

SCENE 1:

Summer time. A working class family's home in the East End of London. Present day.

(Whitney Houston "I Will Always Love You" is played while the house lights are on) We hear the sound of wedding bells. The lights fade up slowly.

Molly is wearing a wedding head-dress with everyday clothing and a bridegroom, wearing a suit, enters from stage right, as if they were coming out of a church after being married. Wedding guests run to meet them from stage right and left throwing confetti. The young couple and the wedding guests look gloriously happy. The couple move to the centre part of the blank stage and face the audience.

FX: *THE SOUND OF WEDDING BELLS FADE OUT SLOWLY.*

Suddenly Molly and the bridegroom begin to walk slowly backwards, away from each other, with sad expressions on their faces. The wedding guests split into two halves, one half slowly walks backwards behind Molly and the other half slowly walk backwards, behind the bridegroom, exiting stage left and right as they do. (Lights slowly fade). Molly removes her wedding head-dress and sits on the settee next to Joan. (Lights fade up).

SCENE 2:

The left half of the stage houses a front room. Against the back wall of this front room sits a settee, with one cushion. At the other end of the settee (the stage left side), is a table. On top of the table is a picture in a frame of Molly and her husband on their wedding day, a bottle of alcohol, a glass and a mobile phone. In the centre of the stage wall left, is a hallway entrance. On the other side of the hallway entrance against the wall is a chair. Sitting on the settee, stage left is Molly who is staring into space, on the other end of the settee is Joan sitting.

JOAN: Molly, Molly, you alright?

MOLLY: Oh, I'm sorry Joan, I was having a nasty daydream. What were you saying?

JOAN: I was telling you about when me and Stan got married. Well, as you know, he kept me waiting for an hour and when he did turn up he stunk of alcohol. It was only a registry office. We had our reception in that transport café opposite. You know that was the first time Stan shouted at me, in that cafe. Stan shouts at me all the time now. Stan shouts if I forget to put sugar in his tea. He still blames me for having our first, says it stopped his career in its tracks. Not like your Bill, he's so gentle. Your Bill works so hard, Stan's never worked since I married him. He just sits in front of the tale, with his fags and his betting slips.

MOLLY: *(Looks at her watch)* I must finish Bill's tea. He's late again.

FX: *MOLLY'S MOBILE PHONE RINGS.*

MOLLY: Excuse me. *(Molly answers her mobile phone)*. Hello. *(Pause)* I'm Mrs Molly Sweet. *(Pause - Molly stands up.)* Bill? What's happened to him? *(Pause)* Yes, my next door neighbour's here. Why? *(Pause)* I am sitting down. *(Pause)* Accident? *(Molly moves slowly toward the imaginary window and looks out at the street. Down stage from where she is standing. Joan stands up. Long pause. Lights fade. During the black out, a bottle of valium is placed on the table.)*

SCENE 3:

Lights fade up. Tilly sits on the wooden chair (where she delivers all her lines from in this scene), being helped by Johnnie and wipes her eyes with her handkerchief. After helping Tilly, Johnnie sits on the arm of the settee stage right. Joan stands near the settee, next to the hallway entrance. Standing either side of Joan is a female teenager and a male teenager. (In the background are two family members who just look sad but do not speak.) Molly takes off her outer clothing and exits through the hallway entrance, reappearing seconds later standing near the hallway entrance. A long silence. Molly stands in the corner of the room alone and isolated not touching anyone.

JOAN: Shall I put some music on? *(Pause)* *(To Jake)* Is this your girlfriend?

JAKE: No.....

JOAN: Do you fancy her?

JAKE: No...

JOAN: Yes you do. I've been watching how you have been looking at her. Wish my Stan would look at me like that. *(to Rosy)* Do you fancy him.

ROSY: No way.

JOAN: Well never mind. As long as you don't end up like me and Stan., he hates my guts.

MOLLY: Tilly, why don't you sit on the settee, you'll be more comfortable there.

TILLY: How can I be comfortable on a day like this!

MOLLY: Oh Tilly, I know it's hard, but please don't make it worse. Joan, have a seat. I have made some sandwiches.

