

**A Play about a life by Steve Pearce:**

# **Strange Days**



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# Strange Days

## Characters (in approximate order of appearance):

<b>Kalon1</b>	}	<b>Kalon* Grace</b>
<b>Kalon2</b>		
<b>Kalon3</b>		
<b>Mother</b>		<b>Catherine Grace: Kalon's Mother</b>
<b>Father</b>		<b>Kevin Grace: Kalon's Father</b>
<b>Brother</b>		<b>Karl Grace: Kalon's Brother</b>
<b>Sister</b>		<b>Coral Grace: Kalon's Sister</b>
<b>Tina</b>		<b>Kalon's best friend</b>
<b>Miss</b>		<b>Kalon's Maths teacher</b>
<b>Jason</b>		<b>Tina's new boyfriend</b>
<b>Lisa</b>	}	<b>Kalon's classmates</b>
<b>Mark</b>		
<b>Jill</b>		
<b>Peter</b>		
<b>Heather</b>		
<b>William</b>		
<b>Timothy</b>		
<b>Denise</b>	}	<b>Two thugs</b>
<b>Tristan</b>		
<b>Crispin</b>		<b>A girl at a nightclub: Kalon's love interest</b>
<b>Mabel</b>		<b>Sister's friend: Kalon's love disinterest</b>
<b>Barbara</b>		<b>Mabel's boyfriend</b>
<b>Mike</b>		<b>A teacher</b>
<b>Sir</b>		<b>A messenger</b>
<b>Runner</b>		<b>An educational psychologist</b>
<b>Ed Psych</b>		<b>Mother's Mother</b>
<b>Grandma</b>		<b>Mother's Father</b>
<b>Grandpa</b>		<b>A market researcher</b>
<b>Surveyor</b>		<b>A sales-person</b>
<b>Assistant</b>		<b>A TV voice-over artist</b>
<b>Announcer</b>		<b>A game-show host</b>
<b>Trevor</b>	}	<b>The Keane family: this week's contestants</b>
<b>Tom</b>		
<b>Carol</b>		
<b>Sam</b>		
<b>Lesley</b>	}	<b>Last week's contestants</b>
<b>Mr Drake</b>		
<b>Mrs Drake</b>		<b>A driving test examiner</b>
<b>Examiner</b>		<b>PA to Mr Foxcroft</b>
<b>Drusilla</b>		<b>Business manager of BrainSpace Ltd</b>
<b>Foxcroft</b>		

\* I've always pronounced this *Kay-lon*, (stressing the first syllable), but I don't know if that's right!

## **Strange Days**

### **About the play**

Strange Days was originally performed at All Hallows Catholic High School, Penwortham, Preston on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> January, 1999:

**Sarah Birkett**

**Kalon  
Adrian Carroll**

**Jenny Delaney**

### **Cast**

**Anthony Atkinson  
Katie Bleasdale  
Patrick Crookes  
Hannah Grundy  
Caroline Hook  
Matthew Johnston  
Christine Petrie  
Danielle Saul**

**Claire Baker  
Simon Carroll  
Louise Cross  
Vivienne Haley  
Hannah Houston  
Bryony Jones  
Louise Quinn  
Liam Scales  
Jessica Woof**

**Helen Barton  
Ruth Cronin  
Hannah Gorman  
Nick Holmes  
Laura Hunt  
Danielle Mason  
Natalie Robinson  
Jodie Wallace**

### **Crew**

**Robert Bates      Joseph Dewhurst  
Sam Dewhurst      Lauren Hodgson  
Written, Produced and Directed by  
Steve Pearce**

The “one act remix” of the play then went on to be a winning entry in the One Act Theatre Festival at the Playhouse Theatre, Preston.

### **About the Author**

Steve Pearce is a frustrated playwright currently living in Preston, Lancashire, and working as a freelance IT consultant and supply teacher. He has also worked as a Scientific Officer for the Defence Research Agency (now DERA), and most recently as a full time Physics Teacher at All Hallows, Penwortham. He was born in Chatham, Kent in 1971, and educated at Swingate and Spinnens Acre, then Chatham Grammar School for Boys, Lancaster University and St. Martin’s College, Lancaster. These institutions are mentioned in the vain hope that they might want to buy several copies of this script out of some misplaced sense of obligation.

When not working or writing or wired to a computer he is usually to be found at the Preston Playhouse, performing with one or other of the local amateur societies.

It is his intention to make resources available for the production of this play at [www.banjax.demon.co.uk/strangedays](http://www.banjax.demon.co.uk/strangedays). Hopefully such things as publicity materials, royalty-free sound effects files and the like will be freely downloadable.

### **With thanks to:**

- the original cast, crew and parents thereof, plus all the other members of the All Hallows community who helped, watched, gave advice or covered for me in one way or another during the production;
- Janet Farrer for her kind words;
- Nicholas Tomlinson and John Garlington for their suggestions and corrections;
- Antonia Rolph for the Gladstone gag and all those people whose ideas were the precursors of Strange Days, particularly Jon Rolph, Steve Jackson and Paul Magrs;
- Justine Niblock for naming her daughter “Kalon Grace”;
- Tony Breeze of the Playwrights Publishing Company for his patience in waiting for this script;
- my parents, without whom I wouldn’t have been possible;
- GOD, without whom nothing would be possible;
- finally, to my partner Jacqueline for her love and support whilst trying to put this version of the script together.

Also, of course to you for reading, performing or watching. I hope you enjoy my work.



# Strange Days

A play about a life

By Steve Pearce

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## Act I

### Scene One: Kalon awakes

*KALON1, KALON2 and KALON3 lie on the stage such that the head of one rests on the ankles of another, forming an equilateral triangle (neglecting any height difference between the actors, of course). Each of them wears an identical dressing gown belted tight around the waist. Their shoes and socks are placed at the front of the stage. In between them in the centre of the triangle lies THE SCRIPT, dormant.*

**F/X** Introductory music crossfades to the sound of an alarm-clock ticking loudly.

*The remainder of THE CAST sit on chairs in a semicircle, facing outwards away from the audience. There are 3 empty chairs in addition.*

**F/X** The alarm clock rings loudly.

*Simultaneously, KALON1, KALON2 and KALON3 strike out at the unseen alarm clock, and sit upright. They stretch in unison, mime throwing back the covers and dismount their bed. Standing, they move forward and arrange themselves such that KALON1 faces left, KALON2 faces forward and KALON3 faces right. Together they mime opening a bathroom cabinet, brushing teeth and washing.*

**F/X** Brushing teeth, running water.

*KALON then inspects his face in the mirror and discovers an enormous zit has erupted overnight. He squeezes it, wipes the mirror with his hand and his hand on his dressing gown.*

*MOTHER stands.*

**MOTHER** (Shouting) Kalon! Kalon Grace! Are you up yet?

*KALON1 and KALON3 look at KALON2, who shrugs then picks up the script from the floor.*

**KALON2** (Reading from THE SCRIPT) Yes, Mum!

*KALON2 lowers the script.*

**L/X** Spotlight on KALON

**KALON2** (To the Audience) Hello. My name is Kalon.

**KALON3** (To the Audience) Kalon Grace.

**KALON1** (To the Audience) Pleased to meet you all.

**KALON2** (To the Audience) Welcome to my life. (Looking at KALON1 and KALON3, who make supportive gestures) Now, you'll probably be wondering about this (holding up THE SCRIPT). Well, it's my script, see. It tells me what to say.

