

**JUST
PASSING
THROUGH**

by

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ACT I SCENE 1

THE HOME OF SIMON AND GEORGE IN BRISBANE, SIMON IS QUICKLY FINISHING BREAKFAST, GEORGE ENTERS HALF ASLEEP.

G: Morning

S: (STOPS WHAT HE IS DOING, TURNS AROUND) Ohr good morning, how come you're up so early?

G: Ohr couldn't sleep, woke up and couldn't get back to sleep. Why are you in such a rush?

S: It's almost a quarter to, I'll miss the bus if I'm not careful

G: No it's not, it's only half past

S: Is it?

G: Yeah, had a look as I got out of bed, you got the paper here?

S: Yeah (INDICATING), hmmm, oh well might as well have this then (SITS DOWN, EATS HIS TOAST, G. IS SITTING READING THE PAPER). What time did you finish last night?

G: Ohr about two-thirty

S: Was it a good night?

G: Same as usual I guess - it's a living (HALF LAUGHS) huh, I spilt a beer on a bloke last night

S: Ohr no

G: Ohr no I meant to

S: Why?

G: I was getting sick of him, he was being rude to me so he got what he deserved

SLIGHT PAUSE

S: What was he doing?

G: Just treating me like shit, saying things behind my back, he kept on asking me to get him drinks so I'm afraid he asked one time too many

S: And what happened when you spilt it on him?

G: Ohll nothing, I just cleaned it up and apologised, he was so dumb he probley thought I didn't even mean it, he didn't ask for anymore drinks from me after that

S: You're lucky he didn't hit you or something

G: Ohr no

S: Yeah you just watch out eh

G: No, got no worries, I'm too clever to get hit

S: Yeah sure, I'll believe that when I see it

G: Do I look beaten up to you?

S: Not this time

THEY SMILE THEN

S: Are you going to drop in today?

G: Ohr don't think so, I think I'll sleep for most of the day

S: We've shelved all of the back wall now

G: Ohr good

S: The Penguin Classics series will be going up there

G: Right

S: Well if you don't come in give us a call okay

G: Righto, if I'm not asleep

S: Ohll that reminds me, thank goodness I remembered

G: What?

S: We're going to have a visitor for a few days

G: Who?

S: My brother

G: What?!

S: My brother, Robert

G: This'll be the first member of your family that I've actually met

S: (CONSIDERING IT) Yes

G: When's he getting here?

S: Sometime today

G: You don't know when?

S: No, he phoned last night, he hadn't booked his ticket yet, but he said it'd either be early this morning or around about lunchtime - so it looks like lunchtime

G: (NOT ENTIRELY ENTHUSED) Great

S: I told him that either way if I'm not here you would be

G: Great

S: What's the matter?

G: Well what am I meant to do? - sit up awake until he gets here?

S: I dunno, I'm sorry, he only rang last night

G: How long does he want to stay for?

S: Only a couple of days

G: What's he coming down for?

S: I dunno, he didn't really say, he's just got a few things he wants to do here, he was really vague about it. This'll be strange, I haven't seen him for a few years. He can sleep here on the couch, that's the best we can do I'm afraid, anyway I better get going (STANDS UP) now be civil to him he's a nice kid

G: Yeah. What was his name again?

S: Robert (GATHERS HIS BELONGINGS)

G: And how old?

S: Um, twenty I think

G: What does he do?

S: Oh I don't know, some course or something - why don't you ask him, that'll give you

something to talk about when he gets here

G: Yeah

S: (CROSSES TO DOOR) Anyway I better go, I'll see you later

G: Righto

S: (STOPS BY DOOR) Listen George, um Robert and I haven't seen each other for quite a while, it'll be good to see him but we're quite different you know, so I wouldn't go telling him too many things you know what I mean

G: Yeah

S: I mean he's alright, but I just want this to go smoothly that's all, I haven't seen him for ages

G: Yeah, that's alright

S: Well anyway, thanks, I'll see you later

G: Righto, bye

G. SMILES A BIT THEN SHAKES HIS HEAD SLIGHTLY IN DISBELIEF, HE THEN GOES AND SITS BACK AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE AND READS THE PAPER, AFTER A SHORT WHILE A KNOCK ON THE DOOR IS HEARD

G: (SHOUTING FROM THE TABLE) It's unlocked Simon, come in

PAUSE, THEN A KNOCK AGAIN

G: I said it's un...(CUTS HIMSELF OFF THEN REALISES AND CROSSES TO THE DOOR AND OPENS IT)

Robert: Hello, is this where.....

G: (CUTS IN) You're Robert are you?

R: Yes

G: Come in

R: You're Simon's flat mate?

G: Yes, George Sullivan

THEY SHAKE HANDS

R: Howareya

G: Do you want to bring in your bags as well

R: Ohr thanks (HE DOES) This is very good of you to have me

G: Ohr that's alright, just leave them here, Simon only just told me you were coming, I wasn't expecting you till lunchtime

R: No well I did get the early bus, I've been in Brisbane for about an hour now

G: Oh, have you had some breakfast?

R: Yeah - McDonald's

THEY SMILE

G: You only just missed Simon, he's on his way to work now

R: Ohr, where does he work?

G: Union Books

R: That's right, I was trying to remember if it was a bookshop or a gardening shop, I knew it was something like that

G: You should pop in and visit him today, it's in Elizabeth Street - right opposite Hoyts

R: Ohr well I was going to see some movies so I might if I have time, if its right next door

G: Yeah (PAUSE) Um I'm afraid the sleeping arrangements are pretty bad here, we haven't got a spare room so you'll have to sleep out here, I'm sorry but that's all we've got

R: Ohr no that's alright, I should have rung earlier and given you more notice, so whatever I get's fine

G: Ohll good. Would you like a drink or something?

R: Ohr no, I'm fine

G: Well make yourself at home (CROSSES BACK TO THE BREAKFAST TABLE) I work pretty late hours so all I was going to do was sleep today, you're welcome to do whatever you like

R: (ACKNOWLEDGING) Hmm, where do you work?

G: I'm a barman at a club

R: Do you like it?

G: Ohr it has its ups and downs, the pay's good but the hours are shocking

R: Yeah

G: What about you?

R: Ohr I go to college (PAUSE) I'm doing physics

G: Wow, so what are you going to do when you finish that?

R: Ohr, I dunno, private research is the only thing that really interest me in it, apart from that it's all pretty boring, my course is pretty boring

G: What year are you in?

R: First

G: Is it a three year course?

R: Yeah, but not the way I'm going. I dunno, it's all pretty boring

G: So what brings you down here?

R: Ohr, just got a few things to do, see some people about a couple of things, that's all

G: (AS IF ENLIGHTENED BY R'S REPLY) Ohll

PAUSE

R: Listen, I might go into the city now if that's alright

G: Ohr yeah sure, look you don't have to ask me, you can come and go as you like

R: Can I get a bus from around here?

G: Yes there's a stop about five houses down on this side of the street - they come through about every twenty or thirty minutes, you shouldn't have to wait for too long

R: Okay thanks

G: Look I'll leave the back door unlocked too for you, in case I'm asleep when you get back

R: Yeah, I dunno when I'll get back, I'll have a good look round and maybe see a few movies, I'll have to check out the financial situation first

G: Yeah (R. WALKS TOWARDS THE DOOR) Righto then well I'll see you later

R: Yep, thanks very much for everything

G: You're right

R: Hooroo then

G: Righto, bye

G. SHUTS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM, LIGHTS FADE OUT THEN AFTER A SHORT WHILE FADE BACK INTO ABOUT 9 O'CLOCK THAT NIGHT, SIMON IS SITTING ON THE COUCH READING A BOOK WITH SOME CLASSICAL MUSIC PLAYING SOFTLY IN THE BACKGROUND, A KNOCK ON THE DOOR IS HEARD, SIMON LOOKS UP, STOPS, THINKS FOR A TICK THEN GOES AND ANSWERS THE DOOR.

S: Robert

R: Hello

S: How are you?

R. STEPS IN

R: Good

THEY SHAKE HANDS

S: I haven't seen you for ages

R: No I haven't seen you for ages either, which is hardly surprising if you haven't seen me

S: No

THEY SMILE TOGETHER, AFTER A SHORT WHILE THE HUMOUR DIES

S: (SIGHS) Ohr, won't you come in, sit down, have you had dinner?

R: Yeah I'm right, thanks very much though

S: Can I get you a drink - would you like a cuppa?

R: Ohr no I'm right

PAUSE

S: So, what have you been doing after all these years?

R: Ohr same as usual - nothing much

S: Here sit down

THEY BOTH SIT ON THE COUCH

S: Did you have a good trip down?

R: Yeah, bus trips are pretty boring but it was alright

S: Which bus did you get?

R: I did get the early one

S: Oh right and you've already been round here

R: Yeah I met your flat mate, um George, he seems nice

S: Yeah

R: How long have you two been sharing for?

S: (PAUSE, THINKING) About two years

R: And you don't have any arguments or anything?

S: No nothing too bad, um sharing with someone's just give and take like everything else

R: Yeah, you're so lucky, I'm still living at home, I want to move out soon

S: You're still at home!?

R: Yeah

S: Oh you poor thing

R: It's not too bad, I get on alright with Mum and Dad, but I want to move soon

S: Do it, you'll be glad once you have

R: (SHRUGS) Oh yeah, I will, sometime, it's alright it's under control

PAUSE

S: So what time did you come by here?

R: Um just after you left actually, George said

S: Oh right, so what did you do all day

R: Oh just looked around - trying to catch up on a bit of culture, (SMILING) haven't been in the big smoke for a while

S: (SMILING) Mmm

R: Saw a few films

S: Ohr yeah any good?

R: Ohr well you know nothing's a waste of time if you learn from it eh (SIMON IS PUZZLED, DOESN'T UNDERSTAND), in other words no they weren't any good but I'm glad I saw them

S: Ohr

R: Just to know what not to do

S: Ohll (HE IS STILL SLIGHTLY PUZZLED, PAUSE), How's the studying going?

R: Ohr, don't remind me, no it's alright, I'm getting a bit sick of it though

S: Why's that?

R: Ohr we're not doing much of the stuff that really interests me

S: Will you?

