

Is There Anybody There?

by

Martin Paul Roche

AUDITION PACK

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Synopsis

Sue has spent her life married to an empty space. Her husband. A man who wasn't ever there; not with her anyhow. And she fooled herself into thinking her manufactured life had been manufactured by her. But a perfect life is not always what it seems, and her husband made her realise that.

When Sue meets Ann, an employee of her late husband, she finds a soul mate in more ways than one. And following a chance conversation, they hatch a plan to laugh, to drink, to joke and to make fun with impunity about the afterlife and those who ask the question, "Is there anybody there?" But life can bring with it unexpected turns and what begins as a joke soon becomes much more.

'Is there anybody there?' explores a range of emotions, expectations and fears. It questions what motivates us, what we want out of life ... and what we think about what might come after it. It explores friendship and what we expect from it and then within the cracks between relationships, what is really going on and what happens when it goes wrong and why.

Finally, it considers those times when we are alone and assess our lives with that inner monologue we all rehearse; what part of us is actually speaking and what part answers us back? The journey the characters go on begins and ends in two very different places and the question of the piece is not resolved ... that is a matter for the audience to decide. What will you decide? Was anybody there?

Characters (3f)

- Sue** 35/45*. Attractive, slim. Always well, and expensively, dressed. She is self-assured, hard, bitter, in humour and in anger. Underneath and later, she is vulnerable, and her demons come home to roost.
- Ann** 35/45*. Business like, 'safe', initially, but there is a feeling that now and again, her character suggests that there is more to her, unexpected, uncharacteristic. In the beginning, she comes across as a person who sees in Sue an opportunity to be somebody very different, have a laugh, take risks. A trusted friend. But in resolution, she is dark, manipulative, chilling.
- The Woman** 35/45*. A complicated character and very difficult to read, judge, categorise who or what she is. She is controlled, unemotional, expressionless, detached, calm, precise, articulate. At no point is anything said which indicates the nature of what she represents. I think to have the audience never having any definitive answer is the crux of the piece; let them imagine who or what she is. For the premiere she was simply dressed: jeans, white T-shirt and bare feet.

No matter what, I would suggest that they all need to be a similar age and therefore, the playing ages of the actress as a group, **may be adjusted upwards to accommodate this. Their language and experiences would not, I would suggest, allow for them to have a playing age which is younger.*

Direction/Production Notes

For the first performance, a simple black box was the basic structure. High bar table and two stools set downstage right for Scene 2 which were struck at the end of the scene.

The opening piece for the first production used a gobo of a cross projected on a black flat downstage left below which, Sue delivered the church service/eulogy. Similar for Act 2 and Ann, where a court crest was projected.

A running black was used part way down stage. It was needed to have the facility to be backlit centre stage to create the effect of the 'audience' being upstage/behind them at times and to enable the action to switch perspective as indicated in the script.

Furniture for Sue's house was set upstage, behind the running blacks: two armchairs; one that swivels, a table, a clothes rail for Act 1, Scene 2. Free standing/abstract panels behind the furniture to represent the walls, sections, of the room and a free-standing door all of which could be seen past/through on either side of them.

Lighting always tightly lit to draw in the attention of the audience. The intent was to focus on the people and their personalities, relationships, tensions and not have it obfuscated by the practicalities of staging. This approach also has the added advantage that it affords the opportunity to play the piece in a range of spaces and not dependant on traditional staging/setting or venues.

The scene transitions were covered by music edits of 70's/80's songs, which are alluded to at an early point in the dialogue.

I have provided certain stage directions, notes, explanations and with them, suggestions of how it might work. But they really are suggestions for a specific staging solution. It works equally well, I hope, in the round if necessary.

The nature of the language is pacey, and it will be seen from the frequent use of ellipses that the intent is for dialogue to have the feeling of being constantly interrupted, predicted, supporting the pace and hopefully, keeping it edgy, spontaneous.

The Woman, it is suggested, is for best effect, either sat in the auditorium at the front from the beginning as a member of the audience, or walks in from there. The writing is structured around that premise. It would work with her coming on from the wings, but it would change the nature of the dialogue and is, in my honest opinion, a poor second choice.

Finally, this piece has not been devised and written to be rewritten by the Director. If you don't get it or aspects don't work for you, I would suggest it is not the piece for you. The feedback from the audience was consistent and, therefore, any change in the piece as presented/written is a huge risk; don't fix what isn't broke.

There is minimal use of bad language. All I would say is that the intention is for the language, phrasing, humour to be 'of' the characters, their nature. It is not included for effect or to shock. It is just the way they are. I would be very wary of, again, editing such out as it changes the piece and the personalities.

Martin P Roche, 2017

Audience Feedback from Social Media:

"Pure brilliance"

"Absolutely gripped"

"Excellent script"

"A really thought provoking play. I loved it ... what a mixture of emotions"

"Brilliant in every way. Totally loved it. Well done to all of you. Martin has such excellent writing skills; I actually couldn't wait to get back in the theatre at the interval to see how things panned out. Totally awesome"

"... give us more plays by this writer ... the cast held me all the way through"

"It was funny, insightful, modern, very witty and thought provoking dialogue. It twists and turns and it grabs you. The staging was original and creative. Simplistic and clever, but that didn't matter because all three performers had you gripped all the way through. They could have performed on a bare stage and it would still be brilliant. I really was impressed ... brilliant piece of original theatre"

"Twists and turns ... mysterious ... evocative ... makes you sit up and think ... haunting ... spine chilling. All in all, this is a great piece of theatre with lots of laughter..."

(Tameside Reporter)

#1

House to Black. SFX: Track #1 begins which fades as lights come up on Sue. Sue is stood in a special, dressed in black. Running blacks are in.

Sue First of all, can I thank you all for coming today. Derek was so close to all of his friends he would be very pleased to see you all here. He spent so much time with all of you. Golf, football, darts, snooker, rugby ... and the do's: stag do's, leaving do's, retirement do's, christening do's, even self-invited himself to hen do's. Fishing weekends, horse racing trips. Office parties, reunions, resignations, dismissals and once, even a decree nisi do. One long inebriated night, weekend, week, fortnight out. I don't think he had a liver. He certainly didn't have one by the end. Now it's his wake and it will be the first do he's ever missed. Ironic really. But he'll undoubtedly be here in spirit – especially as he spent his life supping one variety or another of them. I was about to say: “Ah well, you knew Derek”. But you did, didn't you? Better than me. You spent more time with him than me. You had more fun with him than me. He didn't know me. So, thank you for everything you did for him ... and from me? Well. Thanks for nothing. The buffet and the bar are open next door. He paid for that as well so as ever, feel free to help yourselves. After all, you always have.

