

# THE GIRL IN THE BOX

By

Alex Jones

*Commission for East 15 Drama Students final year showcase production, March 2012.*

Monique sees X-Factor as an escape route from a life 'in care'; her best friend, Mel is keeping her options open and is seriously considering 6th form. But Monique's ex boyfriend, gang member, Sam has other plans for them; unleashing a sequence of disturbing events that lead all the way to the girl in the box - *A modern day parable tackling the worrying trend of sexual exploitation of vulnerable girls by gangs, and the dark consequences of drug crime.*

**Programme notes:** Some years ago I was paid to research a play that was commissioned for *The Fetch Theatre Company* about drug use in rural counties, and before long I was meeting users, carers, gang members and prostitutes. The stories of the people I met were sad, moving and sometimes brutal. But above all one person left a lasting impression on me; a young woman who had been groomed, hooked on heroin, and subjected to sexual acts that I couldn't quite comprehend. Of course in city and urban towns, these problems are even greater, and working as a Registered Care Worker in children's homes I was only too aware of the abuse of young girls by gangs long before the appalling revelations of sexual abuse in Rochdale and indeed all around the UK, and I knew it was a subject (as dark as it was) that I had to tackle. It is worrying to even acknowledge that young girls could be subjected to such hellish ordeals, but this stuff is happening all around us and we can't afford to turn our back on it. I hope this play in some small way shines a light on these significant issues and highlights a problem that we can no longer afford to ignore.

*Alex Jones, March 2012*

**SYNOPSIS & SAMPLE SCENES  
FOR MORE PLAYS VISIT:  
ALEX-JONES.ORG**

**CHARACTERS**

MONIQUE

MELANIE

GRACE

SAM

SCOTTIE

RAD

OLLIE

BEN

GILLIE

GIRL

MORGAN

LENNIE

ASH

DAZ

GEORGE

*For the girl in the box and all the users and carers I met in Hereford and Shropshire towns. And the kids I work with in Children's Homes in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.*

**SCENE 1**

*(Two girls, MONIQUE and MELANIE are in the street outside their school, both dressed in school uniform and bags over their shoulders).*

MONIQUE I'm tellin' ya, Mel - I am finished wiv that place; it is over as far as I'm concerned!

MELANIE Dunno, Monique, gotta get your qualifications, aint yer? I mean you don't get nowhere, not without that bit of paper; my cousin can't even get a job at Tescoes.

MONIQUE *Fuck Tescoes!*

MELANIE I mean it, it is like fierce out there; you need a degree now to work in a hair salon, even.

MONIQUE *Fuck hair salons!*

MELANIE You should think twice.

MONIQUE *Fuck thinking twice!*

MELANIE You are making a big mistake.

MONIQUE No I ain't; I just can't take no more shit from that lot; bunch of tossers; especially that sarky old twat, Mrs Mahood.

MELANIE Well I can't disagree with that.

MONIQUE Way she speaks to me...

MELANIE She *is* a twat.

MONIQUE *(Mimicking)* "I was going to ask you if you had bothered to do your homework, but then I thought what's the point, because you're bone-idle and haven't handed anything in for the whole of this term, have you Monique?"

MELANIE Well - you ain't.

MONIQUE No need to call me bone-idle though, is there?

MELANIE I know it's sometimes shit...

MONIQUE It *is* shit!

MELANIE I know.

MONIQUE It's worse than shit; it's... it's *fuckin' shit!*

MELANIE I know...

MONIQUE It's a complete waste of time - teachers all hate me.

MELANIE Not all of them.

MONIQUE All of them, Melanie! And I hate them too, and what's the point of working yer tits off anyway learning a load of bollocks about nothin' in particular so you can sit behind the check-out in fuckin' Tescoes!

MELANIE Just... just gonna miss you, I suppose.

MONIQUE Aww...

MELANIE *(Pouting) Ohh...*

MONIQUE Aww...

*(They do girly hugs).*

MELANIE Love you!

MONIQUE Love you too - more than life itself.

MELANIE More than the Universe.

MONIQUE I want to have your baby.

MELANIE I want to marry you.

