

'About Time'

A one act play

By Jim Blythe

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Characters

Dani
Guy
Don
Celia
X

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GUY AND DANI ARE ASLEEP IN BED. AFTER A FEW SECONDS THERE IS THE SOUND OF SOMEONE TRYING TO OPEN A LOCKED DOOR.THEY ARE UNSUCCESSFUL. THERE IS A LOUD KNOCKING AT THE DOOR WHICH DOESN'T WAKE THEM UP. FINALLY THERE IS THE SOUND OF GLASS BREAKING AND THE DOOR BEING FORCED DURING WHICH DANI WAKES UP WITH A START. HER EYES DART AROUND THE ROOM.

DANI. (QUIETLY) Guy? Guy did you hear something?

GUY DOESN'T WAKE UP. DANI IS SILENT FOR A FEW SECONDS LISTENING. WHEN SHE DOESN'T HEAR ANYTHING SHE BEGINS TO RELAX. THERE IS THE SOUND OF SOMETHING BEING KNOCKED OVER IN ANOTHER PART OF THE HOUSE. DANI STARTS AND SHAKES GUY.

DANI. Guy, wake up. Wake up!

GUY WAKES UP.

GUY. What? What's wrong?

DANI. Shhhh!

GUY. You woke me up to tell me to be quiet?

DANI. Keep your voice down!

GUY. Why, what's wrong?

DANI. I heard noises.

GUY. What sort of noises?

DANI. Bad sorts of noises.

GUY. Bad sorts of noises?

DANI. Someone breaking into the flat sort of noises.

GUY. Yeah, they're bad sorts of noises.

GUY LISTENS HARD BUT THERE IS SILENCE.

GUY. Except in this case they might well have been imaginary sorts of noises.

DANI. I didn't imagine it.

GUY. Well, there's no noise now is there?

DANI. No, because they've broken in now - the noisy bit is done.

*THERE IS THE SOUND OF SOMEONE TRIPPING OVER AND
KNOCKING SOMETHING OVER, OFF.*

DANI. Or maybe not.

GUY. It's probably just my dad wandering around the flat again - you know what he's like.

DANI. Yes I do. And the first thing he always does is wander in here.

GUY. I have told him about that.

DANI. Well tell him again. It's just not right.

GUY. He's harmless.

DANI. Oh, it's ok for you - you're not the one he keeps perverting at.

GUY. My dad does not perv.

DANI STARES AT HIM, EYEBROWS RAISED.

GUY. OK, maybe he does. A bit. I'll talk to him again tomorrow.

THERE IS ANOTHER SMASH FROM OFF.

DANI. That's not him; he'd have been in here by now.

GUY. Mum then.

DANI. It's not your mother - she sleeps through earthquakes for God's sake. And anyway, I heard someone actually breaking in.

***GUY GETS OUT OF BED PULLING ON A T-SHIRT AS HE
DOES SO.***

GUY. OK then, call the police.

DANI. What are you going to do?

GUY. I don't know.

GUY LOOKS AROUND FOR SOMETHING THAT COULD BE USED AS A WEAPON. HE PICKS UP A HEAVY LOOKING ORNAMENT.

DANI. What are you going to do with that?

GUY. Just in case. Call the police.

*THERE IS THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS OFF. SOMEONE IS CREEPING TOWARDS THE BEDROOM DOOR. **DANI** GRABS HER MOBILE PHONE FROM THE SIDE OF THE BED AND SHAKILY STARTS CALLING 999. **GUY** PUTS HIS FINGER TO HIS LIPS AND CREEPS TO THE SIDE OF THE STAGE. THE FOOTSTEPS ARE CLOSER NOW. THEY STOP JUST THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BEDROOM DOOR. AFTER A TENSE MOMENT THERE IS A CREAKING NOISE AS THE BEDROOM DOOR IS OPENED. **X** ENTERS QUIETLY. HE SEES **DANI** SAT UP AND SMILES.*

X. Hullo. Where's Guy?

*AS **X** HAS ENTERED **GUY** HAS RAISED THE ORNAMENT. HE BRINGS IT DOWN ON **X'S** HEAD KNOCKING HIM DOWN. **DANI** CRIES OUT.*

GUY. Shit!

DANI. What did you do that for?

GUY. I got carried away.

GUY KNEELS BY **X** CHECKING HIM OVER.

GUY. Shit!

DANI. What?

GUY. He's dead.

DANI. Dead?

GUY. Uh-huh.

DANI. No.

GUY. Yes.

DANI. Shit!

DANI GETS OUT OF BED AND MOVES TO JOIN GUY. SHE DOESN'T GET TOO CLOSE TO X.

DANI. Are you sure?

GUY. Well he's not breathing and that's usually a sign.

DANI. What did you go and hit him for?

GUY. I don't know; I panicked.

DANI. Do you know him?

GUY. Why would I know him?

DANI. He knew you. He asked where you were.

GUY. That's true.

DANI. Put the light on.

GUY SWITCHES THE LIGHT ON. X IS LYING DEAD, FACE DOWN.

DANI. Do you recognise him?

GUY. Not at first glance.

DANI. Turn him over.

GUY. OK.

GUY RELUCTANTLY ROLLS X OVER.

DANI. Well?

GUY. Never seen him before in my life.

DANI. So how did he know you?

GUY. I don't know. Look, is it really that important?

DANI. It might explain why he broke into our flat.

GUY. Never mind that; we've just killed someone - what are we going to do?

DANI. Sorry, no. *We* have not killed anyone. You're the one who smacked him round the head.

GUY. I was protecting you.

DANI. Oh thanks.

GUY. Don't mention it. What are we going to do?

DANI. We'd better call the police.

GUY. No, don't do that.

DANI. Why not?

GUY. Well, duh! We just killed someone.

DANI. *You* just killed someone.

GUY. *You* could be just a little bit more supportive.

DANI. Well what else are we supposed to do?

GUY. We could hide the body.

DANI. We are not hiding the body.

GUY. We could take him down to the river and dump him in.

DANI. No, absolutely not.

GUY. Why not?

DANI. Because we could end up in a whole lot of trouble.

GUY. Whereas right now we're just peachy.

DANI. At least right now we can claim self-defence.

GUY. I could go to prison for this. I can't go to prison.

DANI. You won't go to prison baby, calm down.

DANI PUTS AN ARM AROUND GUY WHO IS BEGINNING TO SHAKE AS SHOCK SETS IN. SHE LEADS HIM TO THE BED AND THEY SIT.

GUY. It could happen if you phone the police.

DANI. Guy, we've got to.

GUY. No.

DANI. Yes.

GUY. No, alright. I am putting my bloody foot down on this one - we are not phoning the police.

DANI. And I'm putting my bloody foot down - we are not hiding the body.

GUY. Well, what are we going to do then?

*GUY'S FATHER, **DON**, WONDERS IN LOOKING A BIT BLEARY-EYED.*

DON. What's all the commotion in here, then?

GUY. Dad, get out.

DON. (*NOTICING X*) Oh, sorry, didn't realise you had a friend over.

GUY. Will you stop just wandering into our bedroom, please!

DON. Only I heard quite a bit of noise and I thought I'd better see if you were ok.

***DON** IS NONE TO SUBTLY OGLING **DANI** IN HER NIGHTDRESS. SHE SCOWLS AND PULLS ON A DRESSING GOWN.*

DANI. We're fine. Everything's fine.

DON. Your friend doesn't look fine.

DANI. Go back to bed Don.

DON. He looks out for the count.

***DON** KNEELS BY **X** CHECKING HIM OVER.*

GUY. Leave him Dad.

DON. Oh, dear Lord - I think he's dead.

*GUY'S MOTHER, **CELIA**, WONDERS IN LOOKING A BIT BLEARY-EYED.*

CELIA. What's going on in here?

GUY. Oh no, Mum - go back to bed.

CELIA. Whatever's going on?

DON. I think they've killed someone dear.

DANI. *They?*

CELIA. Killed someone?

DON. I think so. He's definitely dead.

CELIA. How do you know?

DON. Well he's not breathing and that's usually a sign.

CELIA. Well, what are you doing killing someone?

GUY. We didn't mean to; it was an accident.

DANI. Again with the "we"! Look, he broke into the house and Guy hit him.

CELIA. Why did you hit him?

GUY. I don't know.

DANI. He was defending us.

DON. Oh, so he was attacking you.

GUY. No.

DANI. Yes.

GUY. Yes.

CELIA. Oh dear.

DANI. We were just about to call the police.

GUY. No we weren't.

DANI. Yes, we were.

CELIA. Phone the police? Oh no, I don't think that'd be a very good idea, do you dear?

DON. No dear.

CELIA. No.

DANI. What? Why not?

CELIA. Because you'll be in lot of trouble.

GUY. That's what I said.

DANI. But we were just defending ourselves.

CELIA. Yes but that's not going to be much defence. Look what happened to that farmer.

DANI. That was different - that farmer had a gun and was shooting at people running away from him.

CELIA. But he still went to prison dear.

DANI. We can't just not tell anyone.

CELIA. Why not?

DANI. What are we supposed to do instead?

CELIA. Hide the body.

DANI. Hide the...no!

CELIA. It's the only sensible thing to do.

GUY. That's what I said.