**L/X** General cover

**MOTHER** (Shouting) Hurry up in that bathroom! Are you dressed yet?

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- 1 **KALON1**            *(Grabbing THE SCRIPT, and reading from it)* Just a sec!
- 2        *Simultaneously, KALON1, KALON2 and KALON3 remove their dressing gowns to reveal they are*  
3 *indeed almost fully (and identically) dressed beneath. Only shoes and socks are missing, which they*  
4                                *put on from the front of the stage.*
- 5 **MOTHER**            *(Shouting)* Come on! Your breakfast's ready!
- 6        **MOTHER, FATHER, SISTER and BROTHER** enter, bringing their chairs and arranging them as if  
7 *around a table. KALON3 brings on a chair and moves to join the rest of the family, but KALON1 sits*  
8 *on the chair first. THE FAMILY mime eating during the conversation, while FATHER reads the*  
9                                *newspaper he has brought with him.*
- 10 **MOTHER**            Do you like the tea, dear?
- 11 **FATHER**             Pardon?
- 12 **MOTHER**            The tea. Do you like the tea?
- 13 **FATHER**             Super. *(He continues to read the paper)*
- 14 **MOTHER**            They're new.
- 15                                *A pause*
- 16 **FATHER**             What are?
- 17 **MOTHER**            The tea-bags. They're new.
- 18 **FATHER**             Oh, good.
- 19 **MOTHER**            For years we had to put up with *square* teabags. Then *round* ones came along, and  
20 we wondered how we ever made do with square ones. Then they made pyramid  
21 shaped ones and just last week—guess what? Teabags in the shape of former Prime  
22 Ministers. Isn't that amazing?
- 23 **FATHER**             Incredible.
- 24 **MOTHER**            Apparently, it's been scientifically proven that a tea bag in the shape of Gladstone's  
25 profile makes the perfect cuppa.
- 26 **FATHER**            *(Lowering his paper for maximum comic impact)* That'd be a Gladstone bag, I  
27 suppose?
- 28                                *Utter, stony silence. FATHER slowly returns to his paper.*
- 29 **BROTHER**            Dad?
- 30 **FATHER**            *(Putting down his paper resigned to the fact he's not going to read it in peace)*  
31 Yes?
- 32 **BROTHER**            Can I borrow the car tonight?
- 33 **FATHER**             No.
- 34 **BROTHER**            Oh—why not?
- 35 **FATHER**             You're not borrowing the car until you tell me what happened to the last one.
- 36 **BROTHER**            I told you. *(Shiftily)* I had an accident.
- 37 **FATHER**             That doesn't explain why all the wheels were missing...



- 1 **BROTHER** They were...
- 2 **FATHER** ...or how it ended up at the bottom of the river...
- 3 **BROTHER** I was...
- 4 **FATHER** ...or why I keep getting phone calls from the coastguard asking for their lifeboat  
5 back. (*Firmly*) No, Karl, you may *not* borrow the car. (*He returns to his paper*)
- 6 **BROTHER** (*Tutting*) Fine. I'll get a taxi, then.
- 7 **SISTER** Have you got any plans for this evening, Kalon?
- 8 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Not really. Why?
- 9 **SISTER** It's just I'm having a few of my friends round tonight.
- 10 *There is a look of panic on the faces of KALON. KALON1 looks at the other two, who hold onto each*  
11 *other for support. KALON1 tentatively turns the page, and lets it drop to the floor.*
- 12

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- 1 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, relieved*) I'm going out.
- 2 **SISTER** That's a shame. They were *so* looking forward to meeting you again. Especially  
3 Barbara.
- 4 *KALON winces at the memory.*
- 5 **MOTHER** Where are you going, Kalon?
- 6 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I thought I might take a look at that new club in town.
- 7 **SISTER** I shouldn't bother. Barbara went there and said she hated it. Said she'd never go  
8 back.
- 9 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Oh, good.
- 10 **MOTHER** Just make sure you're back by twelve, young man. It might be Friday, but you've  
11 got schoolwork to do, haven't you?
- 12 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Yes, Mum.
- 13 **MOTHER** Anyway, must be getting along now. Coral, you help your Dad to wash up. Kalon,  
14 don't be late for school. And Karl—just find something *useful* to do, will you love?  
15 (*To FATHER*) Oh, and don't forget to get some toilet paper when you go shopping,  
16 dear, we're out again. Make sure it's the "Extra Fluffy Kitten Soft". Can't stand  
17 that cheap stuff you keep buying—it's like sandpaper. Anyway, mind how you go,  
18 loves. See you tonight.
- 19 *There is general commotion as THE FAMILY say goodbye to MOTHER, who leaves giving FATHER a*  
20 *peck on the cheek as she does so. He puts down his paper.*
- 21 **FATHER** Come on, you lot. There's work to be done. Kalon, shouldn't you be getting ready  
22 for school?
- 23 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Yes, Dad.
- 24 **FATHER** Off you go, then.
- 25 *THE FAMILY clear the chairs, then return to their places.*

## Scene Two: School

- 26
- 27 *TINA enters, and approaches KALON. KALON3 takes the script, and steps forward.*
- 28 **L/X** Spotlight on **KALON**
- 29 **KALON3** (*To the Audience, indicating TINA*) This is Tina. She's my best friend. She used to  
30 live next door to me in Wolsey Street before she moved across the other side of  
31 town. Her Dad got another job. (*Pause*) My Dad's job, as it happened.
- 32 **L/X** General cover
- 33 *Other PUPILS begin filtering on from their places and stand in groups, chatting silently amongst*  
34 *themselves.*
- 35 **TINA** Hiya!
- 36 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Hiya, Tina. Y' OK?
- 37 **TINA** Yeah. You done that Maths homework yet?

- 1 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Yeah. You?
- 2 **TINA** No—didn't get a chance last night. Too busy watching telley. Can I borrow yours?
- 3 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I suppose. Make sure you change some of the answers,  
4 though. What were you watching?
- 5 **TINA** When?
- 6 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Last night. On TV.
- 7 **TINA** Oh, some programme about why standards in arithmetic are slipping. Wasn't really  
8 paying much attention.
- 9 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) You doing anything tonight?
- 10 **TINA** Nothing much. Why?
- 11 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Well, I was thinking about checking out that new place  
12 in town. Fancy coming along?
- 13 **TINA** Might do. I'll see what my Jason's up to.
- 14 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Jason?
- 15 **TINA** My new boyfriend. Didn't I tell you—met him last week. He's just started here. I'll  
16 introduce you.
- 17 **F/X** The School bell rings.
- 18 *THE CLASS, including KALON and TINA move to re-arrange their seats into rows. KALON3 and TINA*  
19 *sit near the front. KALON1 and KALON2 stand to one side looking on as THE CLASS sit, chatting idly.*
- 20 *MISS enters, and addresses THE CLASS.*
- 21 **MISS** Good morning, class.
- 22 **THE CLASS** (*Chanting blandly in unison*) Good morning, Mrs... (*They trail off so that the name*  
23 *is indistinguishable*)
- 24 **MISS** I notice that we have a new face with us this morning (*Indicating JASON*). Perhaps  
25 you'd like to introduce yourself to the rest of the class.
- 26 *JASON stands self-consciously.*
- 27 **TINA** (*Whispering to KALON*) That's him.
- 28 **KALON3** (*Whispering from THE SCRIPT*) I guessed.
- 29 **JASON** (*Nervously*) Er, hello. (*Long uncomfortable pause*) My name's Jason. (*He sits*)
- 30 **MISS** Thank you, Jason. Most informative. Now, I would like to begin by having a look  
31 at some of your homework. If you would be so good as to get out your books...
- 32 *THE CLASS mime rummaging in their bags, and setting books out on the desk. MISS wanders around*  
33 *looking over shoulders, ticking or crossing with red pen, as appropriate.*
- 34 **TINA** (*In a hoarse whisper, to JASON*) Jason! (*She flicks her head, calling him over*)
- 35 *JASON moves across to TINA and KALON. The three of them speak in whispers.*
- 36 **TINA** Jason. This is Kalon Grace. Kalon, this is Jason...
- 37 **JASON** Keats. Jason Keats.

