

CHUNKY JEWELLERY: created by Natasha Gilmore,
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PROLOGUE - REHEARSAL ROOM

(Natasha and Jude are sitting dejected on chairs - sorting through bundles of paper - old script ideas.)

Natasha: What if we start to imagine there's actually an audience? Like, it's completely full, well okay, half full. Well, more than the Fringe average of six. And there'd be an esteemed critic sat there, or maybe a blogger. And all the over excited mums out without the kids. Oh my God, maybe Phoebe Waller-Bridge, sat there.

Jude: An', what does that give us?

Natasha: Fear. I mean this is terrifying. You know people are actually coming to watch this. They'll be sat right there watching this. Sat right there clutching those plastic cups watching this.

Jude: It makes me feel a bit sick. I haven't performed at the Fringe for - like - ten years.

Natasha: Yes. That's good, use it. It's like, let it get inside your stomach, then your heart rate goes. Then the ideas will come. The terror is motivating. Yeah?

Jude: No.

Natasha: Oh God it's working, yes this is good, I feel absolutely terrified. All that expectation. Oh my God we're gonna be like that Australian breakdancer, humiliated. Yes I can feel it. It's working.

Okay, get this, how about it starts with this HUGE necklace lowering down and it's heavy, there's something about the weight of it, the strain on the string. Oooo, it could be a massive chandelier.

Jude: And we can be dressed like Priestesses.

Natasha: Yes. And this huge chandelier of necklaces we could have your Mum's necklaces, your granny's. It would descend down and then like our tears, the strain becomes too much, overwhelmed it bursts and all the beads brrrrrrrrrr.

Jude: Oooh we could put microphones under the floor to capture the sound.

Natasha: Yes the sound would be amazing. And we'd be trying desperately to gather them all up but there's nothing we can do to cope with this spillage ...

Jude: Yeah, that part would be a nightmare though - can you imagine the trip hazards? We'd be fucked for dancing, like oh God!

Natasha: Oh yeah.

Jude: Sorry. It's a great image.

(Natasha sits back down dejected,
Jude returns the 'priestess' costume. Keeps hold of mic.)

Jude: What if we go more singing and dancing? Look hear me out, I know you don't want it to be a musical - it's just us - but we could do that thing they do in Chorus Line when you have loads of mirrors so it looks like we're a cast of thousands. And a mirrored staircase. And we'd be like -

(Sings) One singular sensation

Both: *every little step she takes
ba dah dah dah dah dah
One thrilling combination,
every move that she makes*

Jude: (quietly under Natasha's text)

*One smile and suddenly nobody else will do
you know you'll never be lonely with you - bah - know - bah - who . . .*

Natasha: Jude - I don't know - it's not very cutting edge theatre is it?

Jude: (*Gasp*) Let's make it durational!

Natasha: What? How would we get childcare for that? Let's think.
What have we got?

Jude: A title. Chunky Jewellery.

Natasha: Yes, good. Chunky Jewellery. Let's start with that. Chunky
Jewellery Chunky - Chunky Chunky, Chunky

Jude: Yes Will-i-am?!

Natasha: Yes oh my God it could be a celebration of our bodies,
we're chunky and proud.

Jude: Yes. This is good. We could loop all the parts like what's his
chops - the ginger guy ...

Natasha: Oh my God yes

Jude: Ed Sheran.

Natasha: Yes, layer it all up so it's like...

Beat box . . . x 2

Both: *Chunky. Chunky, chunky x2*

Jude: (Plays toy for melody.)

Natasha: (microphone bass beat butt)

Jude: *Chunky*

Natasha: *Plumpy plumpy plumpy plumpy*

Jude: *Chunky*

Natasha: A big shout out to my Chunky Massive

Jude: *Chunky*
Chunky
Oo-oo-oo-oo-oo

N

I like 'em big
I like 'em plumpy
I like 'em round
I like 'em chunky, chunky, chunky

Big
Plumpy
Round

J

She likes 'em big
plumpy
she like 'em round
chunky, chunky, chunky

Big
Plumpy
Round

Both: *Chunky chunky chunky*

Natasha: Then there'd be a dance break, like shake it out, oh yeah, and swing...

Jude: *chunky chunky chunky*
chunky chunky chunky

*It's all in the way she moves
It's all in the way she moves
It's all in the way she moves
She moves she moves she moves she moves*

(Ends with boob grab.)

Natasha: I think, if it's gonna go in that direction, we'd need one of those intimacy coaches.

Jude: Cos of the boob grab? Natasha, I've seen you give birth.

