many goals for which she had planned, her need to be the best is not as serious as Rose suspects. She doesn't truly know what she wants from life; as such she is easily able to risk her job by abandoning it in pursuit of her relationship with Leon, however she doesn't believe herself to be in competition with anyone. Her relationship with Leon is not meant as a something she can be "good" at, she does not want to change him and as is shown from her previous relationships, would no longer be interested in him if he were to change.

Claire's interpretation of what is happening with Jennifer as stated above is far more simple; she believes that Jennifer was abused as a child and as such it was all she has ever known and all she believes she deserves. She states that she feels Jennifer "didn't have a childhood" and she is trying to win back what she has missed without really understanding what a true childhood involves. In some ways she too is correct, while she was not abused as a child the death of her father damaged her far more than it did Heather. She feels abandoned by him and believes there is a need to care for Rose in his place. Thus she feels she never had a true childhood. However, an ordinary childhood was not something she particularly hoped for. Her personality would likely have caused her to be a mature child regardless of circumstances. She is happy with the way that she is

and the way her life has turned out and relishes the fact that she is different. The true issue with Claire is that she is Jennifer's best friend and the only friend ever mentioned within the play yet she doesn't really know her. Jennifer is desperate for someone who might understand her and feels she has that with Claire but doesn't really have anyone. Part of the pull of Leon is that he too is so clearly misunderstood and as such she feels an uncanny connection with him.

The most significant change that the play has gone through after beginning to write it is the cut of Leon. In the original drafts of the play Leon was a very major character. He had both monologues and memory scenes with Jennifer in which his character was fully developed and his side of the story was told; or at least the version of his story that he wanted the audience to hear. While these sections gave a more in depth look at his character and how he feels about what he had done it did nothing for the development of Jennifer and the cause of her hybristophilia. With him as a character the play began to revolve around him and the focus was very much taken away from Jennifer. What he did and why he did it became to focus of the play and as such the representations were not what they were meant to be. Seeing him within the play, it was decided from the first read through of the play performed by the *Swansea Creative Collective*, did not add anything to the plot of the play in itself nor did it add much characterisation for the other characters. The only aspect it added to the play was information about Leon; information which is not needed when the focus should be on the hybristophile and not the one who receives her affections. Without him the character of Maria was able to be brought in. Through her the audience learn all the important information about Leon, that cannot be given by Jennifer and in fact could not be given by Leon either, as he was still denying what he did. With the cut of Leon his character, in fact, becomes even more powerful as his arrogance and ridiculous reasons for killing someone he supposedly loves can be imagined by the audience rather than explicitly stated.

Despite originally not appearing in the play plans, when Leon was added his character became the focus. His scenes became the major aspects of the play. His character was such that it dominated the narrative. The scenes in which he and Jennifer met, in particular pushed the narrative. The focus moved on to how the relationship occurred rather than the why on which my research focused. As these scenes didn't add to the story of Jennifer's issues as a whole they seemed to eclipse the narratives the other characters were developing. Leon and not Jennifer became the protagonist. While this is precisely the type of character he was supposed to impose; one who would assume the story revolves around him and no one else, it meant the audience's attention was diverted from the true intent of the play. Leon might believe himself to be paramount in the relationship but the psychology of the killer is not what this play exists to explore. That is a subject which has been vastly explored from a number of different angles, through both fiction and non-

fiction. The psychology of those who admire and love them however, is rarely seen. It is imperative that the focus of my play remains solely on that issue.

With the exclusion of Leon not only was his claim of the focus extinguished but it also meant that Maria could be added. It would not have been possible to include both of them. It would not only have made Leon's actions far too explicit but also would have entirely removed the focus of the play away from Jennifer and on to the Maria and Leon relationship. Maria's perspective allows the audience to have a different view of women who get themselves into dangerous relationships; those who don't know they are doing so. While Maria is not a hybristophile as Jennifer is; there is little evidence of the danger to her, it could be argued that they do share traits. Leon wins Maria through charm and trickery, watching her and learning about her in order to gain her trust and get close to her. It could be argued that she was aware of this and she too could see the danger he posed and she too chose to ignore it. When he visits her in work, something which by her own admission "he should not do" perhaps this should have been a warning that he was not a good person. A person who is willing to ignore not only her own personal boundaries but also those set by society. While Maria is not aware of Leon's criminal capabilities, she is at least aware that he has a general disregard for rules and boundaries. It could in fact be argued that she was in more danger than Jennifer as her loved ones were not as aware of her potential dangers and by the time they suspected it was too late. The small aspects of Leon's story such as these are far more effectively brought to light through Maria than they would have been through Leon. He would have been unlikely to so freely reveal such unflattering personality traits as those that may be revealed through Maria.

Maria's character being deceased had to be brought into the play through less conventional methods than the other characters. For this, along with much of what is happening below the surface of my play, it was imperative that I also consider the staging of the play; for this there is the Dramaturgical treatment.

Appendix 2

Leon Psychologist Scenes.

LEON enters he stands at the front centre of the stage all is dark apart from where he stood. The sound of wind through the trees can be heard along with the call of a few birds. The lights come up and a woman can be seen shadowed against the back wall. She is walking in place holding her arms around herself.

LEON: There's this woman walking alone in the woods. She's pretty, but messy. She either doesn't expect to be seen or doesn't care if she is, I think it's the former, yes, definitely the former. This woman cares deeply about others. Right now she is miserable. I can see in her eyes, red rimmed from tears. There more coming but she's holding them back until she's sure that no one can see. What's wrong with her? That's the question, isn't it. I don't think she knows, but she is in great pain. She can't tell anyone or perhaps she can't explain it. I think... I think that technically her life is good, great even but there's just this emptiness inside that she can't get over; she has many people who love her, a job, a car? Maybe even a pet. So she feels horrible guilt for her sadness people have it far worse than her after all. That's why she out here alone. She needs to let it out but if anyone sees her she'll have to explain and they will point out how good her life is and she'll have to feel that crushing guilt again. So she walks alone.

The shadow woman stops walking she drops her head and shudders, back tense as though she is beginning to cry.

LEON: It's dangerous. The area, something about it isn't safe. There's something there and she knows it. She wants it to come for her, she's crying now but she wants it. Then she doesn't have to be sad anymore, doesn't have to explain it or at least if she did she'd have a real reason. It's closing on her but she doesn't speed up or change course. I want to help her.

LEON enters the stage he takes a seat on the sofa and takes a look around the office he reaches for a book on criminal psychology flicks through it and throws it on the table. He then turns to the audience.

LEON: I've never had one of these before I suppose you just want to know that I've adequately repented, right? Or perhaps this is just another attempt to get men to confess to something that I just didn't do. I know that's hard for you to accept, you are looking for answers and just decided the most satisfactory ones come from blaming me. It's understandable; it's lazy and despicable, but understandable.

He puts his feet up on the sofa and seems to relax he is completely at ease, showing no sign of nerves.

LEON: Everyone seemed to love her, you see, I know I did at least but they didn't know her; only I knew her. No one realized how sad she really was. She just couldn't handle this world. She wasn't strong enough. Some people just aren't. They only ever saw her happy care free mask. Only I saw her actual pain, her distress at the world so only I could understand why she died.

LEON sits up again he begins to fidget, though he still seems more or less calm he is beginning to show signs of agitation.

