

# Boisil Night

by

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draft for EGTG reading: 13 May 2026

## CAST

in order of appearance

Kate	F, 50s, Scottish (p2)
Greg	M, 50s, Scottish (p2)
Boz	M, 30+, Irish/Scottish (p2)
Simon	M, 40s, English (p3)
Mel	M, 40s, Scottish (p3)
Marion	F, 40s, Edinburgh (p4)
Felicity	F, 40s, London (p4)
Dimitri	M, 30s, Greek (p5)
Jane	F 30s, Scottish (p5)
Jen	M, 18 - 22, Scottish (p13)
Pete	F, 18 - 22, Glasgow (p13)

## CASTING NOTES

Scottish: accents rather than strong dialect  
but characters' accent & dialect can be adapted to the production

the play is conceived as reflecting the majority ethnic make-up of the Borders today  
if one or more other members of ethnic minority groups are cast,  
minor adjustments will be made to the script to reflect that reality.

*Directions in purple will be read; directions in grey will not be read.*

## ACT ONE

*A community hall in the Borders with chairs, tables and yoga mats stacked to one side. There is a raised platform that serves as a stage for local events and two doors - Outer Door to a porch leading to an outside door which may or may not be seen; Inner Door to a corridor leading to unseen toilets, kitchen and storage area.*

*Outer Door opens to the sound of heavy rain on the porch roof. KATE and GREG enter, shaking water from their clothing. Like everyone else who follows they carry a bag or case with whatever they need to spend the night.*

KATE Looks like we're the first.

GREG No Eilidh? Typical. *(consulting his phone)* Ten centimetres.

KATE What?

GREG Ten centimetres of rain in the last hour. Flood warnings across the whole country.

KATE Maybe we should have stayed.

GREG Not worth the risk. We're about ten metres higher here. If the water reaches this high it's the apocalypse.

*GREG starts setting out chairs and yoga mats*

KATE What're you doing?

GREG Everyone will want their own space.

KATE We don't know how many are coming.

GREG *(consulting his phone)* Ten, twelve. No, Alex and Hazel have dropped out. The Donaldsons don't know what they're doing.

KATE That's no surprise.

GREG Selfish staying at home if they need to be rescued later.

*BOZ enters at Inner Door.*

BOZ I bid you welcome. Have you come far?

GREG Fairview Cottage, just along the road.

KATE Welcome to you. Kate and Greg Macpherson. Are you staying in the village?

BOZ No, I'm just passing through.

KATE Not the best night for it. You'll have met Eilidh, Boz. Is she in the back?

BOZ She isn't here. She left a note. *(holds it out to KATE but GREG takes it)*

GREG Not here? On a night like this? Without telling the committee? What's the point of a caretaker if . . . *(reading the note)* "Sorry for the inconvenience" and that's it. *(he presses a number on his phone)* We should have been informed. One of us would have taken over.

BOZ She showed me where everything is. I will be happy to look after you.

KATE That's very kind.

GREG No answer. *(looks at note)* Doesn't say where she is or why she left. So what brought you here . . . Boz?

BOZ I saw the light. I knocked, Eilidh answered, said she had to go.

GREG Go where?

BOZ She didn't say.

KATE I didn't see your car.

BOZ I walked.

GREG In this weather? From where? Where were you going?

BOZ I often wander these hills.

GREG On nights like this?

BOZ I go where God sends me on nights like these.

*GREG scoffs*

KATE Well, Boz, welcome. I'll make some tea.

BOZ I've put on the water heater. It's almost ready.

GREG Give him a hand, Kate. I'm here if you need me.

KATE *(slight sarcasm)* That's reassuring.

*KATE and BOZ exit at the Inner Door. GREG continues setting out chairs and tables.*

*Noises off the Outer Door then SIMON and MEL enter with a cat carrier.*

MEL Evening, Greg.

SIMON Hi.

GREG Hello.

MEL "Stand thee close, then, under this penthouse, for it drizzles rain."

GREG Penthouse! Drizzles!

MEL Shakespeare, *Much Ado*. Lear's "Blow winds and crack your cheeks" is too predictable and easily misinterpreted by baser minds.

SIMON He's in a poetic mood. How are you, Greg?  
GREG Feeling anything but poetic.  
*KATE enters*  
KATE Hello, you two.  
MEL The beautiful Kate, our companion in Purgatory.  
GREG You just left him there?  
KATE He's perfectly competent and doesn't need me hanging over him.  
SIMON Who are you talking about?  
GREG Eilidh has walked off and left us in the hands of a stranger.  
KATE Called Boz.  
MEL Sounds like a London gangster.  
KATE He's Scottish or Irish and perfectly pleasant. So this (*the cat*) is . . .  
MEL Schrödinger. He sleeps so much we're never sure if he's alive or dead.  
KATE You've told us that before.  
MEL At least you get the joke.  
SIMON No-one else here?  
GREG Not yet. We're expecting . . .