#2

The following lunchtime. SFX: Track #2 fades and bar background noise is heard. Lights up, after several seconds, on Ann and Sue sat on stools at a high bar table. Each have a cocktail and they are both glued to their mobile phones. They don't look at each other. SFX: bar background noise begins to fade as the dialogue picks up.

Sue I'm not really surprised that you found my profile on line. There's not many Prendergast's out there and having my profile picture as the Grim Reaper. Well, not exactly an unfathomable correlation with ...

Ann ... with what? A hard faced cow that's just buried her husband who she didn't much care for and hates everything and everybody? No, not at all.

Sue Well, when you put it like that. I do love lunchtime drinks. There's just something about not being in work and ...

Ann Not giving a buggler?

Sue I was going to say, not having a hangover in the morning.

Ann That as well then.

Sue I don't know if it's true, but somebody told me once that Prosecco was a Greek God.

Ann And?

Sue Well love, if she wasn't she should be.

Ann She? I would have thought it was a bloke?

Sue *(She looks at Ann with a scowl).* You are joking?

Ann You're right. *(Silence. They are both still absorbed looking at their phones).* There really is some garbage on social media though, isn't there? I mean, pictures of babies, cats, puppies, whales, donkeys and men wearing very little ... bloody hell. Look at the size of his ... *(She turns her phone around to show Sue).*

Sue That can't be real.

Ann We can live in hope.

Sue Life's too short to spend it hoping. We make our own opportunities. *(She resumes browsing on her phone).* And here we go, for some people being online means every post has to be meaningful quotes, inspirational pictures ...

Ann And videos that you are instructed you have to watch immediately because they will 'change your life' ...

Sue ... or messages that you have to share to get a year's worth of luck or if you don't, a lifetime's worth of misery.

Ann/Sue 'Type Amen and forward on'.

Ann Oh, and don't forget, posting pictures of the meal you're about to eat.

Sue (*Laughing*). And telling the world which café you're in and who's with you.

Ann Oh no, how much you love your family.

Sue ... especially the one who died twenty years ago.

Ann/Sue 'Hello?'

Sue And when they just type, 'Fed up', knowing they'll get overwhelmed with questions.

Ann 'What's up Hun?'

Sue 'You OK Babe?'

Ann And then it starts. Pandora's Box is opened. How much you hate your life.

Sue Your work.

Ann Your friends.

Sue But love your cat.

Ann And dress it up.

Sue Yeah, in animal outfits.

Ann (*Showing Sue a picture on her phone*). A cat in a dog suit wearing a beard.

Sue (*Showing Ann a picture on her phone*). A dog dressed as Elsa from 'Frozen'!

Ann/Sue (*Singing*). 'Let it go, let it go'.

Ann 'Laugh out loud'.

Sue 'Smiley face'.

Ann/Sue 'Woop woop'!

They both 'high five'.

Ann Utter garbage.

Sue Absolutely.

Silence as they continue to browse through their phones.

Ann It's brill though isn't it?

Sue I'd be lost without it.

Silence. They are both still glued to their phones.

Ann I do not believe it. God give me bloody strength.

Sue What?

Ann Candy Crush. Soddin' Candy Crush. If I get one more bleeding request to play it from this silly cow at work, I'm going to buy some real crushed candy and ram it down her throat.

Sue She might enjoy it.

Ann She's diabetic.

Sue 'Live by the candy, die by the candy' then, eh?

Ann You're sick.

Sue You started it girlfriend. (*They 'chink' glasses whilst still looking at their respective 'phones. Silence, whilst still engrossed*). I'm really glad we've come out today.

Ann Yep.

Silence.

Sue Can't remember the last time I had a proper chat with a real person.

Ann Yep.

#3

Sue's house one week later. Items have been set behind the running blacks which open in the black out to reveal the scene. Sue is sat down with a glass of wine, reading a magazine and listening to the radio, which is Track #3 still playing. SFX: a doorbell is heard. Sue turns off the radio. SFX: Track #3 off. Sue answers the door. Ann enters carrying a suitcase of clothes. There are outfits on a clothes rail in between two armchairs, a side table with a bottle of wine and two glasses. Sue is wearing a dressing gown; her outfit for the next scene is hung on the clothes rail.

Ann I tell you, I have found things in my wardrobe that defy any memories I have of me ever having good taste in clothes.

Sue That's an absolutely cracker that you've got on.

Ann This isn't one of them.

Sue Oops!

Ann It's a good job I haven't known you long enough to know when you're being a genuine cow.

Sue Moo! *(She gets an outfit off the rail. Ann sits in an armchair with the case on the floor and opens it). I was thinking something like this? (She holds an outfit on a hangar up to herself).*

Ann I don't know what's more worrying: the fact that you still own that or that at some time in the past you actually thought it was fashionable.

Sue What do you mean? This cost number fourteen a fortune.

Ann Number fourteen?

Sue Boyfriend number fourteen.

Ann Are you being serious?

Sue Not as much as he was. Guttled when I dumped him.

Ann Number fourteen? What did you get up to?

Sue Stuff that would make your toes curl.

Ann No perve, which number?

Sue We didn't give it numbers.

Ann You are so wrong in the head. Explains your taste in clothes.

Sue And friends apparently.

Ann/Sue Moo!

Silence as they look at outfits.

Ann But fourteen? Really?

Sue Variety, spice, you know how the saying goes.

Ann So was your husband number fifteen?

Sue No. I think he was twelve. *(Ann stares at her). Oh, come off it. I didn't have you down as a prude. He wasn't interested in me after we got married, just his business and there was no way I was going to spend our marriage sat on the sub's bench. I was a possession. I have needs and he came nowhere near doing anything for them. (Spoken in a southern American accent). Money might make the world go 'round honey-pie, but it certainly ain't the spice of life. (Speaking normally). You add your own spice, Hun. And I think you know exactly what I'm getting at.*

Ann So you played around?

Sue Don't look so surprised, love.

Ann But you were married.

Sue We, were married. He clearly had an opt out clause on the bits that didn't suit him. He had no interest at all in me. He filled his life with everything but me. So, I had to look for someone who could fill the void. And, well, I liked it.

