

“ABC 123”

BY

KEVIN FEGAN

**Commissioned by The Ashton Group for their senior
youth theatre at Forum 28 Theatre Barrow-in-Furness**

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LIST OF CHARACTERS

April – girl, age 15

Bea – girl, age 15

Celine – girl, age 18

Dee – girl, age 18, Fraser’s ex

Eden – boy, age 15, April’s boyfriend and Bea’s friend

Fraser – boy, age 18

Gene – Bea’s Dad, age 42

Hayley – Fraser’s Mum, age 35

Irene – Hayley and April’s Mum, Fraser’s Gran, age 52

Jay-Jay – Hayley’s Fella, age early 30’s

Kay – girl, age 16-18, Celine’s friend and Chorus

ELLie – girl, age 16-18, Celine’s friend and Chorus

EM – girl, age 16-18, Celine’s friend and Chorus

Naz – boy, age 16-18, Fraser’s friend and Chorus

Oz – boy, age 16-18, Fraser’s friend and Chorus

Pete – boy, age 16-18, Fraser’s friend and Chorus

Quentin – boy, age 12, and Chorus

ARnie – boy twin, age 12-15, and Chorus

ESther – girl twin, age 12-15, and Chorus

T – girl, age 5-6, and Chorus

**ALL MEMBERS OF THE CAST CAN BE USED AS MEMBERS OF THE
CHORUS**

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SCENE 1

ON SCREEN, PRE-RECORDED BRIEF ANECDOTES
ABOUT THE OPPOSITE SEX BY SELECTED MEMBERS
OF THE CAST AS THEMSELVES.

SCENE 2

GIRLS CHORUS

Things girls like about boys:

Funny

Unique

They're not too bothered about their appearance

They can show that they love you

They don't have to be the centre of attention

They can be good companions

They have hobbies

Not as bitchy as girls

Good looking

Nice bodies

Make you feel protected

Different opinions to girls

Make you feel loved and safe

Can have good fashion sense

Hair, bushy or swept

Can show their feelings when they're on their own

Can be good listeners on their own

Smile

Have ideas and thoughts about things

Music

Individual

BOYS CHORUS

Things boys like about girls:

Hair

Eyes

Personality

They have the babies

Do things they don't want to do, like cooking

Look after men

Great for sex

Sense of humour

Looks

Beautiful

Caring

How much effort they put in to impress

How happy they make us feel

A shoulder to cry on

Even though the world falls apart, they still smile

Make a lot of effort for us

Attractive

Get things right first time

Can confide in them

Not as judgemental

Fashion sense

Kind-hearted

GIRLS CHORUS

Things girls don't like about boys:

Chavs

Lazy attitudes

Obsessed with you

Show off in front of their mates

Too loud

Ignore you

Immature

Shallow

Don't listen

Complaining

Big-headed

Can be insensitive

Annoying

Pompous

Constant nagging

Sexist

Selfish attitudes

Jealous

Like you too much

Arrogant

Liars

Two-faced

BOYS CHORUS

Things boys don't like about girls:

Gossiping

Too much perfume

Too much pink

Spoilt brats

Constant nagging

Drag us to town shopping

Spend too long in the toilet

Take too long getting ready

Always argue

They have affairs

Spend hours in the bathroom

Fickle

Can't understand them

Impossible to satisfy them emotionally

Over protective sometimes

Expect men to be strong

Can be gobby

Go to the toilet in pairs

Can be shallow

Can be blonde

Can be plastic

Can be very opinionated

GIRLS & BOYS CHORUS MIMMICK EACH OTHER'S

POSTURES AND ATTITUDES.

GIRLS CHORUS

(GRUNTING) Get your tits out for the lads!

BOYS CHORUS

Does my bum look big in this?

GIRLS

If you really loved me, you would.

BOYS

Haven't you had enough to drink yet?

GIRLS

Yeah, I've done it loads of times.

BOYS

I want you to want to help me.

GIRLS

Can we go out with each other and still see other people?

BOYS

Were you staring at her?

GIRLS

You decide for us.

BOYS

Sorry isn't good enough.

GIRLS

Bitch, ho, bird, the wife!

BOYS

Huh, men!

SCENE 3

A PARK.

APRIL

He’s lovely.

BEA

I know.

APRIL

I am so glad you introduced me.

BEA

I didn’t have much choice.

APRIL

If it wasn’t for you, Bea, I wouldn’t have a boyfriend.

BEA

Tell me about it.

APRIL

You should get yourself someone like Eden.

BEA

Yeah, right.

You won’t hurt him, will you? Only me and Eden have been best mates for as long as I can remember.

APRIL

All the girls like him. And he’s mine.

ENTER EDEN.

EDEN

Hiya, April.