Natasha: It's about context though.

Jude: Yeah but the context was "plumpy, chunky, all in the way she moves." Sorry.

(Natasha sits again - dejected. Jude puts her mic on stand DSL.)

Natasha: It's okay

Jude: Are we okay? (Tash nods - yeah.)

MATCH - first glimpse of ritual world

Jude: What if the whole thing starts with a match? - What if the first thing we see - is the strike of a match? It's the beginning - of the show, of life, of the world.

So it would be like blackout ...

(strikes match - first glimpse of ritual world.)

Life, heat, spark, warmth, joy, heart, connection, ritual, friendship, gatherings, sex, desire, sweat, sunrise, sunset, the candle on Frieda's first birthday cake, hope, courage....

Ok so you just strike a match and riff on life - you try it.

Natasha: Oh 'cooks' matches - these are the exact match's my dad used for his barbecues, he'd burn everything. I mean no amount of ketchup could disguise it! It's actually really carcinogenic to eat food like that.

Jude: Yeah it's not good.

Natasha: He died of cancer as well.

Jude: I am sorry about your dad. Can you please, just try the match thing? Ok.

Black Out.

(Natasha strikes the match.)

Natasha: Crematorium, Witches burnt at the stake, Hiss, Brittle, Broken, Cracked, Fragile, crumbling, twisted, forest fires, those Children's costumes one spark and (sound effect) melted to their skin, Grenfell Tower, Buddhist monk set on fire, arsonists, petrol bomb, back of a cigarette packet, sunburn, Kings x disaster, Glasgow school of art, Hell.

Jude: Natasha, I worry about you.

Natasha: Well it's really dangerous isn't it. Why do you think there's smoke alarms everywhere? Like fall asleep on the sofa with a cigarette and then whoom, then whoosh the curtains have gone, then whooo all the wallpaper's gone, do you know it's not the flames

that actually kills people, it's the smoke that gets you it's like (*choking*)
get down low, under, save yourself . . .

(N drops to the floor...she crawls around, she coughs.)

Jude: Natasha, we're not making a piece about house fires -

Natasha: It could be a metaphor for our lives... Imagine we filled the stage with smoke and it'd be like underneath a little window of existence where the women are hidden away, desperately trying to survive...

Jude: Natasha - no. (Wafting excess smoke.) Jesus christ! Look - let's just say the match thing works.

(Jude rubs beads together on mic.)

Natasha: What are you doing?

Jude: Foley - it's this foley art thing - I did a course once with Complicite - you need to be really quiet.

Natasha: Okay.

Jude: Can you hear it? Listen - what does it sound like?

(Jude - moves Natasha's mic to table, picks up fire and coats, enters ritual space, moves her mic into DSL ritual space. sets up fire from the discarded script ideas.)

Natasha: er...is it a plastic bag, like the kind you get with your fish and chips? I know, it's Space dust. The sound as it hits the roof of your mouth. Is it static? You know that static you use in contemporary dance that's, you know, sort of... meaningful...

emotive. Oh I know, those plastic sheets you put on a mattress when you know someone's going to wet the bed.

Jude: It's fire, Natasha. It's October, it's your birthday and I've lit the fire in your garden.

Natasha, can you grab the chairs?!

(They sit by the fire.)

FIRE - NATASHA'S GARDEN

Jude: Happy Birthday, love.

Natasha: Thanks darlin'... Did you see this present I got?

Jude: Yeah, I clocked it. . .

Natasha: I do like it, it's just sizable isn't it? Like chunky jewellery –

Jude: very art teacher

Natasha: . . . made me realise I must be a woman of a certain age – is it maybe like beads to balance out the hips?

Jude: Maybe that's why my earrings are getting progressively bigger. [I'll be wearing hoola hoops soon.]

Natasha: No longer being gifted delicate diamanté hearts.

Jude: I don't think anyone ever bought me a delicate heart.

Natasha: Or is it as women get older, becoming more and more invisible, they need statement jewellery , like “hello, can you see me, I’m still here, still interesting.”

I remember, a few Christmases ago my dad bought me this really dainty little sparkly green necklace, I mean I could barely get it round my neck, like he hadn’t realised I’d grown.

Jude: I don’t think we do grow up in their eyes. /

We’re queens now Natasha – we deserve crowns. /

We should make a show - call it Chunky Jewellery.

Natasha: What would it be about?

(They try out different jewellery based movement motifs.)

Jude:

*I wish I wish but it is all in vain
I wish I were a maid again
But a maid again I ne’er shall be
Til the apples grow on an orange tree*

SCENE 1- NATASHA’S KITCHEN - Frieda’s birthday

(Natasha lights match.)