MONIQUE *(Pushes MELANIE away) Dyke!* Anyway, I'm still gonna be around, ain't I? I ain't going anywhere... yet.

MELANIE Won't be the same at school.

MONIQUE You've only got two terms to go.

*(Pause).*

MONIQUE No... no, don't tell me - you're not! Oh no, Mel... you're not thinking of doing 6th form, are you?

MELANIE I dunno... just thinking about it.

MONIQUE What you wanna do that for?

MELANIE Ain't made my mind up yet, just considering the options.

MONIQUE What options? You ain't clever!

MELANIE *Thanks!*

MONIQUE Well you ain't - none of us are.

MELANIE Got good marks in my GCSE's.

MONIQUE You got two 'D's.

MELANIE And a 'C' in English!

MONIQUE           A 'C', well wanky-poooh!

MELANIE           Better than a 'D', innit?

MONIQUE           Don't know how you could even consider spending another year in that place.

MELANIE           Just weighing up my options... you should too.

MONIQUE           Yeah, well I have been considering my options, ain't I? Look at that -  
*(MONIQUE takes a form from her bag).*

MELANIE           What is it?

MONIQUE           Application form.

MELANIE           What for?

MONIQUE           Only the X-fuckin'-Factor!

MELANIE           *(Genuinely excited)* Oh Monique! Oh wow - *you done it!*

MONIQUE           Got it this morning.

MELANIE           You done it, you done it!

MONIQUE           Auditions are this Summer.

MELANIE           What you gonna do?

MONIQUE           Was thinking Adele... I dunno, what do you think?

MELANIE           Oh God, yeah, I love that song by her - what is it..?

MONIQUE           *(Sings)* "We could have had it all, rolling in the deep!"

MELANIE           Yeah - that one! Oh wow, you're gonna be on X-Factor!

MONIQUE           Well gotta audition first, but you know - talent will shine through. 'Sides if that gippo, Cher Lloyd can get picked, I don't think I'll have much problem.

MELANIE           Oh my God, you're gonna be on telly!

MONIQUE           Sam's gonna download the music for me.

MELANIE           *Sam* - you're not still seeing him, are yer, Monique?

MONIQUE           Just as friends.

MELANIE           After what he done?

MONIQUE           We are just friends.

MELANIE           He's a wanker!

MONIQUE He's been really nice lately - look what he bought me -  
*(MONIQUE shows MELANIE a bracelet).*

MONIQUE Solid gold!

MELANIE You don't believe that.

MONIQUE Hall-marked, innit? *Legit!*

MELANIE Still think he's a wanker!

MONIQUE So you won't be wanting to come to the party then I take it?

MELANIE What party?

MONIQUE Couple of weeks time.

MELANIE Wot an' I'm invited?

MONIQUE Could be; could ask... gonna be some fit guys there.

MELANIE I dunno...

MONIQUE Wot, you'd actually miss out on a good party?

MELANIE I don't really know them, do I?

MONIQUE So?

MELANIE I dunno... I mean who are they; what school do they go to?

MONIQUE They don't go to no school, do they; they're like geezers, ain't they?

MELANIE How old are they?

MONIQUE I don't know, do I? Sam's twenty an' Scottie's twenty one I think.

MELANIE Does Grace know about this?

MONIQUE No she does fuckin' not, and you know what, Mel; it ain't none of her business anyway! Soon's I'm eighteen I'm off, I'm tellin' ya - I can't wait to see the back of that place, interfering bastards!

*(Pause).*

MONIQUE Oh come on, Mel, don't give me no grief; I get enough of that at the home!

MELANIE *(Smiles)* Yeah..! Oh my God, X-Factor!

MONIQUE X-fuckin'-Factor!

MELANIE Can I come along when you audition?

MONIQUE Too right; gonna need some moral support, not like mum's gonna be there, is it?

MELANIE            Could ask her?

MONIQUE           How? I don't even know where she is, fuckin' old slapper!