APRIL

Hi, babe.

EDEN

Hiya, Bea.

BEA

Hi, Eden.

APRIL LINKS ARMS WITH HIM.

APRIL

Don't you think we make a great couple?

BEA

(LEAVING) I'll leave you two lovebirds alone.

EXIT.

APRIL

She's my best mate.

EDEN

She was my friend first, remember?

APRIL

She's not a “mate” like you, though.

EDEN

You mean like “mate” on the Discovery Channel?

APRIL

A bit forward, aren't you?

EDEN

Sorry, I didn't mean –

APRIL

Only teasing. Don't start going backwards on me. Come on,
let's find somewhere private we can make out.

EXIT.

SCENE 4

FRASER’S HOUSE.

FRASER

Have you seen my moby anywhere?

CELINE

Fraser?

FRASER

Yeah?

CELINE

You know that girl in the pub?

FRASER

What girl?

CELINE

That girl you were talking to?

FRASER

I was talking to lots of girls.

CELINE

Not like that one.

FRASER

Which one?

CELINE

Who is she?

FLASHBACK TO PUB. CELINE GOES TO THE TOILET,
ENTER DEE WHO APPROACHES FRASER.

DEE

Fancy seeing you here.

FRASER

I always come here.

DEE

I'll try and remember that.

I'm with the girls, who are you with?

FRASER

I'm with a girl too.

DEE

Anyone special?

FRASER

Might be.

DEE

Do you miss me?

FRASER

No.

DEE

Don't believe you.

Do you remember our first kiss?

FRASER

No.

DEE

Liar. At the swimming baths?

FRASER

It tasted of chlorine.

DEE

I miss “swimming” with you.

FRASER

You dumped me, Dee.

DEE

I’ve changed.

FRASER

I haven’t.

DEE

You were too pushy.

FRASER

Still am.

DEE

I’m ready to be pushed now.

FRASER

Your loss, not mine.

DEE

Don’t be like that. Forgive and forget?

FRASER

I’m with someone.

DEE

I saw her nip to the loo.

(PICKING UP HIS MOBILE PHONE) Is this your moby?

FRASER

Give it back.

SHE TYPES IN HER NUMBER WHICH APPEARS ON THE
SCREEN. HE TAKES BACK HIS PHONE.

I didn't ask for it.

DEE

Call me.

(LEAVING AS CELINE RETURNS).

You know you want to.

CELINE SEES DEE BLOW HIM A KISS.

EXIT DEE.

RETURN TO PRESENT AND FRASER'S HOUSE.

CELINE

I found your moby.

SHE HANDS IT TO HIM.

FRASER

That's great, where was it?

CELINE

Who's "Dee"?

FRASER

You've been through my contacts? How could you do that,

Celine?

CELINE

Easy.

FRASER

Don't you trust me?

CELINE

Who is she?

FRASER

She's just an ex.

CELINE

You've not mentioned her before?

FRASER

'Cos I've not thought about her.

CELINE

Until you asked for her phone number.

FRASER

I didn't ask, she gave it to me.

CELINE

You took it.

FRASER

I didn't have much choice.

CELINE

You kept it.

FRASER

I don't need it.

CELINE

Good, then you won't mind if I erase it.

SHE TAKES BACK HIS PHONE.

FRASER

I don't need it, cos I've remembered her number anyway.

CELINE THROWS HIS PHONE AT HIM AND LEAVES.

SCENE 5

A PARK.

BEA

April's very pretty.

EDEN

Do you think so?

BEA

Well, you obviously do.

EDEN

She's not like you.

BEA

What do you mean?

EDEN

Nothing.

BEA

No, come on?

EDEN

She wears lots of make-up.

BEA

And?

EDEN

And perfume. We were in the cinema the other night and I could hardly breathe. I was choking on the stink, it was that bad.

BEA

(LAUGHING) Tell her.

EDEN

I can't hurt her feelings.

BEA

Well, I'm certainly not telling her for you.

EDEN

Go on, please, you're her mate.

BEA

No.

EDEN

And she's got sharp nails.

BEA

What?

EDEN

I thought girls were suppose to be gentle?

BEA

That is more information than I need to know.

EDEN

Come out with us tonight?

BEA

I don't want to play gooseberry, thanks.

EDEN

Don't be daft, it'll be a laugh.

BEA

Not for April, it won't.

EDEN

Come on, we used to have a right laugh together.

BEA

Yeah, we did. Now go and see your girlfriend, Eden, you're
doing my head in.

SCENE 6

IN THE PUB.

DEE

Are you following me?

FRASER

No.

DEE

Are you feeling as bad as you look?

FRASER

I could do with some company.

DEE

Lovers' tiff?

FRASER

I suppose.