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- 1 *JASON and KALON shake hands.*
- 2 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Nice to meet you. I've heard so much about you. Your  
3 name... everything.
- 4 *JASON is unsure what to make of KALON's script, and moves away, crouching besides TINA.*
- 5 **JASON** What's going on with the... (*he indicates THE SCRIPT*)
- 6 **TINA** Best not to ask.
- 7 *JASON nods slowly, smiling at KALON who is watching the conversation.*
- 8 **JASON** Is he dangerous?
- 9 **TINA** Oh, no.
- 10 **JASON** That's good.
- 11 *JASON returns to his seat as MISS returns to the front.*
- 12 **MISS** It seems that your homework is in order. I shall collect them at the end of the  
13 lesson. Today I wish to further our studies of Geometry by looking at tessellation.  
14 Can anyone tell me the meaning of the word 'Tessellation'?
- 15 *MISS mimes writing the word 'Tessellation' on the board.*
- 16 **F/X** Chalk on a blackboard.
- 17 *THE CLASS sink below their desks. KALON3 looks round at KALON1 and KALON2, who simply shrug.*
- 18 **MISS** Kalon?
- 19 *KALON3 looks frantically at KALON1 and KALON2, who mouth "Look in the script"*
- 20 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) To cover a plane surface entirely with a repeating or  
21 random pattern of one or more shapes?
- 22 **MISS** Excellent. Well done, Kalon.
- 23 *MISS turns to the board, and mimes writing "The process of covering a plane surface entirely with a*  
24 *repeating or random pattern of one or more shapes", whilst...*
- 25 **F/X** Chalk on a blackboard.
- 26 **TINA** Can I borrow that homework?
- 27 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Sure. Here you go.
- 28 *KALON passes his homework to TINA, who begins copying it studiously.*
- 29 *LISA puts her hand up.*
- 30 **MISS** (*Turning from the blackboard, and spotting LISA's hand*) Lisa?
- 31 **LISA** Tiling? You're making us learn how to fit tiles together? That's so boring!
- 32 **MISS** Yes, well. It can't all be algebra and trigonometry, you know.
- 33 **LISA** I don't see why we've got to learn maths anyway.
- 34 **MARK** So we can grow up into maths teachers!
- 35 *THE CLASS laugh at this.*
- 36 **MISS** Don't be ridiculous, Mark. There're lots of uses for tessellation.

- 1 **MARK** Like what? Name three.
- 2 **MISS** Well, let's see now. There's crazy paving and... jigsaw puzzles and... just get on  
3 with your work.
- 4 **JILL** Why don't we learn *useful* things in maths?
- 5 **MISS** (*Arms folded*) Such as?
- 6 **JILL** Mortgage repayments.
- 7 **PETER** Stock returns.
- 8 **HEATHER** Compound interest.
- 9 **WILLIAM** Share price indices.
- 10 **TIMOTHY** Tax return forms.
- 11 **DENISE** Splitting restaurant bills.
- 12 *Pause.*
- 13 **MISS** Just get on, all of you! (*Spotting what TINA is up to*) Tina, let me have a look at  
14 your homework, please.
- 15 **TINA** (*Trying to pass KALON's book back*) What? Sorry?
- 16 **MISS** Let me see your homework!
- 17 *MISS snatches TINA's book from the desk and inspects it closely. The rest of THE CLASS get on with*  
18 *their work trying hard to ignore what is going on. KALON, however, panics.*
- 19 **MISS** Am I to presume that you have been copying homework, Tina?
- 20 **TINA** Yes, Miss.
- 21 *Meanwhile, KALON opens his book and starts working.*
- 22 **MISS** Kalon, may I see your book also?
- 23 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Why, Miss?
- 24 **MISS** To check Tina's bibliography. Your book, please.
- 25 *KALON hands the book to MISS, who briefly compares the two then pronounces her judgement:*
- 26 **MISS** Detention. Monday. Both of you.
- 27 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, standing*) That's not fair! I didn't do anything wrong!
- 28 **MISS** You were complicit in an act of deception.
- 29 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, still standing*) I was trying to help a friend in their hour  
30 of need, and if that is a crime then punish me how ever you see fit. Like George  
31 Washington, I cannot tell a lie.
- 32 *KALON1 and KALON2 join KALON3 in order to give moral support. KALON3 lowers the script and*  
33 *addresses the audience.*
- 34 **L/X** Spotlight on **KALON**
- 35 **KALON3** (*To the Audience*) I could never understand that one. I was told it in an assembly  
36 when I was seven. Apparently, young George Washington was given an *axe* for his

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1 birthday and, later that night, the cherry tree in the back garden *mysteriously* fell  
2 down. The next day Mr Washington asked George the frighteningly perceptive  
3 question “did you cut down the cherry tree?” I don’t think even Bill Clinton’s\*  
4 lawyers could’ve got him out of that one.

5 Wasn’t it a bit irresponsible buying a kid an axe in the first place? Most dangerous  
6 thing my Mum and Dad ever got me was a pencil sharpener. The moral of the story,  
7 from what I remember, was that George Washington didn’t get belted for cutting  
8 down the tree. I think his father decided to bury the hatchet.

9 **L/X** General cover

10 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, still standing*) I did let Tina copy my homework.

11 **MISS** Your honesty is most commendable, Kalon. (*Pause*) Detention. Monday. Both of  
12 you.

13 *THE CLASS clear away the chairs, and return to their places.*

### 14 **Scene Three: Nightclub nightmare**

15 **F/X** A repetitive dull thumping in the background (generated by filtering out any  
16 frequencies above around 500Hz from a modern dance track) can be heard in the  
17 background. This sound fades down as the scene progresses.

18 *The bouncers, TRISTAN and CRISPIN, stand marking the entrance to the nightclub. These two look as  
19 if they would have achieved first-class honours from “Reggie & Ronnie’s School of Thuggery”, if  
20 they hadn’t been refused admission on the grounds they might bring the place into ill repute. THE  
21 RAVERS gradually queue up in front of them, and are admitted into the bowels of the seedy nightspot.  
22 KALON, TINA and JASON are a few back in the line. KALON2 has THE SCRIPT.*

23 **TRISTAN** (*Looking TINA and JASON up and down momentarily*) In y’ go. ‘Ave a nice  
24 evening.

25 *TINA, JASON and KALON move to go inside, but CRISPIN grabs KALON2 by the scruff of the neck.*

26 **CRISPIN** ’Ere, where’d ya think you’re going, sonny?

27 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) In. With my friends.

28 **CRISPIN** Aren’t you a bit young, sonny?

29 **TRISTAN** ’E looks a bit young. How’s ’e look to you, Crispin?

30 **CRISPIN** ’E looks a bit young, Tristan. I don’t think we should let ’im in.

31 **TRISTAN** We shouldn’t let ’im in. It’d be askin’ f’ trouble.

32 **CRISPIN** Askin’ f’ trouble.

33 *KALON1 and KALON3 begin to back away.*

34 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I’m not going to make trouble. Honest. And I am old  
35 enough.

36 **TRISTAN** ’E says ’e’s old enough, Crispin. How old d’ya reckon ’e is, then?

37 **CRISPIN** Why don’t ya ask ’im, Tristan.

---

\* Or another, more topical renowned scoundrel.

- 1 **TRISTAN** I'll ask 'im, Crispin.
- 2 **CRISPIN** Ask 'im then, Tristan.
- 3 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, exasperated*) I'm over eighteen!
- 4 **TRISTAN** 'E says 'e's over eighteen.
- 5 **CRISPIN** Over eighteen?
- 6 **TRISTAN** Over eighteen.
- 7 **TRISTAN&CRISPIN** (*Together, after an immaculately timed pause*) Got any ID?
- 8 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Yes, I've got my school—I mean *student* bus-pass—I
- 9 mean *rail-card*. (*Pause*) No. No ID.
- 10 **TRISTAN** No ID, 'e says.
- 11 **CRISPIN** No ID.
- 12 **TRISTAN&CRISPIN** (*Together, after an immaculately timed pause*) Can't let you in then, son.
- 13 **CRISPIN**, who still has **KALON2** by the scruff of the neck, is about to cast him aside when **KALON3**
- 14 grabs **THE SCRIPT**. **CRISPIN** lets go and focuses his attention on **KALON3** instead.
- 15 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Can't I prove to you that I'm over eighteen?
- 16 **TRISTAN** Prove you're over eighteen?
- 17 **CRISPIN** Prove he's...
- 18 **KALON3** (*Interrupting from THE SCRIPT*) Yeah. You ask me some questions and I prove that
- 19 I'm over eighteen.
- 20 **THE BOUNCERS** look at each other, and shrug.
- 21 **TRISTAN** All right, then. Which of the followin' are you legally entitled to do on reachin' the
- 22 age of eighteen: a) drive a lorry of over three-and-a-half metric tonnes; b) consume
- 23 alcohol in a public place or; c) kill a member of the Royal Family.
- 24 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) b): consume alcohol in a public place. You can't drive
- 25 a lorry over three-and-a-half metric tonnes until the age of twenty-one.
- 26 **CRISPIN** Unless...
- 27 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) ...unless you have a trainee LGV licence, and you
- 28 can't kill a member of the Royal Family ever.
- 29 **TRISTAN** Except...
- 30 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) ...except in self defence.
- 31 *Pause*
- 32 **TRISTAN&CRISPIN** (*Together*) In y' go. 'Ave a nice evening.
- 33 **TINA, JASON** and the other **RAVERS** arrange themselves in a semicircle just inside of their chairs as...
- 34 **F/X** Participation tune
- 35 ...begins. **THE RAVERS** proceed to perform the puerile dance in perfect unison. Meanwhile, **KALON1**,
- 36 **KALON2** and **KALON3** feebly attempt to emulate their smooth moves CS, and do so badly (but still in