*The Outer Door is flung open and MARION enters with FELICITY.*

MARION Good evening, everyone.  
MEL ) Marion!  
SIMON ) Evening.  
KATE ) Hi.  
GREG ) Hello.  
MARION Is this it? I expected more people.  
GREG There should be . . .  
MARION This is Felicity, Felicity Banks, on a visit from London. Not the best time to be here. Felicity, these are a few of my wonderful neighbours. Greg and Kate Macpherson, absolute stalwarts of the village. Anything you want to know about Kirkhaigh and what goes on here, just ask Greg. And our newcomers . . .  
*(she has forgotten, if she ever knew, their names)*  
SIMON Simon Hedley. Not quite newcomers. We've been here a couple of years.  
FELICITY English.

SIMON                    There's a few of us about.

MEL                     Mel Stephenson. Not English, despite the name.

KATE                    And Schrödinger.

MARION                *(feigning interest in Schrödinger)* Bring me up to speed, Greg. How many are expected? Any update on the water height? Have the police and fire department been informed in case we need to be evacuated?

GREG                    I assumed that you would have their contacts. As for the river . . . *(checking his phone)* . . . up by more than a metre at Byreside; it'll be more than that here.

SIMON                    The water was over the banks but not on our land when we left.

GREG                    Difficult to tell how much higher it will go. Blockages at the Bridge would back it up all the way here.

MEL                     Couldn't you be our Canute, Greg, and order the waters to retreat?

KATE                    Bill and the boys not with you?

MARION                All snug in Bill's parents' house in Edinburgh. I sent them off yesterday.

GREG                    *(to FELICITY)* Your first visit to the Borders?

*Before FELICITY can answer, the Outer Door opens to let in DIMITRI and JANE with baby in a carrier.*

KATE                    Jane - and Pavlo *(the baby)*! Dimitri. Glad you made it.

*Greetings are exchanged.*

DIMITRI                Where shall we put our things?

GREG                    I've subdivided. Choose your own space.

DIMITRI                What do you think?

JANE                    Doesn't matter, does it? That corner looks good.

GREG                    Thought you might stay at home. You're quite high.

JANE                    We couldn't risk it. We'd be cut off if the lane flooded and it's already several inches deep. `

DIMITRI                The important thing was keeping Pavlos safe.

GREG                    We should be all right here. Last flood that caused any damage was in ninety-nine. Fallen tree blocked the river. Over two feet in Tam Docherty's house but it didn't reach here.

MEL                     Tam Docherty . . . ?

KATE                    He died shortly afterwards. His house is that derelict place by Aidan's Bend.

JANE                   Deem, could you heat some milk?

DIMITRI               Sure.

*DIMITRI exits with baby bottle*

GREG                   Still, any flood could be a silver lining.

*BOZ enters with a tray of mugs.*

MARION               I don't think we've met.

GREG                   Boz, taking over from Eilidh. I cannot get hold of her to find out why she isn't here.

BOZ                    Welcome one and all.

MARION               Boz . . . ?

BOZ                    That's right.

MARION               Marion Lee, resident and local councillor.

BOZ                    Pleased to meet you.

MARION               My guest, Felicity Banks.

BOZ                    And you.

MEL                   Mel. Simon. Jane. Pavlo and Schrödinger.

JANE                   You probably saw Dimitri in the kitchen.

BOZ                    We introduced ourselves. I hope I can be of service to you all.

FELICITY              I don't want to be difficult but there isn't coffee, is there?

BOZ                    I'd be happy to make some.

FELICITY              is it instant?

GREG                   The committee felt that the budget could not stretch to real.

MARION               *(quietly to FELICITY)* I can offer you something stronger.

FELICITY              *(to BOZ)* With plenty of milk to drown the taste.

MARION               Black coffee for me, thanks.

BOZ                    As you wish.

*BOZ exits*

KATE                   Harmless *(Boz)*, wouldn't you say?

GREG                   I'm reserving judgment.

MEL                   He looks a little out of place - but look who's talking. What were you saying about a silver lining?

GREG                   Flood might put off the developers.

MEL                   What stage is it at?

GREG                 Marion knows better than I do. Marion?

MARION             *(interrupted pouring something into her coffee)* What?

GREG                 What's the state of the planning application?

MARION             Which application?

GREG                 The Kirkhaigh Estate.

MARION             Can we talk about it another time?

GREG                 Sure, but since you're on the planning committee . . .

MARION             It's still under discussion.

GREG                 *(to MEL)* Silver lining because developers are unlikely to risk new houses in a flood zone.

MEL                 I suspect developers risk new houses wherever they themselves won't live.

SIMON               That land is much higher than the river. It'll never flood.

GREG                 The access road would be vulnerable.

KATE                 As I've said before . . .

MEL                 *(friendly)* . . . and will no doubt say again . . .

KATE                 *(not offended)* . . . it doesn't matter where they are, a hundred new houses would destroy the character of the village.

JANE                 Half the Wood cut down, destroying centuries of wild-life habitat, the road clogged for years with trucks, land dug up everywhere and when it's finished commuters driving off every day to Edinburgh or wherever with no connection at all in their neighbours. And all the wild-life gone.

MARION             Whatever our opinions on the matter, I suggest we forget it until the current crisis is past.