*(MONIQUE's mobile sounds. She gets it from her bag).*

MONIQUE           Oh hang on - *it's him!* 'Hello babe... Yeah, yeah, cool... Wot - tonight..? Dunno, there's a curfew... No... no, I can make it; fuck it, I'll just slip out of the window... Where..? Yeah, yeah, cool..! Nah, still up for the party; it ain't gonna be late, is it..? You got that music, yet..? Yeah - Adele... Was thinking about trying something a bit old-fashioned too; Kylie maybe, you know if they want to hear something else... Yeah, yeah, can you do that for me? Oh yeah an' some Britney too... *(Embarrassed)* No... no, I can't... No... Oh, all right... *(Sings) Oh baby, baby, how was I supposed to know something wasn't right here. Oh baby, baby, I shouldn't have let you go, and now you're out of sight, yeah...* That's all you're getting..! Aw, thanks, babe - later!

*(Pause. MELANIE is looking at her, incredulous).*

MONIQUE           Wot?

MELANIE            *(Sings) My loneliness is killing me, and I...*

MONIQUE            *(Sings) ... Must confess I still believe...*

MELANIE            *(Sings) ... Still believe...*

MONIQUE            *(Sings) ... When I'm not with you I lose my mind. Give me a sign...*

TOGETHER          *(Sings) ... Hit me baby one more time!*

*(They both collapse in girly laughter).*

MONIQUE           Know what - when I get my recording deal you could do backing vocals.

MELANIE           No way - you mean it!

MONIQUE           Defo - you ain't bad.

MELANIE            *(Delighted)* Oh my God, Monique, I'd love to!

MONIQUE           Meantime, guess wot I'm doing tonight?

MELANIE           Surprise me -

MONIQUE           Only going up town, ain't I? That new club.

MELANIE           Pink Heaven?

MONIQUE           On the nail!

MELANIE           You won't get in.

MONIQUE           Got me fake ID, ain't I?

*(MONIQUE flashes ID card).*

MELANIE           Where'd you get that?

MONIQUE            Mate of Sam's, innit? Get you sorted too if you want.

MELANIE            Yeah?

MONIQUE            No probs; get me a photo an' I'll get it sorted.

MELANIE            Monique, I really do love you an' if that means I'm a lesbian, I don't care!

MONIQUE            Yeah well you can kiss me, but stay away from my gina - men only.

MELANIE            No way, your gina is my property - you are my bitch!

MONIQUE            Oh all right, let's go back to yours an' have a snog!

MELANIE            *(Exiting)* Mum's cooking fish pie.

MONIQUE            I fuckin' love your mum's fish pie!

*(They exit).*

## SCENE 2

*(RAD's flat. Sparsely furnished - old sofa, cluttered coffee table. RAD, BEN, GILLIE and OLLIE are waiting for SAM and SCOTTIE. They are all a little pissed off; a couple of them are texting, playing a game on a mobile. Eventually SAM and SCOTTIE arrive).*

RAD                    Where the fuck have you been?

SAM                    Wot?

BEN                    It's half past fuckin' four!

SAM                    I'm here.

RAD                    We said three.

SAM                    Well - I'm here.

SCOTTIE               Got hold up, Rad; car wouldn't start, would it.

OLLIE                    *(Laughs)* That car - fuck!

RAD                    No fuckin' excuses!

OLLIE                    That car - s' like a comedy vehicle!

GILLIE                 Should fuckin' whack him.

SAM                    Yeah?

GILLIE                 S' what I'd do.

*(Pause).*

RAD                    So, let's have it -  
  
                          *(SAM hands a wad of cash to RAD, who begins to count it).*

OLLIE                 S' a Lada, n' it?

BEN                    *(Perplexed)* Wot?

OLLIE                 *(Amused)* Sam's wheels - s' a Lada.

RAD                    *(Looks at SAM)* What's this?

SAM                    What's what?

RAD                    It ain't all here.

SAM                    It is.

RAD                    No it fuckin' ain't!

SCOTTIE              S' all there is, Rad, honest.

BEN                    Aw - *shit!*

SCOTTIE              Nah, nah - it's cool; we still got the rest of the gear; just been slow, that's all.

BEN                    I don't believe you pair!

RAD                    Slow? You've had two weeks; you'd better not...