Natasha: It’s January. There’s a woman standing in her kitchen - she is caught in the sunlight streaming through the window – a wintery sun melting away the morning frost. She’s lighting the candle on a homemade birthday cake. The smell of fresh coffee and croissants fills the air, and on the multi-coloured table cloth, chopped grapes and strawberries, little yoghurt pots, the children with their rosy red

cheeks gather in anticipation, their parents hovering behind them, and in her highchair the baby girl - dressed in her blue and pink embroidered jacket - either side of her - her brothers are beaming as the most enormous chocolate cake, with pressed in smarties making a number 1, is pushed towards them. She opens her mouth and (inhale)

Jude: There's a woman standing in the middle of a devastated kitchen. There's clutter on every surface, the remnants of breakfast litter the table and the floor. Weetabix congealed onto ikea plastic bowls, an apple with one tiny bite taken out of it, half-eaten toast.

The floor is covered in crumbs, lidless pens, abandoned socks in dusty corners and a solo shoe kicked under the table - some kind of marble explosion has occurred.

The woman looks exhausted. She's holding it together. But frayed, like hope might make her cry. I'm standing in my gold dress with my baby on my back. [What needs to happen?]

Natasha: Jude,

Jude: Hey Natasha

Natasha: so you know for the party, um,

Jude: Uh huh

Natasha: Well it's a breakfast party,

Jude: Yeah . . .

Natasha: I just thought it would be the easiest meal to cater for, you know, buy some croissant, whack some coffee on, chop up fruit - simple - but the problem is - breakfast is soon -

the house is a total wreck, and I thought It would be good to get the croissants fresh, but I really can't face getting all 3 kids up and out and in their car seats, and like um, so basically I was just wondering if you could maybe come round -

Jude - yeah, when?

Natasha - now - could you come now? - It's just - I'm here on my own, well obviously the kids are here, but I'm the only adult here. Um, it feels important to celebrate, I really don't want to have to cancel, so I was just wondering if you could maybe come a bit earlier, it would really help, um, yeah, he left, he left a few days ago . . .

Jude: What?

Natasha: ... he's not here... he's gone.

Jude: What do you mean?

Natasha: He's gone

Jude:

I am, I am here

I am, I am here

I am, I am here

I am, I am here

(movement together - Jude gets Natasha off the floor.)

SCENE 2 – NATASHA'S KITCHEN

Natasha: Can we try a scene? Can you be him for a minute? Okay, you'd be sat there, so it's like we're just finishing a meal, the remnants of a meal on the table and-

What are you doing?

Jude: Trying to figure out the physicality. He's quite tall isn't he? A football coach.

Natasha: You'd just be sat here, keep it simple.

(Jude chucks coats on the floor.)

Natasha: Can you actually hang those!

Jude: Alright.

Natasha: So, it's dark, you know that kind of dark of winter when the night's long, the boys are already asleep and it's quiet, that kind of quiet of a newborn in the house. People think it's loud, but it's tender and milky. Okay, so, I'm doing that sort of awkward eating thing - you know - her head's still floppy, so I'm doing that leaning back sort of thing.

So you're going to say "Tash",

Jude: (Trying out a low male voice) Tash, Tash.

Natasha: I think maybe let's skip the Francophone West African accent. It's quite tricky.

Jude: I can practice.

Natasha: No, no, no. Keep it simple.

So you're going to say "Tash, I'm leaving, I need to have my own job, my own life. I'm going back to Norway."

Jude: "Tash, I'm leaving, I need to have my own job, my own life. I'm going back to Norway." Ok.

Natasha: And then I'll protest, we can just improvise that part, and then you say, "Okay I'll stay for a year."

Jude: And do I mean it?

Natasha: Well, he left 3 days before her first birthday so...

Jude: Fuck, yeah, okay, right.

(They settle into the scene, Natasha passes Frieda to Baz,
he passes her back.)

Jude: She wants you. Tash, listen, I'm leaving, I'm going back to Norway, I need my own job, my own life.

Natasha: We've just had a baby. We have, you have two boys already, we have three children, your family is here.

Jude: Yeah, and you're with them.

Natasha: I can't be enough, no, I can't do this on my own, absolutely not.

Jude: I can't get work here. I want to be able to provide.

Natasha: Exactly by being here, being present, being a dad, a husband, an important part of this family.

Jude: I'm telling you I need to go...

Natasha: No, you need to stay, you promised. You said this time you're staying in Scotland.