CELIA. Good boy.

DANI. We can't hide the body.

CELIA. Course we can, can't we dear?

DON. Yes dear. I can get that seen to.

DANI. You?

DANI GLANCES DOWN AT ***DON*** FOR THE FIRST TIME AND NOTICES THAT HE IS TRYING TO LOOK UP HER DRESSING GOWN. SHE PULLS IT TIGHTER AROUND HERSELF AND WALKS AWAY.

DON. Aye. I know someone who crushes cars - he can get rid of it. (*TO CELIA*) We can take a drive out there tomorrow dear; it'll be nice.

CELIA. Lovely.

DANI. I don't believe this - you're not seriously planning on dumping the body and not telling anyone?

CELIA. I think it's for the best, don't you dear?

DON. Oh definitely. If we're going to dump the body we shouldn't tell anyone.

CELIA. That's right. Guy?

GUY. I think we should dump it.

CELIA. He's such a good boy.

DANI. Don't be such a mummy's boy - this is wrong.

GUY. I don't want to go to prison Dani.

*THERE IS A LONG PAUSE AS **DANI** WRESTLES WITH HER CONSCIENCE.*

GUY. Please?

DANI. (*DEFEATED*) Alright. But I don't want to know anything about it.

GUY. Thank you.

***GUY** PUTS AN ARM AROUND **DANI** BUT SHE IS STIFF AND COLD.*

DON. Alright then - I'll get it all sorted out in the morning.

DANI. In the morning?

DON. If that's alright.

DANI. No, it's not alright Don - none of this is alright. But if we're going to go ahead with this sick scheme of yours I want this body out of here now.

DON. But it's the middle of the night!

DANI. I would have thought that was an ideal time for moving dead bodies.

CELIA. She might be right dear.

DON. Oh, I suppose so.

CELIA. And be fair, no one want to spend the night with a dead body in their bedroom now, do they?

DON. Alright. Come on then lad, give us a lift.

GUY AND DON LIFT X AND CARRY HIM OFF.

CELIA. Oh well, I'm off back to bed. Good night dear.

DANI. Yes. Goodnight.

CELIA. Sweet dreams.

CELIA EXITS. DANI SITS ON THE BED THINKING. SHE PICKS UP HER PHONE AND BEGINS TO DIAL THE POLICE. SHE STOPS, CHEW HER LIP AND THEN PUTS THE PHONE DOWN. DANI DROPS HER HEAD INTO HER HANDS AND HER SHOULDERS HEAVE A FEW TIMES AS THE LIGHTS DROP.

BLACKOUT. AFTER A FEW MOMENTS SILENCE WE CAN HEAR A WELL KNOWN TV THEME TUNE AND SOME DIALOGUE THIS CHANGES QUICKLY A COUPLE OF TIMES AS THE CHANNEL IS CHANGED.

AS THE LIGHTS COME UP, THE STAGE IS LIT FOR DAYTIME THE NEXT DAY. GUY IS SLUMPED IN A CHAIR, CHANNEL HOPPING ON THE TV. IT IS CLEAR FROM HIS BODY LANGUAGE THAT HE ISN'T PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO IT. HE SETTLES ON THE NEWS.

VOICE. ...increasing reports of lights in the sky and sightings of unidentified flying objects. A spokesman for the Government has described these reports as ridiculous and hysterical although there is increasing amounts of photographic evidence to support these sightings...

THERE IS THE SOUND OF A KEY IN THE LOCK AND A DOOR OPENING, OFF.

DANI. (OFF) Hi.

GUY. (CALLS) Hi.

DANI ENTERS. SHE IS DRESSED FOR WORK. SHE PERCHES ON THE ARM OF GUY'S CHAIR.

DANI. You alright.

DANI GIVES HIM A KISS WHICH HE HALF-HEARTIDLY RETURNS.

GUY. Mmm.

DANI. (*SHORT SILENCE*) I've felt horrible all day.

GUY. I know.

DANI. What have we done?

GUY. It wasn't our fault.

DANI. We should've gone to the police.

GUY. Not this again.

GUY USES THE REMOTE TO SWITCH OFF THE TV.

DANI. I can't help it - it's just eating away at me.

GUY. It'd be worse if we'd gone to the police.

DANI. How?

GUY. We'd have been in the cells all night. We'd be going to court. We'd probably end up inside.

DANI. We might still.

GUY. We won't. No one knows.

DANI. What if someone finds out?

GUY. Who's going to find out?

DANI. I don't know.

GUY. And how would they anyway?

DANI. They could find the body.

GUY. No one's going to find the body - it's been taken care of, alright?

DANI. No, it's not alright. Who was he? How did he know you?

GUY. I don't know. I don't care.

DANI. But he knew us - I'm sure of it. And when he spoke, he wasn't threatening us.

GUY. So?

DANI. So... I don't know. Why was he here?

GUY. He was a burglar.

DANI. But he wasn't burgling anything. Nothing's been touched.

GUY. Apart from the stuff he broke.

DANI. But they look more like accidents.

GUY. So... so, what?

DANI. I don't know. I don't. I just feel like there's something more to this.

GUY. Like what?

DANI. I just said - I don't know.

GUY. Look, it's too late to worry about it now. We've just got to keep our mouths shut and it'll be alright.

DANI. Alright?

GUY. Yes.

DANI. I don't know if it'll ever be alright Guy.

GUY. What do you mean?

DANI. You might be able to handle getting away with murder - I don't know if I can.

GUY. Well, as you were so keen to point out last night, you didn't murder him did you!

DANI. No, but...

GUY. But nothing. Look just shut up about it ok.

DANI. So, we just forget all about it do we?

GUY. Yes. We do.

DANI GLARES AT GUY FOR A MOMENT BEFORE GETTING UP AND WALKING OFF. SECONDS LATER WE HEAR THE DOOR BEING SLAMMED. GUY LOOKS THOUGHTFUL FOR A MOMENT AND LOOKS ABOUT TO GO AFTER HER, THEN CHANGES HIS MIND. WHILST GUY STARES FORWARD INTO SPACE WE HEAR THE DOOR BURST OPEN AGAIN. X ENTERS AT PACE. HEARING THE NOISES, GUY ASSUMES DANI HAS RETURNED.

GUY. Look, I'm sorry honey, I didn't mean to... you know.

X. Oh that's alright babycakes, don't worry about it.

GUY SWINGS ROUND IN HIS SEAT. HE SEES X AND CRIES OUT IN SHOCK. X MEANWHILE IS LOOKING AROUND THE ROOM IN ANNOYANCE.

GUY. Argh!

X. It's alright, I'm back.

GUY BEGINS HYPERVENTALATING AND POINTING AT X .HE IS TRYING TO FORM ARTICULATE SENTENCES BUT CANNOT GET THE WORDS OUT.

GUY. You... you...

X. Where the hell is everybody? I thought I made it pretty clear that...

GUY. You shouldn't be here.

X. What? Oh, yes, sorry about that. Dani didn't shut the door properly and I just sort of dashed in. Was that a bit rude?

GUY IS BACK TO MOUTHING WORDS, UNABLE TO GET SPEECH OUT.

X. It was a bit rude. Still, no harm done, eh?

X BEGINS TO DASH AROUND THE ROOM SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING.

GUY. You can't be here.

X. Hmmm?

GUY. You can't be here.

X. Oh not this again. Guy, I can't explain this to you every time we meet.

GUY. Every time we meet?

X. We've been through this before and time is short.

***X STOPS SEARCHING AND SWINGS ROUND 360 DEGREES
IN FRUSTRATION.***

X. I take it we haven't found it then?

GUY. *(BEGINNING TO GET REALLY HYSTERICAL)* What do you mean? What do you want?

X. *(TO HIMSELF)* It's got to be here somewhere.

GUY. *(SHOUTS)* What do you want?

***X IS IRRITATED BUT TRIES TO KEEP HIS TEMPER IN
CHECK.***

X. Guy, this is very important so I need you to keep that crazy little brain of yours under some kind of control, alright?

GUY. I'm sorry...I'm sorry...I'm so sorry...

X. *(MOVING TOWARDS GUY)* That's alright, just try to pay attention.

GUY. No, get away from me.

***GUY SCRAMBLES ROUND THE CHAIR TO MAKE A BARRIER
BETWEEN HIM AND X.***

X. Oh for goodness sake.

GUY. It was an accident, I'm sorry, please leave me alone.

X. Accident? What are you talking about - you attacked me.

GUY. I didn't mean to... I thought you were... *(BREAKS DOWN)* I'm so sorry.

X. *(SOOTHINGLY)* It's alright, I know you are you poor, crazy bastard. And it's all fixed now; no harm done.

GUY. Why are you here? What do you want?

X. You know what I want.

GUY. I don't.

X. Yes you do.

GUY. I don't, I swear. Please don't hurt me.

X. Hurt you? Why on earth would I hurt you?

GUY. Because... because of... what I did.

X. What you did doesn't matter Guy, I've sorted it all out and here I am, back again.

GUY. But how are you here? You can't be here.

X. I have to be here, you know that.

GUY. But why?

X. Do you remember last time I was here?

GUY NODS RELUCTANTLY, MUTE WITH FEAR.

X. Remember what happened?

GUY NODS AGAIN AND WHIMPERS SLIGHTLY.