SCOTTIE              We got it all cut up in packets - you can see it if you like.

GILLIE                Come on then, let's see it -

SAM                    It's safe.

GILLIE                So let's see it's safe.

SAM                    Safe at my place; ain't gonna walk around carrying, am I?

SCOTTIE              Feds know us for previous, know wot I'm sayin', Gillie? Gotta be careful, can't be caught in possession again... just y' know being careful.

RAD                    So - you gonna explain this discrepancy?

OLLIE                 *(Laughs)* That fuckin' car; I wouldn't be seen fuckin' dead!

SAM                    What is it, Rad; don't you trust me?  
  
                          *(Pause).*

OLLIE                 *Orange!* I mean - orange; it's bright fuckin' orange!

SAM                    It's all there, Rad, no worries, just been quiet, tha's all; sign of the time, I guess; recession affects us all.

BEN                    It just doesn't look good; I mean, what they gonna say?

GILLIE           Who gives a fuck what they say!

BEN             I dunno, Gillie... they got a reputation.

GILLIE           So have we.

RAD             Yeah, we ain't done nothin' wrong; just have to wait for the rest.

BEN             *Fuck!*

GILLIE           They'll wait - fuck 'em!

OLLIE           *(Laughs)* Orange fuckin' Lada!

RAD             Somebody kick that cunt.  
*(GILLIE kicks OLLIE up the arse).*

OLLIE           Fuck - *wha's that for?*

GILLIE           *Twat!*  
*(Ice is broken; they all laugh at OLLIE's expense).*

RAD             Had me worried there, man; thought you weren't coming.  
*(Manly embraces, high fives, ritual handshakes all around. OLLIE goes to shake, but is ignored).*

SAM             All for one, Rad!

RAD             Yeah - *all for one!*  
*(Doorbell sounds. Everyone is suddenly serious).*

RAD             Ollie -  
*(OLLIE goes to the door).*

BEN             Just... I dunno, stick together.

SCOTTIE         It's cool; it'll be okay.  
*(OLLIE enters with LENNIE and MORGAN, followed by a cowed looking GIRL, dressed in a very short skirt and a skimpy top, who stands obediently behind them).*

LENNIE         Hello girls! Not disturbing anything sexual, am I?

OLLIE           *(Laughs)* *Sexual!*  
*(No one else laughs; OLLIE knows he's out of line).*

RAD             Hey Lennie, Morgan.

MORGAN         Good afternoon Rad... boys.  
*(The lads mumble greetings).*

LENNIE            So - how are things with your little *gang* then? Still fighting the brothers, are you? Still waging your little turf wars, protecting your patch?

GILLIE            We keep close if that's what you mean.

LENNIE            Oh I can see that, Gillie; yeah you're close you lot, very close I'd say; bet no one's gonna fuck with your little gang... What is it you call yourself again..?

*(Pause. OLLIE looks around, no one is forthcoming).*

OLLIE             The Mellow Crew.

BEN                *Cunt!*

OLLIE             *(Confused)* Well... we are, ain't we?

LENNIE            *The Mellow Crew* - strikes terror in your heart, doesn't it, Morgan?

MORGAN           I'm crapping my pants.

*(LENNIE suddenly turns to face GIRL).*

LENNIE            *(To GIRL, aggressive)* Shut the fuck up!

*(GIRL looks at the floor, nervous and silent. There is an uncomfortable pause).*

LENNIE            *(Back to RAD)* So - you got something for me?

RAD                Yeah.

*(BEN hands a wad of notes to LENNIE. RAD hands over the bunch of notes from SAM too).*

LENNIE            Thank you so very much, gentlemen.

*(LENNIE passes the money to MORGAN who begins to count it).*

LENNIE            'The Mellow Crew' - we're doing business with the 'Mellow Crew', strike a light, Morgan, can you believe it? We're down on the streets with the boys!

GILLIE            You got a problem wiv us - lay it on the line.

LENNIE            Temper, temper, Gillie. You really do have a short fuse, don't you?

