

MEMENTO MORI

written by

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## ACT I

### PROLOGUE

There are five people at the site of the grave. The Boss, The Landlord, Alastair, Isaac and Isabelle. Eva is at the front.

BOSS:

Tell me, Eva-

ISABELLE:

-have you considered this small dust-

ISAAC:

-here running in the hourglass?-

LANDLORD:

-Could you believe that this body-

ALASTAIR:

-was of one who loved?-

ISABELLE:

-And in his mistress' flame-

BOSS:

-played like a fly-

LANDLORD:

-turned to cinders by her eye-

ALASTAIR:

-And in death-

ISAAC:

-as life, unblessed-

ISABELLE:

-to have expressed-

BOSS:

-Even ashes shall find no rest.

BLACK OUT.

### SCENE 1

Alarm beeping sound. Dim lights on. Eva gets up and turns off the alarm. She begins to get dressed and rubs the sleep out of her eyes. There is a loud knocking at the door.

EVA:  
(Shouting)  
Yes? Who is it?

LANDLORD:  
It's me.

EVA:  
Who?

LANDLORD:  
Don't play games miss. I'm not a patient man. Open the door  
or I'll have no choice but to get the master key.

Startled, Eva rushes over to the door.

EVA:  
I can promise you, I wasn't playing games, sir. I didn't  
realise it was you.

LANDLORD:  
(Doubtfully)  
I'm sure...

Landlord walks through the room.

EVA:  
Is there something the matter?

LANDLORD:  
The matter?

(pause)  
The rent.

EVA:  
But, the rent's not due until Tuesday.

LANDLORD:  
New management. Rent gets paid early now.

EVA:  
(putting on a jumper)  
Well, no one told me.

LANDLORD:  
A notice was put up.

EVA:  
Well, I didn't see it.

LANDLORD:

Just because you didn't see it, doesn't mean it wasn't there. It was quite clearly on display in the east wing of the basement.

EVA:

I didn't know we had a basement.

LANDLORD:

That's not my fault.

EVA:

How was I meant to know if I didn't see it? That's ridiculous.

LANDLORD:

Sorry love, councils orders.

EVA:

Council? What council?

LANDLORD:

Shall I assume you're not going to pay the rent then?

EVA:

What do you mean?

LANDLORD:

Well, assuming from your abrasive language, I'd say you sound more than a little defiant. Would I be right in thinking so?

EVA:

Abrasive? And who are you to walk into here at (checks clock) six o'clock in the morning and pester me for rent that should be paid on Tuesday! I have rights, sir!

LANDLORD:

(Ignoring her statement)

Let's see your papers.

EVA:

What?

LANDLORD:

Come on. Papers. Now.

EVA:

This is ridiculous. I've been living in this flat for five years. You've seen my papers a million times before.

LANDLORD:

Should I take this as an act of defiance? If so, by article twelve of the landlords' handbook, if a tenant refuses to provide legal papers when requested the proprietor of the establishment has all rights to evict the tenant.

EVA:

Fine! Fine, I'll show you my papers! They're right here. Just give me a moment.

(Rummages through drawers.  
Finds papers. Brings them  
to the Landlord)

Right! He we are! Papers, as requested.

LANDLORD:

Not hiding anything, are you?

EVA:

Hiding anything? No! My papers are in fine order, thank you. I've lived here for years now! What could I possibly be hiding?

LANDLORD:

You can never be too careful. These are dangerous times.

EVA:

Well, you can be assured in knowing I am an upstanding citizen and--

LANDLORD:

Where's the rent?

EVA:

(angrily)

Yes! The rent! Fine, I'll get you the damned rent. Just give me a second.

Landlord picks up pendant and looks at it.  
Put that down.

LANDLORD:

What is it?

EVA:

It's mine.

LANDLORD:

Who's that a picture of it in?

EVA:

When was it ever any of your business?

LANDLORD:

It lies at the very heart of my business. I'm the landlord.

EVA:  
And I pay my rent, don't I?

LANDLORD:  
I don't know. Do you?

EVA:  
  
Gives him the money  
There's your rent.

LANDLORD:  
You're short.

EVA:  
What?

LANDLORD:  
You're short twenty.

EVA:  
Impossible. I counted it out. There are sixty, right there.

LANDLORD:  
Rent's gone up.

EVA:  
What? Why?

LANDLORD:  
Consumer demand.

EVA:  
Consumer demand? That's no explanation at all! What does that even mean?

LANDLORD:  
Consumerism is a social and economic order that encourages the purchase of goods and services in ever-greater amounts.

EVA:  
I was aware of that, but how does it apply to my flat. I've seen no great demand for one bedroom flats.

LANDLORD:  
Councils orders, miss. The powers that be are beyond you or I.

EVA:  
I don't have time for this. I need to get to work.

LANDLORD:  
Not before you give me that twenty. I've got to earn a living too.

EVA:

Yes I am aware of that--

LANDLORD:

I've got kids to feed. I need to provide miss. I fought in a war, don't you know!

EVA:

I appreciate that--

LANDLORD:

I don't think you do miss. Not at all.

EVA:

Well, I don't have twenty to give you. I just don't have it.

LANDLORD:

(sighs)

I'll give you today to get your act together.

EVA:

But I get paid on Monday. That's why I always paid the rent on Tuesdays. Can't you wait until Monday?

LANDLORD:

Can't do that.

EVA:

And why would that be? The powers that be? Councils' orders?

LANDLORD:

No. Those are my orders. Sort it out. And for God sake get dressed. Some of us have jobs to get to.

Landlord leaves, slamming the door behind him. Eva sits on the edge of the waffle and puts her head in her hands. Set around her changes to office.

## SCENE 2

Eva is sitting in the same spot as at the end of scene one, but a desk is in front of her. Random work colleagues walk past her desk, ignoring her. Isaac and Isabelle enter, one on either side of Eva.

ISABELLE:

Well, what's this, brother?

ISAAC:

Why, it looks like Eva is five minutes late for work again.

ISABELLE:

Six minutes thirty seven seconds, if you were being pedantic.

ISAAC:  
But we're not.

ISABELLE:  
Are we Eva?

EVA:  
What do you want? I'm very busy.

ISAAC:  
Nothing.

ISABELLE:  
Nothing at all. We're completely content.

EVA:  
Please, I'm trying to work.

ISABELLE:  
Did you hear that brother? We've hit a nerve.

ISAAC:  
Latecomers always tend to be rather easily provoked.  
Something in the anatomy of a latecomer. It's all part of the  
psychology of the subjects mind.

ISABELLE:  
Have you considered therapy?

EVA:  
I was five minutes late. It's no big deal. I doubt anyone  
even noticed I was gone.

ISAAC:  
But that's five minutes everyday.

ISABELLE:  
Which accumulates to thirty minutes a week, seeing as you  
don't work Sundays.

ISAAC:  
That's twenty five hours a year, seeing that you get the week  
off at Christmas.

ISABELLE:  
Twenty five hours, that's over a day. Think of all the  
precious time you're wasting. All the work that could-

ISAAC:  
-and really should-

ISABELLE:  
-get done.



ISAAC:

Honestly, we've spoken around and, we don't feel you're pulling your weight around here.

EVA:

Pull my weight? You are hypocrites. Both of you. I've never seen either of you do a days work in my life. I don't even know what your job is here? You serve no purpose in this office. None at all!

ISAAC:

Lies.

ISABELLE:

These are indeed lies. We are that which keeps the ship afloat.

ISAAC:

We are the lynch pin! We are always busy.

EVA:

So what are you doing now then?

ISABELLE:

We're on a lunch break.

ISAAC:

An early lunch break.

ISABELLE:

An early lunch break for early lunch. What's your excuse?

EVA:

Please, I have a lot of work to do. Can't you pester someone else?

ISABELLE:

But there's no one better to pester! Isn't that right Isaac?

ISAAC:

Absolutely Isabelle. Absolutely. Miss Eva is an ideal specimen.

ISABELLE:

What's the matter? Don't you appreciate our company?

EVA:

No. Honestly, I don't. And I'd prefer it if you just stopped harassing me!

ISABELLE:

Did you hear that brother?

ISAAC:

Yes sister, loud and clear. Eva doesn't want to talk. That's fine. She's clearly not used to this amount of interaction. I'm amazed she made it this far.

ISABELLE:

We'd best leave her to it, Isaac.

ISAAC:

That would be best, yes.

(Takes an apple from Eva's desk)

Oh wait.

ISABELLE:

Yes brother?

ISAAC:

We had a message to deliver, did we not?

ISABELLE:

Yes we did! (to Eva) The boss wanted you in his office five minutes ago. Seemed urgent. Probably should have mentioned that a little earlier.

ISAAC:

Perhaps five minutes earlier?

ISABELLE:

Perhaps, perhaps.

Isaac and Isabelle walk off. Eva stand up worried.  
The scene around her changes.

### SCENE 3

The boss is at his desk and Eva is down lower stage.  
The boss doesn't look up from his work.

BOSS:

(Working at his desk)

Thank you for coming. I'll just be a minute.

(pause)

Oh please, take a seat.

EVA:

There isn't a seat, sir.