Jude: I can't get work here. I need to go where the work is.

Natasha: We can't just up and leave. The boys are in school, nursery, and it's my income here that supports us. I can't do this on my own. I'm exhausted.

Jude: You've done it before.

Natasha: Yes and that wasn't ok, this isn't ok. We've just had a baby.

Jude: I'll stay for a year. One year -

(Jude leaves the scene and drops character.)

Jude: How did that feel? – Amazing! I felt like my hands were actually bigger. That was so cool, trying to get inside the masculine psyche - to understand his logic...

Let's do it again - an' I'll try the accent - to see what that gives us!

(Natasha is quietly devastated.)

Fuck, sorry. Let's do something else.

SCENE 3 - MOTHERS DAY - Then He Kissed Me.

Let's try Mother's day. We've not tried Mother's Day yet. Take off your jacket. Come on, deep breath. Let it go.

Remember, you'd invited me over because I was a shambles – it was my first Mother's day as a motherless mother. Baz had just left. But it was sunny - in March - in Scotland! And you'd laid the toys out on a rug in your garden. Peggy and I arrived in a taxi.

You came out of the house. You were standing on the steps, with your three kids draped around you, like a lioness with her beautiful unruly cubs.

And you stood there like a Goddess of Motherhood. A Goddess of Motherhood!?

(Natasha limply raises her chin.)

Ok . . . (we can work on that.)

And I thought, "If you can do it with three, I can surely do it with one."

(Natasha hesitantly plays the glockenspiel.
Jude offers encouragement / judgement.
Natasha plays the intro to Then He Kissed Me.)

Jude:

*Well he walked up to me
and he asked me if I wanted to dance
He looked kind of nice
And so, I said I might take a chance*

Both:

*When he danced, he held me tight
And when he walked me home that night*

Jude:

*All the stars were shining bright
And then he kissed me.*

Both:

*Each time I saw him
I couldn't wait to see him again
I wanted to let him know
That he was more than a friend
I didn't know just what to do
So I whispered, "I love you"
And he said that he loved me, too
And then he kissed me*

Natasha: *He kissed me in a way that I've never been kissed before*

Jude: *Oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo*

Natasha: *He kissed me in a way that I want to be kissed forever more*

Jude: *Sha-la-la*

Both:

*I knew that he was mine
So, I gave him all the love that I had
And one day, he took me home
To meet his mom and his dad
Then he asked me to be his bride
And always be right by his side
I felt so happy I almost cried
And then he kissed me*

(Instrumental: Natasha dances, Jude sings / smoke machine.)

Both:

*Then he asked me to be his bride
And always be right by his side
I felt so happy I almost cried*

And then he kissed me

*And then he kissed me
And then he kissed me
And then he kissed me*

SCENE 3a - TINDER / FERTILITY - This is it.

Jude: Well actually, we met on Tinder. Can I try something? Oo, you could do the smoke!

(Natasha nods - sure. Jude indicates big smoke.)

Once upon a time, we swiped right, matched and arranged to meet up. "Hi."

(Pre-recorded: phone calls to clinic.)

- *Hi, I'm just calling to see if I can get book a fertility test.*

And then there was the picnic, with the condensation and the lemonade. And then he kissed me.

- *Hey, I just received the results, and wanted to speak to someone about what the numbers mean...*

And then there was the romping around in the forest with the moss.

- *So what you're saying is I can never have kids.*

And then, when the leaves began to fall, he packed his bags to go off travelling around the world.

- *Ok... thanks. Goodbye.*

Goodbye my love. Goodbye.

Jude sings:

This is it - Is this it?

This is it - Is this it?

This is it - Is this it?

This is it - Is this it?

SCENE 4 - JUDE'S MUM IN HOSPITAL - 'Oh Judith'

Jude: Natasha, I think I need you to be my mum for a minute.

(move table - put on necklace / cardigan / move curtain.)

So you're here - in the hospital. You've had treatment for like 2 ½ years. You've got your little chemo cap on.

I'll come in and say my bit - and then you just say 'oh Judith'.

Ok?

Natasha: Ok

Jude: Hey Mum, I have something to tell you . . . so you know how I did those tests and I was told last week that I would never have kids? Well, it turns out the tests were wrong and I'm pregnant.

Natasha: Oh Judith.

Jude: Not that happy. She wasn't that happy about it. Remember, you've had treatment for years. You're knackered. . . like crazy tired.

You need to imagine tiny blobs of cancer slowly swimming around your system, and the chemo is kind of rotting you from the inside out. Really feel it coursing. But minimal. Minimal coursing of cancer.

