

Ensemble

- William** Male. Late Fifties. Architect from the other side of the world.
- Annie** Female. Early Fifties. Doctor in Emergency.
- David** Male. Forties. Black eye and Bells Palsy. Detective in the city.
- Chairman** Male. Late fifties. The heart and soul of the Barton Trust.
- Peter** Male. Thirties. Senior Advisor at the Barton Trust.
- Jude** Female. Thirties. Risk Assessor.
- Boy** (Danny) A boy of fourteen. But to played by an actor who is at least eighteen in real life. This is truly a boy in a mans body.

Design

The stage should look like a Jeffrey Smart painting of a stage. The elements should be functional. The wooden building blocks and the coffee machine, the metal drawers of a hospital room and several chairs to denote different locations. Open and practical and, ultimately, beautiful. The place transforms in character throughout the play, so we begin in darkness and by the end we are living on a surface of light.

Text

The slash / is the interruption point. It provides an overlapping effect.

Approach

There is one central playing space.

The Boy is the hub of this environment.

Dialogue scenes should be played around, across and through him.

Monologue must always be shared with another ensemble member, never as direct address.

One

Music in the darkness. Then...

The Ensemble appears. The Boy is centre with a box of wooden building blocks. He empties the box onto the floor. They gaze at the blocks. The ensemble filter into the space, the Boy remains central. Pause and then David and Annie begin the Hospital scene.

Annie yawns enormously – it goes on for some time.

David Sorry, am I boring you?

She waves “no” while the yawn continues. He watches her yawning.

He is somewhat amazed by the action – it comes to an end

Annie I’m sorry about that. Go on. What were you saying?

David When can I see him?

Annie When he wakes up.

David He’s still asleep?

Annie Now, that’s what I call, powers of deduction.

Beat.

David You’re a bit of a joker are you?

Annie Okay, why not?

David *(Beat.)* No name?

Annie Not yet.

David Nothing on him? Drivers Licence?

Annie He’s about fourteen years old.

David Okay.

Annie Maybe somebody at the supermarket knows him. Why don’t you try back / there?

David Okay and while I’m doing that, why don’t you try a rectal probing device to find your brain, what do you think?

Beat.

Annie Excuse me, what did you / say?

David I don't appreciate people like you telling me how to do my job.

Okay, for your information, I have been to the Pakistani supermarket.

I have interviewed the Muslim owner, the illegal workers and the apparently deaf, dumb and blind customers who were there.

Amazingly, none of them saw anything! And twice as many of them have never, ever seen this boy before. I know how to do my job!

There is a process and I am following the process.

Annie So, am I part of your process?

David Yes, you are! You are completely central to my inertia right now.

She yawns again.

David What is that all about?

Annie This yawning?

David Yeah, what does that mean?

Annie It means I'm tired.

David Okay.

He makes a note.

Annie And he makes a note of that.

David You being tired is a nice segue back to sleeping, which leads me logically towards the question again; when can I see him?

Annie I'll call you when he wakes up.

David When will that be?

Annie Why are you so fixated on this one boy?

David I don't think I'm "fixated" how long has been asleep?

Annie Elton John! You're divorced, I bet you're divorced.

David What did you just call me?

Annie I don't have a lot of time for people like you. /

David People like you, need people like me. /

Annie Oh no we don't! People like you think people like me need people like you, but we don't! We actually don't need any one, we're perfectly happy without you and we don't feel the urge to procreate with anything like you ever again! Anymore! In fact people like you are pretty much superfluous to people like me from now on!

David You'd all be dead if it wasn't for us!

Annie Oh for fuck sake, / you're so predictable it's pathetic!

I have never met a cop who doesn't think he's god!

"Wake up that coma patient! Get that guy out of his wheelchair! Take that woman off the morphine!" Some things cannot be controlled! You cannot arrest humanity!

David Just because you did seven years of med. school doesn't mean that I'm going to be intimidated by your intellect!

You don't scare me with your funny little stethoscope!

Call me when he wakes up!

Do you think you can manage that? Call me, okay? Just call me!