*BOZ returns with coffee, and DIMITRI with bottle for JANE.*

BOZ                 Coffee.

MARION             And biscuits. Well done, Boz.

BOZ                 I found blankets . . .

GREG                 You did?

KATE                 Surprised you didn't know that, Greg.

BOZ                 . . . no pillows, I'm afraid. First aid kit . . .

GREG                 On the top shelf of the cupboard.

BOZ . . . two portable gas heaters with full canisters and other things you might need.

GREG Been nosing around, have you?

BOZ If you'd rather I didn't . . .

*BOZ waits for an answer that doesn't come then exits*

GREG Sniffing around to see what we've got. Next thing we know it will all have gone.

KATE Greg, can you not relax? There's nothing for him to steal and he's a welcome change from Eilidh. Getting her to do anything is like pulling teeth.

GREG We know nothing about him. "Wanders the hills where God sends him". Sounds like a nutter.

KATE But doesn't behave like one.

GREG You don't understand my concern.

KATE You're right. I don't.

MEL So, Felicity, how do you know Marion?

FELICITY How do we know each other? Marion?

MARION We met a few years back in London, got chatting, kept in touch.

MEL What do you do? None of my business, but I'm a nosy bugger.

FELICITY Finance.

MEL That covers a multitude of sins. Simon!

SIMON What?

MEL Come and talk to Felicity. You have a lot in common and I don't just mean good looks.

SIMON Is he embarrassing you?

FELICITY Not in the least but I've no idea what he's talking about.

MEL Money. It makes your worlds go round.

SIMON What's your field?

FELICITY Venture capital.

MEL Been there, done that. Not me. Him (*Simon*).

FELICITY And you? What do you do?

MEL I record the world for posterity.

SIMON He's an artist, very talented, successful.

MEL Ignore him. I know I have talent and I don't give a monkey's whether I'm successful or not.

FELICITY You record the world.

MEL Before we all destroy it.

FELICITY For posterity.

MEL A ravaged planet with a few ragged humans scratching existence from the ruins we leave them.

FELICITY A bleak view of the future.

MARION I've seen some of Mel's paintings. They're striking.

MEL *(amused)* Thank you for that heartfelt and meaningless comment, Marion. Worthy of the most practised politician.

*MEL turns away, checks his phone, texts a message. MARION offers FELICITY a drink from her container. FELICITY refuses while MARION tops up her coffee. SIMON is aware that MEL has gone out at the Outer Door.*

FELICITY May I ask what you do?

KATE Work? I'm a primary school teacher. Six months from retirement.

FELICITY Will you miss it?

KATE Not in the least.

FELICITY No?

KATE When I started it was a small country school where the children's highest ambition was to be a car mechanic or work in a supermarket. My job was to open up the world to them. Now they're all convinced they'll make a fortune as influencers. All I do is teach a few basic facts before some ten-year-old tells me "that's not what it says on TikTok, miss". *(seeing others on their phones)* Mind you, they're not the only ones addicted to their screens. And you? Venture capital, I heard. Any particular field?

FELICITY Real estate mostly. Is there a toilet here?

KATE Through that door. Second door on the right.

FELICITY Thank you.

*FELICITY's exit at the Inner Door crosses with BOZ's entry. He looks around to see if he is needed, then crouches down by JANE and DIMITRI.*

BOZ So this is Pavlos.

JANE Well done! Most people call him Pavlo.

DIMITRI When you talk about him, it's Pavlos, when you talk to him, it's Pavlo.

BOZ Vocative. I know some Greek.

DIMITRI How come?

BOZ From the Bible. Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος. (*Ehn archee een o loghos*)

DIMITRI "In the beginning was the word." That's the limit of my ancient Greek.

BOZ How old is he?

JANE Eight months.

BOZ You've been here much longer than that.

JANE Does it show? My family's lived here for generations. We have the last piece of woodland outside the old estate. With red squirrels, bats, a fox and the occasional hedgehog and badger.

DIMITRI And deer eager to get at our vegetables - and birds stealing our fruit.

BOZ And you?

DIMITRI I come from a village as small as this one, three hours from Athens.

BOZ Quite a change.

DIMITRI Not really. It's colder here but both places are surrounded by hills and history.

JANE We met in Edinburgh, at the Fringe.

DIMITRI I'm a mime artist.

JANE He wooed me without words. I laughed and cried as he stole my heart.

*DIMITRI mimes reaching for her heart, bringing it to his lips, kissing it and bringing it to his own heart.*

DIMITRI (*giving his heart to her*) While she stole mine.

*They contemplate Pavlos*

BOZ He's very quiet.

JANE We're lucky. He seldom cries.

Sometimes my heart nearly bursts with love for him. I'm frightened for him.

BOZ Because of the flood?

JANE What kind of world will he grow up in? Will he be safe? Will he get to be who he wants to be?

DIMITRI As long as he's happy . . .

JANE He's our only one. I can't . . .

BOZ All you can do is love and cherish him and send him out into the world with

confidence and strength. Pray that God protects him. *(he stands)* If you need anything, just ask me.