LEON: I thought they, our friends and her family, I thought they cared about me too. They seemed to. But they just wouldn't believe me. Like I said they just wanted answers. So, I got blamed despite the fact that I was the only one who was there for her; the only one who knew.

LEON pauses, as though considering his situation and the lies back on the sofa as though he has decided to allow the questioning.

LEON: But you've been told all this already, presumably? So, what is it that you want? I suppose it would be great for you if I just confessed to everything. Show you that I've grown and come to terms with what I've done and show repentance and all that. That would be great wouldn't it? But the problem is; I didn't do anything. I'm not going to lie to tell you I did something I didn't just so you can forgive me or have closure. So, as far as you're concerned I will never be rehabilitated and never be free. This whole thing is just pointless, because you will never believe me.

LEON gets up and walks towards the front of the stage.

LEON: I know you like to use my lack of apparent grief as evidence against me. But did you ever consider that maybe it's bloody hard to grieve for someone when you are instantly blamed. Maybe if anyone bothered to ask they would have seen that I missed her more than any of them. I just managed to handle the truth; unlike them I didn't hide behind false accusations. I was the only one who could see a flawed woman who couldn't handle this horrible world.

LEON: It was that that fascinates me about Jennifer, she's so different to the other women I know she sees life for what it really is; bleak and generally disgusting but she can handle it. You see it's not about seeing everything as sunshine and rainbows it's about seeing what it really is and going on regardless. Happiness can be reached but it'll only be real if you accept that life is generally awful. She has no delusions that life is good. I imagine that's why she came here; the whole world is horrible why not embrace that and visit the most horrible places; no half measures with her.

LEON: She saw my painting and I guess she liked it; I wasn't really sure what I was trying to say with it. Honestly it was a prison outreach thing, some sort of art therapy idea. I think we were supposed to work through our rage with art but I was just happy to do something; anything, it's just so boring here you can feel your brain rot. I'm not sure where the picture came from; I just thought it would look nice. I've always been good at drawing ivy. I like the way it looks; the way it climbs. There is something interesting about a plant that can only live by relying on others. Nice to know it isn't only us. The woman, well she was... her, I know you'll read guilt into that but you have to remember, I miss her too. What Jennifer read into it I'm not entirely sure but it got her here and that's all that matters.

LEON: I had a fear when she asked to see me; most women who actively seek out prisoners are just awful. They are everything that's wrong with society, but well, they are women and any woman is better than no woman, right? So, I agreed and it was a brilliant choice. She was so smart; job interview clothes I'd call them. She doesn't want people drooling over her; not trying to entice, but still it's important to her that she looks good. Her disgust at the other convicts, their pathetic attempts at sexual contact with their dirty visitors; I think she might be the type of woman I've always needed. A small amount of disdain for the human race is a highly desirable trait. I liked talking to her; she didn't sugar coat or delude, she just accepts that life is what it is and gets on with it. I don't think I've met anyone so honest, not only in speech but in her body language even her tone. She was so disgusted; she didn't hide it but didn't let it get in the way of getting what she wants either.

LEON: I'm not sure she'd believe me if I told her I didn't do it. She has a healthy amount of scepticism; I imagine she'd need proof either way before making her mind up. But I get the impression that she wouldn't care either way. She's ready to judge me as me; not by what I may or may not have done.

LEON pauses as if to consider if his reading of her was indeed correct.

LEON: It went well, our meeting, she wasn't nervous; I found it strange. Who would be comfortable around these people? But I think it's probably just her acceptance of the general detestable nature of life. I was just happy she wasn't a prison groupie. I began to suspect she was a reporter, perhaps she is. If so she's a good one. No, no she wanted to meet me because of the painting; I had almost forgotten I had done it. Strange how things work out.

LEON sits on the sofa and this book the shadow woman appears in the background along with the sounds of wind and birds she holds her self even tighter this time and walks more slowly.

LEON: The walking woman, I saw her again. I got a better look at her pain. It's bleak, devastating. The kind of person who is always alone while surrounded by people. She doesn't connect much but when she does she puts her whole being into it. Anyone would be lucky to have a friend like her but she can't accept people so easily, she wants to but can't. That's not what's wrong, that is a part of her being, she's used to that. The relationships she has are strong enough that it doesn't upset her. She has done this walk before. She goes the same way every time without looking this time it's wrong though. Not just because of her pain but something else. She normally does this walk with someone else but that person has gone now. I don't think they're dead, or even out of her life. They just aren't there this time. But in this absence she sees oblivion; the inevitable things to come. Alone in the over populated world. I would be with her; comfort her but I just can't get to her.

LEON: I know what people will think; that my interest in Jennifer is just some sort of scam to convince the world that I have softened. But she has always been the type of woman I wanted. I'd just never met anyone like her before. People are just so cynical, as though because I've been incarcerated I'm incapable of normal human desire. It must just be a scam right? If that's what this is about you can fuck off. I'd gladly stay in prison if it meant I could be with her. If there was some way that would work. I'm no threat to her. I just wish there was some way to prove it.

LEON: I got my first letter from her today. Her hand writing was messier than I had imagined it; it doesn't seem to quite fit her persona, but that's okay I suppose. There was a distinct impression that she was holding something back, that's what bothered me really, not the writing. It read like she had so much more to say I could almost hear her awkward pauses. She doesn't know what she wants yet. She doesn't know what I want I'll have to be the one to start it. No, I think it's the best idea, it doesn't show a 'pattern', no one will think that. Jennifer is nothing like... her. There are no problems between us. Why just because I'm... Just because I'm different do my normal desires need to be worrying? Disturbing? There is nothing unhealthy between us. She is a young, beautiful, perfect woman. How could I not work to take things as far as they can go?

LEON: I wrote her another letter and I've not had a reply yet. No, I'm not angry don't look at me that way, it's just disappointing. I suppose I read the situation wrong, I can do that sometimes. I've been known. My cellmate laughed so hard when I mentioned her; wasn't even talking to him, called her a murder whore. I hate him. I would love to... but I couldn't. He scares me. I heard he's in for some sort of trafficking; people like him are truly dangerous. Maybe Jennifer heard something about the scam with whom I've been housed and assumed there was some sort of connection. How could she think that? I loathe being compared to him.

LEON: I have spent a lot of time thinking about when I was in school. There is a lot about it that parallels the prison structure: Horrible uniform you wouldn't be seen dead in anywhere else, disgusting food at the exact same time everyday, pointless rules that seem only to show their power; that really would not be allowed anywhere else in the world, specific times in the day in which we are allowed to go out and 'play' and of course the constant feeling of futility to fill the days. I suppose both places are designed for the same purpose: to destroy whatever it is inside you that makes you different so you fit into the perfect human mould in order to blindly accept the monotony of modern life. What I find refreshing is how little either of them work; people continue to be who they are. There is nothing they can do to stop that, and our differences lie in how we handle being individuals in a uniform world.

LEON: I've written to Jennifer a number of times now with no response. I have a feeling my letters are not being sent. Is it paranoid to think that? This place's soul purpose is to infringe on every human right. Beat us down until we no longer function as humans, because we are not humans, as far as they are concerned we are little more than vermin. Being able to communicate with people who make us happy makes us feel like we are alive; not in the suspended animation of this place. They can't have that we might start to thin for ourselves, then we will stop making life here unbearable for each other and might actually be able to improve each other rather than fit into their neat little 'baddy' folder. They can't have that; if the people who are allowed to live think we are allowed a second of happiness then they will believe that justice is being served for the evil they believe us to be. Can't have that. No, because if the punishment isn't unbearable then what's to stop everyone murdering everyone, right? What's empathy? What's compassion? Obviously the punishment system is working brilliantly I mean that's why there is no crime out there. All the baddies are in here. We can't be allowed to infect that world with our evil letters. She needs to be able to hear from me. She wouldn't ignore me.