X. Then you know why I'm here.

GUY. What are you going to do to me?

X. Save you of course. If I can.

X RESUMES HIS HUNT AROUND THE ROOM.

GUY. Save me?

X. Yes, save you. Am I really going to have to go through all this again?

GUY. All what again?

X. Isn't there anyone else here I could talk to?

GUY. Anyone else?

X. Yes, anyone at all would do, provided they're sane. Saner than you anyway.

GUY. Saner than me?

X. I know; that's setting the bar pretty low but needs must. *(PAUSE)* Well?

GUY. Well what?

X. Is there anyone else here? I saw Dani go out, although where she was dashing off to at a time like this I can't imagine, but what about Don? Or Celia?

GUY. How do you know my parents?

X. Oh, they're your parents. That makes sense. The same way I know you.

GUY. But how do you know me? How do you know Dani? How do you know any of us?

X. *(IRRITATED)* Because we've met before.

GUY. But you knew us then as well.

X. What?

GUY. Look, I don't know what's going on but please just leave me alone. Please.

X. I will Guy, I will just as soon as I find it. Unless anyone else has found it yet. Have they? Is that why they've all cleared off?

GUY. Found what?

X. Tsk! If I knew that I wouldn't be hunting your house would I! It's got to be here somewhere. Maybe I could try in here?

X MOVES TOWARDS THE EXIT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STAGE WHICH WILL TAKE HIM STRAIGHT PAST GUY WHO COWERS.

GUY. No, just get out. Please. Leave me alone.

GUY BEGINS SOBBING. X LOOKS AT GUY AND THEN ROUND THE FLAT, FRUSTRATION ALL OVER HIS FACE.

X. Look we don't have time for this Guy, alright? Just let me...

GUY. No!

GUY GRABS FOR SOMETHING TO USE AS A WEAPON AND FINDS THE SAME ORNAMENT HE KILLED X WITH EARLIER. HE SWINGS AT X WITH IT. X BACKS AWAY.

X. Guy, please...

GUY. Get out. Get out. Leave me alone.

X. Alright. I'll go. I'll try to nip back in a bit when you're a bit calmer. Or preferably out.

GUY. No!

X. Out might be better!

WITH ONE LAST GLANCE AROUND X LEAVES.

BLACKOUT.

WHEN THE LIGHTS COME UP, GUY IS SAT IN THE CHAIR STARING INTO SPACE WITH A STRANGE SMILE ON HIS FACE. WE HEAR THE DOOR OPENING, OFF AND A FEW MOMENTS LATER DON AND CELIA ENTER.

CELIA. Hello dear.

DON. Alright son?

GUY. Hello. How's your day been?

DON. *(GABBLING, A BIT NERVOUS)* Oh fine, yes, all fine. Everything's been taken care of and it's all fine.

CELIA. Don! Are you alright Guy?

GUY. I'm good. Fine. Great.

GUY IS STEELING HIMSELF TO ASK SOMETHING IMPORTANT BUT THROUGH THE NEXT SPEECH CANNOT GET A WORD IN.

CELIA. Good.

DON. Dani not about?

GUY. Oh. No. She popped out a while ago.

DON. *(DISAPPOINTED)* I see.

CELIA. Popped out? And left you on your own after what you've been through!

GUY. It's alright mum...

CELIA. No it isn't. Popped out indeed! Did she make you any tea?

GUY. Well, no but I can make my own...

CELIA. Tsk! So you haven't even eaten, my poor little soldier?

GUY. No, but it's ok, I'm not hungry.

CELIA. It's not ok. Obviously you're hungry. It's just a bit of shock. What would you like?

GUY. Nothing, honestly. I mean, I can make you something if you're...

CELIA. Oh no, we've already eaten – we're not hungry are we dear?

DON. No dear.

CELIA. No, we ate whilst we were out. We stopped in on Lily and Michael didn't we dear?

DON. Yes dear.

CELIA. You know Lily and Michael don't you Guy?

GUY. I don't think so.

CELIA. Course you do. Lily is Tom and Sylvie's eldest. She's quite a lovely girl isn't she dear, very charming.

DON. Yes dear.

CELIA. Yes, very lovely. We've taken quite a dislike to her haven't we?

DON. Yes dear, you have.

CELIA. Course Michael wasn't there today, was he dear?

DON. No.

CELIA. Which was nice - he's quite dull really isn't he?

DON. Dull, yes.

GUY HAS FINALLY HAD ENOUGH AND BUTTS IN.

GUY. Dad, what happened last night?

DON. Oh I don't think we need to talk about that, do we dear?

CELIA. I don't think so dear, no.

GUY. I do. Please. I need to know.

CELIA. But why?

GUY. Because he's not dead.

CELIA. Who's not dead?

GUY. The man from last night.

DON. What, the one who you killed?

CELIA. Don!

DON. Sorry.

GUY. I didn't kill him, he's not dead.

CELIA. Why do you say that?

GUY. Because he was here earlier. I saw him. He spoke to me.

DON AND CELIA BOTH LOOK SADLY AT GUY.

CELIA. Dear, oh dear.

GUY. Don't look at me like that – it's true.

CELIA. I'm sure you think it's true but...

GUY. He came in here a couple of seconds after Dani left and spoke to me.

CELIA. Guy, he...

GUY. But it's brilliant because that means he's alive. We didn't kill anyone.

CELIA. Don, why don't you call your little man dear, just make sure everything's fine.

DON. Everything is fine; the lad's just gone mad.

CELIA. Just check quickly though, eh?

DON. Oh alright then.

DON PULLS A MOBILE PHONE FROM HIS POCKET. HE HOLDS IT AT ARMS LENGTH TO OPERATE, LOOKING RATHER BLANKLY AT IT. AS HE DOES SO HE EXITS.

CELIA. We had a rather lovely drive today dear.

GUY. Really? Where did you go?

CELIA. We went to a little place called Banthorpe, out in the country.

GUY. Right. What's in Banthorpe?

CELIA. Nothing.

GUY. Nothing?

CELIA. Nothing at all. Rather a dull little place really; wouldn't recommend it.

GUY. So why did you go there?

CELIA. Well we had to see to your little bit of... business from last night.

GUY. Ah!

CELIA. But whilst we were there we decided to go for a little look around.

GUY. But there wasn't much to see?

CELIA. No, not really. We did have a little stroll round the mill.

GUY. Oh right, so there's a mill?

CELIA. That's right dear, a rather charming old mill. Beautifully kept it is in some rather lovely public gardens.

GUY. Public gardens?

CELIA. Yes, we strolled around there for a while and then went to the tearooms.

GUY. But I thought you said...

CELIA. Then we nipped over the road and had a look around the brewery.

GUY. There's a brewery too?

CELIA. Oh yes. Just a short walk from the printers.

GUY. A printers?

CELIA. Yes. Then we went into the shopping centre.

GUY. Right. It sounds like there's actually quite a lot in Banthorpe.

CELIA. Oh yes, it's a bustling place – you really should go and have a look at it sometime.

GUY. (*WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM*) Perhaps we will.

CELIA. Oh and you must go soon. They've got some of these crop circles thingies.

GUY. Crop circles?

CELIA. Yes, you know dear. Those shapes in the fields that loonies say are caused by spaceships landing.

GUY. Probably just somebody messing about cos of all these UFO sightings lately.

CELIA. More likely somebody is trying to make Banthorpe seem interesting. Ha! Good luck to them.

GUY GIVES CELIA A STRANGE LOOK. THERE IS THE SOUND OF A KEY IN THE LOCK AND A DOOR OPENING, OFF.

DANI. (*OFF*) Hi.

GUY. (*CALLS*) We're in here babe.

DANI ENTERS LOOKING LIKE SHE HAS BEEN CRYING. SHE MOVES STRAIGHT TO GUY AND THEY HUG.

GUY. I'm sorry.

DANI. Me too.

GUY. You ok?

DANI. Yeah. You?

GUY. Yeah. And don't worry, it's all ok.

DANI. So you keep saying. I'm just so worried.

GUY. No don't be – it's really all ok.

DANI. What?

CELIA. Guy dear, maybe you shouldn't...

GUY. Shut up mum.

CELIA. Well, really!

GUY. It's ok – he's not dead.

DANI. What?

GUY. The bloke from last night – he's alive.

DANI. You're sure?

CELIA. Oh dear!

GUY. He came here today; he was looking for something.

DANI. Did he say what?

GUY. No – does it matter?

DANI. I suppose not. You're sure?

GUY. Course I'm sure. It shat me up I can tell you.

DANI. Was he angry?

GUY. Didn't seem to be. So you see, it's all ok – we didn't kill anyone.

DANI. Guy, that's brilliant. (*RELIEVED*) Oh God. That has been the worst day of my life.

DANI HUGS GUY AS DON ENTERS PUTTING HIS PHONE AWAY. DANI RUSHES OVER AND HUGS CELIA, WHO LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLE. DON HOLDS HIS ARMS OPEN FOR A HUG WITH A GRIN ON HIS FACE. DANI STEPS INTO THE HUG. AFTER A FEW SECONDS SHE LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLY DOWN AS DON HOLDS HIS GROIN TO HER. SHE PUSHES HERSELF AWAY WITH A TIGHT SMILE.