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- 1 *unison, and synchronised with each other). Frustrated, they give up and move away as the semicircle*  
2 *behind them also disbands. As KALON moves L, he is joined by a girl he has not spotted previously.*
- 3 **F/X** Participation tune crossfades into (quieter) background dance music.
- 4 **BARBARA** (*Schmoosing up to KALON3 and lying*) Hello, Kalon. Didn't expect to see you here.  
5 *The effect on KALON is immediate. KALON3 passes the script to KALON2, and then cowers behind*  
6 *KALON1. KALON2 passes the script to KALON1, and then cowers behind KALON3, behind KALON1.*  
7 *KALON1 has no alternative.*
- 8 **KALON1** (*Reading in desperation from THE SCRIPT*) Hello, Barbara. I hoped—I mean—I  
9 didn't expect to see you here, either.
- 10 **BARBARA** (*Trying to put an arm around him*) Are you here on your own, then?
- 11 **KALON1** (*Trying to change the subject by reading from THE SCRIPT*) Coral said you didn't  
12 like it here.
- 13 **BARBARA** (*Trying to play with his hair seductively*) Are you here alone, then?
- 14 **KALON1** (*Urgently reading from THE SCRIPT*) What? No. I'm here with my friend—  
15 girlfriend. And her—friend.
- 16 **BARBARA** (*Pulling away slightly and trying not to sound disappointed*) Oh? Where is she?
- 17 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, looking around*) She's over there. (*Shouting from THE*  
18 *SCRIPT*) Tina! Tina!
- 19 *TINA, who is dancing with JASON, looks round as KALON beckons her over frantically. The two of*  
20 *them, hand in hand, leave their revels and move L towards KALON and BARBARA.*
- 21 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, and putting an arm around TINA's waist*) Tina, this is  
22 Barbara. My sister's friend. (*Reading with emphasis*) *The one I told you about.* You  
23 remember.
- 24 **TINA** (*With a slow nod, releasing JASON's hand*) Oh, yes. I've heard a lot about you.  
25 (*Slight pause*) Come over here, Kalon. There's—something happening...
- 26 *KALON and TINA move to CS, with JASON in tow.*
- 27 **JASON** What was all that about?
- 28 **TINA** Just saving a friend's bacon, that's all.
- 29 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Cheers, Tina. I think that makes us even, don't you?
- 30 **TINA** Fancy a drink, Kalon?
- 31 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Please. Lemonade.
- 32 **TINA** Lemonade? You sure?
- 33 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Alcoholic lemonade, then.
- 34 **TINA** You sure? They've got alcoholic cream soda, alcoholic cola, alcoholic milk shakes.  
35 I heard they started selling alcoholic Lucozade, but stopped when athletes started  
36 running into each other and stealing traffic cones.
- 37 **KALON1** (*Reading disinterestedly from THE SCRIPT*) Really?



1 **TINA** Oh, yes. They sell alcohol free beers too, which is kind of weird. I suppose if you  
2 mix alcohol-free lager with alcoholic lemonade, you'd get an ordinary shandy.

3 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, attention focussed on someone else*) Lemonade would  
4 be fine, thanks. Straight.

5 **TINA** (*To JASON*) Get the drinks in for us would you Jason? There's a hon. Mine's a  
6 Pernod and Bailey's.

7 *JASON leaves to get the drinks. KALON is eyeing MABEL from across the floor.*

8 **TINA** (*To KALON*) Lovely lad. Thick as a plank, of course...

9 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, pointing to MABEL*) Hmm. Who's that?

10 **TINA** Who?

11 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) The girl over there. Not seen her before.

12 **TINA** That's probably because you've never been here before, Kalon. This is a nightclub.  
13 The people in here don't exist anywhere else.

14 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Wha' d' y' mean?

15 **TINA** Well, night-clubs are full of "how y' doin' friends".

16 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) "How y' doin' friends"?

17 **TINA** Yeah. People you see every week and just go up to, saying "how y' doin'". That's  
18 as far as it goes. And you never see them outside.

19 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, lecherously*) I'd like to see her outside!

20 **TINA** Why don't you introduce yourself?

21 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, nervously*) Well...

22 **TINA** Come on, what's the worst she could possibly say?

23 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) "Get lost you ugly creep"?

24 **TINA** (*After a moment's consideration*) I admit, that'd be pretty bad. But it's not very  
25 likely. People are afraid of being impolite—even to ugly creeps.

26 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Well...

27 *KALON2 has grown impatient and, grabbing THE SCRIPT from KALON1 in passing, struts right up to*  
28 *MABEL.*

29 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Hello, my name's Kalon. Who're you?

30 **MABEL** (*Somewhat taken aback*) Er—hi. I—I'm Mabel. Mabel Nightingale.

31 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Mabel?

32 **MABEL** That's what most people say. I was named after the family cat that died just before I  
33 was born.

34 *Embarrassed pause.*

35 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, rather weakly*) That's...nice. So, erm—do you come  
36 here often?

37 **MABEL** No. It's my first time here.

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- 1 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Mine too...
- 2 *Another embarrassed pause.*
- 3 **MABEL** What's that (*indicating THE SCRIPT*)?
- 4 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) It's my script. It tells me what to say.
- 5 **MABEL** What do you mean?
- 6 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Everything I say comes from this script. I just read  
7 from it. (*Shrugs*) It tells me what to say.
- 8 **MABEL** (*Pause*) So you're telling me that you just read off whatever it says?
- 9 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) That's right.
- 10 **MABEL** And it always fits whatever anyone else has said.
- 11 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Oh, their lines are down here too, of course. Otherwise  
12 it'd just be silly.
- 13 **MABEL** Of course. So what am I going to say next, then?
- 14 *MIKE, MABEL's over-protective boyfriend has arrived behind KALON and looks unimpressed.*
- 15 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) "I love you."
- 16 **MABEL** (*Amazed*) "I love you"?
- 17 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) See what I mean?
- 18 *MIKE spins KALON around by the shoulder.*
- 19 **MIKE** What's your game, mate?
- 20 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I was just talking to Mabel, here.
- 21 **MIKE** Oh, really? Well, I don't *want* you talking to Mabel here. Or anywhere else.  
22 Understand?
- 23 **KALON2** (*Drawing himself up to full height, and reading from THE SCRIPT*) You know, I'm  
24 not sure that I do.
- 25 *KALON1 and KALON3 react with horror.*
- 26 **MIKE** Well, perhaps I'd better explain it to you, then.
- 27 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Perhaps you better had.
- 28 **MIKE** I'm warning you. You're asking for a thumping.
- 29 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, sarcastically*) Oh, please don't thump me!
- 30 *MIKE grabs KALON2 by both shoulders, as KALON3 snatches the script from KALON2, as...*
- 31 **L/X** Spotlight on **KALON**
- 32 **F/X** Background music halts abruptly
- 33 **KALON3** (*To KALON2*) What the hell are you doing? Are you trying to get me *killed*!
- 34 **KALON2** (*To KALON3*) What are you talking about?
- 35 **KALON3** (*To KALON2*) This bloke is *obviously* her boyfriend, and is *obviously* a psycho.

1 **KALON2** (To **KALON3**) You're always holding me back.

2 **KALON3** (To **KALON2**) No. You're always getting me into idiotic situations like this one.  
3 Now get out of the way!

4 ***KALON3** drags **KALON2** aside, and drops to his knees in front of **MIKE**.*

5 **L/X** General cover

6 **F/X** Background music re-starts abruptly

7 **KALON3** (Pleading from *THE SCRIPT*) Oh, please don't thump me!

8 **MIKE** You wanna make something of it?

9 **KALON3** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) No, not me. You just tell me what to do and I'll do it.

10 **MIKE** Yeah, well. Just leave the girl alone, right? She's not interested.

11 **KALON3** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Anything you say, mate. Happy to oblige.