R: No, ohr we do a research assignment in third year, I could then I guess, I'd do it on time or infinity or something like that, if I got to third year

S: What are you doing again?

R: Physics

S: Yeah I knew it was maths or something like that

R: They're not that much different really, there's a lot of maths in physics

S: Yeah I'm just trying to remember when the last time I saw you was? - you'd just finished grade ten I think

R: Yeah, Christmas that year

S: Hadn't you just got a school prize then?

R: Yeah

S: Physics or maths?

R: No, English

S: That's right, I remember you talking about it

R: Yeah, but what's a prize eh?, they don't mean much now

S: Ohr well but it's still good to have

ROBERT SHRUGS, PAUSE

R: You're working in a bookshop?

S: Yeah

R: That'd be interesting

S: Yeah I enjoy it

R: What sort of books do you have?

S: (THINKING) Ohll, pretty much everything, but we try and specialise in the more literary end of the scale

R: (SMILING) Right, ohr that's good. Do you have many poetry collections?

S: Ahr yeah, not as many as novels though, but yeah

R: I'll have to come in and have a look

S: Yeah, do you read much poetry?

R: Ohr a bit - I don't really read much, no novels or anything, just a bit of poetry every now and again

S: Who are your favourite poets?

R: Ohr, John Keats, Emily Dickinson

S: Right

R: I haven't read much of their stuff though, I just really like what I have read

S: Yeah, we've got a complete works of Keats

R: Really?!

S: Yeah, not too much on Dickinson though, there's some of her works in some American anthologies, but nothing on her own I think

R: Oh well (SMILING) you'll have to get some eh!

S: (SMILING) Yeah. And you don't read novels at all

R: Nuh - just never got into them, probley will one day

S: Yeah, I could show you a few good ones in the shop if you like

R: Ohr well no rush, one day yeah, but not today, or tomorrow (SMILING, ROBERT HAS LOST INTEREST IN THE CONVERSATION, HIS MIND IS WANDERING) That's a good TV set

S: Yeah

R: Video too

S: Yeah

R: Do you watch many?

S: Ohll occasionally, not too many

R: If I had one I'd be glued to it all the time

S: Mmmm (PAUSE) well I better head off to bed I think, it's getting late

R: Righto

S: I'm afraid you're going to have to sleep out here

R: Yeah ohr no that's alright, George explained to me - anywhere's fine

S: Yes well sorry we haven't got more

R: No

S: You should be nice and comfy on this anyway

R: Yeah ohr it's fine

S: Are you right for sheets and everything?

R: Yeah I've got a sleeping bag and I can just use these pillows

S: Right well if you need anything my room's the second one, and the toilet's down the end on the left

S: George won't be back till about two or three or some ungodly hour but he shouldn't creat too much of a disturbance

R: Ohr no, that's alright

S: Well I'll leave you to it then

R: Okay

S: I'll see you in the morning, goodnight

R: Goodnight, thanks very much for everything again

S: That's alright

ROBERT LOOKS ABOUT THE LIVING ROOM A BIT THEN EXITS INTO THE KITCHEN AND SHORTLY RE-ENTERS WITH A GLASS OF MILK, HE CONTINUES LOOKING AROUND THE LIVING ROOM AND FLICKS THROUGH SOME BOOKS HE TAKES FROM THE BOOKSHELF, AFTER A WHILE HE PUTS THEM BACK AND CROSSES TO THE TV SET, HE FLICKS THROUGH THE CHANNELS, LOOKING AT A FEW THINGS, BUT TURNS IT OFF SHORTLY AND FIDDLES WITH THE VIDEO BRIEFLY, HE THEN FINISHES HIS DRINK OF MILK AND CROSSES TO HIS BAGS, HE TAKES OUT HIS SLEEPING BAG AND LAYS IT ON THE COUCH AND SLOWLY UNDRESSES DOWN TO HIS UNDERPANTS, HE THEN SITS ON THE COUCH HEAD IN HANDS, STARING DOWN IN FRONT OF HIM, UPSET AND SAD, AFTER A WHILE HE DROPS HIS HEAD DOWN AND SITS DOUBLED OVER FOR JUST A SHORT WHILE, AND THEN SLOWLY STANDS UP AND CROSSES TO TURN OFF THE LIGHT, HE CROSSES BACK GETS INTO HIS SLEEPING BAG, AND ROLLS OVER TO SLEEP. LIGHTS FADE OUT TO TOTAL BLACKOUT, AFTER A SHORT WHILE THEY FADE BACK INTO A DIM EARLY MORNING STATE, JUST AFTER DAWN. ROBERT IS ASLEEP ON HIS STOMACH. NATALIE ENTERS VIA AN UNREALISTIC ENTRANCE POINT - ONE WHICH IS NOT PART OF THE SET, SHE IS WEARING JUST A FLESH COLOURED BODY STOCKING, SHE CROSSES TO ROBERT, STANDS, LOOKS AT HIM FOR A WHILE, THEN SITS ON THE COUCH BESIDE HIM, SHE RUNS HER HANDS THROUGH HIS HAIR, THEN DOWN HIS BACK, GLIDING OVER HIS SKIN, AFTER A WHILE SHE STANDS UP AND TAKES A FEW STEPS AWAY

Natalie: Robbie, Robbie

ROBERT SITS UP, HIS EYES SHUT

N: Come to me, I want to hug you I want to hold you

ROBERT GETS UP OUT OF HIS SLEEPING BAG, THEY HUG FOR A WHILE

R: Mmm, so soft and warm

THEY STOP HUGGING AND KISS SO WARMLY, THEN HUG AGAIN FOR QUITE A WHILE

R: Mmm

THEY THEN PART AND ROBERT CRAWLS BACK INTO HIS SLEEPING BAG, VERY CONTENT AND RE-ASSURED, AND ROLLS OVER TO SLEEP, NATALIE CROSSES TO HIM, LEANS OVER AND KISSES HIM ON THE HEAD THEN EXITS JUST AS SHE ENTERED. AFTER A SHORT WHILE ROBERT ROLLS AROUND QUIETLY THEN WAKES UP, HE SITS UP ALONG THE LENGTH OF THE COUCH THEN LOOKS DOWN TO BETWEEN HIS LEGS, AND THEN BURIES HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, HE THEN REACHES DOWN INTO THE SLEEPING BAG AND TAKES OFF HIS UNDERPANTS, WIPING HIMSELF CLEAN WITH THEM AND PLACES THEM IN ONE OF HIS BAGS WHICH HE THEN ZIPS UP, HE BREATHES OUT LOUDLY, CONSIDERS THINGS FOR A MOMENT THEN LIES DOWN AND ROLLS OVER TO SLEEP. LIGHTS FADE OUT.

ACT I SCENE2

LATE THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, ROBERT ENTERS THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR, HE IS WEARING A WALKMAN, THE MUSIC IS LOUD BUT HE IS NOT LISTENING TO IT, HE IS QUIET BUT STERN, ANGRY WITHIN HIMSELF, DEEP IN THOUGHT, HE SITS DOWN AND STARTS TO LOOK IN HIS ARMY SHOULDER BAG WHICH HE HAS ALSO BROUGHT IN WITH HIM, HE SWITCHES THE WALKMAN OFF AND TAKES IT OFF, FROM HIS SHOULDER BAG HE PULLS OUT A SCRIPT WITH SOME PAPER, HE STARES FIERCELY BUT BLANKLY AT THEM FOR A WHILE AND THEN PUTS THEM IN HIS OTHER BAG, HE SITS THERE, THINKS FOR A BIT WITH HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, AND THEN HUNTS ROUNDS IN HIS BAG FOR A PEN AND PAPER, HE PULLS THEM OUT AND WRITES A POEM STRONGLY

S: (FROM DOWN THE HALL) Is that you Robert?

R: (PAUSE, HE IS STILL WRITING) Yeah

S: You're back late

R: (ANOTHER PAUSE, HE DOES NOT WANT TO BE BOTHERED) Yeah

SIMON ENTERS FROM THE HALLWAY IN DRESSING GOWN AND PYJAMAS, JUST OUT OF THE SHOWER, ROBERT QUICKLY PUTS THE POEM AWAY

S: Is everything alright?

R: (BRIGHTLY, BUT THEN TRAILS OFF) Oh yeah

S: Did you see another film?

R: Yeah

S: You watch a lot of movies

ROBERT GRUNTS AND SHRUGS, PAUSE

S: Have you had dinner?

R: Ohr it's alright don't worry about me

S: Well I'm on my way to bed now

PAUSE

R: Okay (PAUSE) Do you mind if I watch some telly?

S: No go ahead, just keep the volume down

R: Yeah

PAUSE

S: What's the matter Robert?

R: Ohr nothin'

S: No look something's the matter tell me

R: Ohr (PAUSE) things just bug me that's all

S: Like what?

R: Ohr nothin'

LONG PAUSE, THEN R. TURNS TO S., LOOKS HIM IN THE EYE

R: I mean wouldn't you like to change things if you could, some people are just idiots

S: Yeah (SITS NEXT TO HIM) So what is it?

R: (PAUSE, SIGHS) Ohr, I didn't tell you why I came down here did I?

S: No, only you wanted to do a few things, see a few people

R: Mmmm, ohr I dunno (LONG PAUSE) I wanna quit my course

S: Why?

R: (LONG PAUSE) Ohr, just don't want to do it; can't do enough through it - not the really important things

S: So what do you want to do?

R: Ohr (PAUSE) I have ideas you know (LOOKING SIMON IN THE EYE, TRYING TO PERCEIVE IF HE UNDERSTANDS) and I want to get them across to people

S: (PAUSE) What sort of ideas?

R: (PULLING BACK, SMILING, MAINLY TO HIMSELF - HE'S NOT GOING TO GO INTO THIS) Ohr no, (PAUSE, THEN SERIOUSLY, QUIETLY) just ideas on what I see, life, everything (SMILES QUIETLY)

S: So what do you want to be then?

R: It's not what I want to be.....(PAUSE) writing's probely the main thing I do at the moment, I wanna spend more time on it, I've got a.....

S: (CUTS IN) So you want to be a writer?