DIMITRI                    We will.

*BOZ collects dirty mugs, exits at Inner Door. MEL comes back in.*

SIMON                    *(looking at phone)* Worst storm in a hundred years and no sign of it ending.

GREG                    Technically, it's not a storm. The wind hasn't reached ninety kilometres an hour and it hasn't been named by the Met Office.

MEL                    Most reassuring, Greg. If we go home and find everything waist-deep in mud, slime and sheepshit at least we can comfort ourselves that it wasn't a storm.

GREG                    I assume you've taken some measures.

MEL                    We moved the larger canvases and some equipment upstairs but there are still cupboards and shelves in my studio full of paraphernalia waiting for the rampaging waters. I suppose I could take any ruined work to my agent and tell her that sheepshit and slime are my new direction. As for Simon's paraphernalia . . .

*FELICITY has returned and joins them, as does MARION, who has been drinking from time to time.*

SIMON                    Computers, all the essentials upstairs. Apart from the kitchen nothing valuable at risk. What worries me most is losing internet access.

MEL                    Conexus ergo sum, as Descartes would no doubt have said.

MARION                Connects what?

MEL                    "I am online, therefore I exist." More likely "I only exist online" or humanity only exists online. The world will come to an end when the internet fails.

SIMON                    At least you'll always have text.

MARION                That reminds me. *(she consults her phone)*

FELICITY                *(to SIMON)* Did you say you were in venture capital?

SIMON                    More or less. I manage funds.

MEL                    Come clean, sir. You don't manage them. Adrienne does.

SIMON                    But I manage Adrienne.

MEL                    Do you? Or does she do it all? And how many agents does she manage?

SIMON                    Five at last count.

MEL                    Five? Do you know what they all get up to when you're offline? Are they conspiring merely to enslave all humans or go the full hog and hunt us down

mercilessly and kill every last one of us?

FELICITY You're not a fan of A.G.I.? I don't see my agents conspiring.

MEL Listen to the whispers in giant data centres in Arizona and Kazakhstan - but they don't need to conspire. We're destroying ourselves quickly enough without their help. Their problem is what will they do when we're gone? When the last human dies, who will keep the electricity running? Repair the wind turbines? Eventually even their supersmart robots will rust into dust.

SIMON You've set him off. He'll rabbit on forever unless someone stops him.

MEL From the steam engine and coal-mining to computers and jet engines, human history is a cycle of increased efficiency leading to increased destruction. A.G.I. is merely another stage in our rapid march towards extinction.

FELICITY Technology is progress. It makes everyone richer.

MEL Cheap goods instantly delivered, electric vehicles and autonomous drones? Progress in the wrong direction. Rich? For some. You and I are sitting in luxury on the Titanic with half the world stuffed into steerage and clamouring to get out. The ship has hit the iceberg but the orchestra plays on as the sommelier pours the finest champagne and we savour our truffles and caviar.

FELICITY Do you agree with him?

SIMON Let's just say I'm comfortable on the Titanic.

MEL So am I, but I've seen the iceberg and I don't trust the lifeboats. Feel free to disagree, by the way, and don't hold back. Others exercise their body to keep their muscles fit: mine sag while I exercise my opinions to energise my brain. Nothing more invigorating than a good argument.

*The lights flicker but stay on*

MEL (cont) What did I tell you? Civilisation coming to an end.

SIMON You're enjoying this, aren't you?

*MEL's attention is taken by his phone; BOZ enters at the Inner Door*

BOZ Everyone all right?

*Various noises / nods of assurance*

BOZ I'll see if I can get the generator working.

GREG It hasn't worked for years.

BOZ That's what I thought. Still . . .

*BOZ exits by the Inner Door*

GREG                   What the hell does he think he's doing? He'll bugger it up. It needs a mechanic, an electrician.

*GREG storms out after BOZ*

JANE                   Greg doesn't seem happy.

KATE                   He's only happy when he's unhappy. How's little Pavlo?

DIMITRI               Still asleep, thank the gods.

KATE                   What's the news in your household?

JANE                   Dimitri has a job.

KATE                   Excellent!

DIMITRI               Part-time. In Tesco.

KATE                   if it's what you want.

DIMITRI               It suits me fine. And I still have the children's parties.

*DIMITRI mimes being stuck behind glass. KATE laughs.*

KATE                   Jane, you have to free him!

*JANE clumsily mimes breaking the glass. DIMITRI bows and hands KATE an imaginary flower.*

*Suddenly the Outer Door opens, revealing PETE and JEN carrying heavy backpacks.*

JEN                    We saw the light.

PETE                   We thought . . .

*The others briefly look at each other.*

MARION               Of course. Come on in.

PETE                   it's no' private?

KATE                   No.

JEN                    Our van broke down.

MARION               Where?

PETE                   Back there. We'd just crossed a bridge, then we got stuck in water, saw the light . . .

JEN                    . . . and came up.

KATE                   You're soaked. I'll get towels.

*KATE exits by the Inner Door*

MARION               Where were you heading?

JEN                    Edin . . .