DON. What's all this then? Hugs for everyone?

DANI. Hasn't Guy told you? That man who broke in; he's not dead.

DON. Yes he is.

DANI. He's not.

DON. He definitely is.

DANI. (*TO GUY*) You said he's definitely not.

GUY. He is definitely not.

DANI. See?

DON. What does that prove?

DANI. (*STUMPED*) Well...nothing but...Guy says...

DANI *GLANCES OVER GUY'S SHOULDER AT CELIA, WHO IS INDICATING THAT GUY IS MAD.*

DANI. But you saw him? Guy? You definitely saw him?

GUY. He was right here.

DANI. But...

DON. Look, son, I've just spoken to Malcolm at the garage.

GUY. So?

DON. The body's there.

GUY. What?

DON. It's there. At the garage. He's just about to... take care of it.

GUY. No! That can't be. He was here. I spoke to him.

DANI. Guy?

GUY. He came right through that door.

CELIA. Don't be silly Guy. You heard your father; he's dead.

DON. Definitely dead.

DANI. Definitely?

DON. Definitely.

GUY. No!

GUY CURLS UP INTO A BALL AND STARTS SHAKING AS HE STARTS TO GO COMPLETELY MAD. CELIA AND DANI BOTH GO TO COMFORT HIM AND AFTER A BIT OF JOSTLING BOTH MANAGE TO GET AN ARM AROUND HIM, FROWNING AT EACH OTHER.

DANI. Guy, it's ok, I'm here.

CELIA. It's alright dear, mummy's here.

DANI ROLLS HER EYES. DON HAS BEEN STANDING THERE LOOKING AWKWARD. CELIA CATCHES HIS EYE AND SIGNALS FOR HIM TO DO SOMETHING. DON SHRUGS AND LOOKS AROUND. CELIA SIGNALS AGAIN. DON RELUCTANTLY CROSSES TO GUY AND GIVES HIM A QUICK PAT ON THE SHOULDER.

DON. Chin up son.

BLACKOUT.

WHEN THE LIGHTS COME UP, IT IS THE NEXT DAY. DANI IS WATCHING TV AND FLIPPING THROUGH A BOOK. SHE IS CLEARLY NOT CONCENTRATING ON EITHER. AFTER A FEW MOMENTS DON AND CELIA ENTER WITH SUITCASES. DANI MAKES AN ATTEMPT TO LOOK CHEERFUL.

DANI. All packed then?

CELIA. Yes thank you dear.

DANI. Are you sure you don't want to stay a bit longer?

CELIA. Oh no, I think we've had quite enough excitement for one visit, haven't we dear?

DON. We could stay another couple of days I suppose...

CELIA. Yes, quite enough excitement.

DON. ...couldn't we?

CELIA. Hmmm?

DON. Nothing dear.

CELIA. Now, you will look after him won't you?

DANI. Yes of course.

CELIA. Make sure he doesn't get too excited.

DANI. I will.

CELIA. Because he does seem very excitable at the moment.

DANI. Ok.

CELIA. Wouldn't you say so dear?

DON. Hmm?

CELIA. He seems excitable. At the moment. Guy.

DON. Oh yes. Excitable.

CELIA. Yes.

DANI. Well, I'll be here with him.

CELIA. And you'll call us won't you dear. If anything happens.

DANI. Yes of course.

CELIA. That's good. She'll call us Don. If anything happens.

DON. Yes dear.

CELIA. Yes.

*THERE IS A BRIEF AWKWARD PAUSE WHERE NO ONE
KNOWS QUITE WHAT TO SAY.*

CELIA. Still, there's a lot of it about.

DANI. Sorry?

CELIA. All this excitability. I spoke to my friend Annie on the phone this morning and she was in quite a state.

DANI. Really?

CELIA. Oh yes, quite a state. I said to Don at the time, "Annie's in a state" I said.

DANI. (*PAUSE*) Did you!

CELIA. I did. Didn't I dear?

DON. You did dear, yes. "Annie's in a state" you said.

CELIA. That's right.

DANI. Why?

CELIA. (*CONFUSED*) Why?

DANI. Why was she in a state?

CELIA. Oh, she'd been seeing things too, just like Guy.

DANI. What did she see? (*WORRIED*) She didn't see...him...too did she?

CELIA. Him?

DANI. Yes. You know. The man from the other night.

CELIA. Oh, no. I doubt she'd even know about him. No, she was going on about a monster or something. All very silly.

DANI. (*RELIEVED*) Oh, I see. How bizarre.

CELIA. Yes, bizarre.

THERE IS ANOTHER AWKWARD PAUSE.

CELIA. Well, thank you for an interesting stay.

DANI. No, no, thanks for coming. It was lovely to see you again.

CELIA. Yes. It was lovely to see you too dear. Wasn't it Don? Lovely to see Dani again?

DON. Oh yes! Lovely!

CELIA. Well, I suppose we should be on our way. Goodbye dear.

DANI. Goodbye.

CELIA GIVES DANI A BRIEF, RATHER AWKWARD HUG.

DANI. Goodbye Don.

DON. Yes, cheerio Dani, love. Marvelous to see you again.

DON GIVES DANI A LARGE RATHER INAPPROPRIATE HUG ENDING WITH HIS HAND ON HER BACKSIDE.

DON. Mmmmm, yes, marvelous!

DANI DETACHES HERSELF FROM THE HUG WITH A VERY FALSE SMILE.

DON. We must do it again sometime.

DANI. *(INSINCERELY)* Hmm. Yes. I'll look forward to that.

DON. Yes.

DON IS STARING AT DANI. AFTER A MOMENT CELIA CLEARS HER THROAT.

CELIA. Now come on dear, let's get these cases out to the car.

DON. What?

CELIA. *(A LITTLE FROSTILY)* The cases, Don.

DON RELUCTANTLY AVERTS HIS GAZE FROM DANI.

DON. Oh right. The cases. Yes of course.

DON LIFTS THE SUITCASES.

DON. Bye then Dani. Lovely to see you. Really lovely.

CELIA. Yes, I think she realizes that dear. Now come on, we must be off.

DON EXITS WITH THE CASES.

CELIA. Sorry about the...well...

DANI. It's alright, don't worry. Bye Celia.

CELIA. Yes. Goodbye dear.

CELIA EXITS. WE HEAR THE DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING, OFF. DANI GIVES A SIGH OF RELIEF AND GOES BACK TO THE SEAT IN FRONT OF THE TV. SHE PICKS UP HER BOOK AND STARES AT IT FOR A MOMENT. SUDDENLY

*ANGRY, SHE THROWS IT ACROSS THE ROOM AND PUTS HER HEAD IN HER HANDS. AFTER A FEW MOMENTS WE HEAR THE DOOR OPEN AND FOOTSTEPS CREEPING. DANI LOOKS UP PUZZLED AND LOOKS OFF. X ENTERS QUIETLY AND FREEZES WHEN HE SEES **DANI** STARING AT HIM. **DANI** FREEZES OPEN MOUTHED WHEN SHE SEES **X**.*

X. Hello.

DANI. Oh my God...

X. How are you?

DANI. How am I?

X. Yes.

DANI. I'm not sure.

X. Why? What's the matter?

DANI. It's you.

X. It's me.

DANI. It can't be... You can't be here.

X. Oh don't you start, please.

DANI. But you really can't be.

X. Well I am so...

DANI. Why are you here?

X. Because I still haven't found what I'm looking for.

DANI. What are you looking for?

X. You know what I'm looking for. Or rather you don't but you do, at least, know why.

DANI. I see. No I don't. Never mind.

X. I came back looking for it earlier but Guy got a little excitable and I had to leave.

DANI. Guy! Yes of course. You were here earlier.

X. He told you!

DANI. He mentioned it. I've got to tell him...

X. No!

DANI. What?

X. Don't tell Guy I'm here.

DANI. I've got to; it'll help him.

X. I doubt it and it definitely won't help me.

DANI. You?

X. Yes. I've come back to see you.

DANI. Me?

X. Yes.

DANI. Why me?

X. Because you're the sane one.

DANI. I'm not so sure about that.

X. Well, relatively speaking anyway.

DANI. Oh thanks a bunch.

X. We've got to find it Dani, or terrible things are going to happen.

DANI. What terrible things?

X. Terrible, unspeakable, awful things. And they're going to start happening right here.

DANI. In my lounge?

X. Yes.

DANI. Don't be ridiculous.

X. Ridiculous?

DANI. What sort of terrible, unspeakable, awful things are going to happen in my lounge?

X. Well...

DANI. Apart from the occasional Karaoke party?

X. It'll be worse than that.

DANI. You've obviously never heard Guy sing.

X. Fair enough.

DANI. What's "it" anyway?

X. What?

DANI. This thing you're looking for.

X. (*PUZZLED*) If I knew that I'd have a much better chance of finding it.

DANI. You've come back looking for something but you don't know what it is?

X. That's more or less it, yes.

DANI. But how? How have you come back?

X. The same way as last time.

DANI. Last time? You make a habit of this sort of thing?

X. Well...no, not as a rule.

DANI. Why can't you just leave us alone?

X. I've just told you – terrible things are going to happen.

DANI. But why here? Why us?