R: (SMILING) No, part of it's in the writing, that's the most immediate thing after you've had an idea, but then it goes on from there, film's where I really want to be, so I'll have an idea for a film and then I'll want to see it all the way through and direct it and so on - I'm not one of these people who can write something and then just give it away and let it get butchered by someone else into a film

S: You don't think you're trying to do too much do you?

R: (LOOKING AT HIM) No

S: Wouldn't you be better off just trying to concentrate on the one thing?

R: But it is the one thing, they're all just different parts of the whole (LOOKING HIM IN THE EYE) do you see what I mean?

S: Yes but you're going about it the wrong way, you'd be much better off just concentrating on the one thing - I mean the people who do do what you're talking about are the best in the world, what makes you think you're that good?

R: Nothing it just feels right to do it that's all

S: Do you want to be a George Lucas or a Stephen Spielberg or something?

R: No, I just want to be myself, do my own thing (LOOKS AT SIMON THEN LOOKS AWAY) see it's just like the thing with the QFC, they don't understand that either

S: The what?

R: Ohr the Queensland Film Corporation I gave them a script I wrote, I just got it back today

S: And what did they say?

R: They rejected it, won't fund it

S: Why not?

R: Cause they're idiots (PAUSE) They don't think it's good enough

S: Well don't you think they'd know?

R: Nuh

S: (DISBELIEVINGLY) Robert

R: No, they don't

S: Then why is it that you know?

R: You just have to read it to know it'd be a good film

S: What's it about?

R: Ohr it's just a comedy about a couple of blokes in the country, there's nothing much to it really, it's just a funny story that's all, it's not my best idea for a film but it's a good one to start with cause it'd be popular

S: And what did they say about it?

R: Ohr they said the comedy was good and I write in a very visual manner

S: And what else?

R: That it would be too expensive to make, and that the character and plot development wasn't mature enough, which is a load of crap because it's an unrealistic film, it just grows and grows and grows and reaches an absurd conclusion -all just for the comedy, I mean I could have written a realistic story with realistic characters, it just so happens that this time I didn't so they hold that against me

S: Maybe they meant that within the framework of what you were doing you didn't handle it maturely enough yourself, not that the characters or the story were a problem themself

R: (PAUSE, THINKING) No, they said other things as well, that's not it; they said, now this is the biggest load of crap, they said that there's nothing to keep the audience interested, but there's a whole story that's getting larger and larger and larger as the thing develops, what rubbish

S: So what are you going to do with it?

R: The Australia Film Commission have got a copy of it as well, they've got some grant scheme going that I put it in for. The results of that should be announced soon, I hope

they're interested because if not, I dunno

S: Is there anything else that the.....

R: (CUTS IN) What, the QFC can do?

S: Yeah

R: Nuh, they rejected it straight out, don't want a thing to do with it - so I don't want anything to do with them as far as I'm concerned, I'm not going to let what they said or any of that crap worry me; see it's a good script it's just a matter of getting that goodness out and across to the people, they obviously couldn't see any of it themselves

S: Mmm

R: I went in and picked it up from them today, they were going to post it but I just ducked in and got it, I spoke to a lady a bit, she didn't say anything about the script, they have these independant reviewers who read them and assess them - you never know who it is, you have to sign a form saying you're not going to sue the QFC or anything if you don't like what they said (SMILING) and I'm not going to do that - sue them that is. She told me that the funding usually goes out to people in their thirties or forties who've got more experience and so on, which is fine but whatdarya do if you haven't got the experience? My idea is to see this go into production and direct it myself, but have someone else there who knows all the technical things that I don't, so I'd just be there to get the ideas across and shape the film, and I'd leave the rest to those who know what they're doing until I know how it works

S: Yeah

R: That's how it'd work ideally and I'd just step straight out of my course into it, but the way it's looking now there's not much chance of that (PAUSE) I think if the Australian Film Commission reject it as well then I'll quit my course and just follow it through until it's done

S: Do you think that's a wise idea?

R: Well yeah, see the thing is, I know what I want to do but I'm just so far away from it, that's so frustrating you have no idea

S: (PAUSE) Don't you think you'd be better off finishing your course to have it to fall back on if you needed it?

R: (SIGHS AT SIMON STILL NOT COMPREHENDING, THEN) No, how can I? - It's only time and effort taking me further away from what I really want to do

S: But still if you have the.....

R: (CUTS IN, QUIETLY) No. I'm serious about doing it myself if I have to, I would quit, I just wanna do what I really wanna do, put myself out on a limb where its success or fail,

and I wouldn't fail cause I wouldn't have anything else

S: What would Mum and Dad do if you quit?

R: I dunno, I've spoken to them a bit about it, they're just hoping that I'll get the grant - of course they don't want me to leave college

S: Will they still support you if you do?

R: I dunno (SMILING) spose so - hope so!, no, I'd much rather be supporting myself really

S: How would you do that?

R: Get a job, just something for money till the film took off

S: Mmm, have Mum or Dad read the script?

R: No, only (PAUSE, THINKING) two people have

S: I'd like to one day if I could

R: Ohr yeah, if you want

S: I'll give you my honest opinion on it

R: (NOT REALLY THAT INTERESTED) Mmm (PAUSE) Ohr yeah that would be good actually, I'm sick of just rubbish opinions, I mean if people aren't being absolutely honest with you it's just because they're trying to get something out of you, that's what I think

S: Yeah, you should show it to Mum and Dad, they'd tell you what they think

R: Ohr yeah, I don't think they're that interested though

S: Ohr they probley are, they just don't show it

R: Yeah (PAUSE) They were wondering about you you know, they haven't heard from you in quite a while

S: (QUIETLY) Yeah

R: Aren't you talking or something?

S: No, we are, there's just a lot of differences that's all

R: Mmm (PAUSE) Mum would love to hear from you, so would Dad

S: (BLANKLY) Yeah?, oh well they will, I'll write or something

R: What happened? - did you have a big argument with them or something?

S: No, ohr, just difference of opinions, that's all

R: What about?

S: Nothing in particular, just general out look, I believe in a lot of different things to them

R: Ohr yeah but so do I, though that doesn't.....

S: (CUTS IN) No not like this - totally different

R: (LOOKING AT SIMON) Hmmm

S: I left home seven years ago - I've changed a lot

R: Yeah well I haven't seen much of you so I don't know

S: It's totally different in the city to a country town, that's something that they can't see, the people are different, they think differently, they value different things, they live differently, and just because that doesn't fit into their own little narrow minded view of things they reject it - that's why I've had a falling out with them

R: (QUIETLY) Oh. (PAUSE) What is it that's so much better with the people here than at home?

S: Here they're more open minded, more understanding, more sensitive and sympathetic - they accept you as they are rather than try and make you be something you're not, there's more of a um (PAUSE, THINKING) understanding and acceptance of human nature

R: (QUIETLY AGAIN) Oh

S: I've just outgrown Mum and Dad's narrowminded look on things (TURNS TO ROBERT, HE IS LOOKING DOWN AT THE GROUND QUIETLY) if I were you Robert I'd leave home and get out and experience some things, I wouldn't quit your course that's a bad idea but I'd just move out and experience life, you need to, it'll change your whole outlook, open up your mind - it wasn't until I left home and came here that I really found out who I was

R: (PULLING AWAY AND TURNING TO HIM) Ohr that's stupid, you don't need to do that to know who you are - I know who I am, I don't need to do anything to do that

SIMON TAKES THIS AS AN INSULT THOUGH IT ISN'T INTENDED THAT WAY

S: Well, one day you'll see

ROBERT SHAKES HIS HEAD FROM SIDE TO SIDE, LOOKING DOWN SMILING, NOT BELIEVING IN THIS APPROACH AT ALL

R: It doesn't work that way, I mean if you don't know yourself....

S: (CUTS IN) There's no use trying to discuss it, one day you'll understand, (STANDS UP)
it's getting late, I'm going to bed now

ROBERT HALF LAUGHS TO HIMSELF, PAUSE

R: You just don't want to talk about it cause I've got a different opinion

S: No that's not it at all

R: Yes it is

S: No it's not; now do you wanna use the bathroom, I was going to be in there again

ROBERT SIGHS, ANNOYED

R: Okay

HE EXITS TO CLEAN HIS TEETH THEN SIMON FOLLOWS DOWN THE HALL AS WELL, AFTER A SHORT WHILE THEY CAN BE HEARD OFFSTAGE SAYING GOODNIGHT TO EACH OTHER, ROBERT RE-ENTERS, MAKES HIS BED ETC., HE UNDRESSES SLOWLY, THINKING, VERY STERNLY, HE IS HALF UNDRESSED WHEN HE STOPS, SITS DOWN, PULLS OUT A PEN AND A SCRAP OF PAPER FROM HIS BAG AND WRITES A POEM, HE THEN PUTS IT AWAY, CONTINUES UNDRESSING DOWN TO HIS UNDERPANTS, TURNS OFF THE LIGHT AND HOPS INTO HIS SLEEPING BAG AND ROLLS OVER TO SLEEP EVENTUALLY. LIGHTS FADE OUT TO BLACK OUT THEN SHORTLY AFTERWARDS FADE BACK UP TO DEEP IN THE NIGHT, ROBERT IS SLIGHTLY RESTLESS IN HIS SLEEP, NATALIE ENTERS, AGAIN IN JUST A FLESH COLOURED BODY STOCKING AND VIA THE SAME UNREALISTIC ENTRANCE POINT, SHE LIES NEXT TO HIM, THEY HOLD EACH OTHER, HE IS CALM.

- CURTAIN -

ACT I SCENE3

MID MORNING A FEW DAYS LATER, R. IS SITTING AT THE TABLE READING THE PAPER, G HAS JUST WOKEN UP, HAD A SHOWER, AND IS SITTING IN A COUCH, ALMOST HALF ASLEEP, PAUSE THEN AFTER A WHILE

R: Do you ever get sick of the hours you work?

G: Hmm? (PAUSE) um, no get used to them

R: How long does that take?

G: Ohr a week or two

R: There's no way I'd ever work those hours

G: Why's that?

R: Miss out on too much

G: Ohr yeah

R: When do you ever go out?