BOSS:

Oh. Well, you'll have to stand then, won't you. I assume you know why I've asked you to my office?

EVA:

No, not really.

BOSS:

I see. Well, basically, I don't wish to worry you Ellie, but you just don't seem to be hitting the mark.

EVA:

My name is Eva, sir.

BOSS:

Yes, I know, it's been a tough year for us all, and tougher years are ahead, but are you tough enough to take it? Your margins say no. Do you follow?

EVA:

Not quite sir.

BOSS:

Is that a no?

EVA:

No sir. Not a no.

BOSS:

Well I'll take that as a yes then?

EVA:

Yes sir. I do believe so sir.

BOSS:

Good girl. Now, I hope I don't sound personal when I tell you, I am disappointed in you. Over the last quarterly you really have let down the team and I've had a lot of complaints about your work ethic from fellow employees.

EVA:

Complaints? From who?

BOSS:

If I told you that, it would be infringing the employee discretion policy, and I'm not prepared to infringe anything at this moment thank you very much.

EVA:

But, I don't understand, I've been meeting my quotas and even surpassing them, at a constant rate. This doesn't make sense...

BOSS:

Now, I'm aware you're a relatively new employee, but-

EVA:

-I've worked here five years sir.

BOSS:

What was that, Ellie?

EVA:

I've been at the firm five years. You said I'm new but I'm not, I've worked behind that desk for five years and I've always met my quota. Always. This makes no sense at all. I am a model employee.

BOSS:

There is no I in team, Ellie. Only a T-E-A-M. I take team work very seriously and you don't seem to have that team attitude about you. People don't talk to you, they don't like you. Do you follow?

EVA:

Yes sir.

BOSS:

You're unpopular. Unsociable. A social pariah of sorts. Dare I say, I did not see you at the Christmas ball. I don't wish to bruise your self esteem, but some may even say you're hated amongst our community.

EVA:

I know sir, it's just...may I speak freely?

BOSS:

Fire away.

EVA:

It's just, I know this must sound mad, but I get this feeling sometimes that I'm not really appreciated here. Like a ghost. People just look straight through me. I'm not really making any difference here. I don't know where I'm going anymore sir. I keep having these recurring nightmares and I'm afraid sir, I'm afraid. What I'm trying to say is, I don't know who I am anymore.

BOSS:

(ignoring her)

I'm going to put this one down to stress. Here's a note. I recommend you visit the doctor, pick up a prescription. I'm letting you off with a warning this time, but don't let me down again.

EVA:

(confused)

I won't sir.

BOSS:

Promise me.

EVA:

I promise sir.

BOSS:

Good girl. I knew I could get through to you, Ellie! So remember, head down, chin up, work hard!

EVA:

Yes sir.

BOSS:

Say it.

EVA:

(Begrudgingly)

Head down, chin up, work hard.

BOSS:

Very good. Now, back to your station. A minute away from the desk is a minute wasted, eh?

The boss starts laughing.

EVA:

Yes sir. Very good sir.

#### SCENE 4

There is a doctors surgery. Eva is waiting outside. Isaac and Isabelle sit either side of her. Eva coughs.

ISABELLE:

Oh, that sounds unhealthy, doesn't it brother?

ISAAC:

Absolutely, sister. Not that we're doctors-

ISABELLE:

-We're certainly not qualified-

ISAAC:

But if you wanted my opinion that sounded a little cancerous. Wouldn't you say?

EVA:

(Shocked)

That's a horrible thing to say!

ISAAC:

Oh, indeed it is Eva.

ISABELLE:  
Cancer is a horrible thing Eva.

ISAAC:  
But none the less serious.

ISABELLE:  
Tell me, Eva-

ISAAC:  
-Have you been tested?

EVA:  
For what?

ISABELLE:  
Pregnancy of course.

ISAAC:  
Pregnancy is very common in women, don't you know.

ISABELLE:  
He's right.

EVA:  
God, no! I'm not pregnant! I don't even...I mean I haven't even...

ISABELLE:  
Haven't even what?

ISAAC:  
Haven't done "it"?

ISABELLE:  
Has she not done "it"?

EVA:  
No! That's not what I meant!

ISAAC:  
I don't think she has, Isabelle.

ISABELLE:  
Oh dear me. It's worse than I thought.

EVA:  
You're twisting my words! There's nothing wrong with me!  
Nothing at all!

ISABELLE:  
I find that more than a little hard to believe.

ISAAC:

After all, there must be, otherwise you wouldn't be here.

The Doctor leans out of the door.

DOCTOR:

Ms Eva Burgess?

EVA:

Yes, that's me! I'm Eva Burgess!

DOCTOR:

Yes, I thought you would be. Please, come in.

Isaac and Isabelle leave. Eva enters the doctors surgery.

DOCTOR: (CONT'D)

Right, so, what seems to be the problem?

EVA:

Nothing, I feel fine.

DOCTOR:

I'm busy man, miss--

EVA:

I'm sorry, but my boss sent me here. He gave me a note. Insisted that I come. But you can dismiss me as soon as you like. I told you, I feel fine.

DOCTOR:

Looks at note

Ah, yes. I see now. Tell me, have you being feel suicidal recently?

EVA:

What?

DOCTOR:

Take a torch and shines it in her eye.

Suicidal. Wishing to end it all. Been having any dark thoughts, have you miss?

EVA:

Absolutely not! I told you, I'm fine!

DOCTOR:

I'm the doctor miss, I will establish if you are fine or not. (pause) Tell me, have you been tested?

EVA:

For what?

DOCTOR:

Pregnancy of course. Dangerous stuff that. Can lead to some horrible side effects. Sleeplessness, nausea, insanity. Nasty stuff!

EVA:

No! I'm not pregnant! Do I look pregnant to you?

DOCTOR:

Looks can be deceiving miss. Pregnancy would explain your vast mood swings. Tell me miss, do you suffer from vast mood swings?

EVA:

No...not particularly. I don't see how it would matter anyway. I'm fine. Completely fine.

DOCTOR:

I hope you aren't offended when I tell you, I don't believe you.

EVA:

Well, actually, I am a little offended, yes.

DOCTOR:

Well, that can't be helped, miss. I'm only looking out for your own benefit. I hope you realise how lucky you are.

EVA:

Lucky!? You must be joking!

DOCTOR:

You do realise that you are receiving this health care absolutely free, miss? All paid by the Establishment.

EVA:

Yes, yes I do.

DOCTOR:

There are places in this world where people just get pushed aside. Where their governments don't care about the people like our government.

EVA:

I am aware of it, sir.

DOCTOR:

Places where men of learning such as I are sparse. I went to the institute miss. They taught me everything I needed to know there.



EVA:

That is very reassuring doctor, it truly is, but I feel absolutely fine. Now, please, may I go?

DOCTOR:

Are you depressed miss?

EVA:

What?

DOCTOR:

Feeling depressed. Is that you?

EVA:

No, I'm fine.

DOCTOR:

Do you like hurting other people?

EVA:

What are you talking about?

DOCTOR:

If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

EVA:

Listen, I don't know what you're trying to achieve here but I'm telling you, I'm fine. I've had a bad day and if it's all the same to you, I'd like to leave. Are we done here?

DOCTOR:

Yes. I think so. I'll write you up a prescription. Take this pill. You'll feel much better for it, I'm sure.

EVA:

Thank you, doctor.

DOCTOR:

Come back tomorrow and see if the pill is having any effect. If not, we'll put you on another pill. The other one is pink. You'll like that one.

The doctor hits a bell on his desk.

## SCENE 5

Eva is sitting in the center of a long canteen table, eating lunch staring at two work colleagues further forward on the stage. Isaac and Isabelle come either side of

ISABELLE:

Staring at Lowry again?

ISAAC:

He is a rather charming specimen of a man. Works in top office now, so I've heard.

ISABELLE:

He has an office on level seven.

ISAAC:

A very desirable spot.

ISABELLE:

However I doubt staring at him over lunch will win his heart.

EVA:

I wasn't staring. I just...

ISABELLE:

Just what?

ISAAC:

Just glanced?

ISABELLE:

Just peeked?

ISAAC:

A little longer and it's stalking.

EVA:

What?! God no...I was just looking at him. I've never even spoken to him. He isn't interested in me.

ISABELLE:

I wouldn't waste your time anyway dear. Everyone knows Lowry is interested in Hazel.

ISAAC:

And why wouldn't he be?

ISABELLE:

She's quite the catch.

ISAAC:

Although I'm not so sure about the whole push up bra and v neck shirt thing going on. I mean, does that every really work on anyone?

ISABELLE:

A cheap ploy, brother.

ISAAC:

So Eva, you're not thinking of asking Lowry to the dance this year?

EVA:

No, not at all. I'm not even sure if I want to go to the dance this year.

ISABELLE:

The work dance is compulsory.

ISAAC:

Work hard; play hard. That's company policy.

EVA:

I'll think about it.

ISAAC:

To be-

ISABELLE:

Or not to be?

ISAAC:

To sleep-

ISABELLE:

-perchance to dream.

EVA:

Do you think Hazel will go to the dance with Lowry? If he asks her?

ISAAC:

I can't see why not. She tends to go for the first thing offered up to her. Remember last year?