*(LENNIE steps up to GILLIE).*

GILLIE            *(Backing down)* Just sayin' -

LENNIE            Yeah? What exactly are you 'just saying'?

*(Pause).*

GILLIE            Nothing.

LENNIE            Well let me know when you do have something to say; I'd love to hear it.

*(MORGAN has finished counting the money - he looks up).*

MORGAN           It's short.

LENNIE           Short? Really? I find that hard to believe...

RAD               It's been...

*(LENNIE puts his finger to his lips, silencing RAD).*

LENNIE           Short... how much?

MORGAN           Four fifty... four sixty.

LENNIE           Oh dear, oh deary dear! Well now I have to say I am disappointed, very disappointed. I can't believe you would even contemplate trying to pull a fast one on us - tell me it's not true?

BEN               It ain't, it's...

SCOTTIE           It's been slow...

LENNIE           Slow?

MORGAN           Fuckin' slow - *bollocks!*

LENNIE           You're short, Rad; it don't look good, do it?

RAD               Just stuff not sold, tha's all.

OLLIE             It's the recession... *apparently (laughs).*

*(Once again LENNIE walks purposely up to GIRL).*

LENNIE           *(Intimidating)* Did you fucking say something?

*(GIRL carries on staring at the ground; LENNIE turns to face the rest again).*

LENNIE           It's the recession, Morgan - what do you think of that?

MORGAN           *(Laughs)* Yeah!

SCOTTIE           We sold all we could, but...

RAD               Sam -

SAM               Wot?

RAD               Well, come on -

*(LENNIE turns to SAM).*

LENNIE           Hello Sam.

SAM               *(Nervous)* Hello... Lennie.

LENNIE           It seems the finger of blame is pointing in your direction, or am I mistaken?

SCOTTIE I swear, Lennie, there's nothing...

LENNIE Am I talking to you, Scottie?

SCOTTIE No, but...

LENNIE No, but - what?

*(Pause. LENNIE stands before SAM, waiting).*

SAM It's true, s' just been quiet; sold some, but a lot of my usual punters just ain't been around.

MORGAN *Bullshit!*

LENNIE No, no - let's hear the lad out, Morgan.

SAM Dunno, it's just been... quiet.

MORGAN He's using.

SAM No, no, I ain't, an' if like I did I'd pay for it 'same as anyone... Remainder's safe... it's... it's just not sold yet.

LENNIE You been nicking my merchandise?

SAM No - wouldn't.

LENNIE You been stealing my stash?

SAM It's at my place; I'll show you if you like?

*(Tense pause. LENNIE smiles and playfully slaps SAM's face).*

LENNIE No need for that, Sam; I'll take your word for it; like Ollie says - there's a recession on. Clever boy, Ollie; don't know what your gang would do without your brainpower, Ollie.

OLLIE *(Pleased)* Well, you know...

LENNIE So - do we have recompense for these gentlemen's business activities, Mr Morgan?

*(MORGAN peels off a wad from the pile and hands it to RAD).*

RAD Nice one - thanks.

LENNIE No problem, Rad; we all need to look out for each other in these times of economic decline, don't we?

RAD Er... yeah, I guess so.

LENNIE So - you'll be wanting to replenish your stock now, I suppose?

BEN Could use some more of that crystal - the clients loved it.

RAD Same with the coke; it's still the drug of choice around here.

LENNIE I'm sure we can help you out with your requests, gentlemen...  
(Signals to GIRL) Hey -  
  
(GIRL awkwardly turns her back, lifting her skirt as she does so).

LENNIE What do you think you're doing?! Don't you dare turn your fucking back on me!!  
  
(GIRL, terrified, immediately turns back to face LENNIE and the rest of them).

LENNIE Insolent cunt! The merchandise, now -  
  
(GIRL lifts her skirt, puts her hand down her tights and pulls out two packets, hands them to LENNIE, who passes them to RAD).

RAD (Laughs) Still warm!  
  
(Everyone laughs).

OLLIE (Laughing) Still warm - fuck!  
  
(LENNIE turns to GIRL; her head is bowed and her skirt is still pulled up).

LENNIE What are you thinking? Pull your skirt down you fucking slag! And shut the fuck up!  
  