X. I don't know. If I could find it I might be able to explain.

DANI. Look I don't know who you are...

X. Yes you do.

DANI. No I don't. But what happened was an accident and I'm sorry, we're both really sorry but...

X. Accident? I'd hardly describe it as an accident. I had words with Guy about that.

DANI. Right.

X. (*GRINS*) Still, no harm done, eh!

DANI. No harm... Look, I don't understand any of this. According to Don, you can't be here.

X. What's it got to do with Don?

DANI. You know Don?

X. You know I know Don.

DANI. I don't know you know Don. I don't know you.

X. Yes you do.

DANI. I know what's going on here. I'm either asleep or mad.

X. Or both.

DANI. Thank you.

X. But actually, you're neither. Trust me.

DANI. Why should I trust you?

X. Because I'm the only one who can save you.

DANI. Save me from what?

X. The terrible, unspeakable, awful things that are going to happen.

DANI. Ah, right! We're back to that.

X. Dani, I need you to stop talking nonsense and help me.

DANI. How am I supposed to help you?

X. Help me to find it.

DANI. But you don't know what it is.

X. Which is why I need your help!

***DANI STARES AT X CHEWING HER LIP. SHE TAKES A FEW
TENATIVE STEPS TOWARDS HIM.***

DANI. I don't understand any of this but look... if I help you, if we find this thing...

X. Yes?

DANI. ...will you go away?

X. Oh charming!

DANI. I need you to go away; to leave us alone.

X. Alright then yes. I'll go away and leave you alone.

DANI. And will Guy get better again?

X. You mean he used to be normal?

DANI. He was fine until you came along.

X. He was barking.

DANI. He was not!

X. Well he seemed barking to me.

DANI. Please. Will he get better?

X. I don't know. I suppose if his bouts of insanity are brought on by me being here then it's possible he'll get better if I'm not around.

DANI. Then I suppose I'll help you.

X. Thank you.

DANI. So how do we go about finding the... whatever it is?

X. The whatever it is will be something new – something that's only been bought here in the last few days.

DANI. OK, that'll narrow it down.

X. It's got to look very ordinary or you'd have noticed it...

DANI. Right.

X. ...but it'll be pulsing.

DANI. Pulsing?

X. Yes. Slightly.

DANI. Are you serious?

X. Sporadically. At the moment, very much so.

DANI. Pulsing?

X. Yes. Whatever it is, it's living.

***DANI RAISES AN EYEBROW. SHE IS NO LONGER TAKING X
QUITE SO SERIOUSLY.***

DANI. Oh its living is it?

X. Definitely.

DANI. So there's some object in the flat that looks ordinary but is actually alive?

X. Yes.

DANI. And it's pulsing?

X. You know all this, I told you before. At least you told me I'd told you. Unless of course, this is me telling you for the first time so that you can tell me I told you later. You don't believe me do you?

DANI. No.

X. Why not?

DANI. Because nothing like that exists.

X. Not on this planet maybe but...

DANI. Oh, come on!

X. What now?

DANI. It's about aliens now is it?

X. It was always about aliens. What is going on – why don't you remember any of this?

***X TAKES A SMALL METAL BOX FROM HIS POCKET AND
PEERS AT IT INTENTLY.***

X. Unless of course Guy did more damage than I thought he did. He was quite rough, wasn't he!

DANI. I said we're sorry but you seem to have recovered well enough.

X. Hmm? Oh yes I'm fine. I'm more worried about what he may have done to this.

DANI. That? Why?

X. Why?

DANI. I would have thought you'd have been more upset about..., you know.

X. What?

DANI. Maybe you don't remember. Maybe it affected your memory.

X. My memory? My memory's fine. I'm more worried about your memory.

DANI. My memory? My memory's fine. However, I think I might really have gone mad.

X. You really haven't you know.

DANI. I must have. Despite what you say, you really can't be here you know.

X. Oh for goodness sake. Look, if I'm not here, then who are you talking to?

DANI. Exactly. I've gone mad.

X. So you think, what, maybe I'm a figment of your imagination?

DANI. I suppose you must be.

X STRETCHES OUT HIS HAND TOWARDS DANI.

X. Touch me.

DANI. I don't want to touch you.

X. Touch me.

DANI. Why?

X. Because then you'll be able to feel that I'm real.

DANI. No, this is silly.

X. Dani, time is short. Really short. Touch me.

*A LITTLE RELUCTANTLY, **DANI** REACHES OUT AND TOUCHES **X** HAND. SHE IS SURPRISED WHEN SHE MAKES CONTACT. **DANI** GRASPS **X**'S HAND AND THEN SHAKES IT A LITTLE. SHE MOVES FORWARD TOUCHING HIS CHEST AND THEN HIS FACE.*

DANI. Oh my god. You are real.

X. That's right.

DANI. You're warm.

X. I'm comfortable enough, thank you.

DANI. You really are real.

X. Really, really real. Or at least, I like to think so.

DANI. And you are alive.

X. As far as I'm aware, yes.

DANI. I don't believe it.

X. Well, there you are. Would you mind stopping touching me now?

DANI. Oh, yes, of course. Sorry.

X. Happy now?

DANI. Because of the touching?

X. No, because you know I'm real.

DANI. Oh. Well, no not happy as such but...alright. I believe you're real. I believe you're here. But I still don't understand how that can be though.

X. And the next time we have a spare month I'll explain it to you. But in the meantime, we've got some searching to do.

DANI. OK. When you were here earlier, where did you look?

X. Only in here and even then not properly.

DANI. So it could be anywhere in the flat?

X. I suppose so.

DANI. But what makes you think it's here?

X. I don't think it is; I know it is.

DANI. How can you be so sure?

X. I don't know why you can't remember but please, just trust me Dani, please. It's here somewhere.

DANI AND X BEGIN TO SEARCH THE ROOM.

DANI. You've no idea what it might be?

X. None.

DANI. What sort of size?

X. No idea.

DANI. Hang on; you said it would be new, right?

X. That's right.

DANI. How new?

X. Couple of days maybe.

DANI. It can't be, we haven't bought anything new in the last couple days.

X. You must have done.

DANI. We haven't. Well, apart from a few groceries but they've mostly been eaten.

X. How about Guy?

DANI. No, he's been here for ages.

X. No, I mean has Guy bought anything new in the past few days? He might not have told you.

DANI. Oh. I suppose he may have.

X. You'd better go and ask him. I'll check the groceries.

X RUSHES OFF. DANI WATCHES HIM WITH A PUZZLED FROWN. A MOMENT LATER X ENTERS AGAIN.

X. Where are the groceries?

***DANI** POINTS OFF IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.*

X. Right. Thanks.

***X** RUSHES OFF THE WAY **DANI** HAS INDICATED. **DANI** ROLLS HER EYES AND HEADS OFF IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. THERE IS A SHORT SILENCE AND THEN THE SOUND OF CRASHES AND BANGS AS THE GROCERIES GET THROWN EVERYWHERE. **DANI** HURRIES BACK IN AND STRAIGHT OFF AFTER **X**.*

DANI. (OFF) What the hell are you doing?

X. (OFF) Checking the groceries.

DANI. (OFF) Well do you have to break them all to do that!

X. (OFF) No, it's optional.

*THERE IS ANOTHER CRASH. **GUY** ENTERS LOOKING BLEARY-EYED AS THOUGH HE HAS JUST WOKEN UP. HE LOOKS AROUND AS THE DIALOGUE CONTINUES.*

DANI. (OFF) Then stop it.

X. (OFF) Sorry, I got caught up in the drama of the situation.

GUY. (CALLING) Dani?

DANI. (OFF) Shit!

***DANI** ENTERS WITH A FORCED SMILE IN HER FACE.*

DANI. Hi honey, are you ok?

GUY. What's all the racket?

DANI. The racket?

GUY. Yeah, all that crashing from the kitchen.

DANI. Oh, that. I was just making us some tea and I dropped something.

GUY. Something?

DANI. A few things.

GUY. Are you alright?

DANI. Yeah, I'm fine.

GUY. Oh good.

GUY SITS IN THE CHAIR MUCH TO DANI'S HORROR.

GUY. What are we having?

DANI. Having?

GUY. For tea?

DANI. I don't know. What would you like?

GUY. I thought you were just making it.

DANI. Oh. Yes. That's right. I was. I mean, I am.

GUY. So what is it?

DANI. Erm... sausages?

GUY. I didn't think we had any sausages.

DANI. I think you might be right.

GUY. Are you sure you're ok?

DANI. Fine. Really. Look, I tell you what; why don't you go back to bed? It's been a really tough time for you lately. I'll get the tea made and wake you up when it's done.

DANI TAKES GUY'S HAND AND PULLS HIM OUT OF THE CHAIR.

GUY. Are you sure? I can help if you like.

DANI LEADS GUY BACK TOWARDS THE EXIT HE CAME IN FROM.

DANI. No, it's ok, I don't mind. And you should rest – you've not been well.

GUY. Alright then.

DANI. Come on.

DANI LEADS GUY OFF. AFTER A MOMENT X POKES HIS HEAD ON AND LOOKS AROUND. SEEING NO ONES ABOUT HE ENTERS QUIETLY AND BEGINS HUNTING ROUND THE ROOM. DANI ENTERS A FEW MOMENTS LATER AND STARTS WHEN SHE SEES HIM.