Ann Did he know?

Sue What difference does that make?

Ann Perhaps it was a two-way street.

Sue Derek wasn't intelligent enough to have an affair. He wasn't interested in having an affair. All he cared about was his beloved business, golf and mates. He was too wrapped up in someone far more important; himself.

Ann So maybe, what he was doing was all about getting his own back on you?

Sue Are you saying he knew? He froze me out because he knew?

Ann No, but it doesn't sound like you were subtle about it.

Sue *(She laughs)*. My, my. You still like to pack those surprises don't you chuck?

Ann The more I get to know you, the more I get it. Why you want to do this. Why it's not about just 'having a laugh'. And why you clearly get off on the idea of shattering other people's hopes. You never had any hopes so why should anybody else? Bitter and twisted don't you think?

Sue The more sweetener you add, the more bitter the taste it leaves.

Ann I call that deep.

Sue I call that honest. Having cold feet, are we?

Ann Not at all. Just need to understand why I'm getting into what I'm getting into.

Sue And what might that be, do you think?

Ann Dark. Edgy. Risky. A gamble. Dangerous

Sue Good. But I need to know why as well. I can't have you bottling it and ...

Ann Did you not hear what I said? Darlin' I sell bloody car parts. Call me Miss Dangerous! I work with a group of morons for whom the only stimulation they get is their morning coffee. You're on a mission and, well, I'm joining it for the ride. Thelma, meet Louise. Does that make me as bad as you? I guess it does. Do I understand it? I guess I don't. Do I care? I guess not. Will I regret it? Who cares? Look, if I analyse it too much I'll be out of the door. You've had a life of risk. My idea of risk, until now, was eating something without having looked at the calories on the packet. So, let's bin the therapy session, open another bottle and pick out some outfits we wouldn't be seen dead in - but the dead will hopefully want to be seen around!

Sue You, my dear are one sick, hard faced sod ... and I love it. Forget me. You were born for this.

Ann And if we don't stop talking and start getting our act together, we won't need to contact the dead because we'll die on that stage without their help. What do you think of this? *(Holding up an outfit)*.

Sue Brilliant. What do you think of this? *(Holding up an outfit)*.

Ann Shite!

Sue And you've got the gall to criticise my taste in clothes?

Ann I'm thinking bright, garish, loud, what do you think?

Sue Not dark, mysterious, intriguing?

Ann Why not both.

Sue Like your style. Well, not that much, clearly.

Ann/Sue Moo!

They both continue to look through clothes in silence. Ann keeps looking over at Sue, clearly wanting to speak.

Ann But seriously, fourteen?

Sue Well, I don't smoke.

Ann With that much friction, I'm amazed. *(They both laugh)*.

Sue *(She holds up an outfit)*. I think I'm going to go with a little black number.

Ann *(Tongue in cheek)*. Will he be number fifteen then?

Sue Oooo! You see, that's why this is going to work. You're quick.

Ann *(Pause)*. So, have you figured out how it will work, you know, on stage?

Sue If I'm really honest I've been fascinated by the whole thing for ages. You've just given me the final piece in the jigsaw and a reason to finish it. Watched loads of TV programmes for years and even researched it on line during this last week. You just

run with what they tell you. These people are desperate for anything, any message, any hint that there is somebody, anybody there. The majority of the time they give you everything you need to know, and they don't even know it. So, after that? Well, it's just telling them what they want to hear. Just start with a name.

Ann No. We start with an illness, an accident, a tragedy.

Sue That's sick.

Ann No, it gives us the best 'in'.

Sue Why?

Ann Simple. At least you know they're already dead. Think. These people aren't trying to contact the bloody living, are they? Forget names. All the rubbish psychics go with names. "Is there somebody here with a vowel in their name?" Please. "Does the name Smith mean anything to anybody?" Yeah, probably half the bloody audience. Go straight for the affective.

Sue So what do you think then, know-all?

Ann Let's try you for example.

Sue Me?

Ann Yeah. Come on. You want to do this, and we need a dry run. You're recently bereaved. You know how that feels – well as much as you can feel. If you can't take it, you can't give it. So?

Sue Alright smart-alec. Give it your best shot.

Ann *(She stands and 'prepares' herself)*. Right. I have somebody here with me who is telling me there is a woman in the audience they have a message for. Has somebody recently lost a husband very suddenly, without warning? *(Silence)*. Well, come on, just answer me?

Sue This is daft.

Ann No, this is the act. Get with it. So. Has somebody recently lost a husband very suddenly, without warning?

Sue *(She is uninterested)*. Yes. Me. I have.

Ann Oh for god's sake. You're not the next patient at the bloody dentists. You are one of a room full of people waiting, desperate to be picked.

Sue It'll be better than the Lottery draw on telly this.

Ann looks at Sue sternly. Sue mouths the word 'sorry', holds her hands up, takes it seriously and 'prepares' herself.

Ann Has somebody recently lost a husband very suddenly, without warning?

Sue Yes. I have.

Ann Slow down. Talk slowly. That's it my love, I can hear you. I know your anxious but she's here with me and she's listening to you. It is a man that's here with me. He's telling me that the pain has all gone now and he is with people. Other people. People that you will know. But he refuses to talk about what actually happened. He wants to talk about, about, a holiday. He wants to talk about a special holiday, the best time he ever spent with just you and it was in ...

Sue Barbados.

Ann Barbados. Yes. You said it just as he did so it must be you he is trying to make contact with. And it was not just a special holiday ...

Sue Our honeymoon.

Ann This is overwhelming. I can feel so much contentment, love, happiness.

Sue I didn't want it to end.

Ann And he says that it was the happiest he had ever been in his life. In his whole life. And he's telling me that although you had difficult times, he never stopped loving you.

And it was the greatest then. He might not have told you since and he might not have

always showed you, but you meant the world to him. He felt frightened towards the end, but ...

Sue We were both in love but couldn't say it. The words, they just ...

Ann He knew. You didn't need to say anything. You don't need to now. He knew. He knows everything. And no matter what happened he never, ever stopped loving you.

Silence.

Sue *(Breaking the moment)*. Good. Well, that's very ... good. You certainly have this ...

Ann He just keeps saying he's so sorry for not being there with you and at times, not being the husband you needed him to be, that he should have been ...

Sue Well, I think you've nailed this ...

Ann He didn't mean the things he may have done that hurt you. He did hurt you, didn't he?

Sue That's enough now ...