(Pleased with herself for excellent direction.)

Well, it turns out the tests were wrong and I'm pregnant.

Natasha: Oh Judith.

Jude: Yeah, but it's still not right. More fear maybe? And load on the disappointment. It's like you've got generations of Calvinistic shame. Add that in. Yeah.

It turns out the tests were wrong and I'm pregnant.

Natasha: Oh Judith.

Jude: Yeah, that's good - that's it - if you can just keep... (saying it).

Natasha: Oh Judith, oh Judith, oh Judith...

(Jude starts crying. Natasha gets up to comfort her.)

Natasha: Oh Jude.

(Jude goes to the microphone.)

*This is it - Is this it?
Everybody dies or leaves . . .
This is it - Is this it?*

Scene 5 - NATASHA'S HOUSE / HOSPITAL - Frieda's Birth.

Natasha (*recorded voice over*):

- *Jude. Jude wake up. The midwife's here. She's called the ambulance - we need to get to the hospital. Something's wrong. I can feel it. Something... Something's wrong. I'm really not enjoying this -*
- *Where's the ambulance? Why is it taking so long?*
- *No. I can't lie down*
- *I can't push right now, please, I just*
- *I can't*
- *Tell them, Jude - Tell them - Please*
- *I'm in so much pain right now, I'm not sure, please, can I just...*
- *I will be able to just give me a minute, please.*

Jude: (live) Natasha - they need you to sign this, they need to operate.

Do you want me to come with you?

I'll be here. I'll be here.

(Music builds. We hear a baby crying.)

Jude: Can I hold her?

Natasha: Of course, you can hold her

Jude: *When you were born, you cried*
Both: *and the world rejoiced.*
Live your life so that when you die,
the world cries and you rejoice.

When you were born, you cried
and the world rejoiced.
Live your life so that when you die,
the world cries and you rejoice.

SCENE 6 - REHEARSAL ROOM - happy thoughts.

(They step to the side of the microphones.)

Natasha: Yeah, I don't know, I think there's probably a bit too much trauma in all that.

Jude: Yeah, it's too much. We don't want to do that to ourselves night after night. It's just silly.

Natasha: I think it could be triggering.

Jude: Yeah, re-traumatising.

Natasha: Yes, exactly.

Jude: Not a good idea.

Natasha: Okay what we need is happy memory, let's think of a happy memory and use that as a launch pad like whooom. Bring the energy up.

Right, a happy memory.

What about Peggy's birth? We could use that.

Jude: Okay great. Yeah - my mum always said she'd be there, but she had just died. And my dad - was a mess because my mum had just died. And my brother ...

Natasha: No, that's not going to work.

Jude: Even the doula cancelled because her dad had had a stroke-

Natasha: I don't think this is helpful. What else is happy? Em...

Jude: Weddings!

Natasha: Weddings! Oh my God, my wedding day - I was so happy, and I was stood at the top of the stairs in my long dress - and as I walked down I can see my dad, and my little nieces and nephews, all looking up at me like-

Jude: Like a princess.

Natasha: And then I saw him, in his beautiful embroidered African suit . . . Not helpful. Not helpful.

Jude: Opening nights!

Natasha: Opening nights! Yes, the relief.

Jude: Sunshine on Leith - an immediate standing ovation, it was ridiculous - *Da da da da*

Natasha: *Da da da da*

Jude: *Da da da da*

Natasha: *Da da da da*

Both: *Da da da da da da*
Da da da da da da da dah!

Jude: And someone's doing cartwheels. You don't have to do that.

..... encore and we run back out

Da da da da

Natasha: *Da da da da*

Jude: *Da da da da*

Natasha: *Da da da da*

Both: *Da da da da da da*
Da da da da da da da dah!

Jude: And we're skipping offstage, Kevin's getting the pints in, he's like "we get to do this another 183 times."

It was horrible Natasha. I still can't listen to the Proclaimers.

Natasha: Christmases! They're happy!

Jude: yeah, great, Christmas!

Natasha: Okay, Christmas – my dad's sat in his big armchair and there's a roaring fire - wrapping paper flying everywhere, everyone's smiling - and his hideous plastic tree Christmas tree is there - covered in tinsel. I really miss that house – obviously we had to sell it when he died and now there's nowhere big enough for us to gather. We're all just isolated.

Jude: Boobs! Boobs? I've got a good breastfeeding one.

Natasha: Oh right, okay.

Jude: So if you're Peggy... (begins to get boob out). We'll just imagine Peggy for this one.

Natasha: Probably best.