ISABELLE:

When she went off with Jefferies? Who could forget, brother.

ISAAC:

If they do go to the dance together, do you think they'll do "it"?

ISABELLE:

Hard to say, Isaac. Maybe they shall do "it"? What do you think Eva? Will they do "it"?

EVA:

I don't want think about it.

ISAAC:

But if you had to.

ISABELLE:

If you had to guess. What would you say?

ISAAC:

Well? Do you think they're going to do "it"?

EVA:

No. She's not that kind of girl.

ISABELLE:

Is that so?

ISAAC:

And what kind of girl are you?

The Boss enters with Alastair and Isaac and Isabelle leave. Eva stands up to shake his hand.

BOSS:

Ellie! How are we?

EVA:

Good afternoon sir! I didn't expect you down here.

BOSS:

I always like to keep a check on my staff. Chowling down on some delicious state regulation grub I see?

EVA:

Yes sir. Will you be having any?

BOSS:

Oh God no. Anyway, sorry if I was interrupting anything Ellie, just wanted to come down here to have a little chat about the annual dinner dance event.

EVA:

Ah, yes sir, actually I've been meaning to speak to somebody about that. You see...

BOSS:

No need, I know exactly what you're going to say.

EVA:

You do?

BOSS:

Of course I do! You're going to tell me you can't wait and let me tell you a little secret: neither can I!

EVA:

No sir, you misunderstand...

BOSS:

Let me introduce you to a little someone who is also looking forward to the dinner dance. Ellie, meet Alastair. Alastair-Ellie.

The Boss pushed their hands together to shake.

EVA:

Actually sir, I...

ALASTAIR:

It's a pleasure to meet you.

BOSS:

I'll leave you love birds to get acquainted.

The boss walks off.

EVA:

Sir, wait!

BOSS:

(walking off and dancing to  
himself)

See you at the dance!

Eva is left with Alastair.

EVA:

Hello Alastair.

ALASTAIR:

Hello. May I sit with you?

EVA:

You already have.

ALASTAIR:

Ah yes. What are you eating?

EVA:

Number five.

ALASTAIR:

I usually get number eight. Salt?

EVA:

No thanks.

ALASTAIR:

You have beautiful eyes.

EVA:

Thank you. Yours seem rather efficient too.

ALASTAIR:

Thank you. Would you like to go to the dinner dance with me?

EVA:  
That was quite forward.

ALASTAIR:  
Is that a yes then?

EVA:  
Well, we've never really spoken. It seems a little odd.

ALASTAIR:  
Oh no, I'm not odd. Honestly, you can ask around. I'm actually quite tolerable.

EVA:  
I'm sure you are, but to be honest I'm not even sure if I really want to go to the dance at all.

ALASTAIR:  
But it's compulsory. You'll get fired if you don't go.

EVA:  
I was thinking of saying I was sick?

ALASTAIR:  
That would be lying to your boss. That's second to corporate espionage. I think I have to report this.

EVA:  
Report it? What the hell are you talking about?

ALASTAIR:  
  
(Alastair stands)  
Yes, I'm sorry but I have to tell the Boss. This is all very unorthodox.

EVA:  
Wait, Alastair. Fine, I'll go. Just, don't say anything to the boss, okay?

ALASTAIR:  
Hmm...yes. Very well. I'll see you at eight.

EVA:  
Yes. At eight.

## SCENE 6

It is eight. Eva is sitting alone at a dinner table. She is surrounded by people in masks dancing. A waiter comes over.

WAITER:

Good evening miss, are you ready to order?

EVA:

No, I'm waiting for a friend thank you.

WAITER:

Ah very well miss. I'll return to your table later.

As the waiter walks away Eva stops him.

EVA:

Wait.

WAITER:

Yes miss?

EVA:

Did you assume I was here alone?

WAITER:

It's not unheard of to come alone. Many people have come alone tonight.

EVA:

But why me? Why did you assume I was one of the lonely people?

WAITER:

Just because they sit alone, that does not make them lonely.

EVA:

Why else would they sit alone if they weren't lonely?

WAITER:

Some people come for the food or the atmosphere or just to get out the house. Though the annual dinner dance is seen to be a sociable event, many have an alternative perspective on it.

EVA:

And is that me? I am the one who comes for the food? Or the atmosphere? Or even just to get out the house? Am I alone?

WAITER:

No miss, you are not alone, but you are very lonely.

EVA:

...what?

WAITER:

Apologies miss. I didn't mean any offense. I have other tables to wait I'm afraid.

EVA:  
(bemused)  
No, that's fine. Thank you.

The waiter nods and leaves. Alastair approaches.

ALASTAIR:  
Good evening.

EVA:  
It's half eight. You're late. I've been sitting here like an idiot. The boss has come over at least three times and asked me to dance.

ALASTAIR:  
I'm sorry, I lost track of time.  
(awkward pause)  
Do you like my suit?

EVA:  
It's looks similar to the suit you were wearing to work.

ALASTAIR:  
Yes, it is, but I'm wearing another tie, see.  
(awkward pause)

EVA:  
It has cats on it. Big, ginger cats.

ALASTAIR:  
Yeah, I thought I'd wear something a bit fun. A bit funny.  
I'm a funny guy, you know?

EVA:  
I've heard.

ALASTAIR:  
Really?

EVA:  
Yeah. Really. They say you're quite the hoot.  
(awkward pause)

ALASTAIR:  
Have you had a chance to look at the menu?

EVA:  
Yes. The tapas looks nice actually. I quite like tapas.

ALASTAIR:  
Oh...

EVA:  
Is that a problem?



ALASTAIR:

Well, it's just I'm not so keen on tapas.

EVA:

You don't like Spanish food?

ALASTAIR:

It's not that, it's just...I'm not really into sharing. Mixing germs and splitting food. I think it would just be better for us to order separately.

EVA:

Oh right, okay.

ALASTAIR:

It's nothing personal. Just, first we start sharing food, next thing you know we're on a steady road to communism.

EVA:

That's fine. No tapas.

ALASTAIR:

Yeah, I think I'll have a steak. What about you?

EVA:

I'm not really a big meat lover...

ALASTAIR:

Oh God, no. I wasn't implying you order the steak too. I'm not paying for two steaks. That would be ridiculous.

The waiter comes over.

WAITER:

Good evening. Are you ready to order?

ALASTAIR:

Yes. I'll have the steak.

WAITER:

Wonderful, sir. Very good choice. Very good. And for madam?

EVA:

Umm, I'll have the cannelloni?

WAITER:

My apologies miss, cannelloni is off.

EVA:

Oh. Well, how about the carbonara?

WAITER:

That's off too I'm afraid.

EVA:  
The spaghetti?

WAITER:  
Off. I should have mentioned. The pasta is off.

EVA:  
Well, can't the chef make more? I mean, a trained chef should be able to make pasta, right?

WAITER:  
The chef isn't in.

EVA:  
What?

WAITER:  
The chef; he isn't in, miss. It's his night off. He has judo practice on a Friday night.

EVA:  
Then, who's cooking the food?

WAITER:  
I am miss.

EVA:  
But you're the waiter.

WAITER:  
And I'm serving canapes, handling the bar and I play clarinet in the band, yes miss.

EVA:  
That's ridiculous. How can you be expected to do all those things yourself? This can't all be run by one man!

WAITER:  
May I recommend the salad miss? It's very fresh. Very green.

ALASTAIR:  
Yes, she'll have a salad.

WAITER:  
Wonderful. One salad for the lady. Will that be all?

EVA:  
Can we have a bottle of wine please?

WAITER:  
No miss. Wines off.

The waiter leaves.

EVA:  
I don't much like salad.

ALASTAIR:  
I was thinking, maybe we could have a little dance. Maybe a cha cha or a tango?

EVA:  
Well, I'm not so sure..

Alastair gets up and begins to leave.  
Where are you going?

ALASTAIR:  
Sorry, I have a irregular bowel movements. It's nothing serious, just a minor inconvenience.

EVA:  
Oh. Right.

ALASTAIR:  
But when I get back, have your dancing shoes ready!

The waiter comes over.

WAITER:  
Sorry miss...

EVA:  
Salad's off?

WAITER:  
Yes miss. Sorry miss.

EVA:  
That's fine. I'll just have a glass of tap water, if the taps are still running.

WAITER:  
Something the matter miss?

EVA:  
What?

WAITER:  
You seem a little down, miss. Anything the matter?

EVA:  
No, no. It's just been one of those days, I guess. You know that feeling where everything that could go wrong does?

WAITER:  
You're telling me?

He sits opposite her.  
I hate Fridays.

EVA:  
Everyone likes Fridays.

WAITER:  
Not if Friday night is the chefs Judo night. Do you have any idea how stressful it is working the entire venue? Especially when we have a private function like this? Look at me! I'm losing my hair. I'm only twenty three.

EVA:  
If you don't like it, why don't you quit?

WAITER:  
Quit? I can't just quit.

EVA:  
Why not?

WAITER:  
It's not that easy. If you having a bad day, you don't just throw yourself off a bridge, do you?

EVA:  
Well, no, but that's different.

WAITER:  
How so?