LEON: I have written her one last letter. My hope is: if I give them as many letters as I can they will send one. I don't know what else I can do. They have complete control over my life and it is truly unbearable. Can't you see that? A few months in this place turns you into what they already think I am, I'm trying to fight it but I can't if they take away my only release. But that's just it isn't it, if I become what they want me to be then they were right to put me in here; they will actually be keeping the world safe from me. I just need someone to consider I may not be guilty; Jennifer was to be that person, and so much more to me. So I can't give up even if it is futile, then they win. I sent the latest letter but much of my enthusiasm was absent; I was so sure it would be kept back. I regret that now. They managed to neutralize me for a moment I can't let that happen again. Hopefully that won't be the letter they send. It doesn't express my true feelings. I regret that very much.

LEON: Everything is finally back on track. There have been several letters since last time and they are all good. She's interested in me; I know it. She seems lighter than her older letters like she is getting to know me. She's one of those people who thinks you can know someone through what they write alone. It's sweet really, not something that really fits in with her normal cynicism. She's made no mention at all of what I have done; what they say I have done. She probably thinks there's a prison protocol against that. Maybe there is? It never occurred to me to ask anything about that. Do you know?

LEON: There is something in her last letter it seemed distant Perhaps she is bored or scared. I really hope she isn't scared, not only because she has no reason to be but because I thought she was stronger than that. That's what I like about her. She's strong and I think she will be challenging. People never seem to fight anything, just blindly accept everything they are shown, everything they are told. Jennifer and I are of a different sort. We are willing to go against the grain if need be. If she is scared then there is nothing I can do to help her; if she's getting bored then that is an easy cure. Even trapped as I am I can make life interesting. We are going to meet again soon. It will be better than last time; I know what to expect I will be prepared.

LEON: We met again at last. It has relaxed me a lot. I had forgotten how good she looked, so proper. She seemed so intent, she had such purpose, she knew what she wanted but she wouldn't tell me; she had to keep her mystery. I wouldn't have her any other way. Though I sometimes wish I could know people's minds I would never invade hers. She stared so intently, like she was trying to read the terms and conditions of my face. *[Laughs]* I suppose that's exactly what she was doing; reading the small print making sure my side effects are worth the risk. I do come with a lot of side effects but I think she can handle them, I also think she wants to try. I imagine she will now take some time to make up her mind about me. I think I know what she'll decide, I think it's been in the back of her mind since we first met. I might not hear from her for a while; that's okay I can wait.

LEON: The things that's following her is watching her all the time as she pushes through brambles and bracken. She knows it's there I'm sure. She does seem afraid, I think though she's trying not to. She doesn't want to be afraid she wasn't to be able to accept it. Maybe she thinks it's the way to protect herself from it; maybe it smells fear. She walks the same path over and over. I can tell she's been here for a while, she just isn't sure what else to do. Even though it scares her she keeps walking, maybe she hope to stop fearing it after a while, maybe she just has no choice. How do I know this? Well, you just know everything in these dreams don't you? I am the omnipotent narrator of this mystery woman's journey. She'll find what she's looking for I think if she can just get over her fear.

LEON: As expected she hasn't contacted me for a while, I have written her a few letters but nothing important. What is for the best now if that she doesn't feel I'm pushing her. She needs her own space at the beginning, needs to feel like she's taking her time to explore her feelings; figure out what she really wants. Though I think she already knows. She's like me; she knows her mind and is always working towards decisions before she even knows she's made them. That's why she sent me letters; why she came to see me at all. She knew what she wanted before she even stepped foot in these walls. No, I'm not saying she's a murder groupie but she was looking for something and it didn't have anything to do with that painting. I'm just lucky I could guide her towards it.

LEON: Things are beginning to change here. Everyone is acting suspicious, even more so than normal. They know. They all know about her and they are, I don't know, jealous I guess, but they are avoiding me. One of them is going to do something to me or... Or her? Could they get to her somehow? I know a lot of them have contacts doing their scumbag work for them. They could get to her and I just can't protect her. What can I do? I'm stuck and there is no one looking out for me out there everyone they all turned on me because it was easier than accepting that horrible things just happen for no reason and sometimes there is no one to blame. In here they hate me for the exact opposite. They know I'm not like them; that I don't belong and they hate me for it. They have all shunned me and by extension doomed Jennifer. How did they find out? It must have been him. The arsehole I'm locked in with every night. He told them. He's killed her.

LEON: There was a riot the other night. It was baffling if the people in here had an ounce of intelligence they would realize they are working into their captors hands. We make the prison experience the horror that it is and those who hold us; deserving or not need do nothing. We could make it so that this experience actually helps those of us trapped better ourselves. We could communicate with each other and learn from the experiences of others. But instead we are attacked until we are forced to become like our attackers. If we refused to be violent, cruel and just generally terrible people then 'the stay' would be bearable. But most in here are here because they can't grasp such simple concepts. Concepts like if you don't want to spend your life in prison don't act like that's the only place you'll ever belong. It seems this was a poorly constructed plan to escape; distract the guards then... I don't know I'm not in on such moronic plans If I were they would be vastly more successful. But I need to stay don't I? If I run then no one will ever believe my innocence.

LEON: She has asked me why I'm in here. How did she not already know. Did she do no research before meeting me? Does she so trust that she had no curiosity about me? I had assumed she would eventually ask me about it but just for my version not for the actual story. I thought she was smarter than that. If she is the type who believes blindly in the goodness inside everyone then she is in for a rude awakening. I can't go through that again. I believed truly that she was like me; aware of the terrible world but not willing to let it stop her living. But if she is deluded then we need to stop meeting she cannot handle me if she can't face the world? How will she possibly cope if I can never get out of here never prove my innocence? I need to think about this. There is no way she'll be able to handle the judgment from the world if she has blinded herself to its darkness. I'll need to consider letting her go I can't go through that again. How can she not know?

LEON: She knew. It was interesting to see her pretend to learn the information for the first time but I could see the look of 'much as I expected' every time I told her my version of events. It's sweet really that she felt the need to protect me from her research, maybe she was allowing me to be the man and explain, though I assure you that's not how I think and it's certainly not how she does. She needs to know that there is no need to be so careful around me. I'm not easily offended and I think I could handle it even if she just came out and said she thought I'd done it. Maybe that is what she thinks. Does it matter? If it doesn't to her maybe it shouldn't to me. Maybe she just believes that people make mistakes and even if they are horrible and life destroying they don't necessary mean anything particular about the person who committed them. One thing for sure though; I am certain she is interested now. It's just a case of making it work.

LEON: I almost got a glimpse of the thing chasing my forest maiden last night. Her fear was palpable. I could almost taste it; sweet and salty. Still she kept on as normal. If it wasn't for my connection with her emotion I wouldn't know that anything was wrong. But I could hear the footsteps following her; feel the breath of her predator. I could almost feel its excitement as it got nearer. My own heart was bounding with its and hers. The most I have ever connected with a dream I think. I watched her as it did following along her path. I wonder if it's the beast she fears or perhaps me?