SCENE 7 - JUDE'S HOME / Fantasy - Natural Woman.

Jude: So, we're at home - just the two of us -

we're caught in the sunlight streaming through the open window.

And there's piano music playing.

We've finally got her latch on properly, her little cheeks are going, and she just looks up at me with her big brown eyes. Hey, little one you're here. You're here.

[Verse 1]

*Looking out on the morning rain
I used to feel so uninspired
And when I knew I had to face another day
Lord, it made me feel so tired*

*Before the day I met you, life was so unkind
Your love was the key to my peace of mind*

*'Cause you make me feel, you make me feel
You make me feel like a natural woman (Woman)*

JUDE'S PERFORMANCE FANTASY VENUE

[Verse 2]

*When my soul was in the lost and found
You came along to claim it
I didn't know just what was wrong with me
'Til your kiss helped me name it*

[Pre-Chorus]

*Now I'm no longer doubtful of what I'm living for
And if I make you happy, I don't need to do more*

[Chorus]

*'Cause you make me feel, you make me feel
You make me feel like a natural woman (Woman)*

*Ooh baby what you done to me
You make me feel so good inside
and I just wanna be
close to you - you make me feel so . . .*

(Jude drops out - Natasha continues.)

*'Cause you make me feel, you make me feel
You make me feel like a natural woman.*

SCENE 7a - **CREMATORIUM** - calling on my courage

(J and N - funeral attendants = arrange space for the crematorium:
left shoulder to carry table round, bow, curtains. Then put on their
coats.)

Natasha: I'm sitting towards the back of the crematorium, a very young Frieda strapped to my chest - there's a woman standing at the front by the coffin, you can clearly see her pregnant belly through her black dress. She's caught in the sunlight streaming through the window - a wintery sun that's melting away the morning frost. She looks out at the crowd - she smiles at someone - then she walks up to the microphone.

Jude:

She was the kind of mum who would run down the hall in her threadbare nightie if we'd had a bad dream.
She took our friends not just into her home but into her heart.
She never apologised because she always thought she was right.
She was quick to judge and long to forgive.
She was my Mum and I miss her.

*And I'm calling on my courage now,
I'm calling on my courage.*

She was the kind of wife who didn't believe in compromise. My dad is a very patient man.
She would lay out a table-cloth and make meals from scratch when guests were coming but if it was just us it was Bernard Matthews turkey burgers.
She made countless birthday cakes - her carrot cake is legendary.

*and I'm calling on my courage now,
I'm calling on my courage.*

She was the kind of woman who found peace in her allotment - snowdrops in spring.
She was a nightmare to go clothes shopping with.
She'd rather colour-in the scuffs on her old shoes than buy new ones.

She sang most freely - when she thought no one was listening - with her bare feet up on the dashboard.

She would have been a brilliant granny.

*and I'm calling on my courage now,
calling on my courage.*

SCENE 7b- HOSPITAL FOR SCAN - Peggy's scan

Natasha: (*as medic*) Judith Williams.

Jude: Hi, yeah

Natasha: Great. So if you could just (hop up here)

Jude: Sure.

Natasha: Are we waiting on anyone?

Jude: No, no it's just me.

Natasha: Such a gorgeous day yesterday wasn't it? Get up to anything nice?

Jude: It was my mum's funeral. So . . .

Natasha: I'm sorry. (hold mic to do scan, hear heartbeat.) It's amazing how often you hear that in families - one out, one in.

Commented [1]: It's amazing how often you hear that - one out, one in.

Jude: Are they okay?

Natasha: Did you want to know the gender?

Jude: Yes please.

Natasha: You have a healthy baby girl.

(Jude sits up.)

Jude: Hey little one. Hey.

Your granny would have loved you so much.

*And I'm calling on my courage now
I am calling on my courage
and I am call.....*

SCENE 8 - REHEARSAL ROOM - PODCAST > help me

(Natasha grabs Jude's mic.)

Natasha: What if it's not actually a theatre show but it's actually a podcast - like a TED talk only funnier.

Jude: Natasha, I was kind of in the middle of something ...

Natasha: yeah, yeah, it was really good - but I just feel - realistically are we going to be able to rehearse all of this?

Jude: I mean was any of that useful?

Natasha: Yes, you could still sing that - like that could be the theme tune... maybe a bit more upbeat - calling on my courage - perfect

Jude: Calling in my courage - a jingle?

Natasha: Yeah, exactly. So it would be like... Hi welcome to the podcast for single mums - My name's Natasha Gilmore and I'm joined here in the kitchen with my co-host -

Jude: Jude Williams

Natasha: So what advice can you give to all the single mums out there?