EVA:  
Because I still have reasons to live and things to do.

WAITER:  
What things?

EVA:  
I don't know. The things that everyone does that I haven't done yet. I have dreams, hopes, goals. Death is more permanent than losing a job.

WAITER:  
Being dead isn't as bad as they all make out, you know? I'd rather be dead than unemployed any day. Wouldn't you?

EVA:  
No! You have to live your life! You can't just stay here being pushed around. You have to know what it means to be alive, not just stagnate in the same place your whole life.

WAITER:  
You really think? You think I should...spread my wings?

EVA:

Of course! This place is tearing you apart. You're being exploited, it's time you moved on.

WAITER:

You're right. I hate this place. This place, this job, this life. I've had enough.

He gets up and puts his coat on to leave.

EVA:

Wait, where are you going?

WAITER:

I was thinking Paris.

EVA:

What, right now?

WAITER:

You were right, miss. I need to live my life!

EVA:

But who will serve my food?

WAITER:

That's not my problem anymore.

Alastair returns to the table.

ALASTAIR:

No food yet?

EVA:

The waiter left.

ALASTAIR:

Where'd he go?

EVA:

Paris.

ALASTAIR:

Well, how about that dance then.

EVA:

I'm sorry Alastair, but if it's all the same to you I might leave. I'm starting to feel very unwell.

ALASTAIR:

How so?

EVA:  
I have this terrible pain in my neck and it just won't go away. Good night Alastair.

## SCENE 7

Eva is walking down a street on the way home. From round the corner a mugger jumps out with a gun.

MUGGER:  
(heavily muffled)  
Give me all your money.

EVA:  
What?

MUGGER:  
(muffled)  
Money! Give me all the money! In the bag!

EVA:  
I can't understand what you're saying. What do you want?

MUGGER:  
In the bag! In the bag!  
(muffled)  
I want your...

He takes off his balaclava.  
I want your money.

EVA:  
My money?

MUGGER:  
This is a mugging! Give me all your money! In the bag!

EVA:  
I don't have any money.

MUGGER:  
Don't try and pull that over on me. Give me all your money or I'll... I'll blow your fucking head off. I'll blow it off with a gun!

EVA:  
I'm sorry but I'm skint. You can check my purse if you like. I don't have penny to my name.

MUGGER:  
Well, do you have any jewelery? Or any expensive artifacts? An oil painting perhaps? Rembrandt, Cezanne? Anything at all?

EVA:

No, I'm sorry. Nothing.

MUGGER:

No, I guess that was a bit of a long shot.

EVA:

So...are you going to shoot me now?

MUGGER:

No, no. This is only to scare people. I'd never actually kill anyone with it. I wouldn't have the stomach. To be completely honest with you, this is my first day.

EVA:

How's it going?

The mugger sits on the curb

MUGGER:

Awful. You're the fifth person I've jumped tonight and every one before you has said the exact same thing. They were all skint.

Eva sits next to him.

EVA:

Well, maybe crime isn't really a worthwhile career.

MUGGER:

No, you're right. People are too busy these days for good old fashioned crime. It's all done on computer now isn't it?

EVA:

That's not to say you didn't give it a good try. I was very scared at the start.

MUGGER:

Really?

EVA:

Yeah sure. I could swear you were going to shoot me.

MUGGER:

I really though this might work out, this whole criminal thing. I mean, it's not usually my style, but I thought I'd give it a try and it really just totally backfired on me.

EVA:

Well, maybe you could get another job? Perhaps a typist? I hear there's a lot of job openings for typists in the city.

MUGGER:

No miss, I ain't got no skills. They didn't teach me any skills in school. Except Latin. I can speak Latin.

EVA:

Well, I'm sorry but there's not much left I can really do in that case.

MUGGER:

No I understand. It's just been one of those days, you know?

EVA:

I know what you mean. One of those days where everything that could go wrong does go wrong.

MUGGER:

Exactly. First my landlord comes to me saying the rents up. Next thing, I get fired from my office for refusing to go to this bloody dinner dance. And now this.

EVA:

Would you believe it, my day hasn't been completely dissimilar. The only difference with me is that I didn't end my hand wearing a balaclava and holding a prop gun.

MUGGER:

Oh no, it's not a prop. This is the real deal.

Eva jumps up.

MUGGER: (CONT'D)

(standing up, pointing the  
gun at Eva)

You don't need to panic, it's completely deactivated.

EVA:

Thank God for that. I was going to say, the only way this day could get any worse was if you shot me.

MUGGER:

Nah, don't be silly. This thing couldn't hurt a fly. See.

Pulls trigger and accidentally shoots Eva.

MUGGER: (CONT'D)

Hello?...Miss?...Shit.

## SCENE 8

Alarm beeping sound. Dim lights on. Eva gets up and turns off the alarm.



She feels her neck and looks around the room confused, assuming to have had another nightmare. A note comes under the door. She goes to read it.

EVA:

"Dear tenant, welcome to your new home. We are very glad to have found a new resident so soon, considering the unfortunate history regarding the apartment. However, I do hope you find the accommodation to your liking and please feel free to contact me on the line below at any time. Thank you."

She goes to the phone and calls a number.

EVA: (CONT'D)

Hello? It's Eva Burgess from number twelve. I've just got a letter through the door and I think it might of been delivered to the wrong address. Alright. Thank you I'll see you in a minute.

There is a short pause then a knock at the door. Eva opens it and it's the landlord.

LANDLORD:

Morning miss Burgess, is there a problem?

EVA:

This.

(Puts out the letter for him to read)

LANDLORD:

What about it?

EVA:

Well, it can't be for me. I'm not a new tenant.

LANDLORD:

What do you mean?

EVA:

This is addressed to the new tenant.

LANDLORD:

Yes.

EVA:

And I'm not new.

LANDLORD:

I'm sorry, I'm confused.

EVA:

I've been here five years. Just yesterday you were asking me for the rent, remember?

LANDLORD:

But you are the new tenant. This is your first day here.

EVA:

What? Is this a joke?

LANDLORD:

I'm sorry, miss, I don't quite follow.

EVA:

I'm Eva Burgess. I live here. I've lived here for years and now you say you've never even met me before?

LANDLORD:

No. Never. We had a young girl living here before you.

EVA:

What was her name?

LANDLORD:

Eva.

EVA:

I am Eva. My name is Eva.

LANDLORD:

Well, that's a coincidence, isn't it?

EVA:

No! It's not because I am Eva! The only Eva! We are one and the same! Eva is Eva!

LANDLORD:

I don't understand.

EVA:

It doesn't matter, I don't have time for this. Do you want the rent now or later?

LANDLORD:

The rent?

EVA:

Yes. That's right. The rent.

LANDLORD:

You've already paid the rent. Six months in advance.

EVA:

...are you sure?

LANDLORD:

You gave it to me last night when you arrived. One big envelope.

EVA:

Right. Well, last night is a little blurry for me. Maybe that's what's caused the confusion.

LANDLORD:

That all?

EVA:

Yes. That's all.

LANDLORD:

I'll see you around.

#### SCENE 9

Eva is at her desk but the entire office is empty.  
Isaac enters with a yo-yo.

ISAAC:

Quiet today, isn't it?

EVA:

(surprised)

You made me jump.

ISAAC:

Sorry, this emptiness does create a rather...what's the word...

ISABELLE:

Ominous atmosphere?

ISAAC:

Ominous! Yes. That's the one.

ISABELLE:

So, how was the dance?

ISAAC:

The date with Alastair.

ISABELLE:

Creepy Alastair from upstairs. How was he?

EVA:

Fine. We just chatted and then parted ways.

ISAAC:

And that was it?

ISABELLE:  
Nothing else happened last night?

EVA:  
No! Nothing at all.

ISABELLE:  
Okay.

ISAAC:  
We believe you.

EVA:  
Where are they all, anyway? Was there a staff trip or something I'm forgetting about?

ISABELLE:  
Oh no.

ISAAC:  
No trip.

ISABELLE:  
They are all here.

EVA:  
Where?

ISABELLE:  
In the conference hall of course.

ISAAC:  
Of course.

EVA:  
There isn't a conference today.

ISABELLE:  
There wasn't.

ISAAC:  
But now there is.

ISABELLE:  
That is to say, yesterday there was no conference today.

ISAAC:  
But today, there is a conference. In the conference hall.

EVA:  
What is it about?

ISAAC:  
Death.

ISABELLE:  
Someone died.

ISAAC:  
A colleague died.

ISABELLE:  
How very sad. The whole firm is in mourning.

EVA:  
Well, I didn't hear about it. Anyone important?

ISAAC:  
No one important.

ISABELLE:  
Not big news.

ISAAC:  
Not front page, that's for sure.

EVA:  
I guess I should pay my respects. I don't want to seem rude.

ISABELLE:  
That's the last thing you want.

EVA:  
Is the memorial now?

ISAAC:  
Right now. You won't even be too late. It's just started.

ISABELLE:  
I suggest you go.

EVA:  
I'll show my face. Make sure they know I care. Are you coming?

ISABELLE:  
No, no. We can't.

ISAAC:  
We simply cannot.

ISABELLE:  
Too much work to be done.

ISAAC:  
Not enough time to do it in.