(GIRL obediently pulls her skirt into place without once looking up).

OLLIE (Sniggers, unsure, embarrassed for GIRL) She didn't say anything.

LENNIE Can't be too sure though, can we Ollie? Can't let her get above herself, can we?

OLLIE I suppose not.

LENNIE Used to be a right stuck-up cow, right little prick-teaser; needed to put her on the straight and narrow, know what I mean?

OLLIE (Unsure how to respond) Er...

LENNIE You can have her if you like - cost you. Past her best, mind - fucking junkie! You wanna twat her?

OLLIE Er... er... no thank you.

LENNIE (To GIRL) What do you think of that? Not even Ollie wants to fuck you. You really have let yourself go, haven't you?  
  
(GIRL doesn't answer).

LENNIE Haven't you?  
  
(GIRL nods, head down).

LENNIE Can't hear you.

GIRL (Almost a whisper) Yes.

LENNIE (Shouts) Shut the fuck up!! See what I mean - give her an inch... Anyway, we bid you goodbye, gentlemen; pleasure doing business... oh, and Sam -

SAM                    Yeah?

LENNIE                My accountant here (*Indicating MORGAN*) will be keeping an eye on your enterprises... just in case.

                              (*LENNIE and MORGAN exit, followed by GIRL, who can still barely dare to look up*).

BEN                    *Fuck!*

SCOTTIE                Fuckin' psycho!

RAD                    Not really?

BEN                    *You reckon?*

RAD                    S' a game, innit? Gotta look like a nutter so nobody'll dare cross yer.

GILLIE                Yeah, well I'd love to meet him on his own in a dark alley.

BEN                    No you wouldn't.

RAD                    Way he speaks to that girl - fuckin' hilarious!

OLLIE                I kinda felt sorry for her.

RAD                    *Shut the fuck up!*  
*(Everyone laughs).*

RAD                    See what I did there -

                              (*More laughter*).

OLLIE                (*Laughs*) Oh... yeah.

BEN                    *Shut the fuck up, Ollie!*

                              (*More laughter*).

RAD                    Well anyway we're done for a while an' we've got our wages, so let's fuckin' relax, eh?

                              (*Verbal agreement all round*).

RAD                    An' no more surprises, eh Sam?

SAM                    Yeah, sorry about that.

RAD                    Shift the rest of that shit ASAP, right?

SAM                    Yeah... reckon I could move a bit of the crystal, too.

RAD                    We'll dole it out tomorrow.

GILLIE                Do it properly; I got some scales.

SAM                    Wot, don't you trust me, Gillie?

GILLIE            No, I fuckin' don't as it happens.  
  
                      *(Pause).*

SCOTTIE          The rest is stashed away, Gillie - it's safe.

RAD                You know what? Shut the fuck up all of you! 'Sides, Sam's got a treat for us next weekend - we still on for some fun, Sam?

SAM                *Fixed!*

RAD                *Sweet!* We're gonna have ourselves a little private party... Speaking of which -  
  
                      *(RAD fetches a couple of cartons of lager from behind the sofa and drops them on the table. Cheers and exclamations of approval from all).*

SAM                Hey Gillie, we bruvvers?  
  
                      *(GILLIE high-five's him).*

GILLIE            Sorry Sam, y' know me - I don't trust nobody.

OLLIE             *(Shouts) Shut the fuck up!*  
  
                      *(Everyone is suddenly silent, staring incredulous at a nervous OLLIE following his outburst. But then they break into laughter and begin to crack cans of lager).*

### SCENE 3

*(A street near the children's home. SAM and SCOTTIE are waiting for MONIQUE).*

SCOTTIE          Good night, eh?

SAM                *(Low)* Yeah.

SCOTTIE          *(Smiles)* She's fit, man!

SAM                Yeah.

SCOTTIE          She is *tasty*, know wot I mean?  
  
                      *(Pause).*

SCOTTIE          You okay?

SAM                Yeah... y' know -

SCOTTIE          Don't worry - we'll make it back; just charge a bit extra here an' there.

SAM                S'pose.