LEON: Jennifer has this idea that she can somehow get me out. She wants to prove that I didn't kill her and get me freed. I think she believes I have given up; that I'm not trying to do that myself. She thinks there is something that will magically make everything alright. Her optimism is sickly sweet. There is nothing she can do, of this I am sure. What she needs to realise is it doesn't matter to you, you who decide these things whether or not I am innocent does it? What matters is that you look good, look like you're doing the right thing. I'm not blaming you I'm blaming the world, what's true isn't important only what looks good. If she could find the real killer then that would look good, but her death was accidental so there is no one to blame. There is no way for you to look good in this is there? Releasing me without someone else to blame is not going to make you look good; only highlight your mistake. So, my only hope is to show I have repented thoroughly. Repented for something I would never have dreamed of doing. You can say that I have can't you? Convince whoever needs to be convinced that the system has worked and I am well again? How good will that make you look? Imagine it.

LEON: Jennifer's friend came to see me today, though she acted as though she was her lawyer. She came to tell me that I need to leave her alone. I don't know how good a lawyer she can be if she can't understand the basics of the prison system. How can I leave Jennifer alone? Does she think I'm approaching her on the streets? Cornering her in a bar? Jennifer has complete control of this situation. Absolutely nothing that she doesn't initiate can happen. The stupid woman couldn't believe that her precious little Jenny would associate with such an uncouth character. She thinks I'm leading her on somehow. What does she expect me to do, refuse to see her when she comes to visit? Tell her I've moved on? She wouldn't believe me she's not stupid. Tell her it's for her own good if she just never sees me again? She'd never accept that, she can handle the difficulty. Jennifer does not need this pathetic woman protecting her, she is far stronger than that woman will ever be. If I am the monster she believes what good would coming down to talk to me do anyway? Idiot.

LEON: She won't listen to me, she is convinced she can somehow prove my innocence is she just gets a look at the evidence. I keep telling her there is no point, they will never let her see it. Who is she? Just some librarian how will she ever get authorisation. Even if she could there is no evidence to find, it's just not there. There is no one she can blame. But she won't stop. How can I look after her if she won't listen to me. I have no power over her from here all I can do is try and talk sense into her. But how. She's begun telling everyone it seems. Her sister has asked to see me. I thought she wanted to be with me because she was sick of everyone with their false perception of the world and thought that I was real, but maybe she's just doing it to be different after all. I can't believe she would play me like that.

LEON: There is nothing I can do for her from in here. If we could just get away, she and I, we could escape these cretins she wouldn't feel so attached to their weakness. She needs me far more than I thought, I know I get angry at her but I would give anything to be with her right now. I know that's what she wants too but she is going about it so wrong. She needs to stop trying to prove my innocence and instead prove that I have repented. That's what she can do for me, what I need her to do for me right. She's strong there is no way I could use her as I... as they are saying I did with *her* but I want to be with her and maybe that will be enough to show that I am not who I was? She needs to change tactic, but she would never exploit or relationship by going to the press or anything like that. She would never say she thought I'd done it. How can I us... get her to show the world who I really am? If the press were on our side then allowing me my freedom would make you look good right? Denying it to me, how would that look?

LEON: This whole thing is futile isn't it? I knew it from the beginning. Jennifer is out there killing herself trying to prove my innocence to someone. No one will listen to her. She's just a murder groupie now. Anyone who has even bothered to listen to her story has labelled her instantly as crazy and are therefore justified in ignoring everything she has to say. Just like with me. We are getting more and more alike but it's not the good thing I thought it would be. She might be starting to snap, the pressure could be getting to her. She needs me now more than ever but the judgement she is getting is making that harder and harder. We an never really be together can we? I was deluding myself like so many others do all the time. She's stretching herself too thin working for an unattainable goal. How can I prepare her for its inevitable conclusion. She's going to end up hurting herself if I don't stop her. I need to protect her, I don't normally believe in this kind of thing but maybe she is the woman from my dream?

LOEN: I think it's best for me to just admit that this is my life now. I'm here until I'm done I've been spending a lot of time thinking about her... Maria. I've been stuck here with nothing of my memories and none of my accusers can know what it's like to have nothing to do but think about her absence. Whatever they think about what I did. . . Or didn't do they have to realise what it's like to be stuck with her in my head all the time. If I could I would do anything to take it back the bring her back. As she fell, she fell, yes I took her, yes I tried to hide her but I didn't kill her. She fell. There is nothing I can do to take that back. We fought but so does every couple. She was far too sweet, too innocent, how could she possibly handle it. I wonder if Jennifer is stuck thinking of my like this? Thinking about the absence. I can't stand her seeing me how I saw Maria, incapable of coping needing to be looked after. I know she means well, but if I can't get myself our of here then there is no way she will.

LEON: The beast is going to get her now, any minute I can see it. It'll tear into her in seconds I can see her blood mixing with the mud in some grotesque mixture. She knows I can see her pulling her coat closer around her as though it can protect her from it. Like it's some sort of armour. The tears are finally falling as we, she and I, hear the bracken snap under its destructive feet. I'm close to her now I can get to her. I can do it, I can get her away. I can sense the beast tensing to jump I can feel my heart running, does it actually? When you dream does your heart race like that? Or is it just part of the dream? Anyway I could feel it and I jump just as it does I push her to the floor. I can feel her shake, silently sobbing. I stay there for a while I can feel the beast behind me she has stopped crying. I get up and the beast is gone there is nothing there. I did it, I thought the dream would stop me but I protected her, she's safe now and I feel it will last. She lies there for a bit I can feel the weight lifting she's going to be okay.

LEON: If I could get out of here, get away from this sickening hole, I would meet Jennifer somewhere nice. I've always liked to go and hide in the woods. It makes me feel more real, nothing there is fake or man made. It would be the perfect place for us to just be us. We could be alone at last. Then I could show her who I really am at last without the horrible eyes of these beasts on us. Just us, pure honest us. Would she accept me for real? I think so, she was ready to accept me from the get go, she won't change that she'll. . . She would be there for me. Finally I'll be able to protect her. Nothing will get her when I'm there. This worlds will not destroy her. Like Maria. She needs to stay exactly as she is now; as I know her. If I got out I would send her a message to meet me in the wood and we could stay as we are. There's going to be another riot soon I heard others talking. If I could get to the forest with her we could avoid all that. I think the plan is better this time.

Appendix 3

Leon: Memory Scenes

JENNIFER: You're nothing like I pictured.

LEON: I'm sorry, I never like to disappoint a lady.

JENNIFER: No! You haven't. I didn't mean it like that, it's just well, you can't imagine what was going through my head and well, then I saw you and well. . . You know.

LEON pushes slightly closer to JENNIFER she seems startled but decides not to move away.

LEON: I assure you I don't, what could you mean by that.

JENNIFER: Oh, come on you know. They have mirrors in this place don't they? Wait, do they?

LEON smiles brightly he seems to be taking great pleasure from JENNIFERS company or perhaps her discomfort.

LEON: They do, yes, but I have a feeling hearing you explain will be more enjoyable.

JENNIFER: You're very... Handsome.

LEON: That is exactly what I'd hoped you'd say.

JENNIFER giggles in an uncharacteristically childish way, then realising what she is doing quickly sits more upright and properly LEON smiles at this.