ISABELLE:  
Do send our regards to the deceased though.

EVA:

Sure. I will.

SCENE 10

There is a large group of workers and the boss comes to the front as Eva joins the crowd. The boss is in front of a frame covered by a cloth.

BOSS:

Good morning. I'm assuming you all know why you are here today. It's a dark day here at the firm. The cruel and merciless hand of time is waiting for us all, but for one it struck too soon. We have lost someone who, many would consider one of our finest workers. Not only was she a vital element in the work force, she was a friend to many of us. Her high spirits and friendly persona put her above the rest and left the office with such a positive feel. It won't be the same with her gone. I know I appreciated her hard work and passion in the workplace and I didn't just see her as an employee, but as a part of the family. It is a so unfortunate that just last night, this poor girl was taken from us, so young. She will never be forgotten, I am sure. Can we please make a toast, to Eva.

Everyone toasts.

ENSEMBLE:

To Eva!

The cloths is removed to reveal a picture of Eva with floral arrangement around it. Eva is shocked. The crowd disperses and she approaches the boss.

EMPLOYEE 1:

It's such as shame. She had so much to live for.

EMPLOYEE 2:

I'll miss her so much!

EMPLOYEE 3:

I really wish I got to know her better.

Eva approached the boss.

EVA:

Sir, I need to talk to you.

BOSS:

Ah yes, I expected so. You must be the new girl.

EVA:

The new girl?

BOSS:

Yes. Sorry, bit morbid for your first day. Typical that you turn up on this particular day.

EVA:

What? No. Listen, there's been a misunderstanding...

BOSS:

Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name.

EVA:

(shocked)

My name? You know my name! My name is Eva!

BOSS:

Oh, we had a girl called Eva who used to work here too. Such a nice girl. So sad she passed away.

EVA:

Passed away?

BOSS:

Yes, on her way home from the dance. Such a pity.

BOSS: (CONT'D)

Anyway, Eva, I'm assuming you know your way round by now so I'll leave you to it. Feel free to pop by my office any time, okay? Magic, see you around.

He walks away.

EVA:

Sir! I'm here!

BOSS:

Glad to hear it, Eva!

EVA:

No, you don't understand! Sir! I'm alive! I'm alive!

Isaac and Isabelle enter.

ISAAC:

It's no use.

ISABELLE:

He's not listening.

ISAAC:

None of them ever listen to each other.

ISABELLE:

They're all so oblivious to the world around them.

ISAAC:  
It's a wonder they've got this far.

EVA:  
They think I'm dead. All of them. Even my landlord. Everyone thinks I'm dead. They think I died.

ISABELLE:  
That's odd.

ISAAC:  
Very odd.

ISABELLE:  
What did happen last night, Eva?

ISAAC:  
Yes Eva. Tell us. What really happened?

EVA:  
Well, I left the dance early.

ISAAC:  
Yes?

EVA:  
And there was a man. With a gun.

ISABELLE:  
And then what?

EVA:  
And he...

ISABELLE:  
I think she's got it brother.

ISAAC:  
Oh she has, sister. The switch has flicked.

ISABELLE:  
The lights are on.

ISAAC:  
She's solved the million dollar question.

ISABELLE:  
Go on Eva, don't be afraid. Tell us what you're thinking.

EVA:  
Oh God.

(pause)  
I'm dead.



ACT II

## SCENE 1

Eva is sitting on the edge of her bed staring into the distance, with her pendant in her hands. She sighs and goes over to the phone and calls the landlord.

EVA:

(on phone)

Hello, it's Eva Burgess at number 12. The new tenant. Can you come up for a minute, I have a few questions. It'll only take a second. Okay. Thank you.

She waits. There is a knock at the door.

LANDLORD:

Problem?

EVA:

No problem. I was just curious, in regards to the previous tenant.

LANDLORD:

What about her?

EVA:

Who was she?

LANDLORD:

Girl called Eva.

EVA:

Where is she now?

LANDLORD:

Dead. She died.

EVA:

How?

LANDLORD:

I don't know, miss. Just went out one night and never came back. Police came to my door, said they'd found her body and that was that.

EVA:

And that was that was it?

LANDLORD:

Yes miss. That is exactly what that was.

EVA:  
And you never saw the body?

LANDLORD:  
Of course I didn't. I do not partake in such morbid  
perversions! Are you implying I am a pervert?

EVA:  
No. Not at all.

LANDLORD:  
  
(collecting him)  
As I said, the police came, told me she was dead and that was  
that. I have nothing left to tell you.

EVA:  
That was that.

LANDLORD:  
Is that a problem miss?

EVA:  
No. No problem. None at all. What did she look like? If you  
can remember?

LANDLORD:  
Well. Hard to say really. Brown hair, brown eyes. About  
average height. Quite plain. No real discernible features  
upon her person. She was the sort of person who could live  
her whole life unnoticed, if you know what I mean? Under the  
radar.

EVA:  
That's a funny coincidence isn't it?

LANDLORD:  
What is?

EVA:  
Well, this girl, Eva-

LANDLORD:  
Yes?

EVA:  
She had the same name as me.

LANDLORD:  
Yes.

EVA:  
And looked the same as me.

LANDLORD:

Yes.

EVA:

And lived in the exact same place as me.

LANDLORD:

What point are you trying to make?

EVA:

Does it not strike you as odd, that your dead tenant and your new tenant are so similar? No, not even similar, completely identical?

LANDLORD:

Well...I hadn't really thought about it.

EVA:

Hadn't thought about it? How can you miss it? Are you telling me you never even noticed how strange it was?

LANDLORD:

Well, now you mention it, there is a slight resemblance between the two of you, I suppose, yes.

EVA:

Slight resemblance? Sir, we are identical.

LANDLORD:

Yes, I suppose you're right.

EVA:

And what does that leave you to assume?

LANDLORD:

Actually, I've changed my mind. I don't think she was a brunette at all. She was a blond.

EVA:

What?

LANDLORD:

Or was she a redhead? No, actually, I think she had black hair. Yes black. And were her eyes brown? Now I think about it, I can remember them being a deep hazel. Or maroon. A violent shade of green. That must be it. Oh I can't remember for the life of me.

EVA:

You saw her everyday for five years and you can't remember what she looked like?

LANDLORD:

I never really paid any attention. She wasn't a very noticeable person. I deal with very unnoticeable people on a daily basis.

EVA:

But you said just a minute ago she looked the same as me. Now you change your mind?

LANDLORD:

I can't be completely sure. Like I said, her appearance wasn't very striking.

EVA:

Okay, let me ask you another question. Hypothetically speaking, what if I told you that I am Eva. The same Eva that died last night. Only I didn't die. That is to say, my identity died but my physical presence continued. What would you say to that?

LANDLORD:

(pause)

I wouldn't believe you.

EVA:

Even when all evidence points to it being true?

LANDLORD:

...what are you trying to say?

EVA:

(protectively)

Nothing. This is all hypothetical.

LANDLORD:

Good. Because if you were trying to tell me that you and the Eva before were one and the same then I would assume you were mentally ill and have no choice but to get you sectioned.

EVA:

But you won't.

LANDLORD:

Because you aren't.

EVA:

Exactly. All just hypothetical. Just an idea.

LANDLORD:

An idea. Nothing more.

EVA:

Yes sir. Nothing more.

SCENE 2

Two policemen are sitting behind a desk. Eva approaches the desk. There is a sign on the desk saying "Back in five minutes"

EVA:

Hello, I'd like to report a crime.

One of the officers taps on the sign.  
But you're right there...

He taps again.

Fine.

She waits for a while. There is a pause then they take down the sign.

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Hello miss, welcome to the establishment. How can I help you today?

EVA:

I'd like to report a crime.

POLICE OFFICER 2:

Can we interest you in a leaflet on the dangers of smoking miss?

EVA:

No, thank you, I'd just like to report a crime.

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Sure miss?

POLICE OFFICER 2:

Certain?

EVA:

Certain.

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Right.

POLICE OFFICER 2:

What is the nature of the crime?

EVA:

Murder.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Murder. Nasty business that.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Name of victim?

EVA:  
Eva Burgess.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Burgess. Eva.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
And your name miss?

EVA:  
Eva Burgess.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Do you think this is funny?

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Do you think this is some kind of practical joke?

EVA:  
Listen, I can explain this. You don't understand, see--

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Oh, I think we understand. We get prank calls here at the station all the time, but to do it in person. That is a new low.

EVA:  
This isn't a joke. This is serious.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Shall I tell you what's serious? Public servants like us, working day in, day out, serving our duty to the establishment and then, there's little punks like you who think they can waste valuable police time.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
It's disgusting. This country is going to the dogs thanks to people like you.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Show us your papers.

EVA:  
Hear me out...

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Papers.

Eva hands over her papers.

POLICE OFFICER 1: (CONT'D)  
Hmm...

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
You're not an illegal immigrant are you, miss?

EVA:  
No! How is that even relevant?!

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Everything is relevant.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Are you seeking asylum here?

EVA:  
No. My name is Eva Burgess. I was born here and I died here.  
I am here to report a murder. My murder.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
She just doesn't give it up, does she?