DANI. What are you doing?

X. You know what I'm doing.

DANI. Well stop doing it.

X. Stop?

DANI. Yes.

X. No.

DANI. Yes.

X. Why?

DANI. You can't do this now.

X. Why not?

DANI. Because if Guy wakes up again and sees you here it'll upset him. Really badly upset him.

X. But we've got to find it Dani.

DANI. Then I'll keep looking. You've got to go.

X. Go?

DANI. Yes. Now.

X. But you won't know what to do with it when you've found it.

DANI. Then I'll leave it somewhere for you and you can come back.

X. Oh alright then. When shall I come back?

DANI. I don't know. I never know when Guy's going to be here.

X. OK, I've got an idea. I'll come back late at night. When you're both asleep.

DANI. That could work.

X. Leave a key under the mat outside. I'll let myself in, take it away and you'll never see me again.

DANI. You promise?

X. I promise.

DANI. And the terrible, unspeakable, awful things that are going to happen?

X. Will never happen.

DANI. You're sure.

X. I'm sure.

DANI. Alright then. But what if I can't find it?

X. You've got to find it Dani.

DANI. But what if I just can't?

X. No buts Dani. You've just got to search everywhere - the kitchen, Guy's stuff, Don and Celia's stuff...

DANI. But they're gone.

X. What?

DANI. They left just before you arrived.

X. Well then you've got to get them back.

DANI. What? Oh no, please, not that.

X. You've got to. They have to be here – they may have it.

DANI. You can't make me bring those nutjobs back into my house.

X. Remember the terrible, unspeakable, awful things.

DANI. Are they really worse than Don and his roving hands!

X. I'm afraid so.

DANI. But how am I supposed to get them back here?

X. I don't know. Tell them Guy's worse.

DANI. But Guy's not worse.

X. We can soon see to that.

*BEFORE **DANI** CAN STOP HIM **X** RUSHES OFF INTO THE BEDROOM WHERE GUY IS SLEEPING.*

DANI. No, don't!

*THERE IS A SCREAM FROM **GUY**, OFF. **X** ENTERS AT PACE.*

X. That seems to have done the trick.

DANI. You...

*AS **DANI** FISHES FOR THE RIGHT EXPLEITIVE, **X** HEADS FOR THE EXIT.*

X. Remember what we've agreed Dani. Find it, leave it here for me and leave a key under the mat. I suppose this is goodbye.

DANI. If I ever see you again I'll kill you. Again.

X. What?

DANI. You heard me. Now get out of my house.

X. Alright. But find it Dani. Please.

DANI. (*SHOUTS*) Get out!

***X** EXITS. **DANI** STARES AFTER HIM FOR A MOMENT, FURIOUS. THEN SHE STEELS HERSELF AND EXITS INTO THE BEDROOM.*

*BLACKOUT. IN THE DARKNESS WE HEAR THE VOICE OF A TV NEWS REPORTER. OVER THE VOICE THE LIGHTS COME UP TO REVEAL IT IS LATER THAT DAY. **GUY** IS SAT IN THE ARMCHAIR LOOKING VACANTLY AT THE TV. **CELIA** IS SAT WATCHING HIM. **DON** IS WANDERING ABOUT LOOKING A BIT VAGUE.*

VOICE. Good evening. In our main story tonight, there have been further reports of UFO sightings all over the country. What started off being dismissed as a hoax has now become the main cause of questions in Parliament as the opposition questioned what the Government is doing about this threat to national security. The Defense Secretary was quick to dismiss the reports as...

CELIA WAVES HER HAND IN FRONT OF GUY'S FACE BUT GETS NO RESPONSE. SHE TRIES POKING HIM IN THE ARM AND STILL GETS NOTHING. SHE TURNS OFF THE TV BUT GUY CONTINUES TO STARE BLANKLY AT IT.

CELIA. Guy? Come on sweetie. Mummy's here.

THERE IS STILL NO REACTION FROM GUY.

CELIA. (TO DON) He does seem worse dear.

DON. Hmmmm?

CELIA. Guy. He seems worse. Than he was.

DON. Yes dear.

CELIA. I just can't seem to get anything out of him.

DON. No dear.

CELIA. No. Nothing.

DON. Oh dear.

CELIA. We should never have left.

DON. Ah well.

CELIA. I should have known that girl wouldn't look after him properly.

DON. Dani?

CELIA. Yes, Dani. Of course, Dani. Who else would I have been referring to?

DON. I don't know dear.

CELIA. We were only away a few hours and look at the state of him.

DON. I'm sure she did her best.

CELIA. Her best? Look at him.

DON. It's not really her fault though is it?

CELIA. Oh for goodness sake Don!

DON. Sorry dear.

CELIA. And where on earth has she got to?

DON. She's in the bedroom I think.

CELIA. I know she's in the bedroom Don, but whatever is she doing in there? She only took our cases in for us.

DON. (*EAGERLY*) I'll see if she needs a hand shall I?

CELIA. You stay right there. (*CALLS*) Dani? Do you need a hand in there dear?

DANI. (*OFF*) Sorry?

CELIA MOVES TOWARDS THE BEDROOM.

CELIA. I said, do you need a hand in there?

DANI. (*OFF*) Oh no, no – everything's fine. I'll be right there.

GUY REACTS TO DANI'S VOICE – THE FIRST REACTION HE'S SHOWN TO ANYTHING.

GUY. Dani?

CELIA RUSHES OVER TO THE CHAIR TO BE WITH GUY.

CELIA. Guy, sweetheart? Are you alright?

GUY LOOKS AT CELIA, CONFUSED.

GUY. Dani?

CELIA. No, don't be silly Guy; it's me. Mummy. And your fathers here too.

DON. Alright son?

GUY FROWNS AND LOOKS ANNOYED.

GUY. Dani? (*CALLING*) Dani?

CELIA AND DON EXCHANGE A WORRIED GLANCE.

CELIA. Dani's just in the spare bedroom dear, now calm down...

GUY. (*SHOUTING*) Dani?

DANI RUSHES IN, WORRIED AND HEADS STRAIGHT FOR GUY.

DANI. What happened?

CELIA. Nothing happened, he just started shouting for you.

DANI HAS TO MANHANDLE CELIA OUT OF THE WAY TO GET TO GUY'S SIDE.

DANI. It's alright Guy, I'm here.

GUY CALMS DOWN THE MOMENT DANI IS THERE.

GUY. He was here again Dani, I saw him.

DANI. (*SOOTHING*) I know honey, I know.

GUY. Why does he keep coming back?

DANI. (*SOOTHING*) I don't know but he's gone now. Try to relax.

GUY. What if he comes back again?

DANI. He won't. I'm going to fix it. I promise.

GUY. I love you.

DANI. I know.

CELIA LOOKS FURIOUS BUT ATTEMPTS TO HIDE IT. DON LOOKS DISAPPOINTED. GUY LAPSES BACK INTO SILENCE AND STARING VACANTLY AT THE TURNED OFF TV. DANI TAKES A DEEP BREATH AND COMPOSES HERSELF.

CELIA. Has he been doing a lot of that?

DANI. He's not being doing a lot of anything.

CELIA. What happened Dani? You were supposed to be looking after him.

DANI. I did my best.

DON. There dear, didn't I say she'd have done her best.

CELIA. Shut up Don. Look at the state of the poor little mite.

DANI. I'm sorting it out.

CELIA. How? How can you possibly sort this out?

DANI. I can't explain but... just, trust me.

CELIA. Trust you? I trusted you for an afternoon and he's out of his mind.

DANI. It isn't my fault. But Celia, I will fix this.

CELIA. Hmph!

DANI. Don, I need to speak to you.

DON. To me?

DANI. Yes.

DANI GIVES CELIA A MEANINGFUL LOOK.

DANI. In private.

CELIA. Well really! No, don't mind me.

CELIA SWEEPS FROM THE ROOM IN A RAGE AND EXITS INTO THE SPARE BEDROOM. GUY GIGGLES TO HIMSELF.

DANI. Sorry about this Don.

DON. No, no, it's my pleasure.

DANI. Ah-ha!

DON. What did you want to talk to me about?

DANI SIGNALS THAT THEY SHOULD MOVE AWAY FROM GUY. DANI AND DON MOVE TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STAGE WHERE THEY HUDDLE IN QUITE CLOSE. CELIA STORMS BACK IN. DON LEAPS AWAY FROM DANI AS THOUGH THEY WERE UP TO SOMETHING.

CELIA. Why have you unpacked all of our things?

DANI. (*GUILTY*) Oh, yes, I was just so grateful to you both for dropping what you were doing and coming back I thought it was the least I could do.

CELIA. Well really!

**CELIA TUTS AND EXITS BACK INTO THE SPARE BEDROOM.
DANI WAITS A MOMENT TO MAKE SURE CELIA ISN'T
COMING BACK.**

DANI. Don, I need to ask you about the man who was here.

DON. Which man?

DANI. You know. The one that we...

DON. What?

DANI. ...killed, Don. The man we killed.

DON. Oh, that man. What about him.

DANI. I know you called your friend and everything but look... are you sure he was dead?

DON. Course I'm sure. We've been through this already.

DANI. I know. I'm sorry but look, Guy saw him again today.