JENNIFER: Clearly, you wouldn't have been pushing me to say it if you believed I thought you unappealing.

LEON copies JENNIFERS stance and sits more upright and properly himself.

LEON: What I mean to say is I had worried, only for a second that you might use a word like, 'Hot'.

JENNIFER: That's not really me.

LEON: As I'd hoped, you're above that sort of vernacular.

JENNIFER becomes slightly awkward but still strives to maintain her tone.

JENNIFER: What I find interesting; when I saw your painting I imagined you wouldn't be what I would imagine of a normal convict. If there is such a thing. I don't make a habit of ... this

LEON: This? Is it so shameful visiting me?

JENNIFER: No, not at all. But it's not something I would be likely to do without good reason. I mean...

JENNIFER panics realising how close she had come to mentioning LEON'S crimes she becomes flustered and cannot speak.

LEON: Well, I'm glad to be your reason.

JENNIFER: I'm sure you don't belong with these... 'People'.

LEON: Thank you. I appreciate your trust.

A voice calls indicating that visiting time is over. JENNIFER looks mournfully at LEON and then quickly stand and hands him a slip of paper with her address written on it.

JENNIFER: Well, I am yet to have a reason not to trust you.

She gets up and walks to the front of the stage, LEON rises and stares towards her for a while, she doesn't look back.

JENNIFER: I gave him my address and that was supposed to be that. I was going to have a prison pen-pal and it would be a nice thing to do for someone so obviously suffering.

JENNIFER clutches the letter in her pocket and walks off stage.

JENNIFER: Everyone else they all found. . . Ways they were touching each other, I swear some of them were even. . . They all found ways. The heat was unbelievable in there. But because of that Leon and I kept our eyes fixed on each other. It was like a perfect first date.

LEON is sitting at a table at the centre of the stage he seems annoyed and agitated JENNIFER enters and he forces himself to relax and smile. JENNIFER walks straight to the table deliberately looking directly at him and nowhere else. She sits and folds her hands neatly in her lap.

LEON: Thank you for coming to see me again. I really didn't think you would.

JENNIFER smiles nervously, she slightly turns her head then snaps it back to look straight at LEON.

JENNIFER: I've enjoyed our letters, I thought it would be nice to spend some time together. It seems that... I feel it is unfair for you... for everyone in here to be isolated like this. I know that's the point but. . .

LEON: I appreciate it. There aren't many people who would be willing to come to a place like this. It –

JENNIFER blurts abruptly

JENNIFER: No, I can see why. It is really awful. Sorry I didn't mean to-

LEON smiles slightly and looks around himself purposefully JENNIFER is about to follow his gaze but remembering where she is her eyes snap back to LEON.

LEON: Don't be, you're right it is really the worst place imaginable. But really I don't want to talk about it; I have to live it everyday can we not talk about something else, then maybe I can forget I'm here.

JENNIFER: Yes, yes of course, I'm sorry, of course that's why I'm here. I want you to feel comfortable to talk to me about anything you want. I mean... yes anything you want.

JENNIFER put her hands to her face as though covering up a smell and takes a quick look around to identify the source before quickly returning her gaze to LEON who looks down and away from her.

LEON: You get used to it.

JENNIFER looks ashamed of herself for once again reminding him of his situation, he goes to reach for her hand but then looks up as though to a guard and returns his hands to his sides.

LEON: I'd like to know more about you, It would be nice to have something to think about when I'm alone, which really is all the time here.

JENNIFER blushes and looks down at the implication but she becomes bolder and looks directly at him.

JENNIFER: What is it you'd like to know?

LEON: About your family, your job your friends your life as a free person. Anything to allow me to see the outside world.

JENNIFER seems disappointed but carries on regardless.

JENNIFER: Oh, right, well I work in a library, I think I told you that last time? It's nice but what I really want to do is go back to school to further my degree, I did psychology and I really loved it, I think a careers in that would be great.

LEON looks thoughtful for a while, then returns his gaze to JENNIFER.

LEON: Further education, huh? *[He remains silent for a while as though considering then dismissing the idea]* But you know what, librarian seems like the perfect job for you.

JENNIFER: Oh, really?

LEON: Yes, really, I can't imagine anything more perfect than being in charge of all that knowledge, taking care of the books helping people to learn, seems perfect to me. I know I haven't known you for long but I can really picture you up there with a big pile of books. Perfect.

JENNIFER smiles broadly

JENNIFER: I've never thought of it like that, it is brilliant, I love the peace and quiet. Watching people come in just to learn. Yes, it's a good job.

LEON seems please with himself and sits back in his chair more relaxed but is careful not to seem overly causal.

LEON: What about your family?

JENNIFER: Oh well, I've got my sister and my mum they are both great if not a little under motivated, my sister doesn't take life very seriously at all. She's very care free, and my mum has God so she's content where she is.

LEON: *[Laughing]* You don't fit into that picture very well at all do you?

JENNIFER: No, I suppose not. I've always felt like I'm left out of the in jokes with those two, but that's okay I still love them.

LEON: What about your father?

JENNIFER looks down, as though upset but then makes a conscious decision to be strong in front of LEON and once again stares straight at him.

JENNIFER: He died when I was twelve. He was the only one who was like me really. We used to be inseparable. It's because of him that I am who I am.

LEON looks thoughtful then smiles.

LEON: Well, in that case I'm thankful for him too. I know how hard it is to lose someone who means so much to you. I know all too well how much that can change who you are. I'm glad you haven't let it.

JENNIFER smiles but then gives her surroundings an appraising look as she considers how little he fits in with her surroundings. LEON gets up and leaves when she turns back he is gone. She sits thoughtfully for a second before getting up and purposefully running off stage.

LEON and JENNIFER are sitting at the table in the middle of the stage at the table. They are both more relaxed and seem more natural.

JENNIFER: I was wondering, do other people visit you often?

LEON seems confused and noticeably tenses.

LEON: I... Sometimes, I still have a few friends who don't. . . Who believe in me. It gets it gets harder as time goes on, as is the way with these things as I'm sure you know. I'm sure you have plenty of friends who don't bother with you anymore. My situation means I'm long distance with even those living closest.

JENNIFER becomes upset and quite flustered.

JENNIFER: I didn't mean it like that, I just meant I've been doing this nice thing coming to visit you and I thought, what if I'm not what if you have tons of people seeing you everyday... or everyday you get to at least and I'm being silly.

LEON: If I'm just a charity case for you then I don't want you here at all.

JENNIFER: I didn't mean that at all.

LEON: So, you think I'm somehow seeing other women is that it? You think I have some prison groupies, I mean besides you that is.

JENNIFER stands abruptly, angry but also upset.

JENNIFER: You presume way too much. I will not be spoken to like that.

JENNIFER turns her back to leave as she does LEON smiles and relaxes again.

LEON: Please don't go.

JENNIFER stops before turning back around she subtly wipes her eyes and straightens her clothes. As she turns she assumes an angry stance again but returns to her seat all the time.

JENNIFER: I won't if you apologise for what you have said to me.

LEON becomes tense again but only for a second.

LEON: I *am* sorry I really am. It's just it's hard living as I do. In a part you reminded me how little my friends and family do visit. It also seemed a little like you were making sure you had back up if you decided not to visit anymore.

JENNIFER: I wouldn't do that. I don't want to stop visiting, I just wanted to ask about your family but it's hard. What if they don't talk to you anymore.