Jude: Don't do it.

Natasha: The thing is, if it's that depressing no one will actually listen to it. You know what I mean? I think it needs to be honest, but not too honest. Oh, I know, what advice do you wish people had given you.

Jude: Alright

Natasha: We could actually be really helpful, couldn't we?

Jude: Okay

Natasha: Deep breath

So it's like...

Natasha: Hi, I'm here in the kitchen. Hi Jude .

Jude: Hi Natasha .

Natasha:

Welcome. So what advice could you give to all the single mums out there, after your years of experience? Your top five tops.

Jude: Tip number 1, make sure you really know the dad. Have living and available grandparents. Otherwise it's hard. It's really, really hard.

Natasha: Keep it light - Number 2. I'd say Get out the house, you'll feel trapped so just grab a nappy and go, you can get everything else out there.

Jude: Yeah, you have to make eye contact with other adults. Otherwise game over.

Natasha: Yes. It's an opportunity to make new friends – Don't be shy to give your phone number to the mums at bounce and rhyme . . .

Jude: and the dad's, the hot dads - the single hot dads –

Natasha: But you know, it's important to make mum friends, you'll have so much in common with them.

Jude: I had nothing in common with them - all the mums I met were moaning about incompetent husbands and their overenthusiastic grandparents - and I'm like, this is not my experience.

Natasha: But I'm talking about someone to chat bleeding cracked nipples with, how the hell do you get them to latch, infected stitches – because even though you're never alone, ever, you'll be so lonely. The loneliest I've ever been.

Jude: Keep it light Natasha. Okay so Number 3 - Lower your standards. Keep it basic. Best bit of advice I was given – think of early parenting like camping - if you're mostly clean, mostly fed and mostly happy you're doing great.

Natasha: Exactly. You're not a catalogue family, that's not you.

Jude: And that's okay.

Natasha: Be realistic, you're not an 'elf on the shelf' kind of family –

Jude: Never gonna happen

Natasha: Don't do it to yourself - and the first few birthday parties don't make them too good. Because those birthdays just keep on coming.

Jude: Keep it basic.

Natasha: Yeah.

Jude: Number 4 – I'd say Health and Safety – good to learn basic first aid...

Natasha: yeah but also don't worry too much, you can let them out of your sights - I mean, finish your gin, they'll be putting all sorts in their mouths – it's generally alright

Jude: unless it's a dishwasher tablet

Natasha: Oh God yeah, that would kill them

Jude: Yeah you wouldn't even make it to the hospital

Natasha: And they make them look like sweets!

Jude: It's ridiculous.

Ah, number 5 – I'd say - learn to ask for help

Natasha: Like, what kind of thing?

Jude: You know, can you come over and take the baby for a walk so I can have a shower, or a wank, or a shower and a wank.

Natasha: or a cry.

Jude: Oh my god, a wank and a weep - it's habit stacking, right? It's amazing what you can do in 20 minutes - shower, wank, weep, done, ready to go. But you have got to learn to ask for help.

Natasha: Asking for help. Not sure I've fully mastered that one -

Jude: ooh - we could workshop it - That could be episode 2 - Asking for help with Natasha and Jude -

Natasha: Ok, so I've got a newborn

Jude: Yeah, and I'm your friend coming to visit, and crucially I don't have kids, so I've got time.

- Hey how's it going?

Natasha: So good to see you, yeah I'm good

Jude: You're smiling too much, be honest

- Hey how's it going?

Natasha: I'm okay, how are you?

Jude: Don't make it about me, just let it be about you.

- Hey how's it going?

Natasha: Not bad.

Jude: Lies.

- Hey how's it going?

Natasha: I'm a level of tired I've never experienced before.

Jude: That's great, carry on - now ask for help.

Natasha: Is there any chance, no problem if not

Jude: Don't let me off the hook – just ask – help me.

- Hey how's it going?

Natasha: I'm so tired – and there's this smell of vomit on the sheets
I can't get rid of and ...

Jude: This is excellent, Natasha, now ask for help

Natasha: Can you...?

Jude: yes..

Natasha: (opens mouth) h h h h

Jude: it's a word say it

Natasha: h h h h

Jude: what? Horse? Hope? Say it.

Natasha: heh – heh – heeeeh

Jude: that's it come on

Natasha: hell, hell, hellll

Jude: -p

Natasha: hellll

-p

Jude: Good, good

Natasha: help help help me

Jude: You're doing really well.

Natasha: help me – help me –

Jude: You've got it.