DON. Well yes but Dani love, Guy's gone mad.

DANI. I know but...

DON. You're just going to have to accept it.

DANI. But Don, I saw him too.

DON. What?

DANI. I saw him too. When Guy did.

DON. Now come on Dani...

DANI. I'm serious. I saw him. I talked to him. I even touched him.

DON. Lucky bugger.

DANI. Sorry?

DON. Nothing.

DANI GETS INCREASINGLY UPSET OVER THE NEXT FEW LINES.

DANI. He was really here Don, he was really real and he is really alive.

DON. He isn't. I dragged his body out of the back of a car and he was and presumably still is really dead.

DANI. Then how do you explain it Don? How?

DON. (*SHRUGS*) Stress I suppose? It's been tough for you what with killing someone...

DANI. I didn't kill anyone.

DON. ...and the effect it's had on poor Guy.

DANI. You think I imagined it?

DON. I don't see what else it can be.

DON HOLDS OUT HIS ARMS OFFERING DANI A HUG.

DON. Come here.

DANI QUICKLY PULLS HERSELF TOGETHER

DANI. I'll be fine, thanks.

BLACKOUT.

THE LIGHTS COME UP ON THE FOLLOWING DAY. GUY IS STILL IN THE ARMCHAIR BUT HE IS A LITTLE MORE ANIMATED. CELIA IS IN ANOTHER CHAIR WATCHING HIM. AFTER A MOMENT SHE DECIDES TO SPEAK TO HIM.

CELIA. You do look a bit brighter today dear.

GUY STARTS IN SURPRISE.

GUY. When did you get here?

CELIA. I've been there for ten minutes.

GUY. Really?

CELIA. How are you feeling?

GUY. Tired. Confused. What day is it?

CELIA. It's Wednesday dear.

GUY. (*GETTING AGITATED*) Wednesday? I should be in work.

CELIA. You're not going to work this week Guy.

GUY. Aren't I?

CELIA. No, dear, you're not well enough for that. You need lots of lovely rest at the moment to get better.

GUY. Do they know?

CELIA. Yes dear, Dani's sorted all that out for you.

GUY. (*RELAXES*) Oh good. Where is Dani?

CELIA. She's just getting some sleep. We all had a bit of a restless night.

GUY. Did we?

CELIA. Yes. Don't you remember?

GUY. Remember what?

CELIA. All those lights in the sky.

GUY. Lights in the sky?

CELIA. Oh yes. Bright lights and colours and noise. It was almost beautiful in an eerie kind of way. I rang the council and complained.

GUY. Did you?

CELIA. Not that they were any help of course.

DON ENTERS FROM THE SPARE BEDROOM.

CELIA. They were no help at all, were they dear?

DON. Who's that dear?

CELIA. The council. No help at all.

DON. No dear.

CELIA. “Nothing to do with us”, they said. Didn’t they?

DON. Yes dear.

CELIA. The news is full of it, isn’t it?

DON. Full of it, yes.

CELIA. Yes.

GUY. (PAUSE) Right. So, what caused that then?

CELIA. Oh I wouldn’t know. Kids fooling around I expect, wouldn’t you dear?

DON. Yes, kids I expect.

CELIA. Yes.

*THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR, OFF. **DON AND CELIA** LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND THEN AT **GUY** BUT HE HAS DRIFTED OFF AGAIN.*

CELIA. You’d better see to that dear.

DON. Yes dear.

CELIA. Tell them to go away.

DON. Yes dear.

CELIA. I suppose I should wake Dani up; Guy seems better when she’s around.

DON. Yes dear.

***DON** WANDERS OFF LOOKING VAGUE AS EVER. **CELIA** LOOKS AT **GUY** WITH REAL CONCERN AND THEN EXITS TOWARDS THE BEDROOM. **GUY** SITS ALONE ON STAGE FOR A MOMENT LOOKING BLANK. THEN HE FROWNS AND TENSES AS THOUGH SENSING SOMETHING IS WRONG. **CELIA** ENTERS.*

CELIA. I’m going to put the kettle on dear, would you like anything.

GUY. Mum, what's happening?

CELIA. What do you mean?

GUY. Something's wrong. Can't you feel it?

CELIA. Don't be silly Guy, what could possibly be wrong?

DON ENTERS LOOKING SHAKEN.

CELIA. There you are. Would you like a cup of tea?

X ENTERS, JUST BEHIND DON.

X. Oh, that'd be brilliant, thanks. Milk, four sugars please.

GUY CRIES OUT IN TERROR AND DASHES TO HIDE BEHIND THE CHAIR ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STAGE. CELIA LOOKS SHOCKED.

X. I probably should cut down but a slight over-reaction there I can't help but think.

DANI RUSHES IN FROM THE BEDROOM ALERTED BY GUY'S CRY.

DANI. Guy, what's wrong...

DANI STOPS IN HER TRACKS WHEN SHE SEES X.

DANI. You! You promised you wouldn't you wouldn't come here again.

X. What?

DANI. Why are you here? You promised.

X. I never.

DANI. You did so.

X. I did not. When am I supposed to have done that?

DANI. Last time you were here.

X. Last time I was...? I've never been here before.

DANI. Yes you have.

X. I haven't.

DANI. You have.

X. I never.

DON. You have actually. Hasn't he dear?

***DANI MOVES OVER TO GUY AND PUTS A COMFORTING
ARM AROUND HIM.***

CELIA. Oh yes. And I think you owe us all an explanation.

X. (*PUZZLED*) What? You've all seen me before?

DANI. You know we have.

X. I don't. And I've been here before? You're sure about that?

CELIA. Quite sure.

X. Oh dear. That's not good. That's not good at all. What did I say? What did I do?

DANI. You were looking for something.

X. Was I? That's interesting. Did I find it?

DANI. No. You didn't even know what it was.

X. Didn't I? Now that's worrying. Worrying and interesting. And how do you all tie into this then?

DANI. We live here. This is our house.

X. Really? What, all of you?

DANI. Well, no.

DANI GESTURES AT DON AND CELIA.

DANI. They're visiting.

X. I see. And crazy guy?

DANI. He isn't crazy.

X. Really?

DANI. Well he wasn't before you started showing up. Now how do you know him if you've never been here before?

X. I don't.

DANI. You knew his name was Guy.

X. I didn't, what are you talking about... oh, I see! No, when I said "crazy guy", I meant the person who's crazy.

DANI. He isn't crazy.

X. Whatever.

CELIA. Never mind who we are and how we fit in; who exactly are you?

X. Ah, yes! Now, that could take some explaining.

CELIA. Then you'd better get started.

X. Alright but look, you need to trust me on this – some of what I'm going to say might sound a bit...

CELIA. Yes?

X. ...crazy.

CELIA. Everything about you being here is crazy, isn't it dear?

DON. Oh yes dear. Rather!

CELIA. Yes.

X. I'm here because of the strange things that have been happening around here recently.

CELIA. You're the only strange thing that's happened around here recently, isn't he dear?

DON. Yes dear.

X. Really? I'm the strangest thing you've seen?

CELIA. Yes, you are.

X. What about the UFOs?

CELIA. What UFOs?

X. You must have seen them; all the lights in the sky?

CELIA. Oh those. That wasn't UFOs, was it dear?

DON. No dear.

CELIA. No.

X. Really? What was it then?

CELIA. Just silly kids messing around.

X. Kids?

CELIA. That's what we thought, wasn't it dear?

DON. That's right dear, yes. Kids.

CELIA. Yes.

X. Why would kids be putting lights in the sky? How would kids be putting lights in the sky, come to that? And actually, if kids had the ability to put lights in the sky I'm sure they could find something more interesting to do with that ability than to put lights in the sky. That's the brilliant thing about kids isn't it; their amazing ability to think of doing things that would never occur to adults. I think it's a shame that as we grow older we lose that brilliant ability to imagine incredible things. Or is that just me?

X STOPS TALKING AND REALISES THAT EVERYONE IS STARING AT HIM.

X. That'll just be me then. Where were we? Oh yes! (*TO CELIA*) Kids?

CELIA. Well, maybe not kids but...

X. Definitely not kids.

CELIA. What then?

X. I just told you. UFOs.

CELIA. Oh don't be ridiculous.

X. Ridiculous? Me! The woman who just said that kids had someone managed to magic lights into the sky for no apparent reason at all is calling me ridiculous!

CELIA. Well, really!

X. (TO DON) How about you? Have you got a more sensible explanation for what's been going on?

CELIA. No he hasn't, have you dear?

DON. No dear.

X. Right.

X MOVES TOWARDS DANI AND GUY.

X. How about you?

GUY SCREAMS AND BACKS AWAY.

X. No, not you; the other one.

DANI. The "other one"?

X. I'm sorry; I don't know your name.

DANI. Dani. It's Dani.

X. Hello Dani, nice to meet you.

DANI. I wish I could say the same. How about you – what's your name?

X. I can't tell you.

DANI. Why not?

X. Trust me; I just can't.

DANI. Trust you? You turn up here again and again, you won't say who you are, you drive my boyfriend mad and you ask me to trust you? Why should I trust you?

X. Because I'm the only one who can save you.

DANI. Save me from what?

X. From the creatures on those UFOs.

DANI. You're not serious.