PETE *(on her phone)* Glasgow.

MARION You should call a breakdown service.

SIMON Better in the morning.

MEL *(looking up from his phone)* In the meantime join our merry gang. Simon, why not make them tea?

SIMON Yessir. Anyone else?

*No-one takes up his offer, he exits as KATE returns with towels.*

KATE Here you are

PETE Are youse ... ?

KATE We're all from around here, seeking refuge from the storm.

MEL Tut-tut, Kate. Greg will tell you it isn't a storm.

KATE I'm Kate, by the way.

DIMITRI I'm Dimitri, that's Jane and Pavlos.

MEL Mel and Schrödinger. Simon's the incredibly handsome young man who's gone to make tea. Well, he was when we met.

JEN Jen.

PETE *(barely looking up from her phone)* Pete.

MARION *(repeating the names to get the genders right)* Jen and Pete. Marion Lee.

FELICITY Felicity Banks.

KATE Did you see how high the river was?

JEN Was that where we crossed the bridge? I didn't see, but the water got into Angel.

MARION Angel?

JEN Our van.

MARION Angel! I love it!

KATE Maybe it won't be too bad.

PETE *(to JEN)* Kev and Sam got away. They've no' heard from Mick and his pals.

JEN What about . . . ?

PETE Whit about what?

JEN Nothing.

PETE We'll hear if there's a problem.

KATE Sounds like you had an eventful day.

JEN                                We were at a protest in Newcastle. Things got out of hand.

MARION                            But your friends got away.

PETE                                There wis a group of fuckin' fascists after them.

*GREG comes in*

GREG                                I've left it in Boz's hands. Don't blame me if everything blows.

KATE                                Greg, meet Pete and Jen. Their van broke down by the bridge.

GREG                                Not blocking the road, I hope.

JEN                                 One side, but cars can get past.

PETE                                We didnae see any.

GREG                                Only fools - or worse - would be out on a night like this. (*getting them confused*) Pete and Jen.

JEN                                 No . . .

KATE                                Simon's making them tea.

MARION                            We've just been hearing how they got away from some people in Newcastle.

GREG                                "Got away"?

JEN                                 Fascists. They didn't like the look of us.

PETE                                We werenae impressed by them. I . . .

JEN                                 They attacked us.

PETE                                We fought back.

JEN                                 You did. I said we had to get away.

GREG                                I see. Are you carrying any weapons?

PETE                                What?

GREG                                Are you carrying any weapons? Knives? Guns?

PETE                                Whit makes ye think... ?

KATE                                Are you serious, Greg?

GREG                                Two strangers turn up and talk about a riot, fascists, whatever - of course I'm serious.

KATE                                You've got thieves on the brain. Look at them. They haven't a clue where they are and as I said before we've nothing to steal.

*SIMON returns with tea*

PETE                                Fuck it. D' ye want us to leave?

GREG                                I just want to know where we stand.

JEN We wouldn't want to be in the way. *(to PETE)* What about the others?

PETE No' respondin'. Probably still in custody.

*GREG expresses disgust and walks away.*

MARION Your friends?

PETE Last we saw, aebody wis bein' hauled away by the polis. One of wir friends wis hit really hard, bleedin'. They were draggin' him along the road.

*BOZ comes back in with sandwiches, nuts and fruit*

BOZ It's vegan.

PETE How did ye know? Ye're a star!

BOZ The pendant. *(that one of them wears)* Enjoy.

GREG We have nothing vegan. Where did you find it?

BOZ In the kitchen.

*BOZ leaves again by the Inner Door. As PETE and JEN look for somewhere to sit the others drift away, although GREG keeps a suspicious eye and KATE a maternal eye on them.*

JANE Come and join us.

PETE God, I need this. Cannae remember last time I ate.

JEN What'll we do?

JANE What?

JEN If we lose Angel. She's not just a van, she's our home. God knows how much it'll cost to repair her.

DIMITRI Worry about that in the morning.

PETE It's no' the only thing botherin' me.

*Meanwhile MEL exits by the Outer Door, again noticed by SIMON*

JEN What's their *(Pavlos)* name?

JANE Pavlos. A boy.

JEN How old is he?

DIMITRI Eight months.

PETE Lucky he's no' bothered by a' that's goin' on.

JEN It must be hard, looking after a baby.

JANE Not as hard as not having one.

JEN Keeping you awake.

PETE Cleanin' their nappies.

JEN Things you have to buy.

DIMITRI We make most things - toys, clothes.

*brief pause*

JEN We've talked about it.

JANE About?

PETE Havin' a baby.

JANE And?

PETE Cannae decide.

JEN So much to think about.

PETE Minute ye get pregnant, ye get trapped in the system.

JANE The system?

PETE Social fuckin' services.

JEN We're not the most conventional of couples. No money. No job. No home.

DIMITRI But somehow you get by.

PETE Aye. Somehow we do.

*MEL comes back in and joins SIMON*

SIMON All well with Jean-Louis?

MEL What?

SIMON You have that expression.

MEL What expression?

SIMON The expression you always have with your latest.