SCOTTIE          C'mon, chill - it'll pan out, you'll see.

SAM                    Yeah, just feelin' a bit...

SCOTTIE              You *was* a bit wrecked las' night though, Sam.

SAM                    We was *all* wrecked, Scottie.

*(Pause).*

SCOTTIE              Should lay off it a bit though.

SAM                    *Fuck off!*

SCOTTIE              Just sayin'.

SAM                    It was a night out - *fuckin' hell!*

SCOTTIE              Yeah, your girl was wiped out too - totally.

SAM                    She ain't my girl.

SCOTTIE              Well yeah, I know that.

SAM                    She's just... well she just likes having fun, same as the rest of us.

SCOTTIE              *(Laughs)* Oh yes!

SAM                    She's... she's just y' know one of those girls who's... y' know up for anything.

SCOTTIE              My favourite type!

SAM                    *(Restless)* You got some blow, Scottie?

*(SCOTTIE fishes out of his pocket a packet and some skins).*

SAM                    Not here you fuckin' plank! Later.

SCOTTIE              Will you fuckin' calm down. What is wrong wiv you..? You ain't having second thoughts, are yer?

SAM                    No.

SCOTTIE              Rad would not be pleased.

SAM                    I said no.

SCOTTIE              Everybody's looking forward to it; fuck knows wot Gillie'd do.

SAM                    I ain't scared of Gillie.

SCOTTIE              *I am!* *(Spots girls)* Hey up, here she is... aw wiv her little friend too... wha's her name?

SAM                    Mel.

SCOTTIE            God, I love her - little schoolgirl!

                          (*MONIQUE and MELANIE enter. MELANIE is wearing her school uniform.*)

MONIQUE           (*Grins*) *Hey babe!*

SAM                Hey - you good?

MONIQUE           Mm, yeah, 'specially after last night!

SAM                Enjoy yourself?

MONIQUE           Wot you think?

                          (*SAM and MONIQUE kiss.*)

MONIQUE           Had a stonking headache this morning though.

SCOTTIE            Hey Mel -

MELANIE           Hello Scottie.

SCOTTIE            Aw, you remembered my name, that's nice!

MELANIE           (*Shrugs*).

SCOTTIE            Yeah... you look...

MELANIE           Yeah?

SCOTTIE            Yeah!

MELANIE           Thanks.

MONIQUE           You got my CD's?

SAM                'Course.

                          (*SAM takes recorded CD's from his pocket and hands them to MONIQUE.*)

MONIQUE           Aw, thanks babe! Now I can practice.

SCOTTIE            Yeah you're gonna knock 'em out, Monique - what do you reckon, Sam?

SAM                (*Half-hearted*) Yeah.

MONIQUE           Don't be so enthusiastic then, you tosser!

SAM                No, no, sorry; you're gonna be great, babe.

MONIQUE           Think it's gonna be Adele, but I might just do a Kylie; ain't sure.

MELANIE           I'm gonna do backing.

MONIQUE           When I get my deal, Mel, not at the actual audition.

MELANIE            Yeah I know that. Gonna be there wiv you though.

MONIQUE           She's coming along to support me, ain't she - what a mate! You can come too Sam if you want.

SAM                 Sure.

MELANIE           *What?*

MONIQUE           Well Sam can come too, can't he?

MELANIE           Thought it was just gonna be me; you said you didn't want anyone else.

MONIQUE           Well - more the merrier, innit?

SCOTTIE            You gonna be famous then, Monique?

MONIQUE           Watch this space!

SCOTTIE            I intend too. 'Bout you then, Melanie; you fancy the big time?

MELANIE           Maybe, when I've done wiv my exams.

MONIQUE           She's doing 6th form, ain't she?

SAM                 Ain't you had enough?

MELANIE           Keeping my options open, tha's all.

SCOTTIE            Well if you ever need any help revising -

MELANIE           You hitting on me, Scottie?

SCOTTIE            Wot? *No - fuck, no..!* Just y' know being friendly... But well... wot if I was?

MELANIE           Well, you'd be wasting your time.

SAM                 *(Laughs)* Nice try, Scottie!