LEON: I'm sorry, let's just move past it. I have family and they do visit, though not often. It's hard for them and honestly it's easier for me if they just don't all those questions I can't take it.

JENNIFER: I don't understand. What do you mean by that?

LEON: Just don't worry about it, you'll just worry yourself.

JENNIFER looks confused but agrees to drop the subject to two remain seated as the lights fall around them.

LEON is once again sitting at the table when JENNIFER enters she is clutching herself and generally seems nervous. LEON is sitting with his arms crossed and seems angry, though when JENNIFER approaches he relaxes a bit.

JENNIFER: I'm sorry for not asking sooner, or perhaps for asking at all but I need to know you know it's important.

LEON: I'm not so sure it is. You know that I didn't do it, yes?

JENNIFER sits awkwardly on the seat ready to get up at any second. LEON looks at her silently for a second before himself relaxing and uncrossing his arms.

JENNIFER: Yes, of that much I'm sure but I want to help you.

LEON: Interesting; you don't know what I am supposed to have done but you know I didn't do it?

JENNIFER: No, okay fine I don't *know* you didn't do it but I do believe you are a good person and I don't think you would lie to me, at least not if you want our relationship to progress.

LEON seems pleased with her response and uncrosses his arms and leans closer. JENNIFER also relaxes and sits completely in her chair.

LEON: I'm sorry, I'm honestly just not used to people believing in me it is a strange feeling. I have to remind myself that you are not here to put me down like everyone else, you are here because you want to be.

JENNIFER: Exactly, if I didn't believe in you I could easily just not ever come again. So, will you tell me?

LEON tenses but only for a second and quickly looks up to check that JENNIFER didn't notice when he is satisfied he takes a deep breath before telling her the story.

LEON: I had this girlfriend, she was great and everyone loved her but under it all there was a side of her that she only ever let me see.

JENNIFER: Was she abusive or, cruel to you?

LEON laughs there is a slight hint of derision to the tone.

LEON: No, not like that, I don't think she could have managed... No. It was a fear; she was completely terrified of the world, she just couldn't handle it. But around everyone else she wore a mask with her makeup and the way she acted she seemed happy.

JENNIFER: But she wasn't happy around you?

LEON: It wasn't that she wasn't happy it was more that she put on less of a show for me. She still pretended she wasn't afraid but I think part of her knew that it was okay that I didn't want her to hide her fear.

JENNIFER: I think I understand. It's like you said in your letter: She was deluding herself into thinking she could handle the world but deep down she knew she couldn't.

LEON: Yes, precisely. Eventually all that faking and hiding it all caught up with her, she couldn't handle it anymore and she snapped.

JENNIFER shuddered she knew the story was reaching it's bad part and wasn't sure she was prepared for what was to come. She goes to stop LEON but then decides she needs to hear it and says nothing.

LEON: She was screaming at me, blaming me for all that was wrong with the world she was hitting me and screaming, saying that I had trapped her in this horrible world. I must admit I got really angry, I had done everything I could to make her happy but what can you do to someone whose base trait is fear?

JENNIFER just shrugs too nervous to answer.

LEON: I did the only thing I could think of doing I... I left her. I just ran out of the door, or at least that was the plan.

JENNIFER visibly relaxes.

JENNIFER: She wouldn't let you leave?

LEON: It wasn't what she wanted. She ran after me and she tripped on the stairs. Hit her head on the banister and tumbled all the way down. I knew she was dead without looking.

JENNIFER: So it was an accident, a fall that left her... It was just an unfortunate accident. That makes a lot of sense.

LEON: Of course it does, it's what happened after all. The problem was I panicked. I knew I would be blamed and there was no one to prove me innocence so I took her and I tried to bury her in the woods. I didn't do a very good job and I guess a few people saw me carrying her, it looked like I was hiding the evidence there was no way anyone would believe my story. So I condemned myself.

JENNIFER smiles and takes his hand only for a second before reluctantly pulling her hands back.

JENNIFER: I do. I will do everything in my power, which granted isn't a lot... yet... I will do what I can to get others to as well.

JENNIFER gets up to leave when her back is turned LEON shakes his head and then gets up almost annoyed.

CLAIRE is sitting at the table she has a folder with her and her hands help neatly in front of her. She has a generally business like demeanour. LEON enters and stops abruptly when he sees her he looks around for a second then back the way he came. With no indication that anything is wrong he continues into the room and sits opposite CLAIRE. He looks at her suspiciously and says nothing. CLAIRE reaches out to shake his hand but he remains still. She clears her throat and sits back as she was originally. She opens her file as she speaks.

CLAIRE: You must be Mr... um... Leon.

LEON states at her and does not reply.

CLAIRE: I'm a lawy. . . I work for a law firm and I've been asked to. . . I've looked into you case.

LEON: I already have a lawyer. As you may be able to tell he didn't do a very good job. So, why would I be in need of another one?

CLAIRE clears her throat and shifts awkwardly in her seat. She then takes a deep breath and lifts her head so she can look at him directly.

CLAIRE: Actually, sir, I'm not here for you I've come in the interest of my frie... Client. I'm here to ensure her safety. I honestly couldn't care less whether you lived or died, but she matter to me.

LEON leans back in his chair showing CLAIRE she can't intimidate him and also relishing how uncomfortable he is making her.

LEON: Very professional.

CLAIRE shrugs gaining confidence as the conversation goes on.

LEON: Might I ask to whom I am a threat? Perhaps some psychotic drugs dealers are scared of me? Or is it perhaps my human trafficker cell mate? Have I made him cry?

CLAIRE: Adorable. I can see why she like you. You know damn well that there are a lot of different types of harm you can do to a person without the need for physical violence.

LEON: Do I now? What makes you think that?

CLAIRE flicks through her file, she takes a purposefully long time doing it, glancing p at him every now and then to see if he is getting irritated. When it seems to take effect she looks up.

CLAIRE: I've been doing a little bit of research, just for funzies. There seems to be some interesting accusations of emotional abuse to our previous girl friend. Oh, I'm sorry I of course mean victim.

LEON shrugs though he is clearly getting less comfortable.

LEON: Slander made up in order to make me look guilty of killing her. I'm sure you know all about how that works, assuming of course that you actually do work

in a law firm.

CLAIRE does not rise to his bait as she can now see she is getting to him.

LEON: As you can see she never reported me, never complained. There was no reason anyone would suspect such a thing if it hadn't been needed in order to get my conviction. She never even said anything to her family abo-

CLAIRE: Interesting that. I mean she was always a family girl wasn't she and then she just stops talking to them. It's almost as if she'd been cut off from them. Almost as if she might have been afraid of what might happen if someone; a boyfriend perhaps? Found out she'd been talking shit about him.

LEON: Yes, exactly so easy to make up impossible to disprove when the person we're talking about is dead. I hate to rush you when you seem to be having so much fun but do you perhaps have a point?

CLAIRE smiles and relaxes, sure that her interrogation has so far been successful she puts her file in her bag and returns her gaze to LEON.

CLAIRE: You're quite a smart person aren't you, Leon? Can I call you Leon? I'm going to anyway. You are good at reading people; not me apparently, or in fact the jury at your trial, but a lot of people. You manage to use that to, shall we call it bending them to your will.

LEON moves to object but realises it is pointless and remains silent.