Natasha: help !..... (into help me monster) Help me help me help me help me!!!!

(Natasha collapses onto the floor with the microphone.)

Natasha: Jude,

Jude: Hey Natasha

Natasha: So you know for the party, um,

Jude: Uh huh.

Natasha: Do you think you could come round just an hour earlier? It would really help - to get the party ready – the house is a wreck. He's not here. He's gone.

Jude: What?

Natasha: He's gone.

SCENE 9a – JUDE'S HOME - leaving the house

(Jude talks to Peggy.)

Hey Peggy, love. We need to get to Natasha's. It's Freida's birthday. Give me your little hand - please stop wriggling your arm. I know you don't like putting your jacket on - but it's cold outside. Tadcu is waiting for us downstairs. We need to go, fuck. Sorry, love. I'm here. I'm going to put you down for a second. I need to brush my teeth. I'm just here. Dad, why are you phoning? I know you're downstairs. Yes, Peggy is crying. She didn't sleep well last night. We're tired. I'm tired. I haven't even brushed my teeth. No, please - you don't need to come upstairs. We'll be down in a minute. Just give me a minute. Please.

I know love. I know. I'm trying.

Hey... shh.....

*And I'm calling on my courage now.
I'm calling on my courage.*

SCENE 9b - THE UNDERWORLD - Jude introduces Peggy to mum

(Natasha lights a match upstage of curtain - Underworld.)

Mum? mum... this is Peggy . . .

I named her after you.

We're going to be ok mum.

We're ok.

(The match goes out.)

Mum?

(Jude goes upstage to 'find her' opens curtains up.
Puts on priestess dress, lowers chandelier.)

SCENE 10 – NATASHA'S GARDEN

(Natasha starts gathering the furniture into a pile.)

Let's just forget it Jude, this was a terrible idea. It's not right, is it? It's not working. We don't want people to watch this, who'd want to watch this.

Let's just get rid of all this stuff - all of it - none of this is right, none of it - I mean this isn't theatre. Where's the ending? There's no end. There is no ending.

Why did we ever think this was a good idea? You're right, Jude. You said it was going to be re-triggering and it is. That's the thing about personal stories, there are so fucking personal. I'm standing here feeling humiliated. This does not belong on a stage. I don't want people to see this.

It's too much isn't it, it's too much,
but also not enough.

[pause]

I'm not enough. It needs to be better. I need to be better.

This isn't how it should be.

I'm failing.

I'm failing them – I've failed them - I can't be enough,
I'm actually scared.

Jude: Natasha.

Natasha: They need more,

Jude: Natasha.

Natasha: How can I be enough - I can't be enough – it's too much for
me -

(Jude takes Natasha's hand. Gifts her necklace number one
- takes her to a new ritual landscape.)

SCENE 11 - RITUAL SPACE - Jewellery / Here's to Life

(Jude starts to anoint Natasha with jewellery and titles.)

Jude: Natasha Olivia Polly Gilmore

Daughter of Jerry

Daughter of Hilary

Mother of Otis

Mother of Iggy

Mother of Freida

(The following text is pre-recorded)

Natasha:

J Holder of hands
 Holder of dreams

N Holder of bags
 Packer of snacks

 Maker of meals
 Maker of plans
 Baker of birthday cakes

J Giver of cuddles

N Administrator of Calpol

J Washer of faces

N Dishes

J Socks

N Pants

J Floors

N Windows

J Car seats

N Hair

J Wiper of tables

N Wiper of butts

J Wiper of tears

N Unplugging of sinks

J Brusher of teeth

N Banker

J Butler

N Taxi Driver

J Toilet Chaperone

N Social Secretary

J Buyer of gifts

N Christmas coordinator

J Filler of forms

N Teller of stories

J Inventor of games

N Appreciator of questionable art

J Controller of screen time

N Bringer of fun

J Keeper of secrets

N Explainer of racism

J Explainer of war

N Creator of home

J Keeper of hope

(Natasha starts to spin.)

Jude:

*No complaints and no regrets
I still believe in chasing dreams and placing bets
But I have learned that all you give is all you get
So give it all you got*

*So here's to life
And every joy it brings
Here's to life
to dreamers and their dreams*

*There is no yes in yesterday
And who knows what tomorrow brings
Or takes away
As long as I'm still in the game
I want to play
For life
For laughs
For love*

*So here's to life
And every joy it brings
Here's to life
to dreamers and their dreams*

(They move together.)

May all your storms be weathered

And all that's good get better

Here's to life

Here's to love

Here's to you