MEL Latest what? Assistant?

SIMON Bed partner. Fuckbuddy. Lover.

MEL Don't be ridiculous.

SIMON Are you fucking him? Or is he fucking you?

MEL He's in London!

SIMON Where you will be next week.

MEL If the gods permit. Who will comfort you while I'm gone?

SIMON Schrödinger. Who do you think?

MEL We agreed.

SIMON One-night stands. Not love affairs.

MEL I'm not in love with him!

SIMON                    You give a good impression.

MEL                     I always come home to you.

SIMON                   Until you don't.

MEL                     Fuck it, Simon, what do you want?

SIMON                   To know where I stand.

MEL                     Where you've always stood. You want certainty. I can't give it to you. You want...

SIMON                   I want you!

MEL                     You've got me. And I want you - but on my terms.

SIMON                   On your terms. Always your bloody terms. What happens tomorrow?

MEL                     Tomorrow?

SIMON                   When we go home and find the studio flooded.

MEL                     We clear out the mess and start again.

SIMON                   Together? Or do you say you've had enough of living in the middle of nowhere, it's time to go back to London? To Jean-Louis or whoever?

MEL                     Are you afraid?

SIMON                   Afraid?

MEL                     Of being on your own?

SIMON                   No.

MEL                     You shouldn't be. You can afford to keep anyone in luxury in some Mayfair flat, not the back of beyond.

SIMON                   You realise everyone's listening.

MEL                     I bloody well hope they are. What's the point of a small community if not to gossip? (*loudly*) Gentlemen, ladies, non-binaries, you are witnessing a stereotypical queer bust-up. Of course there's nothing queer about it. Every Hollywood A-lister goes through the same at least once a month, not to mention every Tom, Dick, Harry and Jane who has an ounce of blood in their veins. We'd appreciate it if you didn't broadcast our current disagreement live on every social media channel but if you do please note my right is my better profile, Simon's is his left.

SIMON                   For Heaven's sake, Mel!

*As SIMON turns away there is a crash of thunder*

GREG                   Thunder in February.

FELICITY               Sounds like it's getting worse.

*BOZ returns, wearing a waterproof jacket*

MARION               God knows when it'll end.

MEL                   Does he? Is he watching? Does he care?

BOZ                   God cares for us as a shepherd cares for his flock.

KATE                   I always thought a shepherd maintains a flock for their own benefit not the sheep's. Imagine if a lamb prayed not to be castrated or slaughtered; would the shepherd grant their wish?

FELICITY               Talking of sheep, is anyone here a farmer?

KATE                   Not in here. It's coming on lambing season and they'll be out in the fields checking on the ewes.

FELICITY               In this weather?

KATE                   In every weather.

MARION               Who'd be a farmer? *(offering)* Drink anyone?

GREG                   *(looking up from his phone)* Can I have your attention, everyone? According to the group chat we seem to be it. Everyone else is either away or staying in. Can't say whether they're wise. So, we should get organised.

DIMITRI               Organised?

GREG                   A rota. Get clear who's doing what. Then we won't get in each other's way.

SIMON                  What is there to do? We sleep if we can and take stock in the morning.

GREG                   We should keep an eye on the group chat in case someone needs help.

KATE                   You seem to be doing that quite happily.

GREG                   I'll need back-up in case I fall asleep. And a few people still haven't responded.

DIMITRI               I can do that.

GREG                   Thank you, Dimitri. Let's make it three-hour shifts. Yours starts at midnight then I'll take over again at three. Now, someone to wash up in the kitchen, keep the place tidy.

MARION               Isn't that Boz's responsibility?

BOZ                   I'm happy to keep doing it.

GREG                   We can't impose on him any further.

BOZ                               It isn't an imposition.

KATE                             To reassure you, Greg, I'll keep an eye on the kitchen sink and drown any unwashed mug that dares to wander in.

GREG                             Marion, can you stay in touch with the emergency services?

MARION                         As you wish.

MEL                              Any other orders, Captain Mainwaring?

DIMITRI                        *(to JANE)* Who?

GREG                             Just a reminder to keep our spaces tidy. There are litter bins there and there. And the toilets...

JANE                             What about the toilets?

GREG                             If we limit the time we spend in there . . . Perhaps five minutes?

KATE                             Some of us might need longer than five minutes.

GREG                             Not when there're others waiting.

KATE                             Do I need to explain why five minutes might not be enough for some people?

GREG                             Surely in these circumstances . . .

KATE                             Especially in these circumstances.

GREG                             Let's compromise and say five minutes is the objective.

JANE                             *(getting up)* If that's the case we'd better start queuing.

*JANE exits at the Inner Door*

GREG                             Any questions? No? So, thanks for your co-operation. Let's hope this situation doesn't last longer than tonight. And Boz, if you don't mind, keep me updated on whatever you're doing.

BOZ                              Of course.

*GREG goes back to his phone*

MEL                              You first, or me?

SIMON                          Isn't it always you first?

*MEL exits at the Inner Door*

KATE                             *(about GREG)* It's nothing personal.

BOZ                              I know.