DEE

Not everyone knows how to be with you like I do.

FRASER

That's true.

DEE

Come to your senses, at last? You're obviously not right for each other.

FRASER

We are most of the time.

DEE

You should spend more time with your friends.

FRASER

I'm not splitting up with her, you know?

DEE

I know. We're just having a drink.

SCENE 7

ON SCREEN AND PRE-RECORDED, SELECTED
MEMBERS OF THE CAST, AS THEMSELVES, TALKING
ABOUT FAMILIES.

SCENE 8

PARENTS AND TEENAGERS' RAP

PARENTS' & TEENAGERS' CHORUSES

Parents and teenagers

Are like perfect strangers.

PARENTS' CHORUS

Parents who bring home the wages

Are flying into rages

Cos the teenagers are not able

To guage the dangers,

Teenagers always in our faces,

Lying around like wasters,

Hanging out in all the wrong places,

Racing around in car chases,

Battling with neighbours and legal cases,

No manners, no respect, no social graces.

PARENTS & TEENAGERS

Parents and teenagers

Are like perfect strangers.

TEENAGERS' CHORUS

Teenagers are going through different stages,

Passing phases, needing praises,

Feeling like they're living in cages,

Taken hostage by hormones

And parents in beige trousers,

Forgetting what it was like to be their age,
Ripping through rites of passage
At a furious pace,
Turning a new page in the book of life,
Trying not to do themselves a damage.

PARENTS & TEENAGERS

Parents and teenagers
Are like perfect strangers.

THEY AIM CLICHES AT EACH OTHER.

PARENT 1

While you live under my roof, it's my rules.

TEENAGER 1

That's soooo unfair.

PARENT 2

You must think money grows on trees.

TEENAGER 2

I'm telling mum.

PARENT 3

Act your age and not your shoe size.

TEENAGER 3

It wasn't me.

PARENT 4

You're not going out dressed like that.

TEENAGER 4

Whatever.

PARENT 5

Watch your lip.

TEENAGER 5

In a minute.

PARENT 6

How much?

TEENAGER 6

I'm bored.

PARENT 7

In my day.

TEENAGER 7

Am I bothered?

PARENT 8

And what time do you call this?

TEENAGER 8

And your point is?

PARENT 9

Where do you think you're going?

TEENAGER 9

Do it yourself.

PARENT 10

You treat this house like a bloody hotel.

TEENAGER 10

It was already like that.

PARENT 11

Chance 'ld be a fine thing.

TEENAGER 11

Why is it always my fault?

PARENT 12

Watch your language.

TEENAGER 12

You never let me do anything.

PARENT 13

Your room is like a bomb-site.

TEENAGER 13

It's not that bad.

PARENT 14

Don't use that tone of voice with me.

TEENAGER 14

She started it.

PARENT 15

Less of your back-chat.

TEENAGER 15

It's the fashion.

PARENT 16

What did your last slave die of?

TEENAGER 16

LOL.

PARENT 17

When did you last have a bath?

TEENAGER 17

ROFL.

PARENT 18

I am not a bloody taxi.

TEENAGER 18

OMG.

PARENT 19

If I had a pound for every time.

TEENAGER 19

Get out of my room.

PARENT 20

Do I look like a bank manager?

TEENAGER 20

I hate you.

PARENT 21

If you're not happy with it, phone childline.

TEENAGER 21

I'm on the phone.

SCENE 9

BEA'S HOUSE.

GENE

What's the matter, peach?

BEA

Nothing.

GENE

Yes, there is.

BEA

How do you know?

GENE

I'm your dad, it's my job to know. I have a little sensor in my brain that flashes whenever you're feeling a bit low.

BEA

It's Eden. He's going out with my mate, April.

GENE

And you fancy him?

BEA

I didn't say that.

GENE

You don't have to.

BEA

He doesn't think of me like that, we're mates.

GENE

How do you know? Have you asked him?

BEA

No way. I'm not asking a boy out.

GENE

Why not?

BEA

I'm not, that's all.

GENE

Your mum asked me out when we were your age.

BEA

Yeah and look where that got you.

GENE

We had some good times – we had you.

BEA

True, I was your finest hour.

I just don't think this girl's any good for him.

GENE

Tell him.

BEA

I can't. That would be betraying April.

GENE

Then do nothing.

BEA

I can't do nothing.

GENE

“Doing nothing” isn't doing nothing, it's waiting.

BEA

What use is waiting?

GENE

These things have a habit of working themselves out.

BEA

I don't know what you mean.

GENE

Trust me.

BEA

I don't mean to be funny, dad, but you're old.

GENE

Not that old.

BEA

How can you know how kids today think?

GENE

Hey, I was 15 once.

BEA

Things have changed.

GENE

Growing up doesn't change.