G: I don't work every night - I do get time off you know

R: Yeah (PAUSE, STILL READING THE PAPER) How long do you want to stay there for?

G: Oh I dunno, end of this year, some of next year I guess - not forever that's for sure

R: Whatdarya wanna do when you leave?

G: Ohr have a holiday for a while

R: What about a career?

G: Nuh - just living's enough for me

R: Oh (PAUSE) What about a job?

G: Ohr yeah, anything'll do, public servant, I dunno, anything; the only reason I've got this job is because nothing else was around at the time, and I still haven't been able to find anything better

R: Yeah

G: I worked for a landscape gardener before this (HALF LAUGHS) huh I was a labourer I remember

R: (SMILING) Hmm

PAUSE, G. HALF TURNS TO R.

G: What are you doing today? - are you going in to town again?

R: Um, I dunno, (JOKINGLY) Why? do you want me to?

G: Ohr no, just wondering

R: Yeah, no I don't know what I'm doing, I'm just looking at what shows are on but I haven't really got enough money, I'd love to go and see a theatre show

G: Yeah there are a couple good ones on

R: It's just so expensive that's all - I dunno life as a student is pretty bad sometimes

G: You should be working on your holidays, not bludging down here

R: (SMILING) I'm not bludging, I did come down for a reason

G: Yeah I know, just havin' a go at ya

R: (SMILING) Yeah (RETURNS TO PAPER)

G: Actually Simon told me about your script - I think that's terrific, best of luck with it

R: Thanks

G: Did it take you long to write?

R: (BECOMING A BIT SHY) Ohr about a year, would've been quicker if I wasn't at college

G: Yeah, still that can't be helped

R: No, hey there's an ad in her for your club

G: (NOT REALLY INTERESTED) Yeah?

R: Yeah, "rage from eight till late", (LOOKING AT G, SARCASTICALLY) sounds great

G: Yep you better believe it - you should drop in sometime, why don't you come in tonight?

R: Ohll

G: I'll get you free drinks

R: (BRIGHTLY) Ohr well in that case, no I dunno, I wouldn't know anyone there

G: You'd know me

R: Ohr yeah but you know, I don't really go out much to those places anyway

G: You don't have to stay for long, just pop in

R: Ohr yeah

G: If you see a film or something come in afterwards

R: Okay. Free drinks eh?

G: Yep

R: I don't really drink much, but not to the extent where I would knock back an offer like that

G: No, well that's good

R: Yeah, okay then. (PAUSE) There'd be a fair few girls there, wouldn't there

G: (SMILING) Sure are

R: That'd be the best part about working there - all the women

G: You should come along, you might be able to get one

R: (HALF LAUGHING, SHY), Hohr, I don't think so

G: You never know your luck

R: (EMBARASSED) No, not me

G: Why have you already got one?

R: No, ohr - no

G: Come on who is she?

R: No, I haven't

G: Who is she?

R: Ohr there's just this girl, she's not my girl friend (TRAILING OFF) just this girl

G: Ohr yeah, what does she do?

R: Um, goes to college

G: Right

R: What about you? - who's the love of your life?, who's your woman?

G: Um, there's no woman in my life

R: Well that's bad luck isn't it

G: Ohr yeah if you choose to look at it that way, I can do without a woman

R: Ya reckon (FADES BACK INTO READING THE PAPER)

PAUSE

G: What's her name?

ROBERT SMILES, CONTINUES READING THE PAPER

G: What's ya woman's name?

R: (LOOKS UP, SMILING) She's not my woman (PAUSE) Natalie

PAUSE

G: (GRINNING) Natalie eh

R: (PAUSE SMILING) Yes (LOOKS BACK DOWN AT PAPER)

PAUSE

G: (SAYS IT IN THE AIR AMOROUSLY) Natalie

R: (LOOKS UP, SMILING) Will you stop it

G: What's she look like?

R: Oh (LOOKS DOWN, HEAD IN HANDS, FEELING THE WORLD OF FEELING WITHIN HIM, THEN QUIETLY) She's beautiful (CONSIDERS HER FOR A SHORT WHILE, THEN SNAPS OUT OF IT) will you stop asking me these things

G: Yeah sorry - she's just a friend

R: (PAUSE) Yeah

G: Hmm, ohr well, you might get lucky

R: Yeah (LONG PAUSE, HE IS STILL EFFECTED THOUGH) Do you mind if I have some lunch?

G: No look go ahead you don't have to ask

R: Thanks (R. EXITS TO KITCHEN, G. SITS THINKING, AFTER A SHORT WHILE R'S VOICE IS HEARD FROM OFFSTAGE) I think you've run out of bread, I can't find any

G: Ohll, you'll have to go across to the shop then

R: Righto

JUST THEN SIMON ENTERS HURRIEDLY THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR AT THE POINT OF TEARS, HE CROSSES TO THE HALLWAY

G: (STANDS UP) Simon! What's the matter?

SIMON STOPS TURNS, R. STANDS IN THE KITCHEN DOORWAY, SIMON LOOKS DOWN, HOLDING BACK THE TEARS, CROSSES TO THE COUCH, SITS, G. SITS NEXT TO HIM

G: What is it?

PAUSE

S: I just (BREAKS DOWN, COLLECTS HIMSELF) Rachel got hit by a car this morning trying to cross the road

G. GASPS SILENTLY

S: They don't know if she's going to live

HE BREAKS DOWN THEY HUG FOR QUITE A WHILE, G. LOOKS AT ROBERT IN AN UNDERSTANDING WAY BUT INDICATING THAT HE SHOULD LEAVE, R. OBLIGES AND EXITS OUT THE FRONT DOOR ACROSS TO THE SHOP, AFTER A WHILE THEY BREAK THEIR EMBRACE, AND SIT HOLDING HANDS

S: She was just trying to cross and this car came round the corner (WIPES HIS NOSE ON SOME TISSUES)

G: She'll be alright (KISSES HIM ON THE FOREHEAD)

S: (THROUGH HIS TEARS) I know

PAUSE

S: Ohh I just wish.....ohr

G: Where is she?

S: At the P.A., I only just found out, Paul rang me and told me, so Douglas is going to stay in the shop all day for me

G: When did it happen?

S: About nine this morning, Paul said they're operating on her now, she's got a cranial haemorrhage and ruptured organs, it had to happen to her

G. IS UPSET BUT NOT CRYING

G: Ohr

THEY HUG

G: She'll be alright

S: Hmm

AFTER A WHILE S. BREAKS THE HUG, WIPES HIS EYES

S: Come on, let's go down and see her, I'll get my things

SIMON EXITS TO THE HALLWAY AND TO HIS ROOM, G. STANDS, UPSET
AND IN DISBELIEF, AFTER A SHORT WHILE ROBERT RE-ENTERS WITH A
LOAF OF BREAD

R: Um, is he alright?

G: Yes, quite upset though

R: (PAUSE) Who was it in the accident?

G: A very very close friend

R: Will she be alright?

G: Don't know, we're going down to the hospital to see her now, you better stay here

R: Yeah (PAUSE, THINKS, THEN EXITS TO KITCHEN)

SIMON RE-ENTERS SHORTLY WITH HAIR BRUSHED AND A SMALL
HANDBAG, HE IS SLIGHTLY TERSE IN HIS MOOD NOW

S: Come on let's go

G: Yeah

S: Robert shouldn't be here now

G: Come on he's alright

THEY EXIT, DEEP IN THOUGHT ROBERT RE-ENTERS SHORTLY WITH A
PLATE AND A SANDWICH, AND A GLASS OF MILK, HE SITS AT THE COUCH
AND THINKS ABOUT THINGS FOR A LONGISH WHILE, HE THEN GETS UP
AND MAKES A PHONE CALL

R: (HAPPILY) Hi Mum, it's Robert here, howareya (PAUSE) good, good (PAUSE) ohr I'm
not too bad (PAUSE) yeah it's going well, I dunno when I'll be back I've gotta go down
to the studio's on the Gold Coast yet and I wanna spend a bit more time in Brissy as well
as I don't know, maybe four or five more days (PAUSE) no I won't (PAUSE, HIS
MOOD CHANGES) yeah I saw 'em (PAUSE)

(R. CONTINUES)

R: No, they weren't interested (PAUSE) they told me a whole lotta rubbish over it (PAUSE) Oh yeah but you know you don't let that worry you eh (PAUSE) Ohll I dunno, just rubbish, I can't really remember, I'll tell you when I get home - it's all wrong anyway (PAUSE) ohll, he's fine, oh well he was, he just came back from work early as he found out a friend has been in a car accident (PAUSE) yeah, it's bad eh (PAUSE) don't know, they said they're not sure (PAUSE) yeah, he's just gone down with his flat mate to see her (PAUSE) yeah so do I (PAUSE) no, just a friend as far as I know, a close one, he's pretty upset (PAUSE) yeah, I will, hmm, listen has there been any mail for me? (PAUSE) from the Australian Film Commission!, ohr wow go and open it (LONG PAUSE) yeah, you got it? (PAUSE, R.'s EXPRESSION CHANGES FROM ENTHUSIASM AND EXPECTATION TO REALISATION AND ANGER HELD DEEP WITHIN) Yeah, oh well, (HALF LAUGHS) hmm, that's the way it goes eh (PAUSE) ohll that's alright, it's not your fault (PAUSE) yeah, well anyway I better leave you to it, stop spending all of Simon's money here, so thanks anyway (PAUSE) yeah no I will, always do, I'll ring you in a couple days just before I come home (PAUSE) righto then bye

HE HANGS UP, STANDS UP, HOLDS HIS FACE IN HIS HANDS

R: (GROANS LOUDLY) Ohll (PULLS HIS HANDS AWAY) Whatdarya have to do.....(STOPS HIMSELF)

HOLDS HIS FACE AGAIN, BREATHES IN DEEPLY, HOLDS THE ANGER, THEN SIGHS OUT, MOVES HIS HANDS AWAY AND CROSSES TO HIS BAG, LOOKING DOWN STERNLY AND ALL THE WHILE CURSING THE FILM COMMISSION IN HIS MIND, HE PULLS OUT A CASSETTE TAPE AND PLAYS IT IN THE STEREO VERY LOUDLY, THE SONG IS 'NEVER UNDERSTAND' BY THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN, HE STANDS THERE DEEP IN ANGER AND THOUGHT, ONLY LISTENING A BIT TO THE MUSIC, CURTAIN AS THE SONG CROSS FADES INTO THE AUDITORIUM.