12 *With a vicious point in **KALON3**'s face, **MIKE** exits with **MABEL** as **KALON3** stands and brushes himself*  
13 *off. **KALON2** looks at him with disgust, and **KALON1** shakes his head. **TINA** approaches.*

14 **TINA** Tell me this much, Kalon. There's this one thing I don't get. If that script of yours  
15 tells you what to say, and everything that's going to happen to you, why don't you  
16 just take a peek and find out what you're letting yourself in for, eh? I mean, perhaps  
17 it might stop you making an idiot of yourself every once in a while.

18 *Exeunt **TINA** and **JASON**. **BARBARA** approaches from where she's been standing quietly, watching.*

19 **BARBARA** (Trying to put a consoling arm around him) I think you did the right thing, Kalon.  
20 It takes courage to do what you did.

21 **KALON3** (After a pause, reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Oh get stuffed, Barbara.

22 **F/X** Cut background music

23 ***THE RAVERS** return to their places*

## Scene Four: Detention

24 ***TINA** and **KALON3** arrange their 2 chairs facing forwards CS, a little way apart. They begin to mime*  
26 *writing studiously as **SIR** paces backwards and forwards.*

27 *Pause.*

28 ***SIR** looks at his watch, then resumes his pacing.*

29 *Pause.*

30 ***SIR** looks at his watch, then resumes his pacing.*

31 *Pause.*

32 ***TINA** coughs. **SIR** halts mid pace and glares at her, then resumes his pacing as she continues with*  
33 *her work.*

34 *Pause.*

35 **SIR** Remind me why you are both here again? (Without waiting for a response) Ah, yes.  
36 Plagiarism. The act of passing off the work of another as one's own. An heinous

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1 crime. Ironic, then, that you should be forced to copy from a printed sheet onto  
2 blank paper as punishment.

3 In my day, of course, punishments were *far* more imaginative. Oh yes, one would  
4 sometimes allow oneself to get into trouble intentionally, just to discover the nature  
5 of the punishment. Why, I remember one incident when we hoisted “Snapper”  
6 Hargreave’s trousers up the flagpole. I can remember now sitting in the common  
7 room watching them flaccidly flapping in the wind, while Snapper ran around like a  
8 half-dressed buffoon shouting, “My wife’s only just pressed those, you  
9 scoundrels!”

10 Well, the moment the Headmaster found out, of course, there was hell to pay. All  
11 of the boys responsible were herded into his office. So there we stood, cowering in  
12 front of him. Giant of a man he was—wide as he was tall. They said he was the  
13 reason they invented double doors. And do you know what he made us do? The  
14 punishment for flying Snapper’s pants at full mast? It wasn’t copying from a  
15 printed sheet—no, no, no. He made us *eat* the flagpole. Rope, pulleys and all. We  
16 didn’t have to eat it all at once, of course—that would’ve been barbaric. Every day,  
17 when the other chaps were served up steaming spotted dick with custard, Jenkins,  
18 Alsop and I were served sawn up flagpole. A high fibre diet it may have been, but  
19 pleasant it was not.

20 Still, I’m a better man for it, I can tell you.

21 *RUNNER*\* enters and whispers something into *SIR*’s ear.

22 **SIR** (*Looking at his watch*) It would appear that, by a quirk of fate, you have won an  
23 early reprieve. It seems that my psychiatrist has arrived and would like to interview  
24 me in the Medical Room.

25 *RUNNER* whispers once more into *SIR*’s ear.

26 **SIR** It would appear I am mistaken, and that *you* are to be interviewed by the  
27 psychiatrist, Master Grace, in the school medical room. (*Pause*) My appointment is  
28 not until Wednesday.

29 *Exeunt ALL.*

## Scene Five: Ed Psych

30 *ED PSYCH* enters and sits astride a chair, leaning on its back. After a moment, *KALON* enters.

31 *KALON2* has *THE SCRIPT*.

32 **ED PSYCH** Hi—how are you—come in—shut the door—sit down—nice to meet you—you’re  
33 Kalon right?

34 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Yeah. That’s right. (*He sits*)

35 **ED PSYCH** Fabulous—outstanding—good, good, good. So, Kalon—tell me about yourself—  
36 what do you like doing—do you enjoy school—how do you get on with your  
37 brother and sister—do your Mum and Dad fight in front of you—have you many  
38 friends—do you get bullied—are you afraid of failure?  
39

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\* When I was at school, the Runner was one of the pupils commandeered by the schools office to run errands. It basically meant a morning or afternoon off lessons—a great skive.

- 1 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) What? Yes. I mean no. Who are you?
- 2 **ED PSYCH** I'm the Educational Psychologist—Ed Psych for short—that's not my name, of  
3 course—but it'd be funny if it was—very appropriate—I once knew a priest called  
4 Peter McVicar—pity he was a catholic—your teachers are a bit concerned—  
5 worried—yes—about you—not paying attention—poor test results—unusual  
6 behaviour.
- 7 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, but trying to conceal it*) What d' y' mean “unusual  
8 behaviour”?
- 9 **ED PSYCH** Well—I mean—what's that—hmm?
- 10 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, defensively*) It's—my script.
- 11 **ED PSYCH** Ah—mm—I see—your script.
- 12 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) That's right—my script. It tells me what to say.
- 13 **ED PSYCH** That's unusual—strange—odd—so to speak—don't you agree?
- 14 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I suppose it is. I've never really thought much about it.
- 15 **ED PSYCH** Why do you feel you need it—your “script”—an emotional crutch—a security  
16 blanket—avoiding reality—introversion—internalisation—a way of passing the  
17 blame or buck, if you will—like an invisible friend—“Jasmine did it, Mummy”—is  
18 that it—hmm?
- 19 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I don't know what you're on about.
- 20 **ED PSYCH** Let's see—let me have a look—let the dog see the rabbit—so to speak—hmm?
- 21 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) What? Why?
- 22 **ED PSYCH** Well—you know—might shed some light on it—explain the whole thing—see  
23 what I mean?
- 24 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) No. Look, explain what thing?
- 25 **ED PSYCH** Well—how to put it—why you feel—think—believe—if you will—that you need  
26 this “script”.
- 27 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I've had it all my life. Every morning I wake up and  
28 there it is—next to my bed. Everything I've ever said, read straight off the page.
- 29 **ED PSYCH** How does it get there—where does it come from—hmm?
- 30 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I don't know. I don't really care.
- 31 **ED PSYCH** Don't you think you should know—don't you think you should care—doesn't it  
32 trouble you—make you wonder—hmm?
- 33 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) No. It's always been there. Why should I wonder  
34 where it comes from?
- 35 **ED PSYCH** (*Standing and reaching for THE SCRIPT*) Let's have a look—hmm—Kalon?
- 36 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, snatching it away from ED PSYCH's grasp*) No! Get off  
37 it!
- 38 **ED PSYCH** (*Backing off a little, for the moment*) Come on, Kalon—I'm your friend—I'm here  
39 to help you—that's my job—hmm?

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- 1 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I don't need your help. I don't *want* your help!
- 2 **ED PSYCH** (*Grabbing THE SCRIPT*) Let's have a look—trust me—I'm trying to help—I just  
3 want what's best for you.
- 4 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT with some difficulty, as ED PSYCH tries to pull it away*)  
5 Get off! Leave me alone!
- 6 *In the struggle, THE SCRIPT becomes spilled onto the floor and KALON frantically tries to collect it*  
7 *back together. As he does so...*
- 8 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT as he picks it up*) See what you've done!
- 9 **ED PSYCH** Here—let me help.
- 10 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Just leave it! (*Shouting*) Leave it, all right!
- 11 **ED PSYCH** I'm only trying to help—just trying to help—here...
- 12 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, furious*) Get off it! Leave it alone! Just go—go on, go!
- 13 **ED PSYCH** (*Trying to be conciliatory*) You need my help—I can help you—to get over this—  
14 to get better.
- 15 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, having gathered it together*) What? I'm not sick! Just  
16 'cause I'm not like you, is that it? It wasn't me that asked for your help! Get lost,  
17 creep!
- 18 **ED PSYCH** Kalon, I...
- 19 **KALON2** Get out! Just leave me alone!
- 20 *ED PSYCH decides to leave. KALON2 collapses back into the chair to be comforted by KALON1 and*  
21 *KALON3.*

## Scene Six: Birthday Party

- 22
- 23 **MOTHER** (*Singing*) Happy Birthday to you...
- 24 *DAD, BROTHER and SISTER join in...*
- 25 **THE FAMILY** (*Singing*) Happy Birthday to you...
- 26 *THE OTHERS join in...*
- 27 **THE PARTY** (*Singing*) Happy Birthday dear Kalon...
- 28 **L/X** Spotlight on **KALON**
- 29 **KALON1** (*To the Audience*) I'd always dreaded my sixteenth birthday. In fact, I dreaded all of  
30 'em. But especially my sixteenth. Up until I was ten, none of my birthdays were  
31 much different to any other. 'Cept I was a year older than before. Suddenly they all  
32 started meaning stuff. Like, on my tenth I was into double figures. I got really  
33 worked up about it. For the rest of my life I'd have to write *two* numbers for my  
34 age. (*Pause*) Until my hundredth birthday, that is.
- 35 When I was twelve, I got really worked up about the next one. I had this fear of  
36 thirteen, see. So, for the year before my fourteenth birthday I was twelve-"a" years  
37 old. And so my fourteenth was the first time I called myself a teenager. My

1                   fifteenth was all right, but that was halfway to being twenty. Well, halfway between  
2                   ten and twenty, anyhow.