Ann ... but he says you know that he found it so hard sometimes to say what really mattered, especially at the end, to admit that you deserved better than him ...

Sue I said enough ...

Ann ... and in the hospital there just wasn't the time to ...

Sue Stop.

Ann ... to say goodbye, to make amends, to make peace and just let you know that no matter what, love had, love would, love will endure ...

Sue *(Shouting)*. Stop!

#4

SFX: an announcement and audience applause are heard. Sue and Ann immediately turn upstage and face the closed black tab curtain. As the curtains open, the upstage lighting comes up to blind/cover them as they then turn and walk downstage. Stage crew follow them on through the blacks with a table and set it for them to use for their drinks whenever appropriate. As they walk downstage, the lights go off behind and the blacks are closed. Front of house spots come up. Dialogue commences as applause ends.

Ann Well, you've been a lovely audience ladies and gentlemen. We hope that you've had a chance to relax in the bar at the interval. The theatre has asked me to draw your attention to their forthcoming events listed on the notice board in the bar. Also, that a new Zumba class will be starting here on Monday next week. Which sounds lovely. Wouldn't see me dead at it – and neither, I think would the dead like to see me in a leotard. *(She laughs at her humour. It trails off as, clearly, nobody else has laughed)*.

Anyhow, we've been very lucky this evening in being able to make connections with the spirit world, haven't we? I hope that they have meant something to, well, some of you. Before we finish for the evening, we will attempt to connect one more time with our spirit guides and, hopefully, bring the world of the spirits into all of our lives and give your loved ones the chance to touch us again. Sue would you like to start? Sue?

Sue What? Yes. Thank you, Ann. *(She is quiet, 'focussing' and hesitant before she speaks)*. I am drawn strongly to the young couple sat on their own at the front of the circle. Please my love, don't cry. I can feel your loss and I know it's so overwhelming. Your mother? Yes, let me see if it is her.

SFX: applause is heard.

Ann Just give Sue a moment my love and let her establish the connections she needs to make with her spirit guide who will introduce her to your ... Yes, yes, I know, I know, the years aren't the healer everybody says are they?

Sue My love, I do have an elderly lady here and she says that she is your mother, but says you always called her something unique, your own little pet name for her, something only you ever used that was, well, special, private, personal ... Mummy? That was

your pet name for your mother? Yes, original, well, she says that's right, yes, you knew her as ... Mummy. She's agreeing with you. She looks good for her age even now, a beautiful old lady.

Ann What, say again love? But she was only forty when she died?

Sue Well yes, my love but what you don't understand is that she is clearly projecting a much older maternal persona to comfort you.

Ann *(Whispering, aside to Sue)*. Nice one.

Sue Well, exactly, that's what I'll be seeing isn't it? I'm assuming the visual imagery infers age, but we're both right. A forty year old lady who looks like, like, well, like a pensioner.

Ann Oh, she dressed old for her age did she? Well, that just confirms what Sue's saying. Amazing. Amazing really.

Sue Truly.

Ann Really.

Ann/Sue Amazing.

SFX: applause is heard.

Sue *(Whispering, aside to Ann)*. You're telling me. *(To audience)*. And I can see that she is gesturing pain in her, I see in her ... *(she moves her hand around, hesitating, giving the impression she has no clue and is waiting for a lead to help her)* ... legs?

Ann Oh, she died of a heart attack?

Sue *(Aside)*. Shit, *(To audience)*. Correct, she's telling me that it radiated ... from her heart ... into her legs.

Ann Uncanny really.

Sue Really.

Ann Truly.

Ann/Sue Amazing.

#5

Running blacks out during interval. Sues house, two weeks later.

Ann *(From outside the door)*. Sue? Open the door, love. I know you're in there. You can't hide forever from me and I'm not going, so answer the bloody door. It's freezing out here. If I had nuts they'd have dropped off by now. It's been two weeks. Sue? Please? I'm not leaving until I speak to you. I'm worried about you. Please Sue? *(Sue quickly opens the door, then immediately goes back to her chair and sits with her knees up to her chest. Ann slowly walks in. Eyes fixed on Sue and slowly sits in the other chair)*. Thanks. So. How are you? *(Silence)*. Glad you let me in. I think the neighbours were beginning to think I was a member of the God Squad with a quota to fill. *(She laughs to herself but soon stops when Sue doesn't respond)*. I've been around a few times, but clearly not caught you in. Suppose you were out. I'll give you the benefit of the doubt with that, those ones. I've called the house phone loads of times, but your answering machine was off, so I'll give you the benefit of those ones as well. But I've lost count of the number of texts and calls to your mobile and as that's permanently fixed to you I can't let you get away with not knowing I was ...

Sue I wanted to be left alone. Still do.

Ann I see.

Sue *(Quickly)*. Do you?

Ann Yes.

Sue *(Sarcastically)*. Really?

Ann Clearly not.

Sue Clearly not.

Silence.

Ann (She spots tablets on the table which have spilled out). What are those?
Sue Valium.
Ann Why?
Sue (Singing, defiantly). 'Just a mouth full of red wine makes the Valium go down, Valium go down, ...' (Whilst singing she takes some valium and then washes them down with wine as she stops singing. Once she has swallowed, she sings again). 'Valium go down ...'
Ann I just wanted to ...
Sue What?
Ann Well. Just to find out ...
Sue What?
Ann To make sure you weren't ... alone.
Sue What? Alone? Stupid. A lifetime alone. What difference will two more weeks of it make.
Ann I was worried about you.
Sue Why?
Ann Why do you think?
Sue To make you feel better?
Ann Is that what you think? Honestly?
Sue Don't start me on honesty.
Ann It's the truth.
Sue (She laughs). Truth. Now. That's a whole new chapter. No. A book on its own. A lifetime of a conversation. Not enough drink, even in this house, to wash that one down.
Ann And I was worried.
Sue And I still want to be left alone.
Ann Fine. (She gets up and starts to leave).
Sue No. Sit. I'm all over the show. Just ... sit. (Ann sits slowly back down, not taking her eyes off Sue).
Sue (She picks up the wine bottle and pours the contents in the glass. There is literally a drop left. She looks at it and then drinks it anyhow). Sod it! (She exits and returns with another bottle, unscrewing the top. She pours herself a drink and knocks it back. She pours another and then sits as before holding the glass to her).
Ann (She weighs Sue up). Bit early Sue.
Sue Not when you've been drinking all night, Ann.
Ann All night?
Sue All night.
Ann Why?
Sue (Incredulously). Why? Do you seriously want me to answer that?
Ann Look Sue ...
Sue No, you look, Ann. Don't insult my intelligence by pretending that what happened two weeks ago didn't happen. That we're going to chat like two old dears at a tea dance, comparing conditions and prescriptions. That's what this is all about, isn't it? The house call? That's why you're here. Drop the bull and the pretence. Don't tell me that what happened meant nothing. That we do niceties. I've had enough of pretending. A lifetime. And please. Don't even try asking me to forget it.
Ann I wouldn't dream of it.
Sue Dreaming. Wow. Don't get me on to dreaming.
Ann (She becomes annoyed). Please, give it a break darling. I'm not meaning anything by it, so for god's sake stop looking for reasons to be a cow. (Silence). Sue?
Sue (Pause. Speaking calmly). Any concept of reality, of sanity, of, God knows. God, now that is a subject for a whole new bottle. Sorry. It all left me two weeks ago. "Is there