CLAIRE: No denial? Good, good. I know you have recently played your tricks on a friend of mine and I need you to stop.

LEON: If you've come here to try and get me to stop seeing Jennifer you are wasting your bloody time. It's up to her, she sees me when she wants not the other way. Or perhaps have you failed to notice I'm in prison?

CLAIRE: Yeah, that is what you've managed to get her to think isn't it? How about you just tell her what you did, see if she still wants to be with you then? That's what normal couples do right; confess their sins and love each other regardless. I mean that's what you told her you want right?

LEON begins to get angry and struggles to control himself, knowing if he snaps he won't be able to see JENNIFER.

LEON: I'm not going to admit to something I haven't done.

CLAIRE lets out a bit of a laugh

CLAIRE: You really are amazing. You and I both know you did it so I don't know why you're bothering with all that. But okay you won't tell her, I don't know why I'm surprised you don't consider anyone else to be worthy of the truth. Is that it? Or is it just women who are beneath you? No, it's everyone you look at everyone here all your jail buddies your guards everyone with the same

amount of scorn. How can I possibly expect you to respect poor little Jenny, so gullible and weak as she is.

LEON stands abruptly pushing his chair back but quickly looks around him and sits back down.

LEON: If you believe that about her you don't know her at all.

CLAIRE: Oh, so you do care about her then? Is she perhaps a member of your master race? Then what trouble will you have in telling her, surely she will agree that your previous conquest deserved her fate?

LEON: Because I didn't do it.

CLAIRE shrugs, gathers her bags and gets up to leave.

CLAIRE: Well, I'll just have to convince her of the facts myself won't I. It's a shame it would sound so much better coming from you.

LEON: She won't believe you over me.

CLAIRE shrugs and continues to walk off stage.

CLAIRE: I suppose we'll find that out soon enough.

CLAIRE exits Leon is left sitting with his fists balled trying to contain his anger as the lights go down around him.

LEON and JENNIFER are sitting at their table in the centre of the stage they seem to already be deep in conversation JENNIFER seems excited but LEON seems more concerned.

LEON: It's not a normal relationship why would you want others to know about us- about what they blamed me for. I don't like the idea-

JENNIFER: If I'm going to help you I'm going to need help myself.

LEON: Jennifer, I really appreciate your enthusiasm; it's great to know how much you care but you aren't going to be able to help me.

JENNIFER sits back away from him and crosses her arms, she is uncomfortable with the direction this conversation is taking and wants to re-gain control of the situation.

JENNIFER: No, really it will be fine. Claire is a lawyer, or she will be soon enough. She'll be able to get what I haven't. Whatever it is we need to find proof, files or evidence or the like.

LEON: I'm not saying *you* can't do it; I'm saying it can't be done.

JENNIFER waves her hand at him dismissively, so sure of her ability that she is convinced he is simply trying not to get his hopes up. LEON gets angry he tenses but then takes a deep breath trying to control his anger.

JENNIFER: I just don't think anyone tried hard enough.

LEON is unable to hide the anger from his voice now though it seems he is still making an attempt at it.

LEON: Of course people have tried. Do you think I just lay down and accepted my wrongful conviction? Do you think my family just rolled over and agreed that I could kill someone?

JENNIFER just shrugs once again dismissing his feelings.

JENNIFER: I just think tensions were very hot back then. I think they were desperate to have the case wrapped up that they just wouldn't –

LEON: Look, I know you are trying to help and I know you love to be in charge of this but it isn't going to help. As unbelievable as you seem to find it there are other people who care about me, other people who love me and they have already tried to fight my case and failed. They had a lot more information than you as well. Just trust me you aren't going to help. My only hope is to convince the powers that be that I am of sound mind and that it won't happen again. Okay?

JENNIFER shakes her head unwilling to be told there is no hope.

JENNIFER: No, my friend is a lawyer she'll be able to help you if I can just get her to agree she was dismissive of it before but it won't be long before she agrees; she needs the excitement in her life.

LEON: Your friend the lawyer? Sounds to me like she is just trying to get money out of you. She knows there is nothing she can do.

JENNIFER shakes her head vigorously becoming quite defensive.

JENNIFER: No, it's not that because she hasn't agreed to help me, yet. She almost laughed off our relationship like it was a joke. It's okay though she's just angry because of how dull her life has become. Once she sees she can be part of this she'll change her tune I'm sure.

LEON reaches out and takes JENNIFER'S hand for a second before quickly pulling them back.

LEON: This woman is not good for you Jennifer, don't ask me how I know, I just do. She's trying to use you somehow. I don't want a woman like that to be part of this all I want is for you to be with me, as little as we can pull that off. Trust me you don't need her in your life.

JENNIFER: She's my best friend. She wouldn't use me. If you care about me you'll let me do this for you.

JENNIFER gets up and leaves without looking at LEON for a second. He sits a while shaking his head before getting up and leaving himself.

HEATHER enters she seems excited she sits at the table and looks around curiously. LEON enters and seems angry when he sees HEATHER but after reading her expression he relaxes a bit and seems more curious. He sits opposite her and folds his arms on the table leaning in towards her.

LEON: Heather is it?

HEATHER: How did you... Oh I suppose they have to tell you whose visiting. I just thought I should check you out.

LEON laughs a bit and sits back in his chair more relaxed.

LEON: Check me out, ey? So you're here to protect your big sister that's nice of you.

HEATHER: Seriously? Big sister, is that the best you can do?

LEON tenses a little bit.

LEON: Oh, sorry I thought... I didn't mean it to be like that. You genuinely seem younger than her. Sorry, God that must have sounded tacky.

HEATHER: No, that's okay it makes sense she's very. Old in her...ways. No offense.

LEON: None taken?

HEATHER sits forward not bothering to hide her interest.

HEATHER: I must admit I was fascinated. I mean that girl was born with a bun, I just had to meet the man who got her from that to dating... Well, I suppose you can't 'Date' as such, can you? To whatever you call what you're doing with a murderer.

LEON sits even further forward and smirks a bit, a look that makes HEATHER grin.

LEON: Well, I hope I don't disappoint. But just FYI I'm not actually a murderer and your sister knows that.

HEATHER: Sure you aren't.

HEATHER leans back in her chair a bit a looks around herself.

HEATHER: It's funny, you know. Imagining her in this place, she must look so awkward. I'm surprised she's willing to touch anything here.

LEON: You don't like your sister much do you? I can't help but feel this visit is less about protection and more about morbid curiosity.

HEATHER: Now whatever gave you that impression? Of course I like my sister, I have to. What I want to know is why you like her.

LEON sits back in his chair and crosses his arms, though he doesn't seem offended more that he wants her to think he is.

LEON: Why, am I not pert and proper enough for young Jennifer.

HEATHER: You do realise you're in prison right?

LEON looks about himself and feigns shock HEATHER over dramatically rolls her eyes at him.

LEON: Exactly I'm in prison, so I don't exactly have women throwing themselves at me.

HEATHER: Bullshit. You're a hot convicted murderer I would be surprised if that wasn't exactly what they were doing. Literally.

LEON: Yes, though it would be difficult considering all these walls. But they aren't really an option, Jennifer is very different than them.

HEATHER: Well, I would bloody well hope so. But what is it about her that interests you? I mean at least those women would be interesting.

LEON: I've never found damaged people to be that interesting and crazy gets very irritating very fast. I see enough of that sort of thing from my lovely companions in here. Jennifer is unique without being disturbing.