ACT I SCENE 4

A FEW DAYS LATER, JUST BEFORE DAWN, ROBERT IS ASLEEP ON THE COUCH, NATALIE ENTERS, AGAIN JUST IN THE FLESH COLOURED BODY STOCKING AND VIA THE UNREALISTIC ENTRANCE POINT. SHE IS HAPPY AND SMILING AND FULL OF ENERGY, SHE RUNS OVER TO R. AND STANDS NEAR HIM

N: Robbie, Robbie, it's me

SHE TOUCHES HIM

N: Robbie, Robbie

HE OPENS HIS EYES AND SMILES A WARM SMILE TO HER, HALF SITTING

UP, SHE MOVES AWAY FROM HIM

N: Ohll it's so good to be here, it's so good to see you, I haven't seen you for ages
SHE STRETCHES HERSELF AND GROANS, SO FULL OF FEELING AND LOVE.
SHE STRETCHES FOR QUITE A WHILE, THEN STOPS AND BREAKS DOWN
CRYING, SHE SITS ON THE FLOOR, ROBERT IS QUITE SAD BUT SAYS
NOTHING, SHE IS STILL CRYING. SHE COLLECTS HERSELF AND STANDS
UP.

N: I'm sorry, I shouldn't have come. I have to go

SHE WALKS AWAY, VERY SAD, AND EXITS, ROBERT LIES BACK DOWN
ASLEEP, THEN WAKES UP SHORTLY AFTER, HE HALF SITS UP, BURIES HIS
HEAD IN HIS HANDS, THEN SIGNS AND LOOKS AROUND, AFTER A WHILE
HE REACHES INTO HIS BAG FOR PEN AND PAPER AND WRITES A POEM, HE
KNOWS WHAT HE FEELS, BUT WRITES TO HELP HIM UNDERSTAND IT,
AFTER A WHILE HE GETS UP AND EXITS TO THE KITCHEN, AND RETURNS
WITH A GLASS OF MILK, HE STANDS IN THE KITCHEN DOORWAY,
THINKING FOR A WHILE AND THEN CROSSES TO A WINDOW AND
WATCHES THE DAWN.

- CURTAIN -

ACT II SCENE 1

A FEW DAYS LATER, ROBERT IS ON THE PHONE.

R: Okay and how about a return service today as well (PAUSE) No, have you got a later one? (PAUSE) yeah six'd be fine thanks, so how much is that altogether? (PAUSE) right, and I pick them both up at the transit centre (PAUSE) rightio, thanks very much then (PAUSE) okay bye

HE HANGS UP AND SITS AND THINKS FOR A WHILE THEN GEORGE ENTERS FROM THE HALLWAY IN HIS DRESSING GOWN

G: Are you going?

R: No, ohr well I am, just down to the Gold Coast to the studios, I'll be back tonight

G: Right, what are you going to do down there?

R: Ohr just see them about my script, see if they're interested, have a look at the studios - I'm getting a guided tour

G: Wow that's pretty good

R: Yeah I wrote to them a couple of weeks ago and we organised it - most of the set up's completed now and they should be going into production in under twelve months

G: Ohll that's good, are they after new scripts or something?

R: Ah dunno, I hope so, I dunno, hopefully something'll become of it

G: Yeah well you never know your luck (EXITS TO KITCHEN)

R: (SLIGHTLY BLANKLY) Yeah

G: (FROM IN THE KITCHEN) When are you going home?

R: Tomorrow or the day after I think, next week's the end of my holidays so I better get back and do some work soon - I've got four assignments due in and I haven't done any work on any of them

G: Really?!

R: Yeah

G: Will you get them done?

R: Ohr yeah, always do, it's no big deal

G: What are they on?

R: Hohr, Physics, what else, they're all pretty boring, ohr one's on relativity that'll be alright

G: Relativity? - What Einstein and all that

R: Yeah

G: (IN THE KITCHEN DOORWAY) Do you understand that?

R: Yeah the principles of it, I don't know all of it that well but I understand the basics of it

G: Explain it to me

R: Ohr, well (PAUSE, THINKING HOW TO APPROACH IT)

G: No, I'm onlykidding

R: Good cause I wouldn't explain it very well, I've got a book if you....

G: (CUTS IN) No it's alright, just think I could be talking to thenext great Einstein here

R: Huh don't think so, Eisenstein maybe, but not Einstein

G: You don't think so?

R: No, I know so. There was nothing amazing aboutEinstein anyway

G: Ohll?

R: No, he was just another person as far as I'm concerned, good at physics though, but just another person - anyone can be good at physics

G: Ohll really?

R: Yeah (SMILING) well except me that is, I'm failing pretty badly at the moment (LAUGHS MAINLY TO HIMSELF) I used to be good at it, when I wanted to do it

G: What about film making?, can anyone be good at that?

R: (QUIETLY) Ohll, I dunno (PAUSE) yeah

G EXITS TO THE KITCHEN WITH A SMIRK

R: (CALLING OUT TO G, SLIGHTLY LOUDER) If they're allowed to make their bloody films that is

G: (LAUGHS) Yeah

ROBERT SMILES, LAUGHS TO HIMSELF, IT FADES SOON

G. RE-ENTERS BRISKLY WITH A CUP OF COFFEE

G: So when are you going today? (HE SITS)

R: In about an hour and half, I might go into town first and just have a look round, though I'm getting sick of that, I think I've seen every bookshop, record shop and cinema there is in Brisbane

G: Yeah. Good luck with it with the studios

R: Thanks

G: You don't want to worry about all the knock-backs, the best people in the world all get knocked back at one stage or another

R: (QUIETLY) Yeah, no it'll be right, doesn't worry me

PAUSE

G: I even got knocked back once

R: Really? - what doing?

G: Ohr made a pass at this woman

THEY LAUGH

G: I pinched her on the bum, she didn't appreciate it

R: I'm not surprised

G: But that doesn't matter, women don't matter

ROBERT LOOKS AT HIM, CAN'T COMPREHEND HIM

G: They just muck ya round too much

R: Uhr

PAUSE

R: Don't you think they're worth the hassle?

G: Nuh

R: (HALF SURPRISED, TO HIMSELF) Ohll

PAUSE

G: Simon was saying you're thinking of quitting your course

R: Hmm yeah

G: Don't worry about what he says, I think if you want to you should

R: Ohr thanks

G: I can see you've got the talent and potential to really do it if you want to

R: (QUIETER, SHYLY) Ohr thanks

G: You've got to do what you really want to do, eh

R: (QUIETLY) Yeah

PAUSE

G: I knew someone in the industry once, he was a designer, a lovely man, he's gone back to the theatre now, but he worked on a few films

R: Which films, do you know?

G: No I don't, a couple of Australian films from out of the seventies, I can't remember which ones

R: I hope it wasn't something shocking like Bazza McKenzie

G: No I don't think so

R: Ohr that's good - I hate the seventies

SIMON WALKS IN THE FRONT DOOR, ROBERT WATCHES HIM FOR A FAIR WHILE BEFORE HE SPEAKS

S: Hello

G: Well how is she?

S: Ohll she's alright, she's conscious now, I spoke to her for a bit

G: Did she have much to say?

S: No, not really, she's very tired and in a lot of pain

R: Will she be alright?

S: Yes, the doctors seem to think so, it'll take her a long time though

R: Mmm

S: So what's been happening here?

R: Ohr nothing (THEN BRIGHTLY) I'm going down to the studios on the Gold Coast today

S: Are you? - good

R: Yeah

S: What time do you have to be there?

R: Ohr not for a while yet, I'm getting the bus down, I should go now really, I was going to do a few things in town first

G: You should take your togs down with you and go for a swim

R: I didn't bring any with me

G: Just use a pair of shorts

R: Ohr no it's alright (PAUSE) well I might as well go I guess (CROSSES TO BAG, GETS OUT HIS WALKMAN AND A FEW BELONGINGS WHICH HE PUTS IN HIS ARMY SHOULDER BAG)

S: Righto then, any idea when you'll be back?

R: I don't leave there until six, it's late night shopping tonight isn't it?

S: Yeah

R: Well I might poke around for a bit and get back here late - that's alright isn't it?

S: Yeah of course - do what you like

R: Okay (STANDS UP, CROSSES TO FRONT DOOR) Well I'll see you all later than

S: Yep

G: Goodluck

R: Thanks - I'll need it

G: Ohr come on

R: No piece a cake eh

G: Yeah

S: Listen I'll leve a key under the pot plant in case you're really late

R: Okay thanks, righto then (EXITS)

S: Bye

G: Bye

SIMON SITS DOWN, SIGHS

S: Well thank goodness he's out of the way

G: Don't be so hard on him, he's a nice boy

S: (FACE BURIED IN HANDS) Mmm, I'm so glad Rachel's going to be alright

G: (PAUSE) Yeah

S: I don't know what I'd do if (PAUSE, THINKS OF IT) ohr dear

G: Well you don't have to worry about it anymore

S: No (PAUSE) I think you and she are the two people I'm closest to in the world, if she was gone.....(TRAILS OFF, NODDING HIS HEAD, LOOKING DOWN)

G: Ohll come on, she's going to be alright

S: Yeah I know, mmm, it just makes you rethink a lot of things, revalue a lot of things - somethings suddenly become worth a lot more

G: (LOOKING AT HIM) Yeah

S: Mmm (THEN LOOKS DOWN FOR A WHILE) I'm going to go back and see her again this arvo - she really wanted a good rest this morning

G: Was Miriam there?

S: Yes, ohll that's right, she asked me to stay round tonight, she's getting a bit lonely without Rachel there to talk to, the poor old soul

G: Ohr she's a dear isn't she

S: Yeah, I'll go straight round there from the hospital this arvo

G: Right

S: What about you - are you working tonight?

G: Yeah, not for very long though - it's the new roster system they've brought in, I have to knock off at eleven which pisses me off because I won't be earning as much

S: Yeah, what are they doing that for?