EVA:  
Check my papers. Look at them! What does it say my name is?

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Ms. Eva Burgess.

EVA:  
Now look at your files. Is it documented that one Eva Burgess  
was found dead last night? Is that name mentioned anywhere at  
all?

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
No files. It's all on the system now.

EVA:  
Well, check your system.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
The system is down.

EVA:  
Then how do you get anything done in here?

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Are you questioning a police officer?

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Correction. Two police officers.

EVA:  
I'm not questioning either of you, I just find it ridiculous that you have no source of information in regards to any crimes ever committed. Isn't that what a police station should do? Document crimes?

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
No, a police station should prevent crimes.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
And from the lack of documented crimes, it appears we're doing a pretty good job.

EVA:  
Why won't anyone listen to me, last night Eva Burgess was shot and killed. Now, are you going to do anything about that or do I have to take it into my own hands?

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
No, you're in quite capable hands here miss. Just give us a moment.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
See, your story seems a little patchy.

EVA:  
I've explained it very clearly.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
I'm sorry miss but the one necessary requirement for a murder is that the victim must be dead.

EVA:  
I am dead. I think.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
If you think, therefore you are.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
That's Descartes, miss. Do you want to argue with Descartes? Greatest philosophical mind of his time?

EVA:  
To hell with this. And to hell with your establishment. If you're not going to deal with this, I will. Good day.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Is that a threat miss?

EVA:  
A threat?



POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Under police legislation administered by the establishment,  
it is a felony to threaten an officer at work.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Correction. Two officers.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
That makes you a felon.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Ms. Burgess, I am putting you under temporary arrest for  
assaulting two police officers in their place of work. Take  
her to the holding cell.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Yes. The holding cell.

EVA:  
No! You can't do this! I've done nothing wrong!

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Restrain her.

Police Officer 2 restrains Eva. She fights back.

EVA:  
Get off me! I'm innocent! I'm a victim, for God sake!

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
Don't resist miss. You can't fight the law.

EVA:  
My name is Eva Burgess! My name is Eva Burgess and I am an  
innocent woman!

### SCENE 3

Eva is sitting in a cell. There is a barred door  
silhouette produced by a gobo. Police officer 1  
enters along with the Boss.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Burgess. You've got a visitor.

BOSS:  
Hello Eva.

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
If you need me, just shout.

BOSS:  
Thank you very much officer.

Police Officer 1 leaves.  
So, how are you?

EVA:  
Incarcerated.

BOSS:  
Yes, well, not for much longer! I heard all about your little run in with the police and I popped over to put in a good word with the commissioner. After a bit of sweet talking, looks like you're free to go.

EVA:  
Good. There's no reason for my being here anyway. These people are fools.

BOSS:  
I knew you'd be happy. However, I do ask just one tiny little favour of you. Just the tiniest one.

EVA:  
And what's that?

BOSS:  
A psychiatric evaluation. See, as an honorable pillar of society, I couldn't allow myself to be seen letting a potential lunatic free onto the streets. I have a reputation to uphold. I have to be sure I'm doing the right thing.

EVA:  
What are you insinuating? That I'm mad?

BOSS:  
No, not at all my dear. You're young and rebellious. It is expected that you break a few rules here and there. I can tell you, I was a bit of a rebel back in my day. When you're young and free everything seems so easy, but we all have to grow up eventually. Responsibilities.

EVA:  
This wasn't rebellion sir, this was a matter of principle. No one will listen to me. I am Eva Burgess!

BOSS:  
I understand, it all must be very frustrating. I'm sure the doctor can help.

EVA:  
I don't want a doctor. I'm fine.

BOSS:  
I can't let you go until I'm sure of that.

EVA:

Do not trust my word?

BOSS:

Shall I call for the doctor then? Yes? Good.

(shouting)

Doctor!

The Doctor enters in his place.

DOCTOR:

Right, so, what's the verdict so far?

BOSS:

Not a huge deal. Just stress related probably, Doctor.  
Nothing too serious.

EVA:

Can we please hurry this along? I have places to be.

DOCTOR:

Don't we all. Open your mouth.

EVA:

Why?

DOCTOR:

Get a degree in medicine, then ask me why. Open wide.

She does so and he puts in a thermometer.  
Bite on that for a moment. Wonderful. Sir, tell me, has she  
shown any signs of peculiar behaviour recently? Anything  
bothering her?

BOSS:

Not to my noticing. She seems fine to me. Just usual Eva.

EVA:

Struggling with thermometer in mouth.  
Liar!

DOCTOR:

(to Eva)

Miss, please, keep the thermometer in your mouth.

(to Boss)

And any strange actions or statements recently? Anything to  
detect attention?

BOSS:

Not at all. She seems absolutely content and fine. Isn't that right Eva?

EVA:

Hardly able to talk.

No.

DOCTOR:

Right, let's have a look at that thermometer.

Takes out the thermometer.

Oh my. 45.

BOSS:

45? Is that bad?

DOCTOR:

It shouldn't be too much of a problem. I've seen 45 before. I think I have something for 45. Would you prefer it via needle or cream?

EVA:

Get off of me! The pair of you! I don't want your needles or your creams! I want to go home!

DOCTOR:

No need to over react. We're only trying to help.

BOSS:

That's right Eva. That's all we've ever done. Trying to be helpful.

EVA:

No you're not. None of you are. None of you are any help to me what so ever. You never have been. My whole life has been this way, but only now do I realise it. Like I've woken from some terrible dream to realise I am surrounded by not a single friend. Not one. I am completely alone. Well, so be it. I don't need any of you. I am dead now. I am nothing!

Pause.

BOSS:

Verdict, doctor?

DOCTOR:

If you want my professional advice, I'd say she's unstable.

EVA:

What?

DOCTOR:

You heard me. Unstable. A menace to society. Her brain is all inside out. She doesn't know what she's saying. She has lost control.

EVA:

That's not true! You don't know anything! You don't even have the first clue as to what I am!

DOCTOR:

I know that you're not safe. And I can see that you're not well. Only a twisted mind such as yours would come up with such peculiar rhetoric. You want my verdict, sir? I'd say the girl is mad.

BOSS:

Madness? Can it be cured?

DOCTOR:

Yes. I believe I have something for madness. Would you like it via needle or cream?

EVA:

No! Please, sir, I'm not mad! I'm not! I just want to go home! Please, send me home.

BOSS:

I'm sorry Eva, but I can't let a lunatic onto the streets. It's just not the done thing.

EVA:

I'm not a lunatic! I'm not!

BOSS:

I have to go by the doctors professional opinion.

EVA:

I demand a second opinion.

DOCTOR:

A second opinion? This is highly irregular.

BOSS:

Perhaps we should appease the girl?

DOCTOR:

But we'd have to go through all the right channels. It would need to go through court. There would have to be officials and paperwork.

EVA:

Please sir, a second opinion. This is all I ask.

BOSS:  
 (sighs)  
 So be it. Doctor, you are dismissed.

The Doctor leaves.

EVA:  
 I'm not crazy sir. I'm not! I promise I'm not!

BOSS:  
 Shh. Don't worry child. I believe you.

FADE OUT

#### SCENE 4

Lights fade back in. There is a court room set up.  
 There is an altar in the center of the raised stage  
 and lower is a stool. The two police officers escort  
 Eva to her stool. Judge enters.

JUDGE:  
 Miss Eva Burgess, you have requested a second opinion upon  
 diagnosis of insanity. I shall therefore act as  
 representative of the Establishment when standing judgment in  
 this trial. Is the defendant fully understanding of this  
 process?

EVA:  
 No, your honour. I am afraid I do not understand. Not at all.

JUDGE:  
 Well, this is not important. Your understanding is not  
 relevant in these circumstances.

EVA:  
 My understanding is paramount sir!

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
 Silence girl!

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
 Quiet.

JUDGE:  
 Your understanding is of no significance to the court and you  
 will respect my right to ignore you miss. Are we in  
 agreement?

EVA:  
 (reluctantly)  
 Yes sir.

JUDGE:

Then the trial may commence. I have it on record from a medically trained professional that you have been showing signs of erratic behaviour. Is this correct?

EVA:

I suppose so, yes. Though erratic wouldn't quite be the word I'd use.

JUDGE:

Can you explain this behaviour?

EVA:

That depends, are you prepared to hear me out?

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Just tell us what you have to say miss.

EVA:

I am-

Isaac and Isabelle enter either side of Eva.

ISABELLE:

Careful now.

ISAAC:

We don't want to create more problems than we already have, do we Eva?

EVA:

They think I'm mad.

ISABELLE:

Of course they do.

ISAAC:

Sometimes it's best to let them think that.

ISABELLE:

They don't want to know the truth.

ISAAC:

They just want to hear the same thing they've heard before.

EVA:

So what do I say? If I can't tell them the truth, then what do I say?

ISABELLE:

Nothing at all.

ISAAC:

Keep on talking.

ISABELLE:

But don't say a word.

EVA:

I don't understand.

ISAAC:

No one does.

JUDGE:

Is the defendant quite ready?

Isaac and Isabelle nod to Eva.

EVA:

Yes sir. I do believe I am.

Isaac and Isabelle begin whispering into Eva's ear.