3                   Then there was my sixteenth looming up. You're supposed to be able to do all this  
4                   stuff when you're sixteen. You know—adult stuff. *(Pause)* I'd never wanted to buy  
5                   cigarettes, though.

6 **L/X**                General cover

7 **THE PARTY**      *(Singing)* Happy birthday to you!

8 **F/X**                Quiet party atmos.

9     **THE PARTY** *flock round from their seats and form into little groups, miming chatting, drinking and*  
10                   *eating. GRANDMA and GRANDPA are the first to accost KALON.*

11 **GRANDMA**        Ohhh, hasn't he grown! You'll be as tall as your Dad soon, won't you dear?

12 **GRANDPA**        Of course 'e's grown, you daft old bag. 'E's a kid. That's what kids do. They grow.

13 **KALON1**           *(Reading from THE SCRIPT)* That's right, Grandpa.

14 **GRANDPA**        Of course, if they came round to *see y'* every once in a while, per'aps it wouldn't be  
15                   such a shock 'ow much they 'ave grown. Per'aps if they bothered to visit y'  
16                   wouldn't 'ave to tell 'em 'ow much they've grown, now would y'?

17 **GRANDMA**        Don't you listen to him, love. He's just jealous, you know. Oh, yes, jealous of  
18                   anyone over five foot eight, he is. Always was. Whenever your Mum bought home  
19                   a new fella, he'd stand 'em up against the door post. If they came up to the third  
20                   hinge, 'e wouldn't even let 'em in the 'ouse!

21 **GRANDPA**        I'm only short because you never fed me right. All them greens stunted me growth!

22 **GRANDMA**        Ohhh, 'ark at 'im now, love. You'd've thought he was Charles Atlas when he met  
23                   me! First time me old Mum clapped eyes on 'im, she asked if 'e was standing in a  
24                   pothole!

25 **GRANDPA**        Valerie Postlethwaite would 'a' fed me right. Beef, gravy and Yorkshire puddings,  
26                   not boiled greens an' carrots!

27 **GRANDMA**        Valerie Postlethwaite fed 'alf the town right, from what I remember. And you'd  
28                   only 'a' come down wi' mad cow disease if you'd stuck wi' 'er.

29 **GRANDPA**        Aye, well, better that than mad carrot disease. Or stunted growth.

30 **GRANDMA**        Anyway Albert, enough quarrelling, this is Kalon's special day. Do you like your  
31                   sweater, Kalon?

32 **KALON1**           *(Reading from THE SCRIPT)* Oh, yes, Grandma. Lime green and purple are my  
33                   favourite colours. Thank you so much.

34                   **KALON** *walks off in search of some of his friends. Unfortunately...*

35 **BARBARA**        Kalon!

36 **KALON1**           *(Reading from THE SCRIPT whilst trying to pass it on to KALON2 who is wise to*  
37                   *that one)* Hello, Barbara.

38 **BARBARA**        I was hoping to see you here.

39 **KALON1**           *(Reading from THE SCRIPT)* Well, you were on to a pretty sure thing. It *is* my party.

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- 1 **BARBARA** (*Laughing in a hideously false manner*) Oh, Kalon. You're so funny.
- 2 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, trying to be brutal*) I don't remember inviting you.
- 3 **BARBARA** You didn't. Your sister did.
- 4 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I see... (*Pause, while he looks around*) Excuse me for  
5 just one moment...
- 6 *KALON moves away, and calls out across the room:*
- 7 **KALON1** (*Calling out across the room from THE SCRIPT*) Coral! Coral!
- 8 **SISTER** What's up, Kalon?
- 9 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Why've you been inviting *your* friends to *my* party?  
10 (*Dropping his voice a few dBs*) Especially *Barbara*.
- 11 **SISTER** Mum said I could. Anyway, I thought you *liked* her.
- 12 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Liked her? *Liked* her! Does a... a vole like an eagle?  
13 Does an antelope like a jaguar? Does a... (*running out of metaphors*) an ant like an  
14 ant-eater?
- 15 **SISTER** Sorry, Kalon. I didn't know you felt like that. I wouldn't have invited her if I knew  
16 she'd upset you.
- 17 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) She doesn't upset me. She just gives me the creeps,  
18 that's all. How many of your friends did you invite?
- 19 **SISTER** Just Barbara. I honestly didn't think you'd mind.
- 20 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Yeah, right. Like you didn't think I'd mind you  
21 dressing me up in your old clothes when I was five...
- 22 **SISTER** Kalon...
- 23 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) ...on my first day at school. It's a wonder I've got any  
24 friends at all!
- 25 **SISTER** Tina said you looked cute. Anyway, Karl's bought some of his friends. Look.  
26 *SISTER indicates BROTHER, who is standing talking to MIKE and MABEL.*
- 27 **KALON1** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Mabel and her boyfriend. Oh, no!
- 28 **F/X** Cut party atmos.
- 29 **L/X** Spotlight on **KALON**
- 30 **KALON1** (*To the Audience*) And so, my sixteenth birthday party was turning into my worst  
31 nightmare—except for the cocktail sausages on sticks and there weren't any huge  
32 fish with wings.
- 33 Only one thing for it: advice.
- 34 *KALON1 gives the script to KALON3.*
- 35 **L/X** General cover
- 36 **F/X** Quiet party atmos.
- 37 *KALON moves quickly over to TINA, who is standing with JASON.*



- 1 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Tina, Tina, Tina! You've got to help me!
- 2 **TINA** (*Almost choking on her drink*) What on Earth's the matter, Kalon?
- 3 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Barbara's here! And that girl from the nightclub with  
4 her boyfriend!
- 5 **TINA** So what?
- 6 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) So what! What am I going to *do*, Tina?
- 7 **TINA** Do? *Do* nothing. Just ignore them!
- 8 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) But you don't understand. You can't just ignore  
9 Barbara. She's like toothache: a dull nagging pain that won't go away. And I don't  
10 *want* to ignore Mabel.
- 11 **TINA** Well, tell you what, then. Why don't you have a look in your script, flick forward a  
12 few pages, and see what it says? How about that, eh?
- 13 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, aghast*) What? I can't do that. It'd be—like cheating.
- 14 **TINA** Cheating? There's no such thing as cheating in this life, Kalon. If you get a chance,  
15 you take it. Make the most of what you've got, because whatever it is you've never  
16 got enough of it. Here, I'll do it for you if you haven't got the guts...*(She goes to*  
17 *take THE SCRIPT...)*
- 18 **KALON3** (*Grabbing THE SCRIPT away from her, and reading from it*) No! Look, you don't  
19 understand. This isn't just words, you know. This is *me*. This script is my life. You  
20 can't just flick through it like a magazine!
- 21 **TINA** Fair enough then, Kalon. Do whatever you think best. But if you want my advice:  
22 cheat.
- 23 *KALON hesitates for a moment, about to turn the page, but shaking his head he stops himself and*  
24 *moves away.*
- 25 **JASON** What *is* that thing he carries round with him?
- 26 **TINA** Like he says, it's his script. He's had it ever since I've known him.
- 27 **JASON** How long's that?
- 28 **TINA** 'Bout twelve years, I guess. We grew up together. He's always been kind of odd.  
29 Never said a word until his second year at school. He's the only kid I know who  
30 had to learn to *read* before he could talk.
- 31 **JASON** (*Considering this for a moment*) Makes sense, I suppose. Fancy another drink?
- 32 **TINA** Don't mind if I do...
- 33 *They leave in search of more drink. KALON is moping about SL.*
- 34 **MOTHER** (*Seeing KALON, and moving to him*) What're you moping about for, love?
- 35 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I'm not moping. I'm thinking.
- 36 **MOTHER** It's your birthday, Kalon. No time to stand around thinking—go and enjoy yourself.
- 37 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I'm enjoying myself thinking.
- 38 **MOTHER** Oh, don't talk daft! Go and talk to your friends. Tina's just gone into the kitchen.