anybody there?" you asked me. Remember? You asked me. Sat in that chair. Well. After what happened. What do you think now, eh? And you asked me, "... but what if?" Remember that as well? You said that as well. Sat there. Well. There was somebody there. Something there. My god there was. And no friend, no shrink, no case of red will convince me otherwise. Two weeks I've sat here thinking about it. Drinking about it. I might have some baggage but I'm not mad. I know what I saw, what I heard. You won't convince me otherwise. We, I, did something that night. My big joke, my laugh at everybody else's expense. And what happened? Well. I'm the joke and the expense is mine. The question is, how long will I be paying? Who am I paying? What will be the price? And now she's back to collect the balance.

Ann She's back?

Sue It wasn't just onstage. It's happened in here. I keep hearing voices. A woman. She says things. Can't tell what sometimes. And the whistle. Same thing every time. Like she's calling a dog or something. And blowing on my face. Touching me. Wakes me up. Her voice is very quiet. Calm. But she's here. I know she is.

Ann Have you been to the doctors?

Sue *(She turns very quickly and looks at Ann sharply).* Have I what? Doctors? Are you not listening to me?

Ann Just because you can't explain it, doesn't mean that the answer has to be so, so, far-fetched.

Sue Far-fetched?

Ann You know what I mean Sue.

Sue No I don't, Ann, and neither do you. You don't know what you're talking about.

Ann And to be honest, neither do you. *(Silence).* I didn't see, didn't hear anything. Nobody did. Doesn't that tell you something?

Silence. Then the following dialogue gets more heated and angry.

Sue I only know ...

Ann You only know, what? Think about it. You saw something. You heard something. You believe something. No one else did. A theatre full of people. No one. And you're telling me that something, some woman, was there? And because it's carried on, it's real?

Sue And what might that something, some woman have been? What do you think Ann? Come on. Pin your colours to that mast.

Ann You're not drawing me into this.

Sue Into what? Speculation? The truth? You can't accept it so 'it' can't be? Is that how it has to be? You can't explain, so I need help?

Ann So I'm mad, am I?

Sue So we're bring madness into it are we?

Ann I'm just saying.

Sue And if you're clearly not, then I am? I asked you, who brought madness into this?

Ann I'm not saying that.

Sue So what exactly are you saying?

Ann To be honest? I have no idea. I don't know what to believe any longer.

Sue You mean, you don't know who to believe any longer?

Ann You said that.

Sue No, I simply said what you refuse to.

Ann Word games, mind games. It's your game, not mine. When you've figured the rules of your little game, you let me know. *(She stands and goes to leave but Sue's next dialogue stops her).*

Sue Well, well. I remember these conversations. Just like having Derek back from the dead. And out the door she trots. Bit of a theme in this house. People always walk out of here when reality begins to fight back.

Ann *(Incredulously)*. Reality? Reality? What are you ...

Sue *(Interrupting)* ... if you don't know which way to go, just follow the track on the carpet that he wore out, running away when he couldn't deal with life.

Ann Life? So, seeing dead people is life is it? *(Sue doesn't answer)*. Fortunate you can speak to his friends then. Isn't it?

Sue Sod off!

Ann *(She moves to Sue)*. So. You can pick and choose reality, but I can't? Is that it? Come off it. Isn't that what this is all about? So, go on then. I'll say it because you won't. You 'feel the presence' of a dead person, a ghost, a spirit, a woman? And worse, you now believe that what we did brought it there and now she's here. *(She turns and moves away. Sue's breathing is becoming anxious and obvious)*. You brought her here and she might come back. And I can't see her, so it has to be right. The joke has backfired and instead of being the joker, you're the joke. *(Sue is getting more worked up)*. And locking yourself away with a cupboard full of wine, a head full of shadows and a life full of nothing, helps? And ignoring the only friend you've got makes it easier to cope I take it? Because any minute, you're scared that the next person you see might be your dead husband. *(She turns and sees the state Sue has got herself into which immediately diffuses her anger. She kneels next to Sue and takes her hands)*. Breathe. Deep, slow. Calm ... down. Calm. I'm sorry. *(Sue fumbles in her handbag for her inhaler and uses it. She calms slowly and then suddenly embraces Ann)*. Alright. I don't know. I don't understand. And worst of all. Neither do you. Well. Whatever happened was down to us both, so no matter what we've done, we both have to fix it. Don't we? *(Sue sits back and nods)*. First step completed. You've let me in the house. Second step, well, think we've done that. But number three - will you allow me to come into your, our problem? *(Sue nods. Ann hugs her again)*.

Sue What time is it?

Ann Ten. In the morning.

Sue ... in the?

Ann *(Standing)*. Yeah, morning, you piss head. Go and get dressed. We need air. Breakfast. *(Sue picks up the glass of wine and knocks it back)*. What are you doing?

Sue Breakfast.

Ann Sue?

Sue One step, one problem at a time. Not all crutches are made of wood.

Ann *(She picks up the bottle of wine and looks at it. She looks for a glass but can't find one)*. Sod it. *(She takes a big swig from the bottle)*. See you out front. I seriously need a fag. *(She goes to leave)*.

Sue And Ann? *(Ann stops and turns to look at Sue)*. Who, whatever this, she, is. I'm not frightened of it any longer. I guess the reason I'm getting worked up is all about me. But I will find out what's going on. I will.

Ann Good on you, Doris Stokes. *(She exits)*.