EVA: (CONT'D)

I am Eva Burgess. No more, no less. There have been many calling of my madness recently, calling for me to be incarcerated, however I stand here to prove these people wrong. I am sane. It seems my mistake was that I projected my voice too loudly. I have made myself seen, I have stepped out of the wings and here I stand before you all, cold and crying the words of a woman who is afraid. What it was that pushed me into this position, I cannot quite explain. However, I only ask of you one thing. Stay where you are and listen. Don't even listen, just wait. Don't even wait, just be completely silent. My answer will offer itself to you to be unmasked, it can't do otherwise, in raptures it will writhe before you. I am not mad. I am just very, very afraid. Now, if the court has nothing more to say, I'd quite like to go home. I have a plant that needs tending to.

POLICE OFFICER 1:

The girl is a liar.

POLICE OFFICER 2:

She's mad! Mad as hell!

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Mad! The girl is mad!

JUDGE:

Silence! Miss, what do you say in defence to these allegations?

EVA:

I do strongly believe their opinions are largely misplaced. I am as sane as yourself.



JUDGE:

And these acts of retaliation? How can you explain that? I have it on record you have been having some rather "macabre" thoughts?

EVA:

I'm sure it's all just...stress related.

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Don't listen to her! It's a trick!

POLICE OFFICER 2:

Not a trick! A trap! It's a trap, sir!

POLICE OFFICER 1:

She wants to trap you in her lies sir!

EVA:

It's no trap! I have woken up to the whim of a bureaucracy that I cannot even see! What sense of justice is this? I can't even surely say what I'm being tried for!

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Insanity!

EVA:

But this accusation is based on slander!

JUDGE:

Enough! Though I am still amiss as to what it was that could have possibly caused you to act out the way you have in the past few days, you have put your case across quite eloquently. And I do believe I understand. I hereby find the defendant, Ms Eva Burgess to be sane in the eyes of the Establishment. Congratulations. Court dismissed.

The judge and two officers leave.

EVA:

Is that it? I am free?

ISABELLE:

See. Wasn't that easy?

ISAAC:

And all it took was a little imagination.

EVA:

But this doesn't change anything, does it? I'm still....

ISABELLE:

Not quite.

ISAAC:

Half and half.

EVA:

What do I do?

ISABELLE:

That's something for you to find out yourself.

ISAAC:

You can't expect us to give you all the answers.

ISABELLE:

You'll figure it out.

ISAAC:

And if you don't, you'll probably end up far worse. So don't worry about it.

Isaac and Isabelle leave.

#### SCENE 5

The next scene is back at Eva's apartment. She is lying on the bed. She sits up and looks out into the audience. She puts on a record.

There is a knock at the door.

ISAAC:

Eva?

The door and Isaac and Isabelle enter.

ISABELLE:

Been having dark thoughts again, have we?

EVA:

You! How do you know where I live? How did you get passed the landlord?

ISAAC:

He is a very stubborn man.

ISABELLE:

But we are equally persuasive.

ISAAC:

That is to say, we persuaded him.

ISABELLE:

Is there time to talk?

EVA:

I don't want to talk.

ISAAC:

It's not about what you want anymore though, is it?

EVA:

Get out! Get out of here! I need space to think.

ISABELLE:

Space?

ISAAC:

Eva, of all things you do not need space. Space will not help you now.

EVA:

Then tell me, what do I need? What is it? What is this incredible thing that I have missed all along? Is it so clear that I cannot see it here, right before my eyes? Am I that dim witted, or is there more? What is it?

ISABELLE:

You've irritated her Isaac.

ISAAC:

She's very irritable, Isabelle. It surely couldn't be helped.

ISABELLE:

No excuse, dear brother.

ISAAC:

No. No excuses. None at all.

EVA:

Can you stop it?

ISABELLE:

Stop what?

EVA:

The way people look at me? The way they speak to me? The woman they think I am, can you stop it?

ISAAC:

We know no more than you do.

EVA:

(in desperation)

Then what do I do? Please! Please help me. I have to know what to do. I can't go on living like this. It's enough to drive you mad!

ISABELLE:

Like this? Like what? You are living as one should live.

ISAAC:

You have a steady job, your rent is paid, your colleagues appreciate you and you are of value.

ISABELLE:

You're less mad now than you ever were.

EVA:

In death though! They don't care about me, they care about me *in death!* How can that possibly be worth anything?

ISAAC:

Surely you're not arguing petty morals at a time like this?

ISAAC: (CONT'D)

In death or life, if it irrelevant. It is a formality. In the end you got exactly what you wanted.

ISABELLE:

You won your freedom.

ISAAC:

And at such a price.

EVA:

Well, I don't want it! I never asked for this! Change it back! I don't want this freedom, you hear me? I don't want to be heard, or seen, or even cared about. I just want to go back to how things were. I don't want to be dead. Not like this!

ISABELLE:

Dead.

ISAAC:

Yet still alive.

ISABELLE:

Alive.

ISAAC:

And dead.

EVA:

Which is it? What am I; dead or alive? Because I cannot say, so please, tell me. Which is it?

ISABELLE:

Why do you assume you must be one or the other?

ISAAC:  
You're confusing her, Isabelle.

ISABELLE:  
Let me put it simply. When someone loses their physical presence, but their soul still wanders this Earth, that is a ghost, yes?

ISAAC:  
But, if you flip the coin, what if one were to lose ones soul but maintain their physical presence? Then we have a different situation.

EVA:  
I'm an apparition?

ISABELLE:  
An abomination.

ISAAC:  
You are a woman that should no longer be and yet here you are, standing and sobbing. It's not natural.

EVA:  
I don't know what to do anymore!

ISAAC:  
Get up!

EVA:  
What?

ISABELLE:  
You heard him. Get up.

Isaac opens a drawer and takes out a handgun.

ISAAC:  
You have places to be. Work to be done. It's five o clock now. That gives you seven hours until the funeral.

EVA:  
Who's funeral?

ISAAC:  
Yours.

## SCENE 6

The office is set up with the Bosses office door at the end of the stage and co workers milling around the area. Eva enters and approaches.

EVA:

Hello.

EMPLOYEE 1:

Yes? How can I help you?

EVA:

The boss. I need to speak with the boss. Urgently. Yes, it's very urgent. He should be expecting me.

EMPLOYEE 1:

He'll be right out. He's just in a meeting at the moment.

EVA:

How long will he take? Ten minutes? An hour? A day?

EMPLOYEE 1:

I can't say. Could be some time.

EVA:

Well, I'll wait here for him then.

pause.

EMPLOYEE 1:

You're the new girl aren't you? Just came into town?

EVA:

Eva Burgess. Pleasure to meet you.

EMPLOYEE 1:

Welcome aboard. How are you finding it here?

EVA:

It's okay. Just a couple little ticks that have been getting to me, but nothing much.

EMPLOYEE 1:

Oh yes, this place can get a little crazy at times, but you'll get used to it.

EVA:

How long have you worked here?

EMPLOYEE 1:

Only a few months. I'm temping. Shouldn't be here for too much longer.

EVA:

And you find it...okay here? Nothing odd about the place?

EMPLOYEE 1:

It pays the bills.

EVA:

I suppose it does.

EMPLOYEE 1:

I heard you got ill recently. They wrote you a doctors note or something. You feeling okay?

EVA:

What? Oh, yes, it's not much really. Just a little irritation. Actually, that's why I'm hear. I'm hoping to sort it all out once and for all.

EMPLOYEE 1:

Nothing contagious I hope?

EVA:

Let's hope not.

(pause)

Is he going to be much longer?

EMPLOYEE 1:

I really don't know. Maybe you can come back later-

Eva gets up and heads towards the door.  
You can't do that!

Eva knocks on the door.

EVA:

Hello? Sir?

EMPLOYEE 1:

Miss, I really must advise against that...

Knocks again.  
Hello?

The door opens.

BOSS:

Yes? Who is it? Oh! Eva! I didn't expect to see you around here so soon. I thought I told you to take the week off. You really didn't have to-

She punches him in the face.

BOSS: (CONT'D)

God, please, someone help me! She's insane, the girl's gone mad! Someone call security! Help me!

EVA:

Stay back! Stay back all of you! You don't get it. You don't know who I am!

BOSS:

Stop! Eva, please! This isn't you speaking, it's the stress! Please, let's calm down here!

EVA:

I am speaking but you are not listening! You never listened to me! Never!

BOSS:

Well, we're listening Eva. We're all listening to you now.

EVA:

You are?

BOSS:

Yes. We are. Just...please...calm down.

EVA:

I am calm. Just as long as you all stay back, I'll be calm.

BOSS:

Good! Now please, speak! What ever it is you need to say, just say it and then please go!

EVA:

I have been over worked, under paid and pushed to my limits. I have been forgotten by my friends, humiliated by my superiors and surpassed by my peers. And still, after all that, you don't even know my name. I don't even have an identity. I gave my life to this firm and now I have nothing at all. Explain that.

BOSS:

Listen, I understand you're frustrated but I don't see what I can do? How much time off do you want? A week? A month? A year?

EVA:

No! Not time off. I don't need time off.