## Strange Days

- 1 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) She's with Jason...
- 2 **MOTHER** Oh, I see...
- 3 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT defensively*) What? What do you see?
- 4 **MOTHER** Girls, is it? You want to talk to your Dad about that... (*Reminisces for a moment*)  
5 No, perhaps not.
- 6 **KALON3** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) No it's nothing to do with girls. I just wanted to have a  
7 few moments peace, that's all. Just leave me alone!
- 8 **MOTHER** All right, then. Suit yourself. (*She leaves him to it.*)
- 9 **F/X** Cut party atmos.
- 10 **L/X** Spotlight on **KALON**.
- 11 **KALON2** (*To KALON3*) Why not? What's the problem? I don't see the problem.
- 12 **KALON3** (*To KALON2*) I can't just turn the pages like that. What happens if they're blank, or  
13 something?
- 14 **KALON2** (*To KALON3*) I know they're not blank. I saw them when that shrink dropped 'em.  
15 So why not then, eh?
- 16 **KALON3** (*To KALON2*) Because I've got this far in my life without having to, that's why.
- 17 **KALON2** (*To KALON3*) Yeah, right. And who's to say I wouldn't be better off if I *had* looked  
18 years ago?
- 19 **KALON3** (*To KALON2*) Don't be stupid! What difference could it make? It's all here! This is  
20 like my *destiny*.
- 21 *KALON1 and KALON2 mock this*
- 22 **KALON1** (*To KALON3*) What're you talking about? *Destiny!*
- 23 **KALON3** (*To KALON1, holding up THE SCRIPT*) This is my future in here! Everything that'll  
24 ever happen to me, printed on these pages. Nothing I can do or say can change it.  
25 It's already here!
- 26 **KALON2** (*To KALON3*) So look at it then! What difference will it make!
- 27 **KALON3** (*To KALON2*) Exactly! It won't make *any* difference. So why spoil it?
- 28 **KALON1** (*To KALON3*) Spoil what?
- 29 **KALON3** (*To KALON1*) The future. That's what makes it special. It doesn't matter that it's  
30 written down, 'cause I don't *know* how it'll turn out!
- 31 **KALON1** (*To KALON3*) But how do you *know* it's always been the same? How do you know  
32 that it doesn't *change*?
- 33 **KALON3** (*To KALON1*) I *don't* know. And I want to stay that way. I'm not looking, and that's  
34 final!
- 35 **KALON2** (*To KALON3*) That's your trouble: no sense of adventure. It's amazing anything ever  
36 happens at all!
- 37 *KALON2 grabs the script from KALON3*
- 38 **F/X** Party atmos.



## Strange Days

- 1 **MIKE** (To **KALON**) Like I say, sorry about the other night...
- 2 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) That's OK...
- 3 **MIKE** ...but if you *ever* even *look* at her again, I'll break your face. Understand?
- 4 *He follows the others.*
- 5 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Sure. Fine. Great. Thanks for making that clear.
- 6 **F/X** Cut party atmos.
- 7 *THE PARTY return to their seats.*

## Scene Seven: Shopping

- 8
- 9 **L/X** Spotlight on **KALON**
- 10 **KALON2** (To the Audience) Next day, I decided to go shopping. Buy a few bits an' pieces I'd  
11 been saving me pocket money for. I asked Tina to come along, too—girls are better  
12 at shopping. It's in their genes.
- 13 Now, there were loads of places I could've gone, but I decided to have a look  
14 around the new department store in town first. A really posh place, with escalators  
15 going up *and* down.
- 16 You can tell how posh a places is by the escalators, see. A tacky place doesn't have  
17 escalators at all. Then, a—like—normal place has escalators that go up, but stairs to  
18 go down. I s'pose that's because they want to make it easy for you to go upstairs  
19 an' buy stuff, but then make it harder for you to leave. A posh place has escalators  
20 going up and down. Some *mega*-posh places have even got lifts.
- 21 **L/X** General cover
- 22 *SHOPPERS mill around looking at invisible items for sale as KALON and TINA shop.*
- 23 **TINA** What about one of these mugs? Look, it's got fake mould growing inside it, so it  
24 looks like it's been left under your bed for months even when it's clean. (She shows  
25 **KALON** the mug)
- 26 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Ugh, no thanks. Anyway, I was thinking of something  
27 a bit more—I don't know—exciting—than a new mug.
- 28 **TINA** How about this non-stick frying pan.
- 29 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) How can you tell it's non-stick?
- 30 **TINA** It's got a sticker stuck to it saying so.
- 31 *They look at each other and shake their heads. TINA replaces the pan.*
- 32 **TINA** What about a whisk?
- 33 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Tina?
- 34 **TINA** Yes, Kalon?
- 35 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) What are we doing in the cookware department?
- 36 **TINA** Dunno. We just sort of—ended up here.

- 1 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) This is the third time we've ended up here. I *thought*  
2 this was the basement.
- 3 **TINA** Let's check the store guide again.
- 4 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) If we can find it. And if you see a compass anywhere,  
5 let me know.
- 6 *They move SR and stand looking at the store guide for a moment. Beside them stands SURVEYOR,*  
7 *with a clipboard, who is interviewing one of the SHOPPERS. KALON watches them.*
- 8 **TINA** Lets see now: (*Reading from the store guide*) audio equipment, first floor; boots,  
9 second; cookware, ground; duvets, first; encyclopaedias, first; Faberge, second;  
10 glassware, first; homebrew, basement; insurance, basement; jeans, ground; kettles,  
11 second; lingerie, first; microwaves, ground; novels, first; ovens, ground; pans,  
12 ground; quilts, second; rugs, basement; sofas, basement; towels, first; umbrellas,  
13 roof; vacuums, second; waterbeds, basement; xylophones, basement; yachts,  
14 basement. (*Deep breath, then pause*) Pity they don't sell anything beginning with  
15 "Z", really.
- 16 *The SURVEYOR has finished the interview, and the SHOPPER walks away.*
- 17 **KALON2** (*Who wasn't listening, reading from THE SCRIPT*) What, oh—sorry. What was the  
18 first one again? (*Checking the list*) Audio equipment. Let's go there.
- 19 *They walk off, but KALON stops as he passes the SURVEYOR.*
- 20 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Just a moment. (*To SURVEYOR*) Excuse me?
- 21 **SURVEYOR** (*Boredly, with a resigned sigh*) Before you ask, no I don't know where the  
22 lavatories are. Nor have I seen your parents, or your baby sister. I do not know the  
23 time, I have not found your wallet, you may not borrow my pen. I am not that  
24 newsreader off the telly, I have never met you before and yes, this *is* my real hair.
- 25 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) No, it's nothing like that...
- 26 **SURVEYOR** (*Interrupting*) Really? Surprise me.
- 27 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) I just wondered if I could have a go at your survey.
- 28 **SURVEYOR** (*Shocked*) What? Really?
- 29 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Yeah.
- 30 **SURVEYOR** (*Overjoyed*) You mean, you *want* to take part in my survey?
- 31 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, nodding*) Yeah!
- 32 **SURVEYOR** (*Quite overcome*) Thank... thank you very much. I've never had anyone actually  
33 *ask* to take part in a survey before. I'm—flattered.
- 34 **KALON2** (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Well?
- 35 **SURVEYOR** What? (*Flustered, fiddling with clipboard and pen*) Oh, yes, of course. Here we go  
36 then. You ready?
- 37 *KALON nods expectantly.*
- 38 **SURVEYOR** (*Clearing throat, then reading from the clipboard*) Have you ever considered  
39 installing double-glazing?