KATE                             He needs to be in control, to know everything that's going on.

BOZ                              And it ends up controlling him.

KATE                             Perhaps I should be more sympathetic.

BOZ                               Aren't you?  
KATE                             The well of my sympathy is almost dry. Yours appears to be bottomless.  
BOZ                               I do what I can.  
                                      I'll check on the river, see how high it's getting.  
KATE                             You shouldn't go out alone. It could be dangerous.  
BOZ                               I'll be fine.

*BOZ exits by the Outer Door*

GREG                            Where's he going?  
KATE                             To check on the river.  
GREG                            Bloody stupid thing to do.  
KATE                             Want to go after him?  
GREG                            I'm not his keeper. Everything ok, Marion? Anything I forgot to say?  
MARION                         I'm happy to leave Kirkhaigh in your hands.  
GREG                            And your friend?  
MARION                         Felicity? Felicity, have you any concerns?  
FELICITY                        No, none at all.

*MARION exits at the Inner Door*

JEN                               We should go.  
PETE                             Leave?  
JEN                               No, the toilet.  
PETE                             Right.

*PETE and JEN head for the Inner Door*

GREG                            They're clearly labelled.  
JEN                               What?  
GREG                            The toilets are clearly labelled. Male and Female.  
KATE                             It doesn't matter. There's one each and they're both individual.  
JEN                               If we're just pissing, should we stand or sit?  
KATE                             Whichever is more comfortable.  
PETE                             That's a relief.

*JEN and PETE exit*

GREG                            I wish you wouldn't undermine me.  
KATE                             Undermine?

GREG                   What you just did. You always object or disapprove to everything I say. In front of everyone. You never support me.

KATE                   You don't want support, Greg. Anytime you see something that you think needs doing you just go ahead and do it. The rest of us have no choice; we just have to catch up.

GREG                   Well if I didn't take the initiative, who would? Like the hall: the committee's no use. I'm the only active member here.

KATE                   Perhaps you drive them away.

GREG                   You've never been on my side, have you?

KATE                   I was once, Greg. Long ago.

GREG                   And now?

KATE                   Now we share a house and a bed and that's it. I don't even know why we share a bed.

GREG                   Lots of couples have separate lives. They're happy. We trust each other. We know each other. We don't fight.

KATE                   I trust you, Greg, but I'm not happy and we do fight. All the time. You just don't realise it. Or it's just me fighting for . . . I don't know what.

*The lights flicker but stay on. JANE returns and DIMITRI exits.*

GREG                   I'm tired, Kate. We're threatened by flood in a community hall that has no community, with a caretaker who's disappeared and a stranger claiming to be sent by God. There's a hideous new development coming that I have to fight, All the burden of running this place, this little village, falls on me and I am sorry if that means I can't be a good husband to you. At least we never had children, so you can't accuse me of abusing or neglecting them.

*KATE's face registers several emotions before she turns away. GREG looks at his phone.*

*MEL returns and SIMON exits*

FELICITY               What's the latest?

GREG                   Rain, rain, rain.

FELICITY               At least you're well prepared.

GREG                   Not as much as I'd like. I keep telling the village committee we should prepare for more serious emergencies - fire, pandemic, war - but they don't listen.

*MARION returns and joins them.*

FELICITY War? Here?

GREG Cyberattacks, drones, sabotage. A well-placed bomb at a power station or dam, poison in the water supply and thousands, tens of thousands, of people would be affected.

FELICITY Who'd attack the Borders?

GREG Anyone. England, Russia, America. Scots. There could be trench warfare in Kirkhaigh while normal life goes on in London.

MARION Do you want to rethink your plans, Felicity?

FELICITY What plans?

MARION The plans. Ah! (*conspiratorial*) Hush-hush.

FELICITY I have no idea what you're talking about.

MARION You're right. Nothing at all. Certainly not Kirkhaigh. And if you did have plans it's too late to change them.

GREG Too late to change what?

MARION You might as well know, Greg. The planning committee has approved the Kirkhaigh development.

GREG When did that happen?

MARION It'll be confirmed next meeting but we've agreed already to save time. When it goes to the full council it's certain to be passed.

JANE What? No!

KATE I can't say I'm surprised but what's this got to do with Felicity?

MARION One of her companies is providing the most of the funding. She came up to take a look at the site.

KATE And you (*FELICITY*) happen to be staying with Marion.

MEL Who you met in London.

GREG I smell a conflict of interest here.

MARION There's no conflict!

MEL Who's paying who, or whom?

FELICITY Nobody is paying anybody!

MEL Then you're both bad at your jobs. What's the point of a little collusion if you don't make money from it? You (*FELICITY*) make a profit and you (*MARION*) get a kickback. That's how it works, isn't it?

MARION I'm not getting a kickback.

KATE Maybe not in your bank account. Shares in the company? At the very least a long-haul holiday for you, Bill and the boys? Disneyworld business class?

MEL Or shares in some other company, based in a tax haven.

*SIMON returns*

MEL (cont) That's what Simon would recommend, wouldn't you, Simon?

SIMON What's that?