JOAN: I'm starving. *(She sits down)*

JOHN: I can't stay, I've got to pop into the office. Then I've got to meet Sarah, we'll pop back if you like.

MOLLY: No, it is ok, do what you have to do.

(Long pause)

TILLY: There's so much more he could have done with his life. If only he gone into banking with his Dad and not into the building trade. He would have never been in that house when it collapsed. *(pause)* He'd be here now if he hadn't met you!

MOLLY: So it's my fault he's . . .

JOHN: For Christ's sake Mum it's no good arguing! Dad's gone and that is that!

TILLY: Why did it have to be my son! When he was a little boy he used to say "I'm cry-ning, instead of crying. *(She starts to cry)* What am I going to do now, now that I'm on my own again. Who's going to look after me . . . ?

JOHN: We'll look after you Nan.

TILLY: I'll never get over this, never, my life is ended.

MOLLY: No it's not Tilly.

TILLY: How do you know! I don't know why this had to happen to me! I've never done anybody any harm! It's just not fair! He was good to me. He always called in to see how I was. Now, what am I going to do?

JOHN: Don't worry Nan, I will call in to see you, more often.

TILLY: I'll always remember his smiling face. *(Pause)* I'm going to go home.

JOHN: I'll give you a lift Nan.

TILLY: Would you?

MOLLY: You're welcome to stay, Tilly.

(John moves over to help Tilly stand)

TILLY: No! I prefer my own bed! Besides I don't feel comfortable here!

(Tilly stands up and moves slowly across the room aided by John)

JOHN: I will try and pop in, later in the week Mum.

(Tilly exits with John stage right and so does Jake and Rosy and the two silent family members. Molly watches. Then Molly turns to Joan.)

JOAN: She shouldn't of said those things. The old cow.

MOLLY: (*giggling*) Oh, I'm sure she doesn't mean the things she says.....

JOAN: Why don't you come away on holiday with me?

MOLLY: Where to?

JOAN: Spain.

MOLLY: Spain.

JOAN: Yes Spain. I've been saving these tokens up from The Sun Newspaper. I only need one more and we could go.

MOLLY: What about Stan. Doesn't he want to go with you.

JOAN: Stan. He'll only go as far as Southend. (*pause*) I have to get back, to feed him.

MOLLY: Can't he get his own dinner.

JOAN: Cook! My Stan. He has a heart attack if I ask him to wash up. I'll leave him frozen dinners when I go to Spain (*Joan laughs*)

MOLLY: Joan, you've been a great support, thanks for all your help.

JOAN: Will you be alright? Shall I pop in later?

MOLLY: No I'll be fine. I just need to get some sleep. I've still got the sleeping tablets, the doctor gave me. (*She picks up the bottle of Valium*). Here they are. I'll just take one of these, if I need to.

(*Molly replaces the valium bottle, back on to the table*)

JOAN: See you later then Molly.

MOLLY: Yes ok Joan. Bye.

Joan exits stage right. Molly sits on the settee and holds her head in her hands for a few moments. Then she picks up the bottle of valium and looks at the bottle. She then pours herself a glass of alcohol and takes a drink, her hand shakes as she does so. She looks at the bottle of valium, then places the bottle of valium and the empty glass on the table and makes a makeshift bed, using the cushion and goes to sleep. As Molly sleeps, she begins to dream. She tosses and turns and cries out.

MOLLY: Bill, Bill!

(Bill appears in the hallway smiling.)

BILL: Molly.

MOLLY: Who's there?

BILL: It's alright don't be afraid.

MOLLY: Who is it?

BILL: It's me, Bill.

MOLLY: Is it really you . . . ?

BILL: Yes. . .

MOLLY: I must be dreaming.

BILL: It's no dream Molly, they let me come back. *(He moves closer to Molly.)*

MOLLY: Who let you come back?

BILL: I'm not allowed to say. They let me come back, because you were in so much pain.

MOLLY: I must be going mad.

BILL: You're not going mad.

MOLLY: What happened Bill?

BILL: Oh it's a long story.