## Strange Days

- 1 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) No.
- 2 **SURVEYOR** (Turning pages, then reading from the clipboard) In that case, thank you for your  
3 time.
- 4 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Is that it? Oh, well. Bye, then.
- 5 **SURVEYOR** Goodbye. And thanks again!
- 6 *KALON and TINA move SL, and shuffle onto the escalator facing back towards SR, KALON first.*
- 7 **TINA** What the hell was all that?
- 8 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) It's just nice to talk to someone else with a script from  
9 time to time.
- 10 **TINA** Really? You ought t' join a drama club.
- 11 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Nah! I can't learn lines.
- 12 **TINA** So, what is it we're looking for?
- 13 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Wha' d' y' mean?
- 14 **TINA** Audio equipment?
- 15 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Oh, you know. The usual. Boy's toys—that kind o'  
16 stuff. I quite fancy a new CD player.
- 17 **TINA** What's wrong with your old one?
- 18 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) I'm bored with it.
- 19 *They reach the top of the escalator and disembark, stumbling forward slightly as they do so. KALON*  
20 *looks around him as he moves R. SHOPPERS surround them, browsing as before.*
- 21 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Wow! Look at all this gear. There's more buttons in  
22 here than a shirt factory! (He inspects one item closely) This one says it's got  
23 seventy-six functions you're guaranteed never to use. Brilliant!
- 24 **TINA** So what's the point?
- 25 **KALON2** (Ignoring her, and reading from *THE SCRIPT*) I wonder what *this* button does?  
26 *He pushes it.*
- 27 **F/X** Deafening electronic alarm sound.
- 28 *ASSISTANT enters, and marches smartly up to an unseen control and switches it off with a key.*
- 29 **F/X** Electronic alarm sound ends abruptly.
- 30 **ASSISTANT** (To **KALON**) Can I help you?
- 31 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Yeah. I want a new CD player.
- 32 **ASSISTANT** Are you looking for anything in particular?  
33 *ASSISTANT begins rubbing his hands and looking at KALON as if he were dinner.*
- 34 **KALON2** (Reading from *THE SCRIPT*) Oh, just something flashy. Lots of buttons and stuff.  
35 You know.

1 ASSISTANT Oh, yes I *do* know. Indeed I do. What kind of (*licking lips*) price-range are we  
 2 talking about?

3 *KALON removes his wallet and inspects it, while the ASSISTANT eyes it greedily.*

4 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) ‘Bout a hundred.

5 ASSISTANT (*Flinching slightly*) One hundred pounds? I see. I think perhaps the “Disc-o-matic  
 6 three thousand” may be a little out of your price-range.

7 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Could I afford the “Disc-o-matic two thousand”?

8 ASSISTANT Sadly, no.

9 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) What about the “Disc-o-matic fifteen hundred and  
 10 twenty-three”.

11 ASSISTANT Regrettably not.

12 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) The “Disc-o-matic twelve two-fifty”? (*ASSISTANT*  
 13 *shakes his head*) Eleven seventy-five? Eleven hundred?

14 ASSISTANT No, sir.

15 KALON2 What can I afford, then?

16 ASSISTANT I think you should be considering the “Disc-o-matic three and five-sevenths”.

17 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, slightly deflated*) Oh. Okay. What functions does it  
 18 have?

19 ASSISTANT Well, it plays CDs.

20 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Is that all?

21 ASSISTANT I’m afraid so. Unfortunately, most bottom of the range CD players only play CDs.  
 22 But it does have a remote control with an eject button.

23 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT, cheering up slightly*) Really?

24 ASSISTANT Oh, yes. (*Pause*) It’s completely useless, of course. Once you’ve ejected the CD  
 25 from across the room, you still have to go up to the machine to take the disk out.  
 26 (*Shrugs*) Might as well just press the button once you get there. It’s handy for  
 27 frightening pet animals, though.

28 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Great! I’ll buy it.

29 ASSISTANT Excellent. A wise choice, if I might say so. (*Removing the player from the shelf,*  
 30 *and handing it to KALON*) If you’d like to take this up to the cash desk.

31 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT with some difficulty*) Thank you very much.

32 ASSISTANT Thank you, sir.

33 *The ASSISTANT spots more prey, and moves swiftly off SL after them. KALON, followed by TINA,*  
 34 *moves over SR to the cash desk. The cashier has their back to them.*

35 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Excuse me?

36 MABEL (*Turning*) Hello. How may I help you...? Oh, hello again. It’s Kalon, isn’t it?

37 KALON2 (*Reading from THE SCRIPT*) Hello again, Mabel... (*weakly*) fancy seeing you here.

## Scene Eight: Future shock

- 1
- 2 L/X                   Spotlight on KALON
- 3 KALON1               What now?
- 4 KALON3               *(To KALON1)* Wha'd'ya mean, "what now"?
- 5 KALON2               *(To KALON3)* I'll tell you "what now". We cheat, that's what now.
- 6                         *KALON2 begins to turn the page of THE SCRIPT. KALON3 grabs it.*
- 7 KALON3               *(To KALON2)* Don't be stupid! Leave it alone!
- 8 KALON2               *(To KALON3)* Stupid! Who's being stupid? You're the one throwing this life away!
- 9 KALON3               *(To KALON2)* What are you talking about?
- 10 KALON2              *(To KALON3)* You've got a chance to find out what happens. To stop yourself  
11 looking stupid. Sort it all out from the start.
- 12 KALON1              *(To KALON3)* Come on. Let me have a look!
- 13 KALON3              *(To KALON1)* You! Let *you* have a look? You've gotta be joking. You wouldn't  
14 know what the hell to do even if you *could* read it. Eat it, hit it or fall in love with  
15 it. 'S all y' ever do!
- 16 KALON1              *(To KALON3)* Least I don't spend all my time worrying about what'll happen. If it  
17 was left up to *you*, nothing'd ever get done!
- 18 KALON2              *(To KALON1&3)* All right, you two. Knock it off!
- 19 KALON3              *(To KALON2)* What're you shouting at me for? *You* started all this!
- 20 KALON1              *(To KALON2)* Yeah!
- 21 KALON2              *(To KALON1&3)* Grow up, the pair of you! And give me that script.
- 22 KALON3              *(To KALON2)* No chance! If you want it, you're going to have to *take* it!
- 23 KALON2              *(To KALON3)* Watch me!
- 24     *KALON2 & KALON3 struggle together over THE SCRIPT. KALON1 eventually decides to intervene.*
- 25 KALON1              *(To KALON2&3)* All right! Break it up, both of you. We're not going to solve  
26 anything like this.
- 27 KALON3              *(To KALON1)* So what do you suggest, then?
- 28 KALON2              *(To KALON3)* How about... democracy.
- 29 KALON3              *(To KALON2)* What?
- 30 KALON2              *(To KALON3)* We take a vote.
- 31 KALON3              *(To KALON2)* Now, just a minute...
- 32 KALON2              *(To KALON1&3)* All those in favour of reading the script, raise your right hand.
- 33     *KALON2 raises the right hand. KALON3 crosses arms resolutely across the chest, and THE SCRIPT.*  
34                         *KALON1 raises the left hand.*
- 35 KALON2              *(To KALON1)* I said raise your *right* hand.
- 36 KALON1              *(To KALON2)* Oh, right. Sorry. *(Raises right hand, left hand still aloft)*



1 *Pause*

2 **KALON2** (To **KALON3**) There. Now. Give me the script.

3 **KALON3** (To **KALON2**, *calmly*) No. (Pause) No. I'll read it.

4 **KALON2** (To **KALON3**) All right.

5 **KALON3** (To **KALON2**) How much do I read?

6 **KALON1** (To **KALON3**, *excitedly*) All of it!

7 **KALON2** (To **KALON3**) Just the last page. All I really want to know is how it ends.

8 **KALON3** (To **KALON2**) I thought you wanted to know about Mabel?

9 **KALON1** (To the Audience) I wanted to know about Mabel.

10 **KALON2** (To **KALON3**) Yeah, well. Perhaps she's there too, eh?

11 *KALON3 nods.*

12 *KALON3 turns to the back page of THE SCRIPT, and reads. A look of horror grows on KALON3's face,*  
13 *as KALON1 & KALON2 watch.*

14 **KALON3** (Shaking head) No... please, No!

15 *KALON3 sinks to the floor, head in hands. KALON1 & KALON2 look on, still standing.*

16 **L/X** Fade to blackout.

17 *End of Act I*