HEATHER: Yeah, I don't believe you. She's very dull but she's smart, or is it a money thing? Just tell me what it is you get out of it.

LEON is taken aback by HEATHER'S accusation and sits bolt upright staring at her.

LEON: I don't know what exactly you are trying to imply but the only thing I get out of it is companionship from a woman I like a lot. I don't know exactly how I can prove it to you but I assure you there is nothing, and I really do mean nothing that she can do to get me out of here. The world has been ignoring my innocence for a long time she can't change that.

HEATHER: So, you genuinely like her? It's not your thing is it; killing things you love?

LEON: No, that not my thing as I've said I don't have a thing. Even if I did I am locked away, always under a close watch. I can't hurt her.

HEATHER leans back in her chair and considers this.

HEATHER: So, you're both just lonely people who feel trapped, you in your actual prison her just in her strange mind. Okay I think I understand.

LEON: I'm glad someone can accept I'm not a threat. Though you're wrong, she doesn't have a strange mind.

HEATHER: Really? The girl who's falling in love with a convicted murderer doesn't have a strange mind. You know it's possible you two may actually be made for each other.

Before LEON can respond HEATHER gets up and heads off stage, leaving him alone and confused but more or less satisfied that HEATHER is comfortable with the relationship.

LEON is sitting at the table fidgeting with his hands and his seat he is nervous and desperate to get what he has to say over with. JENNIFER enters and he jumps up and beckons to her excitedly, but then quickly sits again. She rushes over and sits quickly her own excitement building.

JENNIFER: What was so important this time.

LEON: There is so much I need to tell you right now, I don't know where to start. Just let me say I think things are about to get a lot better for us.

JENNIFER: Are things not good already? I thought everything was going-

LEON: Things are only good because of how much you have lowered your standards to allow for this thing to work it's not fair for you to have to do that.

JENNIFER reaches out for LEON'S hand.

JENNIFER: I haven't lowered anything you are-

LEON moves out of her reach.

LEON: You have there is no point denying it. You can't want a partner you can never be close to, one you have to go through the authorities just to see.

JENNIFER: It's -

LEON: Worth it I know, but we shouldn't have to do this. I don't think we will have to for much longer.

JENNIFER: I thought you said you would never be considered... Has someone been willing to re-look at you're case?

LEON: No, it's nothing like that. Look, please just trust me. Remember I told you about that woods I keep dreaming about?

JENNIFER: Yes, I think so.

LEON: It's a real place and I just keep picturing the two of us there. Wouldn't that be just great. I think it's safe to tell you now, Jennifer, I'm pretty sure that I love you. It was hard to pinpoint but I think... Know that is what I feel. Do you feel the same.

JENNIFER: I don't kn-

LEON stares at her hopefully his excitement is clear and as JENNIFER stares at him she considers her own options and smiles.

JENNIFER: Yes, yes I think I do.

LEON: Good, then you trust me.

JENNIFER: Of course.

LEON: Great. It's going to be good. You're going to go there to the forest in two or three weeks. I'll send a letter soon. You'll see it will be good.

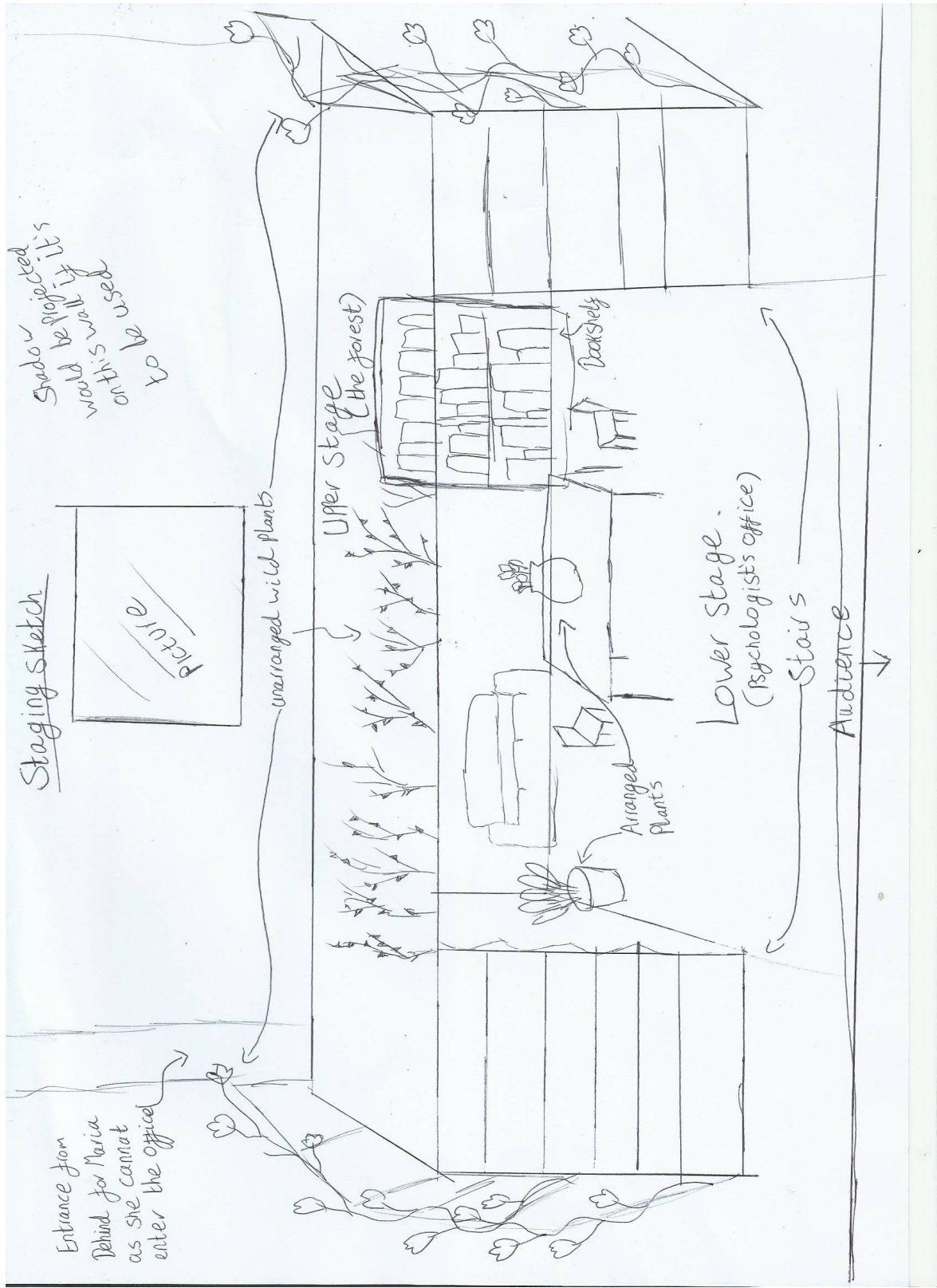
JENNIFER: But why would I-

LEON: Just trust me okay.

LEON gets up and leaves before he gets caught giving away too much. JENNIFER sits for a while looking after him before shrugging getting up and leaving.

Appendix 4

Staging sketch



Appendix 5

Location Photographs

Swansea Prison



Cork County Gaol

Entrance





Stairs and prison levels



Drum chamber



Cells



Appendix 6

The painting