As Sue stands and folds the blanket, The Woman appears. SFX: the whistle is heard.

Sue Did you not hear me, darling? Not frightened. So, do one.

Woman Really? We'll see!

Sue stops dead in her tracks and drops the blanket. Fade to black. Track #7 plays as running blacks in.

#6

Courtroom. Ann stands facing the audience in a tight spot. This is now her position for the subsequent scenes in the courtroom. She is wearing a different overcoat.

Ann I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this Inquest shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Where was I? So, yes, as I said before we finished for lunch. Two weeks ago, and I hadn't seen my friend Sue for, what, the previous two weeks before that, so we went out for breakfast. We talked. For hours. And breakfast turned into lunch and dinner and, well, the world was well and truly put to rights. We agreed that, well, look ... I know you're not interested in what we thought happened that night at the theatre, but what matters now is that we agreed to go back. We agreed to do our act and, well, see what happened.

She didn't want to go. I guess I convinced her. Wanted to show her it was all in her head. She insisted she did it on her own to prove it was real – as real as seeing and hearing dead people could be. She did explain to me why, her rationale. I didn't get it, understand. And in the end, I gave in and we agreed to see, to see, well, just to see what, who, would be there if we went back and to see if there really was, 'anybody there'. *(She appears to get upset)*. Do you mind if we have a break? It's all a bit much, remembering.

#7

SFX: audience sound fades out, announcement and then applause is heard. Running blacks open, the upstage lighting comes up to blind/cover Sue and Ann as they then turn and walk downstage as in Act One. Dialogue begins as applause ends.

Ann Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Well, it would appear that for only our second evening of 'Spirit with Spirits' we have a full house. So, thank you for sharing your evening with us. My beautiful assistant has kindly furnished us both with the necessary. *(She holds her glass up)*.

Ann/Sue Cheers!

Ann And I trust you have all brought in the same from the bar. So. Time to find if there really is, anybody there, assisted of course by 'Spirit with Spirits'.

SFX: applause is heard. Sue moves down stage and stares out into the audience. Silence. She closes her eyes. After a short while, Ann looks a little uneasy as nothing appears to be happening.

Ann Well ladies and gentlemen, these things take a short while to get warmed up because of the way things work in the spirit world, we can't just turn things on like a tap, can we?

The Woman walks on stage during Ann's dialogue and stands behind Sue. She then moves to the side of her and blows on her face. Sue smiles, but now a little more controlled.

Sue She's here.

Ann *(Speaking under her breath)*. Oh shit! *(To the audience)*. Well ladies and gentlemen, it appears we are ready to commence. We just need a moment for Sue to focus. Just a moment hopefully.

Sue I can feel her here.

Ann *(Speaking under her breath again)*. Double shit! *(To the audience)*. It would appear, ladies and gentlemen, that Sue has made contact with the spirits.

SFX: applause is heard. Ann goes into a freeze just as she is to speak to the audience. LX: lights go down on Ann and highlight Sue and The Woman. The Woman is stood closely behind Sue and they are both facing the audience.

Woman *(Quietly)*. You know I'm here.
Sue *(She reacts slightly and also speaking quietly)*. Yes. I can hear you. I can feel you.
Woman Who am I?
Sue I ... I don't know. I'm not sure if ...
Woman Are you sure?
Sue No. Yes.
Woman You really don't know?
Sue I ...
Woman Do you believe?
Sue I'm not sure if ...
Woman *(Interrupting)*. Do you believe that I am ...
Sue Don't say it.
Woman Say what, that I'm ...
Sue Please.
Woman Then do you believe? Do you? Do you? Do you?
Sue *(Interrupting first and then shouting her repeated answer)*. Yes. Yes! Yes! Yes!

LX: lights come up on Ann and she reacts to Sue calling out.

Ann *(Almost sounding relieved)*. And she's back in the room, ladies and gentlemen. Thought Sue was re-enacting 'When Harry Met Sally' for a moment then. *(She laughs nervously)*. So, Sue, what are the spirits saying to us?
Sue They're asking if I believe in them. Asking if I think they're real.
Ann Lovely. That's, well, lovely. Isn't it ladies and gentlemen. Don't know about you but I'm not struggling to believe at the moment.

LX: lights fade on Ann as she goes into a freeze and highlight Sue and The Woman.

Woman Ask the lady who looks tearful on the fifth row the question. You know the question.
Sue How can I know?
Woman You know. Think. Consider. You know.
Sue *(Loudly)*. I know.

LX: lights come up on Ann who is confused and laughs nervously.

Ann Well, aren't we pleased ladies and gentlemen. She knows, something.
Woman Ask her.
Sue You, my love. *(Pointing)*. Yes, you. Why did you never tell him? *(SFX: applause is heard. Ann slowly turns sideways, mouth open and looks at Sue)*. No need to cry, my love. He knew. He always knew. He's just sad you never had the chance to say it.
Ann *(She is nonplussed and hesitant almost)*. Indeed, yes, never saying, sadness, saying what exactly ... *(Silence)*. Nothing, clearly. Anyway, yes, my love?

#8

LX: the lights go down on Ann and she exits. The lights come up on Sue who is sleeping. She is dishevelled, looking terrible. There are a couple of empty bottles around her and she is still holding a wine glass in her limp hand. The Woman enters. Sue becomes aware of her presence and opens her eyes. She has clearly had a drink, and this is reflected in her manner and slightly in her speech.

Sue About time. Where have you been? Have you been away somewhere?
Woman Away?
Sue Well, yeah.
Woman Where could I possibly go, why would I without you?
Sue So you've been here all along?
Woman What do you think?