MOLLY: Oh Bill I knew you would never leave me. I'm so happy you're back. *(She moves towards Bill)*

BILL: You're not allowed to touch me Molly. *(overstate next line)* Its so cold in here. Bill rubs his shoulders.

MOLLY: I've missed you at night, Bill. I've reached out for you, but then realised you were'nt there.

BILL: Oh Molly.

MOLLY: I love you Bill.

BILL: I love you Molly, but . . .

MOLLY: Before you came, I was dreaming about when we first met, do you remember?

BILL: How could I forget? It was at that disco, it was my sixteenth birthday. You wore pink.

MOLLY: That's right.

BILL: You were a great dancer.

MOLLY: So were you.

BILL: You were the best . . .

MOLLY: I wasn't the best . . .

BILL: *(overstate this line)* You could out dance any of them . . .

MOLLY: No I couldn't . . .

BILL: Yes you could . . .

FX: **MUSIC: "PAINT IT BLACK" BY THE ROLLING STONES.**

Lights dim. As the blank part of the stage starts to fill up with mist and a disco ball suspended centre stage starts to turn giving off shafts of coloured light. A Young Molly and a Young Bill enter stage right followed by a group of four couples (similar aged teenagers) including young Jake and young Rosy who are more prominent. Young Bill wears a pair of round rimmed glasses which are held together with a plaster and with Molly dances towards centre stage. They are now sixteen years of age and dance in the style of 1965. After a while the music ends and the couple stand together centre stage, facing the audience. While the crowd stand still. (please note: Molly & Bill could double here and play themselves as young people). The music fades out. (Young Bill has a stammer).

Y/BILL: Do you come here often?

Y/MOLLY: Every Saturday night.

Y/BILL: It's fantastic here, isn't it?

Y/MOLLY: It's alright.

Y/BILL: Are you on your own?

Y/MOLLY: No, *(Molly looks off stage right)* I'm with my girlfriend.

Y/BILL: I'm with my mates.

Y/MOLLY: I wonder where she can be . . .

Y/BILL: I . . .

Y/MOLLY: Can't see her . . .

Y/BILL: I was . . .

Y/MOLLY: She said she'd meet me back here . . .

Y/BILL: I was wondering, if you'd like to come to the pictures with me tomorrow night.

Y/MOLLY: Ok.

Y/BILL: *(He does not realise what Young Molly has said)* They're showing, "The Blob From Outer Space. *(Now he realises)* Oh, fantastic. I'll meet you outside the Odeon at 7.

Y/MOLLY: Ok.

Y/BILL: Fantastic! I've seen it before. A meteor hits earth. And out crawls this blob! It starts to grow and invades this cinema and eats the people!

Y/MOLLY: Where is she? What groups do you like?

Y/BILL: Err, the Rolling Stones. *(He imitates Mick Jagger and tries to sing)* I can't get no satisfaction.

Y/MOLLY: Do you like the Beatles?

Y/BILL: Yer.

Y/MOLLY: I like George Harrison best, he's really sweet.

Y/BILL: I like John Lennon. *(He stands tall pretending to play a guitar and sings)* Help, I need somebody, Help.

Y/MOLLY: Would you like to kiss me? *(She pushes her head forward, playfully possibly)*

Y/BILL: Help I nee...What!? What did you say?

Y/MOLLY: Would you like to kiss me?

Y/BILL: Yes.

Y/MOLLY: Come on then. *(She moves further forward and pouts her lips possibly)*

Y/BILL: I will.

Y/MOLLY: What you waiting for then? (*Mollys head is now in the air*)

Y/BILL: I'm not.

Y/MOLLY: I'll count to three.

Y/BILL: Wait a minute. (*He kisses Molly*)

Lights fade. Young Bill, Molly & Crowd exit

SCENE 4:

Lights fade up.

MOLLY: I was so confident then, now look at me . . .

BILL: And I was so shy.

MOLLY: I fell in love with you Bill.

BILL: I fell in love with you Molly but, Molly you must . . .

MOLLY: You know I have been so tired since you've been away.

BILL: Well rest now Molly. Lay down. Lie down and rest.