Annie What's wrong with your face? /

David There's nothing wrong with my / face.

Annie Is it supposed to look like it's melting?

David Oh. Right. That. Yes. That's the Palsy. The Bells Palsy.

Annie From stress.

David Yes, I know what it's from.

Annie Once you've got it, never leaves you.

David That's right. /

Annie It's a virus. /

David Correct. /

Annie It lives under your skin, like a sleeper cell, waiting for the signal to attack.

David Ten out of ten for bedside manner. /

Annie You look pretty shattered.

David No, no... Cops don't get shattered. We don't have time to get tired.
We get deployed and – contorted, but we don't sleep.
This face is my Curriculum Vitae. You know?
These formerly clearly defined cheeks bones are my old precinct.
A lot of people think I've been in a fight... You know?
Because the Palsy gives me this broken appearance.
It's plausible.
I *have* actually fought, I have been in a *fracas* or two in my time.
I can be brutal. But I am far from shattered.
I'm – ruggedly handsome.

Beat

Distinguishing marks?

Annie Absolutely.

David Can you detail them?

Jude Black eye.

Annie Right side.

Jude Partial paralysis of the / face.

David That's from the assault? /

Annie How'd you guess? /

David Anything else?

Annie Tattoos.

David Already?

Annie / Yes.

David Jesus. How many?

Jude Fourteen.

David But who's counting?

Annie Well, I am obviously.

Jude He's got fourteen tattoos. /

Annie Home-made jobs. /

David You're kidding. /

Jude Wish I was. /

Annie Looks like he's been raised by wolves. /

David You got a problem with that?

Annie Listen, why don't you go home and get some "shut eye" Detective?

David You want me to go where, and do what?

Annie You look exhausted.

David According to my notes, we've already established that I am actually ruggedly handsome. I've got the "lived in" thing going on and you... You've been working three days straight, but you still look pretty presentable, to this Olde Officer. I like your ... hair.

Annie My hair?

David Yeah. It's a nice... feature.

Annie Ike and Tina Turner.

David Okay. You're right. I am divorced. /

Annie I never would have guessed. /

David But you did. /

Annie Now, that's what I call, powers of deduction. /

David And what about you? /

Annie What about me? /

David Are you?... /

Annie Am I what?

David ... available?

Beat.

William Now, this is where it gets interesting.

Annie You wanna cup of coffee? /

David Caffeine is my middle name. /

Annie What cruel and unusual parents you had. /

David I didn't have any parents. I'm just saying / you know? It was a joke.

Annie Oh... Okay. Yes. Ha!

She yawns enormously again

David Quick, let's go.

Annie He says –

David Before the kid wakes up.

Annie And we leave the scene together.

William is already striding victoriously into the space.

The Boy remains and accompanies him throughout.

William This empty building is now the Temporary Foyer of the world famous Barton Trust, and yes! I have arrived! /

Two

- Jude** Excuse me sir!
- William** Who do I see about who to see? /
- Jude** Do you have an appointment? /
- William** No! I am William White and I have come to see your Chairman! /
- Jude** We have a very full schedule Mr White and I'm sorry but you won't get in without an appointment. /
- William** Can I make an appointment, please? /
- Jude** No. /
- William** What? /
- Jude** I think you have to be invited to get an appointment. /
- William** I'll wait. /
- Jude** Nothing is going to happen! / We're still working this bit out.
- William** That's fine, that's fine! I'll wait. /
- Jude** You're going to wait for nothing to happen?
- William** I can assure you young lady, I have waited much longer, for less.
- Jude** When Security arrives you will be thrown out.
- William** You're going to have me arrested for waiting in a foyer?!
- Jude** Yes.
- William** What is wrong with this country?!
- Jude** What is wrong with you?! / Are you a little bit mad or something?
- William** There is nothing wrong with me! I am at the peak of my powers. /
- Jude** The peak of your powers of what exactly?
- William** Architecture.
- Jude** Architecture isn't a power is it?
- William** What?
- Jude** I would have said it was more like a hobby isn't it?
- William** How dare you. /