Sue Why didn't you say something, give me a sign?
Woman Why?
Sue Hmm. Guess so. Why should you? (*Pouring herself another drink*). Just knowing you might be around is enough. Knowing I'm not alone, but then again ...
Sue/Woman Always been alone.
Sue Ain't that the truth. Now there's just me. And before that there was just me and ...
Woman And?
Sue And? Me and ...
Woman And ... who?
Sue Derek. Me and Derek.
Woman And?
Sue What? I'm not sure what you ...
Woman Mean? Hmm. Mean. Very, very mean.
Sue Where's this going?
Woman Honesty. The truth. I know you're thinking it. The truth always needs a beginning. But it doesn't always make sense. Bit like Derek. So, what was the beginning? What was the truth of Derek?
Sue (*Pause*). Well. There was always, you know ...
Woman Something, Some ...?
Sue One.
Woman Interesting.
Sue Yeah, someone. It always felt like he was acting ...
Woman Suspiciously?
Sue Suspiciously. Yeah, that's right. He sometimes behaved like there was a ...
Sue/Woman Secret.
Sue Secret. That's the word. I was trying to remember it, but yes. A secret. That's exactly it. I knew it was that but never processed it, never thought it, considered it, challenged it. As if he was ...
Sue/Woman Hiding something.
Sue Hiding something. Of course. How could I have been so ... and a suspicious, secret, something. Always, always, hiding ...
Woman Things? (*She moves to stand near Sue*).
Sue Things, nothing you could, nothing you could pinpoint as, you know, ever point a finger, raise a question. There was nothing ever ...
Sue/Woman Important.
Sue No, that's right as well. But there was just something about his behaviour, always something ...
Woman Concealed?
Sue Wary.
Woman Furtive?
Sue Preoccupied.
Woman Cagey?
Sue Avoiding.
Woman Busy?
Sue Late.
Woman Uninterested?
Sue Cautious.
Woman Indiscreet?
Sue (*Pause. She stands. Her expression is of somebody who has had an unexpected revelation*). Indiscreet. (*She is pacing anxiously and searching for an answer*). Discreet. Discretion. Concealment. Furtive. Hiding. Secret. Concealing, concealing an, an, an ...
Sue/Woman (*Almost whispering*). An affair.

Sue *(Speaking slowly, deliberately and convincing herself as she says it).* He was having an ...

Sue/Woman Affair.

Woman *(Breaking position, away from Sue).* Bravo.

Sue Affair.

Woman Bingo.

Sue Affair.

Woman Outed.

Sue But ...?

Sue/Woman Who?

Sue The signs were there. And they were just, so, subtle. *(Pacing).* No. What the hell am I saying. They were blatant, illuminated, almost ... speaking to me. Talking, walking, breathing signs. Signs like an attention seeking dog jumping up and down demanding attention. *(Getting louder ending almost in a scream).* An ignored, cheating, dog. And a stupid, stupid, gullible, bitch! *(She is shaking).*

Woman But who?

Sue But how could I not have realised? I didn't think him capable, interested. He was never interested in me, so why would he be in anybody else?

Woman But who?

Sue It must have been going on all the time. All along. Years. Late nights at ...

Woman Work?

Sue Work. Of course.

Woman And?

Sue And all through it he must have been ...

Woman Laughing.

Sue He was seeing her, and they were ...

Woman Laughing?

Sue And I was, I was ...

Woman Blind?

Sue Stupid.

Woman Gullible?

Sue Humiliated.

Woman Feel?

Sue I feel ...

Woman Sick?

Sue I need to ...

Woman Sit?

Sue Down.

Woman Please.

Sue *(She sits).* Head full of questions. Can't think straight. But ...

Sue/Woman Who?

Sue If it was there all along. If the signs were there all along. If she was there all along. Then it's common sense. It has to be. I must know ...

Sue/Woman Who?

Woman So what shows us the way?

Sue Signs.

Woman Then signs are just numbers. A simple calculation. So just add up the numbers.

Sue Signs are just numbers.

Woman See the signs.

Sue You see the signs and eventually you reach ...

Sue/Woman Answers.

Sue No. No.

Woman Ahh. But you know the answer, don't you? You probably worked it out years ago, but you ignored it. A marriage of convenience and with it, a lie of convenience. But behind the lies, there are numbers and numbers have a face value. So, if you add it all up, all the numbers make a, make a?

Sue/Woman Face.

Woman And now, at last, you see the numbers, so naturally, you see the ...

Sue/Woman Face.

Sue *(Pause)*. Of course. Work. Eileen. It was Eileen. That's why he gave her the job.

Woman Really? Has someone done their maths wrong?

Sue What?

Woman Is it really that simple? Have you really been that simple? *(Silence)*. A lifetime as a wife, blind to the obvious. And now a widow who wants to remain blind. Does it make it all easier?

Sue No. I'm not sure ...

Woman Sure. Hmm. We're never sure. Truth and deception. You deceived Derek, made him believe what you wanted him to. So why couldn't he have done the same? 'Dear Deceiving Derek'. 'Dear Deceiving, Departed Derek.' What's the difference? He's died and nothing's changed. Except, well, he's dead but his deceiving lives on.

Sue You mean. His lie was also a lie? He made me want to think it was Eileen if he was found out, when he was found out.

Woman And has 'if', now become 'when'? *(Silence)*. Ah, but it has, hasn't it? So. Time to revisit our calculation. You did the calculations and you saw a face, but not the face; you worked it out to get the answer he wanted you to, saw the one he wanted you to; then ignored the one he wanted you to ... *(She moves close to Sue, both in profile and almost touching)*. If you face the truth you see the face. So, see the face. See the truth. *(Chanting, loudly but getting quieter)*. Who do you see? Who do you see? Who do you see?!

Sue/Woman *(Pause. Whispering)*. Ann.

Woman *(She breaks position, away from Sue)*. Bravo. Bingo. Outed!

Sue Ann.

Woman Ann.

Sue/Woman Ann.

Woman Bing Bong. *(SFX: the doorbell is heard. Sue jumps. She is nervous and frightened)*. Think; calm, control, breathe, breathe. Think. What stands behind that door? Questions and answers. Door. *(Sue is neutral, blank. She goes to answer the door but The Woman stops her in her tracks when she speaks)*. Sue. Payback. *(She exits)*.

#9

Sue answers the door and then immediately sits; upright, composed and waiting. Ann walks in slowly, looking around. She does not take her eyes off Sue as she takes off her coat and sits. Silence.

Ann I've been around a couple of ...

Sue I know. Twice.

Ann You didn't answer the ...

Sue Busy.

Ann Right. So how have you ...

Sue Fine.

Ann Have you been ...

Sue Nowhere.

Ann Right.

Sue Fine. *(Silence. Sue stands and moves downstage)*. How long?

Ann How ...?

Sue Long.

Ann I'm sorry, I don't know ...

Sue *(Speaking deliberately and slowly)*. How, long.

Ann How long was I ...

Sue Having sex with Derek? *(Ann stands and begins to move to her)*. Stay back from me; sit down.

Ann *(She moves slowly to sit down. She looks tense)*. Sue I don't know ...

Sue Don't lie to me. I know everything. Everything.

Ann But ...