G: I dunno - trying to save money, no one comes on for me after eleven, the work just gets spaced out amongst the others. It gives me a bit of time though I think I'll go out somewhere afterwards, I haven't been out for a while

S: Now don't get too drunk

G: Ohr come on, me?

S: (NODDING HIS HEAD, AGREEING) Mmm

G: (WITH DEVILISH LOOK IN HIS EYE) What a shame you won't be here

SIMON SMILES

-- CURTAIN --

ACT II SCENE 2

LATE THAT NIGHT, THE HOUSE IS DARK, KNOCKING ON THE DOOR CAN BE HEARD FOR A WHILE THEN IT STOPS, THE DOOR IS SHAKEN THEN NOTHING, AFTER A WHILE BUMPING AND SCRAPING CAN BE HEARD OFF STAGE THROUGH THE KITCHEN, ROBERT THEN JUMPS ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR AND ENTERS INTO THE LIVING ROOM, HE TURNS ON THE LIGHT AND STOPS, THINKING, LOOKING, THEN CROSSES DOWN TO THE HALLWAY, HALF CALLING

R: Simon, George (THEN AFTER A SHORT WHILE) Simon you forgot the fucking key-
hee (THEN SILENCE, AND AFTER A SHORT WHILE HE RE-ENTERS THE LIVING ROOM, STANDS IN THE MIDDLE, CLAPS HIS HANDS TOGETHER)
Right no-one home - party!

PAUSE FOR A WHILE, HE HAS A SLIGHT SMIRK ON HIS FACE, HE THEN GOES AND SITS ON THE COUCH, HE GETS OUT A FEW PIECES OF PAPER THAT THE STUDIOS GAVE HIM FROM HIS SHOULDER BAG AND LOOKS AT THEM, ALTHOUGH HE IS INTERESTED IN THEM THERE IS A GENERAL

LOOK OF DISAPPOINTMENT ON HIS FACE, AFTER A SHORT WHILE HE FOLDS THEM IN HALF AND PUTS THEM IN HIS OTHER BAG, HE HOLDS HIS FACE IN HIS HANDS AND SIGHS, THEN COLLAPSES BACK INTO THE LOUNGE AND SITS THERE MOTIONLESS, AFTER A WHILE. HE SUMMONS THE ENERGY TO GET UP, HE UNFOLDS HIS SLEEPING BAG, MAKES HIS BED ETC, HE THEN EXITS TO CLEAN HIS TEETH, RE-ENTERS, TURNS OFF THE LIGHT, UNDRESSES DOWN TO HIS UNDERPANTS, HOPS IN THE SLEEPING BAG AND ROLLS OVER TO TRY AND SLEEP. AFTER A WHILE KNOCKING IS HEARD ON THE DOOR, IT WAKES HIM UP THE SECOND TIME ROUND AND HE QUICKLY GETS OUT OF BED AND PUTS ON SOME SHORTS AND A SHIRT, HE CROSSES TO THE DOOR AND ANSWERS IT

Natalie: Hello

LONG PAUSE

R: Natalie (LONG PAUSE) What are you doing here?

N: I came to see you

PAUSE

R: Come in

SHE ENTERS, THIS TIME SHE IS JUST WEARING NORMAL CLOTHES, ROBERT'S WHOLE BEING IS ALIVE WITH FEELING

N: I got your letter

R: (LOOKS DOWN, SMILING, BUT SORRY TO HIMSELF) Ohll (PAUSE) What did ya think? - did you like the poem?

N: Yes it was beautiful Robert.

R: Ohll (HE SMILES TO HIMSELF, FEELING SO GOOD, PAUSE) thanks. (PAUSE) Do you wanna sit down, would you like a drink or something?

N: No I'm right

THEY SIT ON THE COUCH, ON HIS SLEEPING BAG

R: How long have you been down for?

N: I just got in tonight

R: Oh, (QUICK PAUSE) and you came down to see me?

N: Yes

R: (REALISING INSIDE, FEELS GOOD) Ohll (PAUSE) You didn't have to do that

N: No I wanted to, especially after I got your letter

R: (MAINLY TO HIMSELF) Ohll (PAUSE, THEN OUTWARD TO HER, FULL OF JOY, BUT TRAILS OFF) This is such a surprise, I don't know what....

N: That's okay Robbie, it's the least I could do

R: (AGAIN MAINLY TO HIMSELF) Ohll (PAUSE, THEN) How long are you staying down for?

N: I don't know, I don't care - as long as you want to, I'll go back with you

R: Ohll okay, actually I was gonna go back soon - in a day or two

N: That's okay - whenever

R: What about the day after tomorrow? We could spend tomorrow in town looking around (SMILING WITH MOCKING FUN) I could show you all of the sights

N: Fine

R: And we could have lunch in the botanic gardens

N: Yeah that'd be nice

R: Okay then. I've done everything I wanted to here so this'll be a good way to finish it all off

N: Yeah (PAUSE) Did you do much down here? - how did you get on with the film?

R: Ohll (LONG PAUSE, HE IS QUIET FOR A WHILE, VOICE DROPS) not very well

N: (WITH UNDERSTANDING) Why not?

R: Ohr; they're just stupid that's all (HE LOOKS AT HER, SHE IS QUIET AND LISTENING, LOOKING AT HIM IN A WAY OF OPENESS AND UNDERSTANDING, HE LOOKS BACK DOWN AND SIGHS) I went to the QFC first of all - I put that in the letter didn't I, that I was actually gonna go in and see them

SHE NODS SILENTLY, AGREEING

R: Yeah well they had it there, they sent it out for someone to assess and there was a sheet there with his comments on it

N: And what did he say?

R: Ohr he didn't like it, he said a couple of good things, but overall he just pulled it to bits for all sorts of things, all of these stupid things you know that I wasn't even trying to do with the film, it's ridiculous, it's just his opinion and because of that they're not interested, his final comment was 'Not Recommended' (LOOKS UP AT HER AND THEN BACK DOWN AGAIN) so that's that as far as they're concerned, it doesn't bother me, I can do without them, I wouldn't have minded if it was an honest or sensible opinion, if they could see what I was trying to do with the film, it's like being judged unfairly or being ripped off or something, I dunno, don't care, it just shows them up for what they are

N: Hmm but you don't want to cut yourself off completely - it could work against you in the future

R: Ohr yeah, I'm probley over reacting a bit I spose, I dunno, I don't care, I don't need them I'd much rather make it on my terms in my own way, I mean if you just follow what everyone says you're worthless

N: (QUIETLY) Yeah. What about the studios down at the coast?

R: Yeah I went down there, just today actually

N: And?

R: Ohr, they're not interested either, ohr they were but not for them, they were really encouraging about the fact that I've written a script, but they've got their own programme of things and they didn't even want to read it

N: Ohll

R: I didn't get in that Australian Film Commission thing either

N: Ohr Robert

R: No, I rang up Mum and there was a letter there

N: What did they say?

R: Nothing. I don't know, it was just a form letter saying it didn't even get through the first round, and they said there are so many applications they can't provide any reasons or assessment or anything - they're just going to post the script back soon

N: So where do you go from now?

R: (SIGHS) Dunno, don't know. (PAUSE FOR A LONG WHILE, THEN) I mean I can understand that there's not enough money for every film, or that they can't afford to give an assessment to everyone, but none of them have been able to understand what I'm trying to do, what it's all about, if they could just see that (PAUSE) ohr I dunno (LONG PAUSE) it takes it all away (PAUSE) I've felt like tossing it in so many times, the only thing that keeps me going is just thinking just imagining a film of mine up there on the screen and all of these people seeing it and seeing in it what it's actually about and

learning and knowing and being better for that, not just seeing it and liking it cause it's in the style of how a popular film is made or something, I don't want to do something that just panders to the public and gives them something that they mindlessly want, I just want to do it for the worth of the ideas that I'm trying to express and for the audience to see those ideas

N: (NODDING, QUIETLY) Mmm

R: I dunno (SIGNS) the way it is sometimes, I don't feel like doing it at all. But just thinking that one day people will be able to see, you know, that makes it worth it

N: (STRESS ON THE 'I') I think you'll make it, I believe that you will

R: (SHY BUT THRILLED INSIDE) Ohll thanks

N: You've just got to work at it

R: I know

N: But you can do it, you can

R: (QUIETLY, ACKNOWLEDGING IT HIMSELF) Mmm (THEN TO NATALIE) I know

PAUSE

R: It's funny you know, when I see you oohll (PAUSE, HE IS LOST IN FEELING FOR A BIT THEN) you remember that time I ran into you down town that day (SHE NODS) just a smile on your face, that makes it all feel worth it too

N: Ohll Robbie

SHE KISSES HIM, HE JUST STAYS LOOKING DOWN, FEELING SO MUCH, ALL WITHIN HIMSELF, PAUSE FOR A WHILE THEN HE LOOKSK UP, SMILING SOFTLY AND WARMLY TO HER, AND THEN LOOKS BACK DOWN AGAIN, AFTER A WHILE NATALIE SPEAKS

N: How are you getting on here with your brother?

R: Ohl alright I spose

N: (LOOKING AROUND) It's a nice place

R: Yeah it is

N: Does anyone else live here too?

R: Yeah he's got a flat mate

N: Who's that?

R: A bloke called George Sullivan, he's a barman

N: What's he like?

R: Oh alright I spose

N: What does Simon do again?

R: Works in a bookshop

N: That's right

PAUSE

R: He's changed a fair bit, he's not how he used to be

N: Has he?, but you know you've probley changed a fair bit yourself as well

R: (AGREEING, BUT THE POINT DOESN'T MEAN TOO MUCH TO HIM, TRAILS OFF) Ohr yeah (PAUSE) Whereabouts are you staying?

N: At my cousins

R: Do they live very far away?

N: No, I just walked over, it only took about half an hour

R: Ohr you shouldn't have done that

N: No that's okay, I wanted to - I though I should come round and see you as soon as I got here

R: (QUIETLY) Ohll

N: I take it the other two are both out at the moment

R: Yeah

N: No wonder it was so quiet when I got here - I thought you'd at least have the telly on or something

R: No I was going to have an early night

N: Ohll were you asleep!