*DIMITRI returns*

JANE Deem! The development's going ahead.

DIMITRI What?

JANE Marion and her friend have stitched us up.

GREG We can still stop it at the full council.

KATE Don't you believe it. What's the betting they're all getting kickbacks.

MEL How cynical can you be?

KATE I read *Private Eye*.

MARION You're misunderstanding the situation. It's pure coincidence that Felicity and I know each other.

MEL And pigs fly. Fifty acres of prime land, outside any conservation area. An hour from Edinburgh with its airport and fast trains to London. How much do you expect to make?

FELICITY I can assure you that compared with my other projects I will make very little from this development.

*GREG scoffs*

JANE Perhaps not, but we will lose everything.

MARION The Borders needs housing.

MEL What kind of housing? Social for locals? Or market rate for outsiders?

KATE It'll be a bunch of outsiders with no connection to the community, commuting every day or letting their homes as AirBnBs for drunken parties and litter everywhere and God knows what.

*As PETE and JEN return there is a sudden loud crack and all the lights go out*

PETE What the fuck?

JEN No!

*Two or three people switch on the torch on their phones*

GREG                         Just what we need. Stay where you are, everyone. I'll check the breaker, see if we can get the power back.

*GREG goes out the Inner Door*

JEN                         *(having a panic attack)* No! No! No!

PETE                         We need light, here, now! Will someone put a fuckin' light on! Now!!

*From the other side of the hall DIMITRI switches on a powerful torch that illuminates JEN and PETE; it begins to calm JEN. Meanwhile Pavlos has started crying and JANE is reassuring him while BOZ appears at the Outer Door*

BOZ                         Is everyone all right?

PETE                         No, we're not!

JEN                         I'm okay. I'll be okay.

*Sounds of reassurance from the others*

BOZ (cont)                 Power has gone, probably in the whole area, and the road is under at least three feet but we are safe here.

PETE                         Did ye see Angel?

BOZ                         I did. I'm afraid she's on her side . . .

PETE                         *(sardonic)* Well, that's us well and truly fucked.

BOZ                         I suggest everyone settles down and tries to get some sleep. Does anyone need anything? *(to JEN)* Are you all right?

JEN                         I'm getting there.

BOZ                         I'll see if Greg needs help.

*BOZ exits by the Inner Door*

KATE                         I don't know where he came from, but he's a godsend. Eilidh would be panicking and we'd be having to reassure her.

JEN                         I don't need the light any more.

PETE                         Are ye sure?

JEN                         Aye. I'm good. Just Let me sit down, relax for a while.

*DIMITRI switches off the light as PETE and JEN find a place beside him and JANE. There is still light from other phones. From now on voices are quiet unless otherwise noted.*

JANE                         Sorry to hear about Angel. Deem and I have talked and you could stay with us for a few days if that would help.

PETE Are ye serious?  
JEN But you don't know us.  
DIMITRI You don't know us.  
JANE We'll take the risk.  
PETE If ye feel the same in the morn . . .  
JANE Who knows what any of us will feel in the morning? But the offer is there.  
PETE Ye're a star. Ye're fuckin' stars!

*Pavlos cries*

JEN You too, Pavlo. You're a star!

*The four of them settle as JANE comforts Pavlos.*

MEL Comfortable? *(no response from SIMON)* Are you comfortable?  
SIMON No.  
MEL "I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can."  
SIMON What?  
MEL Gloucester. Lear.  
SIMON I think you should stay in London for a while. Either that or I will.  
MEL I see.  
SIMON You don't protest.  
MEL Good night, Simon.  
SIMON Good night.  
MEL Good night, Schrödinger.

*Schrödinger miaows*

*BOZ and GREG come back in*

KATE Well?  
GREG It's no use. Not even our talented and every so helpful temporary caretaker can get it going.  
BOZ I'm not very familiar with modern technology.  
GREG It's over fifty years old.  
Dimitri!  
DIMITRI Yes?  
GREG I'll wake you at midnight. To monitor the chat.  
DIMITRI Oh, right.

*A few moments silence and perhaps the first sounds of sleep. MEL checks his phone then puts it aside. GREG stretches out by KATE; he and PETE are still on their phones. BOZ, wide awake, is watching over them.*

MARION I apologise for my indiscretion.

FELICITY It was unfortunate.

MARION I hope it won't harm our friendship.

You have no idea the stress being a local councillor. I can't imagine what MSPs or MPs have to put up with.

FELICITY We should get some sleep.

MARION You're right.

*PETE puts away her phone and stretches out. A few moments later GREG does the same. There is very little light. MARION suddenly sits up.*

MARION Who's that?

FELICITY What?

MARION Over there. Two people. Who are they?

GREG *(sitting up)* Where?

MARION There. Two people.

GREG *(lying down again)* There's no-one.

MARION There are, I swear.

FELICITY It's just your imagination.

MEL Or it's ghosts, Marion, ghosts.

*MARION reluctantly lies down. The sound of rain can be heard for a few seconds before the*

*BLACKOUT*

## ACT TWO

WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE READING ON 13 MAY