X. I am you know.

DANI. Why are creatures in UFOs after me?

X. They're not. Well not specifically. Well, I don't think they are anyway. When I say save you, I mean all of you.

CELIA. Why are they after all of us?

X. Well, when I say all of you, I mean all of us. Everyone.

CELIA. Everyone?

X. Everyone. All but a few members of humanity are going to be wiped out in a few days time. And it all starts here.

CELIA. Here?

X. I'm afraid so.

DANI. In this lounge.

X. That's right. You don't seem surprised.

DANI. You told me that. Just the other day.

X. I did? That's really very worrying, you know.

DANI. But how do you know all this?

X. Because I've seen it. Seen it, experienced it, survived it.

DANI. Survived it?

X. And now I've come back through time to where it all started to try to stop it happening.

DANI. You're trying to tell us you're from the future?

X. That's right.

DANI. Our future?

X. Yes.

DANI. How far ahead?

X. A few months.

DANI. How?

X. Alien technology. It's all linked to this.

X PULLS A SMALL METAL BOX FROM HIS POCKET.

DANI. What is that?

X. A rather nifty piece of alien technology which I managed to procure from our would-be invaders.

DANI. And you've managed to figure out how to use it travel through time?

X. Yup. Pretty smart, eh! (*GRINS*) And that's not all it does.

CELIA. I'm sorry; I don't believe a word of this. It's ridiculous, isn't it dear?

DON. That's right dear, ridiculous. Yes.

CELIA. Yes.

X. What about you Dani; do you believe me?

DANI. (*PAUSE*) Yes.

X. Really?

DANI. Yes.

CELIA. You can't be serious Dani?

DANI. I am being serious Celia. How else can you explain what's been going on? There have been lights in the sky...

CELIA. Well, yes but kids...

DANI. It wasn't kids! And what about your friend who saw that monster?

CELIA. Monster?

DON. Annie, dear.

CELIA. Oh you don't want to listen to what Annie says, do you dear?

DON. I think we might want to this time dear.

CELIA. Don!

DON. Sorry dear. But something's going on here. How else do you explain him?

DON POINTS AT X WHO GRINS DISARMINGLY.

CELIA. Well, yes but...

DANI. But nothing Celia. Because if there's one thing that clinches it, it is him. How else do you explain him?

CELIA. *(PAUSE)* I can't.

DANI. And nor can I unless you believe that he's a time traveler. And if that's true...

DON. The rest might be true.

X. I've no idea what you're all talking about but at least you seem to be believing me now.

DANI. So how do we stop it?

CELIA. And what is it?

X. Tomorrow, aliens are going to come here. It's the beginning of an invasion that ends in just a few weeks of bloody conflict with humanity all but wiped out.

DANI. Tomorrow?

X. Afraid so.

DANI. Nothing like leaving it 'til the last minute is there!

X. Sorry.

DANI. And they start here? In this flat?

X. That's right. They come here and they... well, you don't want to know what they do.

DANI. Don't we?

X. No, trust me, you really don't. If it's any consolation it's quick. Well, relatively quick.

DANI. But we can stop it?

X. That's the plan.

DON. But why here? Why do they come here?

X. An excellent question Don. Something attracts them here. If I can find out what it is and destroy it then maybe they won't come.

DANI. But you don't know what it is!

X. I'm afraid not. But there's enough of us here – I'm sure we can find it.

CELIA. Have you any idea what it'll be?

X. It'll be organic.

CELIA. Organic?

DANI. Alive. It'll be pulsing.

X. That's right. How do you know that?

DANI. You told me.

X. Ah yes, that again. We need to talk about that.

DANI. Once we've destroyed this thing.

X. Alright.

CELIA. I suppose you do know how to destroy it?

X PATS THE BOX.

X. This little chap is all set up to neutralize compatible technology.

CELIA. How?

X. If I was to explain to you how I'd managed to rig up a piece of technology that you don't even have words for to destroy another piece of technology you don't even have words for, do you honestly think you'd understand?

CELIA. Well, probably not...

X. Well no point wasting a whole lot of time on it then is there! Now don't just stand there all of you – let's get looking.

DON AND DANI START SEARCHING. GUY CONTINUES TO COWER AWAY, STARING AT X AND SWAYING.

CELIA. But why do these aliens come here in the first place?

X. They're drawn here by the thing we're looking for - they sense someone using a bit of their kit.

CELIA. How did a piece of alien technology end up at this flat?

X. I don't know Celia. If we find it, maybe we can figure it out.

CELIA. But we don't know what it is.

X. It's a piece of alien technology and it's alive. How difficult can it be to find something like that?

X MOVES TOWARDS GUY IN HIS SEARCH. GUY STARTS TO MOAN AND THEN LEAPS UP LASHING OUT AT X. THE BOX FLIES FROM X'S HAND AND SMASHES ON THE FLOOR.

DANI. Guy, no.

DANI MOVES BETWEEN GUY AND X AND RESTRAINS GUY.

DANI. It's alright, Guy, leave him.

GUY. Make him go away. Please make him go away.

DANI. I will, baby, I will. I promise. Come and sit down.

DANI LEADS GUY TO A CHAIR AND SITS HIM DOWN. X HAS MOVED TO THE BOX AND IS SITTING ON THE FLOOR LOOKING AT IT GLOOMILY.

DANI. (TO X) Is it damaged?

X. If by damaged you mean "is it in more pieces than it used to be", then yes.

DANI. But will it still work?

X. Not without some repair work, no.

DANI. How long will that take?

X. A while.

CELIA. How long's a while?

X. I'm not sure. Hours. Days maybe.

CELIA. But we haven't got days have we dear?

DON. No dear.

CELIA. No. Even hours are pushing it.

X. Cheer up. It'll still work as a time travel device; I'll just need to fix its more destructive capabilities. I'm going to have to nip back to my time to get some parts, then I'll come back again and rejoin the hunt.

DANI. Will that take long?

X. In your timeline, no; a few seconds.

DANI. Are you sure?

X. Of course I'm sure. Now keep looking, I'll be right back.

***X RUNS FROM THE ROOM. THE OTHERS EXCHANGE A
GLANCE AND KEEP LOOKING.***

CELIA. This is ridiculous really isn't it?

DON. Is it dear?

CELIA. Yes dear. The man may be completely mad for all we know.

DANI. He came back to life Celia.

CELIA. Well, yes but...

DANI. Except of course, he didn't.

CELIA. Sorry dear?

DANI. He didn't come back to life at all did he? He came back in his future which is our past and Guy killed him. That's why knew us. That's why nothing he said made any sense.

DON. Shouldn't he be back by now? He said he'd only be seconds.

DANI. He has been back. Several times.

***DANI STOPS SEARCHING AND DROPS INTO THE CHAIR,
HER HEAD IN HER HANDS.***

DON. I haven't seen him.

DANI. Yes you have. We all have. He must have been wrong about the box - the time travel bit must have been damaged after all and it's taken him back further into our past. He didn't realise and that's why he couldn't understand why we didn't know him. And then the last time he came back, Guy killed him.

DON. So does that mean he's not coming back again? I mean, in our future.

DANI. I suppose not.

DON. So how are we going to destroy the... the thing. The whatever it is.

CELIA. We can't can we? Not without the box.

DANI. (*REALISATION*) The box! Yes of course.

CELIA. What is it dear?

DANI. This thing we're looking for – it's a piece of alien technology?

CELIA. Yes.

DANI. Like the box.

CELIA. Like, as you say dear, the box.

DANI. Well then, it's the box, isn't it!

CELIA. The box?

DANI. Yes.

CELIA. No.

DANI. Why not?

CELIA. Because the little man said the thing was alive, didn't he dear?

DON. Yes dear. Alive, he said.

CELIA. Yes. And that box wasn't alive.

DANI. We don't know that.

CELIA. He would've though.

DANI. I suppose.

DON. He was though.

CELIA. What's that dear?

DON. He was alive. The man.

CELIA. Yes he was dear. Well done.

DANI. No, hold on, maybe Don's right.

CELIA. Oh I don't think so, do you dear?

DON. I suppose not dear, no.

CELIA. No.

DANI. The aliens are drawn by their technology and that would be the box. Whatshisname thought it was alive but what if it's just that it was with something alive. Him.

CELIA. So the aliens come here looking for him?

DANI. That would make sense.

CELIA. Don't be silly dear – it doesn't make any sense at all.

DANI. Yes it does. And it means we can't stop it now either. The person who was going to stop it actually caused it and now he's lost in time and... well, we know how that ends up.

*THEY LOOK AT **GUY** WHO IS STARING VACANTLY AHEAD.*

DANI. Guy is indirectly responsible for the end of humanity.

DON. His teachers always said he was trouble, didn't they dear.

CELIA. Shut up dear. So what are we going to do?

DANI. What can we do?

CELIA. We could run away.

DANI. What would be the point? You heard what he said, humanity gets decimated.

CELIA. So we just wait do we?

DANI. We might as well.

***DANI** MOVES TO **GUY** AND PUTS HER ARMS AROUND HIM.
DON AND **CELIA** LOOK AWKWARD. THERE IS A SILENCE.*

DON. I spy with my little eye...

CELIA. Shut up Don.

BLACKOUT.

THE END.