SCOTTIE            Wot? I weren't hitting on her, just jerking her about, weren' I?

MELANIE           Whatever!

SAM                 She's too young for you, anyway.

SCOTTIE            They're the same age, ain't they?

SAM                 Different backgrounds though, innit?

MONIQUE           Different backgrounds?

SAM                 Well you're in a home, ain't yer? Council care.

MONIQUE           Wha's that supposed to mean, that I'm a slag?

SAM                 No, 'course not, I ain't sayin' that.

MONIQUE            Just wot are you sayin' then?

SAM                *Aw, fuck, Monique!*

MONIQUE            You saying 'cos my mum fucked off an' I've been in care that I'm inferior, or something?

SAM                No.

MON                What are you sayin' then?

SAM                You're... I dunno just more grown-up; you're more experienced, ain't yer?

MELANIE            I'm as grown-up as her.

SCOTTIE            *(Laughs)* No you ain't!

MONIQUE            Yes she fuckin' is!

SAM                *(Walking away)* *Oh fuck this!*

SCOTTIE            Sam. wot you doing?

SAM                I ain't taking this shit!

MONIQUE            Ain't shit though, is it? An' I ain't gonna be talked to like that!

SCOTTIE            We've just had a tough week; he ain't dissin' you, Monique, are you, Sam..? Are you?  
*(SAM stops in his tracks; he has a job to do. Pause).*

SAM                No... no... I'm sorry if... well y' know if I made you feel bad... didn't mean to.

MONIQUE            S' okay; just a bit sensitive about all that stuff, ain't I?

SAM                Yeah, 'course.

MONIQUE            So -  
  
*(SAM hugs her and kisses her forehead).*

MONIQUE            That's more like it! Know wot I think, Sam?

SAM                What do you think?

MONIQUE            I think you're falling for me.

SCOTTIE            I think you might be right, Monique.

MONIQUE            Awww - you got me the CD's an' all - you are so good to me!

SAM                Yeah... yeah, well we gotta go, got some business, y' know? Just checking you're still okay for the weekend?

MONIQUE            Can't wait!

SAM                    Yeah... got some business.

*(Kisses and hugs from MONIQUE).*

MONIQUE            Yeah, 'course babe - I'll call you.

SAM                    Yeah, see ya!

SCOTTIE             Hey, don't be late, Monique, gonna be a good night!

*(SAM and SCOTTIE exit).*

MELANIE            Thought it was just gonna be me?

MONIQUE            How can I not invite him, Mel? I want as much support as I can get; ain't got no family to come, have I?

*(Pause - MELANIE is sulking).*

MONIQUE            Oh come on, Mel; I want you there above anybody - you're the first person I told, ain't yer?

MELANIE            I honestly don't know what you're doing with him though, Monique; 'specially after the last time.

MONIQUE            Things got out of hand, tha's all.

MELANIE            He beat you up!

MONIQUE            I hit him too.

MELANIE            He gave you a black eye!

MONIQUE            Things got out of hand; we was both out of our heads. He's different now.

MELANIE            If you say so.

MONIQUE            Hey, wot you think of Scottie?

MELANIE            He's okay I s'pose if you like that sort of thing.

MONIQUE            He likes you.

MELANIE            Yeah, I noticed.

MONIQUE            Aw, be great if we could all hang out together, wouldn't it?

MELANIE            *(Shrugs her shoulders).*

MONIQUE            You like him!

MELANIE            *No!*

MONIQUE            You do - you fuckin' fancy him!

MELANIE I do not..! He's... he's all right, I s'pose...

MONIQUE ... 'If you like that sort of thing?'

MELANIE *(Playfully slaps her friend) Shut up!*

MONIQUE Right, come on - let's go to your place; I'm gonna do your make-up. Let's get your photo done an' sort out your ID; 'bout time you lived a little!

MELANIE I can't believe you got into Pink Heaven!

MONIQUE *Believe!* It was a fuckin' ace night! *(Exiting)* Hey, what's on the menu tonight?

MELANIE Casserole, I think.

MONIQUE I bloody love your mum!