R: Yeah

N: Ohll I'm sorry

R: No that's okay

N: Oh dear

R: No don't worry, I'd only just got into bed, I was probley hardly asleep when you called

N: Ohll (GLANCES AT HER WATCH) it's getting late, I think I'd better get going Robbie, they wouldn't appreciate it if I cam home too late

R: No (PAUSE) I'll walk you home

N: No it's alright, I got here okay, I'll be able to get back alright

R: Are you sure, it's not very safe

N: No it's okay, I'll be right, you know that Robbie

PAUSE

R: Okay

THEY HUG THEN PART AFTER A WHILE

N: And besides, you know the way I walk, I'll be there in no time

R: (QUIETLY) Yeah

N: Now what if I come round here about nine tomorrow

R: Ohll I was going to go round to your.....

N: No it's alright, I'll come round here

R: Okay

N: Do you want to go back to bed now - I'll just turn off the light

R: (QUIETLY) Okay

SHE DOES SO, HE UNDRESSES BACK DOWN TO HIS UNDERPANTS AND HOPS BACK INTO HIS SLEEPING BAG, SHE CROSSES BACK TO HIM AND THEY KISS AND HUG FOR A WHILE, AND THEN PART, BUT STILL HOLD HANDS

N: I'll see you soon okay

R: Okay

SHE LETS GO, HE ROLLS OVER TO SLEEP, AND SHE EXITS VIA THE

UNREALISTIC POINT THAT SE WAS PREVIOUSLY ENTERING AND EXITING FROM. ROBERT IS HAPPY IN HIS SLEEP AND AFTER A WHILE MOVES AROUND A BIT AND WAKES UP, FOR THE FIRST FEW MOMENTS HE IS STILL HAPPY AND FEELS SOFT AND GOOD, BUT IT DAWNS ON HIM QUICKLY, HE COLLAPSES HIS FACE IN HIS HANDS AND THEN STANDS UP, HE LOOKS ABOUT THE ROOM A BIT TRYING TO IMAGINE SHE IS THERE, BUT HE KNOWS SHE'S NOT, HE SHUTS HIS EYES TIGHTLY, PULLS AT HIS HAIR AND GROANS LOUDLY, HOLDING IT ALL WITHIN, ONLY SHOWING A GLIMPSE OF THE REAL POWER, HE COLLAPSES BACK INTO HIS CHAIR, VACANT AND MOTIONLESS, FEELING ABSOLUTELY EMPTY, HIS EYES WATER AND SOME TEARS RUN DOWN HIS CHEEKS, HE WIPES THEM AND SNIFFLES, AND LEANS FORWARD WITH HIS HANDS BURIED IN HIS HAIR, LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN, AGAIN HARDLY MOVING, AFTER A WHILE THERE ARE SOME NOISES OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR, IT IS RATTLED A BIT, ROBERT IS TOO DEEP IN THOUGHT AND DOESN'T HEAR ANY OF THIS, EVENTUALLY THE DOOR IS OPENED AND GEORGE COMES IN, DRUNK. ROBERT TURNS HIS HEAD SLIGHTLY, AWARE THAT SOMEONE HAS COME IN, HE TURNS, HAS A LOOK, THEN TURNS BACK, SIGHING TO HIMSELF AND LOOKING DOWN AGAIN

G: (LOUDLY) Hello

HE STUMBLES DOWN TO THE COUCH AND COLLAPSES BACK INTO IT NEXT TO ROBERT, HE GROANS A BIT AND LOOKS AT ROBERT, ROBERT IS IN A DIFFERENT WORLD

G: What's the matter?

PAUSE

R: Nothing

ROBERT GETS UP, PUTS ON A PAIR OF SHORTS AND CROSSES TO THE WINDOW AND STANDS THERE, LOOKING OUT SILENTLY, LONG PAUSE

G: Is something getting you down, eh? (PAUSE - ROBERT SAYS NOTHING) Look I've just had the best time, you shoulda come round to the club, I knocked off early

PAUSE, STILL ROBERT SAYS NOTHING

G: What is it Robbie (PAUSE, THINKS) how'd it go at the studios?

PAUSE, ROBERT SAYS NOTHING

G: Not so well eh, look you don't want to.....

R: (CUTS IN, QUIETLY) No it was alright

G: Ohll, good (WATCHES ROBERT FOR A BIT, THEN So what's the matter then?

ROBERT SAYS NOTHING

G: You're not still thinking about that girl?, what's her name? - Natalie

ROBERT LOOKS DOWN

G: Ohll come on Robbie forget her, look I'll give you some good honest advice, don't worry about women, they're not worth it

PAUSE, EXPECTS ROBERT TO TURN OR SAY SOMETHING, HE DOESN'T

G: When I was your age I used to love women but they're not worth it, they'll just stuff you round so much you won't know whether you're coming or going. Look you've got a great career ahead of you - (SOMEWHAT SIMPLISTICALLY) just go and make your films, you don't need a woman (PAUSE, TO SEE IF IT HAS ALL SUNK IN) eh?, don't you reckon? - it's true, she'll only stuff it all up

LONG PAUSE

R: (QUIETLY) You don't understand George

G: What? - yes I do, look come and sit down, come on (ROBERT TURNS AROUND) come on

PAUSE FOR A BIT THEN ROBERT GOES AND SITS NEXT TO HIM

G: Now tell me about her, Natalie

PAUSE, ROBERT SAYS NOTHING, LOOKS DOWN THINKING

G: Who is she?

R: She's just a girl

G: So why's she getting you down?, what's she done that's so bad?

R: Nothing (LONG PAUSE) she's just a girl that I want to get to know - that's all, we're not going out or anything, we just sorta see each other around and say hello, that's all - I don't even know what she thinks of me

G: I'll tell you what she thinks of you

ROBERT TURNS TO GEORGE, HE IS ABOUT TO ASK WHAT, BUT THEN TURNS AWAY, HAVING CHANGED HIS MIND

G: Nothing (ROBERT LOOKS AT HIM, THEN TURNS AWAY AGAIN) she thinks nothing of you (PAUSE) And do you know how I know that? (PAUSE, ROBERT SAYS NOTHING, STILL NOT LOOKING) Because they're all the same

ROBERT TURNS HIS HEAD, LOOKS FARTHER AWAY AND SIGHS

R: No they're not

G: Oh yes they are

ROBERT SHAKES HIS HEAD QUIETLY TO HIMSELF, LOOKING DOWN

G: How old are you? - nineteen, so how many girls have you had - who was the first one you were ever with?

ROBERT SAYS NOTHING

G: Was it someone at school? - Ohll no that's right you went to an all boys school, so who was your first woman then?

ROBERT SAYS NOTHING, HE IS BEING HURT INSIDE BY GEORGE

G: Who was your first girlfriend? Come on you must have had someone

PAUSE

R: No (PAUSE) never really had anyone (PAUSE) I've gone out with some girls, and I've been close friends and things, but never really anyone, seriously, properly

G: Never?

ROBERT ISN'T LOOKING, JUST TURNS HIS HEAD FROM SIDE TO SIDE VERY SOFTLY TO SAY NO, LONG PAUSE, GEORGE IS JUST LOOKING AT HIM, SUMMING HIM UP IN HIS HEAD

G: So you don't know, do you?

ROBERT SAYS NOTHING, GEORGE BURPS AND GROANS A BIT WITH SOME GASTRIC REFLUX

G: Why, why do you think I've been saying these things to you?

ROBERT IS LOOKING AWAY, SHRUGS QUIETLY

G: Because I've made the same mistakes as you and I've lived and I've learnt and I don't want to see you make the same mistakes

PAUSE ROBERT SAYS NOTHING

G: (SLIGHTLY CONDASCENDING) Ohll Robbie, Robbie Robbie Robbie, you're a lovely boy, don't let things get you down

GEORGE PUTS HIS HAND AT THE BACK OF ROBERT'S NECK, ROBERT

STANDS UP AND CROSSES TO THE WINDOW QUITE ANNOYED, HE STANDS THERE LOOKING OUT IT AGAIN, LONG PAUSE

R: Of course I don't know her, I just feel something that's all (QUITELY) feel a lot

LONG PAUSE

G: It hurts doesn't it

PAUSE, ROBERT SAYS NOTHING

G: It doesn't have to be always pain, women don't understand, they don't see life like a man does (PAUSE) there is hope, there is understanding, there is love - it's just a matter of finding it and getting it (PAUSE) and you won't get it in a woman (PAUSE) love is love, that is all (PAUSE) it's alright Robert

LONG PAUSE, THEN GEORGE STANDS UP AND WALKS OVER TO ROBERT, HE PUTS HIS HANDS ON ROBERT'S SHOULDERS AND GIVES HIM A LONG HOT LOVE BIT ON THE NECK, ROBERT TURNS AROUND AND PUSHES HIM AWAY, BUT NOT AT ALL VIOLENTLY

R: (QUIETLY) No

G: It's funny you know, life, you get born and grow up and expect everything to work out fine - except it doesn't

THEY STAND FOR A LITTLE BIT MORE THEN G. EXITS DOWN THE HALLWAY TO BED, R. THEN SITS FOREWARD ON THE COUCH, WIPING HIS NECK A BIT MORE THEN HIS HAND ON HIS SHORTS, HE THEN HOLDS HIS FACE AND THEN HIS HAIR IN HIS HANDS, HE IS NOT IN TEARS BUT IT IS ALL THERE, AFTER A WHILE HE

LEARNS FORWARD, DOUBLED OVER, WITH HIS FACE BURIED IN HIS HANDS, LIGHTS FADE OUT

-- CURTAIN --

ACT II - SCENE 3

THE NEXT MORNING, ROBERT IS FINISHING PACKING HIS BAGS, HE THEN COLLAPSES INTO THE COUCH, SIGHING AS HE DOES, AND SITS THERE WITH HIS ARMS FOLDED, STARING INTENSELY AHEAD AT NOTHING, FULLY POSESSED BY THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS, AFTER A SHORT WHILE SIMON ENTERS

S: Ohr good morning

ROBERT SAYS NOTHING FOR A BIT, THEN TURNS HIS HEAD, ALMOST LOOKS OVER HIS SHOULDER TO SIMON

R: Hi

S: Are you alright?