Sue Everything. But I want to hear you. Your words. Details. Sordid. Everything.

Ann Look, I ...

Sue *(She suddenly loses her control and screams at the top of her voice)*. Don't lie to me! Don't lie to me! *(She moves quickly to Ann who goes to get up and Sue pushes her violently back into the chair. She goes behind her and holds her in the chair, aggressively)*. Oh, don't worry Ann, we're mates, remember? You hated the bastard more than me, remember? We're having a good laugh, remember?

Ann You didn't love him.

Sue You lied to me!

Ann You were happy that he had died.

Sue You lied to me. All along you wanted me to think it was Eileen.

Ann *(She breaks her grip and now there is a change in her demeanour, delivery, personality. She composes herself and is cold, calm, calculated)*. Such a small lie compared to a lifetime of deceit. And you betrayed every wife of the husbands you slept with. The only difference between you and me, lady, is capacity and anonymity. And you beat me hands down on both counts. So, don't you dare build yourself a pedestal because there ain't one small enough for you to deserve.

Sue Don't look at me. And get out of my house. Get out! *(She sits huddled on the swivel armchair)*.

Ann Not so quick lady. You want an honesty session, well you're gonna get one. And more, so much more. *(She circles Sue in her chair, like a predator waiting to pick at her prey)*. Not nice is it? Being on the receiving end? Oh, I knew about you. Knew all along. Derek told me. Every word. About every victim you made of all those women. Oh, he knew your history love. And now being on the receiving end, you just can't hack the truth. Consequences love. Consequences. In a way, you couldn't hack your own sordid life, so you picked on the vulnerable to hide you from yourself.

Sue *(Screaming)*. Get out! *(She begins to cry, and her breathing becomes laboured)*.

Ann You pushed out your predecessor, I pushed out you. Natural selection, survival of the fittest. Darwin would be so proud. You slept your way, your life through this town you sick, demented bitch and tore him to pieces in the process. But faux-victims like you are all the same. Create your own little alternate reality to make yourself feel better about being the biggest shit of them all. You believed the lie you created. And I helped you. And you didn't even realise. Puppet on a string. *(Sue's breathing is now erratic)*. Aww. Is little asthma girl getting all worked up? Not looking good this kid.

Sue I need my inhaler, please, help me.

Ann *(She picks up Sue's bag, rummages through it and then empties it in Sue's lap)*. Find it yourself, bitch. You're a big girl.

Sue *(She is now clearly in distress and frantically rummages through what is on her lap)*. Can't breathe, can't breathe.

Through what follows, Sue is clearly succumbing to the attack and slowly becomes motionless apart from her breathing which is slow, shallow and noisy.

Ann

Oh dear. Can we not breathe? Is that asthma finally going to take its toll do we think? No inhaler either. Dear, dear, dear. This isn't looking good is it? Not really how you planned all of this is it? Not funny any longer is it? Well, for me, it was funny at one point, but that was before I met you. It was when Derek was alive. When he was still with you. And still with me. Oh, but you had figured that hadn't you? And in your sad, sick little mind, you thought it was a ghost, a spirit, even Derek. Let you into a secret love. There's no such things as ghosts. *(She turns Sue around in her chair so she is now facing upstage)*. It's not the dead you need to be worried about. It's the living. Talking to yourself all along, weren't you? And that lunchtime with the cocktails, I realised there was a way to find an opportunity to settle-up with you for keeping me from what I wanted. You were the last person I ever wanted to be around. And funnily enough, the other last person who ever wanted to be around you was Derek.

He hated you more than I did. The advantage was, I had never met you until recently. It didn't have to end up like this you know. It could have been so different. So very different. *(She picks up a cushion from the other chair, slowly walks around to face Sue and stares at her)*.

Here you go my love, this will help you. *(She takes the pillow as if about to put it behind Sue's head but suddenly holds it over her face and continues talking, nonchalantly, neutral. Sue is struggling slightly but not enough to stop her)*. We could have been friends, you and me. Then again, no. Obviously not. Maybe in a different set of circumstances. But you had what I wanted. The man and the money. Well, the money. But what you didn't know, my pet, was I was bleeding him dry over the years I worked for him and slept with him and when he died, all the money I had been given or just taken from him, I used to buy his business. Ironic really. So many ironies. And to top it all, the cherry on the Bakewell, meeting you and getting to know all your issues. And then it all just fell into place. Just had to wait for the opportunity. And to think, you spent your life taking men from their wives with impunity and you then had the gall to want to get your own back on a world that had done nothing to you other than give you a selection of people to sleep with; a world littered with your victims, your spite, your slutishness. Cheap, dirty, little, slut.

(Sue stops what little struggling she has been attempting and falls silent and still. Ann drops the cushion on the floor. During the next dialogue she straightens Sue's clothes and her hair). And there we go. All done. Now. Wasn't hard was it? Sorry that took so long. Couldn't hold it too tight as we wouldn't want anybody thinking somebody had helped you on your way, now would we? Don't want you spoiling anything would we? Let's just have a little check ... *(Shouting in Sue's face)*. Is there anybody there? *(She laughs)*. Oops. Think not. That's a cracker. You kept asking me that, remember? "Is there anybody there?" Oh, and you said it sat in that chair as well. And now I'm saying it to you. Piss funny. Who would have thought by the end, your death could have brought me so much happiness? How happy can one death make a person? I just don't deserve it. So much good fortune. Still.

(She puts her hand in her pocket and takes the inhaler out of her pocket and then continues). Oh! Look what I've found. Would you credit it? I had it all along. Must have fell in my pocket when I went in your handbag. To think I could have helped you in your hour of need. Then again, no, probably not. What am I like eh? Mooooo. Remember how we used to do that? How it made us laugh? And to think. I was the real cow all along. The killer cow. Who would've thought it? You've eventually been killed by Mad Cow Disease.

(She takes her mobile out of her pocket and starts to dial). Here we go now. Pity you're not here to see this because it is inspired. And the award for best actress goes to ... *(Suddenly sobbing and hysterical she speaks into her mobile)*. Help, please god help me.

Send an ambulance. Forty-two Cherry Tree Gardens. Sue's asthma. I can't help her. She can't breathe. I think she's dying. I think, I think ... And disconnect. (*She starts putting her coat back on*). You know what? You will never know how I enjoyed that little call. Liberating. I always wanted to be an actress. But hey, I think I've done pretty well so far. And you'll never know how happy I am that you're dead. Have I told you that already?