BOSS:

Well money. Everybody wants money. I'll write you a cheque. I'm a wealthy man, name your price!

EVA:

I'm not some whore; I have no price. I just need some closure. What happened to Eva Burgess.

BOSS:

I've told you! She died!

EVA:

How?



BOSS:

I don't know! She just did! It happens. People die.

EVA:

You don't care, do you? None of you do. You never did. You all ignored me when I was alive and now I'm dead I'm just as ignored. You'll still do your duty, put a reef on the grave, show your face for the wake, but you don't care. The worst bit though? The worst bit is that at least you were prepared to fake interest in me in death. You loved me more in death than you did in life. What does that say about me?

BOSS:

Miss Burgess...I think you should leave.

EVA:

What?

BOSS:

Get out! You're fired, okay! I tried sympathy but you just kept throwing it back in my face. Now get out!

EVA:

What? No! I'm not done.

BOSS:

No. You don't seem to understand at all. Why did you even come back here? No one wants to see you. No one ever wanted to see you here.

EVA:

I'm not finished!

BOSS:

What kind of person are you anyway?

EVA:

What do you mean?

BOSS:

What kind of person does a thing like this? Who the hell are you?

EVA:

Eva Burgess! I'm Eva Burgess!

BOSS:

I think you should leave.

EVA:

(begins leaving in fear)

Okay! I'm leaving!

BOSS:

Get out! Go! Leave! Don't come back! Never! Never come back!

SCENE 7

Eva enters her apartment. The room is entirely bare apart from black funeral clothes laid out on the bed. She is shocked. After a while of her looking amazed, the landlord enters.

LANDLORD:

Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't expect you to still be here. Are you waiting for someone?

EVA:

Why wouldn't I be here?

LANDLORD:

Well, you're leaving tonight, aren't you? I expected you'd be catching your train out of the city by now.

EVA:

My train?

LANDLORD:

Yes miss. The trains don't wait for you, miss Burgess.

EVA:

Oh...but where are all my things?

LANDLORD:

Things? What things?

EVA:

My pictures and my books and my clothes. My possessions. My things!

LANDLORD:

No things. This is all there is. All there ever was.

EVA:

Where is it? Where did you take all of it?

LANDLORD:

I assure you, I've taken nothing, miss. I am no common thief! It was left just as it always was. This room was always just as bare.

EVA:

But it was all here just a few hours ago before I left. The room was full.

LANDLORD:

I'm sure I don't know what you mean miss. There is nothing; there never was. I therefore have nothing left to say.

EVA:

No, I refuse to believe that! I think you have plenty to say, you're just not saying it! You can't keep getting away with this!

LANDLORD:

With what miss?

EVA:

I must believe this is all some kind of awful joke! And I am the butt of this joke, yes I have learned to accept that fact. However, please, let me keep my things. My books, my clothes. The pendant with my mothers photo. If nothing else, let me have that.

LANDLORD:

I'd love to help you miss, but there is no pendant. No books, no clothes. This room hasn't been furnished properly since the last tenant.

EVA:

The dead tenant? Eva Burgess?

LANDLORD:

Yes miss. That was the tenant before you.

EVA:

And she died.

LANDLORD:

Dead.

EVA:

How?

LANDLORD:

I don't know miss. I guess that's just the unfortunate circumstance of life. People die.

EVA:

What are these clothes doing here? They aren't mine.

LANDLORD:

Some one sent them for you. They arrived while you were out so I took the liberty of laying them out on your bed for you.

EVA:

But I don't wear black. I never wear black.

LANDLORD:  
Everyone wears black to funerals.

EVA:  
Who's funeral am I going to?

LANDLORD:  
Her funeral. The tenant.

EVA:  
Eva?

LANDLORD:  
That's right. Eva.

EVA:  
But I am Eva.

LANDLORD:  
You are *an* Eva.

EVA:  
The Eva. The only Eva. The only Eva that ever lived here and ever will! Is this a joke? Is this what it has been all along? Are you all playing me for a fool?

LANDLORD:  
What's that miss?

EVA:  
A joke? Are you playing me a joke, sir?

LANDLORD:  
No jokes, miss. Never any jokes.

EVA:  
Well, I'm not laughing anymore. I think the joke has worn thin and maybe you should all let it go now.

LANDLORD:  
I'm sorry miss. You don't live here anymore.

The Landlord opens the door, indicating she should leave.

EVA:  
It's a sick joke, that's what it is! A sick joke!

LANDLORD:  
You'll have to vacate the premises. This isn't your home anymore. This is no ones home anymore. Now, shouldn't you be leaving?

EVA:

For where? I have nowhere to go!

LANDLORD:

You are expected at the funeral.

EVA:

By who? Who would possibly want to see me now? After all this, who could want to have me present?

LANDLORD:

I don't know miss. I'm just following orders.

EVA:

Do you even know who's order you are following? Or do you merely except the word you hear from this faceless establishment?

LANDLORD:

I should be going miss. I have a lot shirts downstairs that need ironing. Many, many shirts and only one iron, miss.

EVA:

No, I'm not done with you!

LANDLORD:

No miss, but I am done with you. You don't live here anymore. You have no jurisdiction anymore. You aren't even on the system.

EVA:

What are you saying?

LANDLORD:

Your records are deleted. You no longer exist in our files. You're a ghost miss. Good night, miss Burgess.

EVA:

Don't leave, I'm not done with you! I still have a thousand questions left to ask.

LANDLORD:

Don't look to me. I have none of the answers you are looking for.

EVA:

Come back here! Come back! You can't leave, not now! Not yet! Come back! Come back!

She wildly bursts into hysterics and begins crying on her bed. Then she collects herself.

## SCENE 8

All actors apart from the boss are around an open grave with the vicar at the top and four on either side.

VICAR:

We are here today to mourn the passing of Miss Eva Burgess. A beloved colleague, a hard worker and most importantly, a friend. Before we subject her body to the depths of this cold earth, it is at the request of the deceased that a few words be spoken. Is Miss Burgess ready for her eulogy?

(There is a silence)

Is Miss Burgess here?

EVA:

Yes. I'm here but, I don't have any words prepared.

VICAR:

Well just hurry up and say something. I've got five of these to get through tonight.

EVA:

Right. I know it must seem strange to you that I should stand here tonight. I can assure you it is just as strange for me and I do not quite know what to say. I knew Eva very well but she didn't really know me at all. You see, this past day I have thought about her a lot and I think she would've wanted this. Yes, she definitely would've wanted this.

Eva pulls out the gun and points it to her own head. Everyone gasps in shock.

EVA:

I could plead my argument to you until my throat bleeds but I have seen that none of you care about what I have to say! You care about her! You care about what the dead girl has to say! I don't even believe she is in that grave, I believe she is here! She is me and you can call me mad all you like, but unless you start taking me more seriously I'm afraid I have no choice but to blow my fucking head off.

There is a silence and then a clapping from the back of the auditorium. The Boss is at the back, clapping and walks up to the stage through the aisle.

BOSS:

A confession! A confession! Do you hear it! She has confessed! The girl has confessed!

Everyone cheers and brings out party hats.

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Apprehend her!

POLICE OFFICER 2:

The girl must be apprehended!

EVA:

Stay back! I'll fire!

The Landlord come up behind her and takes the gun, points it at his own temples and fires. It clicks and he throws it in to the grave.

LANDLORD:

You fell for the old fake gun trick, miss.

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Oldest one in the book.

POLICE OFFICER 2:

They don't get much older.

BOSS:

Doctor, get the chair.

The doctor brings on an execution chair and side table on from off stage as the police officers apprehend Eva.

EVA:

It was a trap! I was set up! Isaac gave me the gun! He told me to do this!

BOSS:

Isaac?

POLICE OFFICER 1:

And who?

POLICE OFFICER 2:

Or what?

POLICE OFFICER 1:

Is an Isaac?

EVA:

The twins! Sir, they work for you sir! In the firm, the twins. It was the twins!

BOSS:

Twins? At the firm. I have never seen these so called twins in my life.

DOCTOR:  
I think the girl is deluded sir.

LANDLORD:  
Deluded? The girl is purely mad sir!

EVA:  
I'm not mad! This is all a horrible trick!

BOSS:  
Put her in the chair doctor!

DOCTOR:  
Of course.

EVA:  
The chair? What chair?

POLICE OFFICER 1:  
Miss Burgess, you are an enemy of the state.

POLICE OFFICER 2:  
And in accordance with procedure, you must be sentenced to the chair.

EVA:  
What are you going to do to me?

DOCTOR:  
This is your cure of course! We can't have lunatics like you roaming the streets.

BOSS:  
It's just not the done thing, you see?

EVA:  
I'm innocent, please! You have to believe me! I'm innocent!

BOSS:  
Begin the procedure doctor!

Music plays as the doctor begins drilling. A waiter walks around the room serving champagne and the vicar continues the procession, throwing dirt into the grave.

VICAR:  
Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in the sure and certain hope of eternal life. Amen!

ENSEMBLE:  
  
Raising glasses



Amen!

CURTAINS CLOSE AS MUSIC PLAYS AND EVA SCREAMS. THE MUSIC  
STOPS BUT EVA IS STILL SCREAMING.