Molly moves back to the settee and lays down. Bill gently moves towards her and kneels down on the floor in front of her.

MOLLY: You're so sweet Bill I knew you'd come back.

BILL: Close your eyes and rest Molly.

Molly falls asleep. After a few moments, Bill stands up and walks backwards, exiting through the hallway entrance. Lights slowly fade. Molly exits through the hallway entrance.

SCENE 5:

Lights slowly fade up. Molly slowly enters from the hallway entrance wearing a different dress and carrying a wedding album, she places the wedding album on the settee and moves towards the door and picks up the post. Molly opens the bills one at a time, with a disturbed expression. After she has looked at them, she puts the bills under the cushion on the settee. Molly exits through the hallway entrance and returns with a vase of flowers and a duster and stands near the table.

MOLLY: I bought these from the market today Bill, don't they smell lovely? *(Molly puts the vase of flowers on the table and begins to dust the surface of the table. Molly then picks up the photograph of her and her husband on their wedding day and sits down on the settee and looks at the photograph. You know our friends don't come round any more. When I'm out, if I see one of our friends coming towards me, they cross the street. (Pause) I've still got all your clothes and your John Wayne DVD's ready for when you do come back. Come back Bill I know you're still alive. It's been three months since I saw you last. (Pause) (Molly looks out of the window) You know Bill I hate sunny days.*

Molly sits looking at the photograph. John (in a different expensive suit and carrying a different mobile phone) and Joan enter stage right. They walk to Molly's front door and watch Molly.

JOHN: How has she been coping Joan?

JOAN: Well, she don't go out no more. I've said, why don't you come to Bingo with me, but she won't listen, she just stays in and mopes. She'd have a laugh at bingo.

JOHN: Mmmmm.

JOAN: You work in the stock market don't you.

JOHN: Yes. I sell millions of pounds worth of stock and shares every day.

JOAN: My Stan brought me a premium bond when we first got married, but I've never won anything.

JOHN: Really. *(Pause)* Mum.

MOLLY: Oh, hello John, hello Joan, this is a nice surprise. Are you coming in?

JOAN: I won't Molly. I just popped over to borrow a cup of sugar. Its for Stan he's got a sweet tooth.

MOLLY: Oh, come in and I'll get you some.

Joan and John go into the house. Molly goes into the hallway entrance and returns with a cup of sugar.

MOLLY: There you go Joan.

JOAN: Thanks Molly, I'll bring the cup straight back.

MOLLY: Oh no, don't worry.

JOAN: No, I will.

MOLLY: Ok then.

Joan exits stage right. Molly picks up her duster and dusts the furniture.

MOLLY: Are you stopping?

JOHN: I can't Mum.

MOLLY: You work too hard.

JOHN: Look Mum I've got something to say..... . . .

MOLLY: How's Sarah?

JOHN: Oh, she's fine. *(Pause)* Look Mum, I'm worried about you living here on your own . . .

MOLLY: And how's Sarah's mother?

JOHN: Ok! Mum look! I think, I think this house is too big for you now that Dads gone.

Bill appears in the hallway entrance, with his arms folded.

BILL: Don't listen to him Molly.

MOLLY: Bill.

BILL: *(overstate next line)* Have you got the heating on *(Bill rubs his arms, he's cold)*.

MOLLY: Yes.

JOHN: Who you talking to?

MOLLY: Your Father.

JOHN: Don't be silly.

BILL: She's not silly.

MOLLY: Shhhhssssssss

JOHN: Don't shhhhssssssss me. Dad's gone.

MOLLY: Dad's talking to me.

JOHN: Well what's he saying then?

BILL: You're a tosser.

MOLLY: I can't tell you.

JOHN: Go on, tell me what he said.

MOLLY: I can't.

JOHN: No because he doesn't exist.

MOLLY: Doesn't Sarah's mother have to go in for some tests?

JOHN: Yes! But look Mum, Dad's gone and you have to face facts.

MOLLY: How old is she. She must be getting on.

JOHN: You're on your own here. Why don't you sell up and come and live near me.

BILL: Live near you in Docklands?