R: Yeah

S: You just seem a bit quiet that's all, I tell you what I'm glad to be back - she's a dear old think but I can only take so much (CROSSES TO THE HALL) Is George awake?

R: Ahr dunno

SIMON EXITS DOWN THE HALL, R. SITS THERE ARMS FOLDED AS BEFORE, THINKING IF SIMON AND GEORGE ARE GOING TO BE TALKING, AFTER A WHILE SIMON COMES BACK OUT, STOPS IN THE HALL DOORWAY, PAUSE

S: He told me about last night, I'm sorry.

PAUSE, SIMON CROSSES TO ROBERT, SITS NEXT TO HIM

S: You've got to try and understand George, he's not like he seems, he's very caring and sensitive underneath - he was only trying to help

ROBERT LOOKS AWAY, SAYING NOTHING, HAVING IT TALKED ABOUT OPENLY HURTS, PAUSE

S: I'm sorry

PAUSE

R: (QUIETLY) Huhr, it's not your fault, crikey

PAUSE

S: I know, but I'm sorry; he said you were upset about something and he wanted to help

R: Huh I don't believe that

S: It's true Robert, that's the sort of person he is

R: Well he shouldn't have, I don't need it (HOLDING THE SPOT ON HIS NECK, LOOKING DOWN, SORRY FOR HIMSELF)

PAUSE

S: I was going to tell you about he and I, it just wasn't the right time (PAUSE) I should have (LONGER PAUSE) it's just the way I am Robert, you have to accept it

LONG PAUSE, ROBERT IS SAYING NOTHING, BUT HIS EXPRESSION IS SAYING 'NO'

S: Robert.....

R: I don't believe that

SIMON SIGHS AND LOOKS AWAY, THEN

S: I'm being honest with you

R: You're not being honest with yourself

S: (STANDS UP IN A HALF CONTROLLED FIT OF TEMPER) Ohll (EXITS TO THE KITCHEN)

ROBERT IS LOOKING DOWN STERNLY, THEN SIMON RE-ENTERS QUICKLY AND SITS NEXT TO HIM AGAIN

S: If I wasn't being honest with myself why would I be like this, why would I be what I am now?

R: (PAUSE) I dunno, you tell me

S: Ohll Robert!

R: (LOOKING AWAY) I always reckoned there's no such thing as a true homosexual - they only think they are (TURNS TO SIMON)

PAUSE

S: ?! (PAUSE) You've got no idea Robert, you don't know a thing about what you're talking about

R: You don't need to

S: Ohr whata load of rubbish (PAUSE) you think that I only think I'm gay

R: (PAUSE, THINKING, THEN QUIETLY) Yes

S: Can't you see why that's so stupid?

LONG PAUSE, ROBERT THINKING

R: No

S: (SHAKING HIS HEAD IN DISBELIEF) See you just don't know

SLIGHT PAUSE

R: But you don't need to know, you just have to be honest with yourself deep down in your heart, that's all (PAUSE) it's just a cover-up, an excuse, that's all it is, it's taking the easy way out

S: Robert I'm not even going to bother arguing with you

R: Yeah because you know I'm right and you don't want to admit it

S: No because you're too narrow-minded and you don't know what you're talking about

PAUSE, ROBERT THINKING, THEN

R: So that makes you right does it?

S: No, but it shows that you're not

R: Why? - prove it to me

S: Prove it to you?!, it doesn't work that way Robert, it's not maths and physics you know; it's human nature - it just is

PAUSE

R: And so does that make it right?

S: It does to me

R: Well it doesn't to me (PAUSE) I mean just because you can do something doesn't mean you should - you've got to have a better reason than that

S: Like what?

R: Like whether or not it's the right thing to do

S: What if your heart says it's the right think to do?

R: (PAUSE) Well (PAUSE) that makes no difference

S: Ohr come on

R: It doesn't, what if everyone did what they felt in their heart, anything could happen

S: But they don't, do they? I'm not hurting anyone, so what's the matter then?

PAUSE

R: It's the principle

S: But the principle doesn't matter, it's two different things - I'm talking about the real world (PAUSE, ROBERT DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY) Everything's so simple to you isn't it?

R: No it's not

S: Yes it is, you think if something's the right thing to do then you go and do it, as simple as that, that'd be fine if the world was nice and easy and you could always do the right thing as if it were nothing, but it's not, and you can't

R: (PAUSE) But you can

S: Robert you just don't see do you

PAUSE

R: You just have to be strong enough, that's all - strength and honesty

S: And who's ever strong enough? (PAUSE, ROBERT DOESN'T ANSWER) eh? (PAUSE) Are you?, I know I'm not; somethings just are Robert (PAUSE) wait until you're older and your mettle's put to the test and you ind out just how hard it is and just how far from perfect we all are

ROBERT IS THINKING OF LIFE AND HIS FEELINGS FOR NATALIE, HE DOES SO FOR QUITE A WHILE, AND THEN OF THIS, PAUSE AGAIN THEN

R: Well I won't be (STOPS HIMSELF, CALMS HIS TONE OF VOICE BACK DOWN) I won't be gay, that's for sure

S: (SLIGHTLY TEMPERED) Fine, do what you like, it's up to you

LONG PAUSE

R: What do you expect me to tell Mum and Dad?

PAUSE

S: Tell them whatever you like (PAUSE) they probley know by now anyway, it doesn't matter (PAUSE) it's up to them to come to terms with it, I'm not going to change or sacrifice myself just because they can't understand (LONG PAUSE) I'm not trying to hurt them you know

R: Mmm

LONG PAUSE

S: I know I should go and see them or something sometime

R: Yeah, they'd like that

S: (PAUSE, QUIETLY) Mmm (PAUSE) it's a stupid misunderstanding, it's not that they can't understand it's just that they won't, they're too set in their ways; they'll never approve, I know that, but you don't have to approve to understand (PAUSE) it's stupid, it's just opinions that's all it is Robert, what's right for them is right for them, and what's right for me is right for me, I don't believe anyone has the right to take away someone else's personal happiness or to force their own opinions on them and tell them how to live

ROBERT CAN SEE THE TRUTH AND THE FALSENESS IN WHAT SIMON IS SAYING, BUT DOESN'T WANT ARGUE, HE SITS THERE THINKING FOR A WHILE, THEN

R: They still care a lot for you, you know

SIMON LOOKS UP TO ROBERT AS IF THIS IS NEW NEWS, THEN LOOKS BACK DOWN, THINKING

S: (PAUSE, QUIETLY) I know (PAUSE) and I do for them, but it's never going to resolve (LOOKING UP AT ROBERT, HOLD FOR A SHORT WHILE, THEN BACK DOWN)

ROBERT SITS QUIETLY, THINKING, LONG PAUSE

S: I, sorry about everything, what happened and everything

R: (QUIETLY) It's alright (HE IS HOLDING THE SPOT ON HIS NECK LIKE A SORE WOUND, HE IS NOT CONSCIOUSLY AWARE THAT HE IS DOING SO)

LONG PAUSE

S: And so what about you? - where do you go from here? - back to college?

R: No, I've got another week of holidays yet (PAUSE) I've got a fair few assignments and things to keep me busy

S: Yeah (PAUSE) You didn't tell me how you got on yesterday at the film studios down at the coast

R: Ohr alright, but they're not interested, it was good though, they gave me a tour of the whole place which was really good

S: Yeah

R: But they're not after (WITH A SLIGHT SMILE) unsolicited scripts

S: No?, ohr, I'm sorry

R: (SHRUGS) It's alright

PAUSE FOR A BIT, ROBERT IS DISTANCED IN HIS THOUGHTS

S: I hope your stay was worth it then

R: Ohr it was - I mean there's only one way to learn isn't there

S: Yeah, are you going to re-write the script after some of the comments they gave you?

R: No - there's nothing wrong with the script

S: (SMILING) ohll, you don't think it'd be a good idea to?

R: No - it'll still be a film one day, if I make it that is; that's one thing I know, if you want something done in this world you have to do it yourself, no-one's going to do it for you

S: (AGREEING BUT NOT KNOWING) Yeah (PAUSE) You all packed up ready to go?

R: Yeah

S: What time will you get in there?

R: About two

S: Do you travel alright on buses?

R: Yeah, just put some music on on my walkman or read or something - maybe I might be sitting next to someone interesting

S: Yeah, I'm a shocking traveller, I hate it

R: I'm getting good at it now, that's all I every seem to be doing - in constant transit

S: (SMILES) Yeah

PAUSE FOR A BIT, THE MOMENT DIES

R: I'm looking forward to be going back home though

S: Why's that?

R: Ohr just get back to things - can't stay away for too long

S: No

R: It's good to have a home to go back to too, you never really realise it till you're gone for a while

S: No

PAUSE

R: I better get going soon - I want to get down there early

S: Yeah

R: (STANDS UP, COLLECTS HIS BAGS) Oh well, thanks very much for having me

S: That's okay, it's a pleasure, you're quite welcome to stay again whenever you like

R: Thanks, I will, sometime, when I've got another script that I want to get the routine round of rejections for, I will, sure

THEY SMILE

S: (PAUSE) Listen, SAY giddyay to Mum and Dad for me, I'll catch up with them sometime

R: (QUIETER, ACKNOWLEDGINGLY:) Yeah, okay

THEY SHAKE HANDS

R: See ya then

S: Take care

R: (WALKING TOWARDS THE DOOR, WITH A SMILE) Yeah ohr don't worry about me, I'm just passing through as per always

S: Yeah, you're keen to get back aren't you

R: Yeah, ohr there's someone I really want to see

S: (AGREEING BUT NOT KNOWING) Yeah

ROBERT IS ABOUT TO GO, THEN PAUSE, THINKING, THEN

R: You know what love is? - Love is a mystery, a beautiful mystery

PAUSE FOR A BIT, ROBERT IS LOOKING AT HIM, SMILING OF HIS OWN WORLD, SIMON IS THINKING INSIDE WITH A PERCEPTIVE BUT ALMOST EXPRESSIONLESS EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE

R: (SMILING, HALF LAUGHS) Hmm, see ya

HE EXITS

S: Bye

- CURTAIN -