BEA

I don't want to talk about it.

GENE

Maybe ask your mum's advice when you go back to hers?

SCENE 10

FRASER’S HOUSE.

FRASER

Mum?

HAYLEY

What’re you after?

FRASER

Nothing.

HAYLEY

Good, cos I’m skint until pay-day.

FRASER

It’s not money.

HAYLEY

Makes a change. I’ve told you, we’re not having a dog.

FRASER

I never said.

HAYLEY

If you want guitar lessons, you’ll have to save up.

FRASER

No –

HAYLEY

Nintendo Wi?

FRASER

No.

HAYLEY

Motorbike?

FRASER

No.

HAYLEY

New carpet for your room?

FRASER

No.

HAYLEY

Holiday?

FRASER

No.

HAYLEY

New trainers?

FRASER

No.

HAYLEY

What then?

FRASER

Can Celine stay over with me in my room?

HAYLEY

No.

FRASER

Why not, we're both 18?

HAYLEY

I'm not discussing it.

FRASER

Your fella stays over.

HAYLEY

Er, who's the mother here? Who's house is it?

FRASER

It's my house as well.

HAYLEY

No, you live here.

FRASER

Thanks very much.

HAYLEY

When you pay me some rent, then you can have some rights.

FRASER

I thought you wanted me to study?

NO RESPONSE.

Mum, I think Celine's gonna finish with me.

HAYLEY

And you think letting her stop over will make her decide to stay with you?

FRASER

She wants us to be more grown-up.

HAYLEY

You want to sleep with her, you mean.

FRASER

Mum, we've been doing it since we were 16.

HAYLEY

I didn't think she was that kind of girl.

FRASER

And how old were you when you had me?

HAYLEY

That's quite enough.

FRASER

(GIVING UP) I'll ask me gran.

HE OPENS HIS LAPTOP.

HAYLEY

What're you doing?

FRASER

Msn-ing me gran.

HAYLEY

She only lives next door.

FRASER

I can't be arsed to go 'round.

HAYLEY

Don't be so lazy.

SCENE 11

BEA’S HOUSE AND IRENE’S HOUSE.

AT BEA’S HOUSE, HER DAD IS ON HIS COMPUTER, INTERNET DATING. AT IRENE’S HOUSE, IRENE IS REPLYING TO HIM. THEIR MESSAGES (IN ITALICS) APPEAR ON THE SCREEN.

GENE

I really enjoy chatting to you.

IRENE

Me too. You’re good company.

GENE

Would you like to meet?

IRENE

(TO HERSELF) This is the scary part. I don’t know what he’ll make of me when he sees me in the flesh.

GENE

(TO HIMSELF) She’s obviously thinking about it. Maybe I asked too soon?

IRENE

(TO HERSELF) He doesn’t seem like a nut-job. It’s so difficult for women to tell. Oh well, here goes...

This is my mobile, call me.

GENE

Yes!

HE IMMEDIATELY PHONES HER. SHE ANSWERS.

IRENE

Hello?

GENE

Hi, Irene, it's me, Gene – with a G.

IRENE

That was quick.

GENE

I must be keen.

How do you feel about meeting up?

IRENE

I'm not sure.

GENE

What aren't you sure about?

IRENE

Lots of things.

GENE

I like the sound of your voice – it's like treacle pudding.

IRENE

Charming.

GENE

You have lovely eyes.

IRENE

I liked your photo too; but I'm much older than you.

GENE

Only ten years.

IRENE

That’s a lot.

GENE

Not at our age. Look, it’s only numbers to me.

IRENE

You don’t know what you’re letting yourself in for. I have two daughters, 15 and 35; my eldest has a son aged 18 – I’m a grandma, and have been since my mid-thirties.

GENE

So you have a family, who hasn’t? I have a 15 year old daughter too. My wife ran away with another woman.

IRENE

Really?

DAD

No, I just say that to avoid the awful truth.

IRENE

Which is?

GENE

We fell out of love – okay, she fell out of love.

IRENE

My husband died not long after our youngest was born.

GENE

I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to –

IRENE

It’s okay, it was years ago.

GENE

I still don't hear any good reason why we shouldn't meet?

IRENE

We have a lot of emotional baggage at our age.

GENE

I tell you what: let's go on holiday –

IRENE

You what?

GENE

We'll fly to an island in the Med and all the emotional baggage can go to, er, Krakatoa – into the volcano.

NOISES OFF, SOMEONE COMING IN.

IRENE

Sorry, I'll have to go; I'll phone you back soon with a time to meet.

ENTER IRENE'S DAUGHTER, APRIL. IRENE HANGS UP.

GENE LOOKS A BIT CONCERNED, THEN EXITS.

APRIL

Hi mum, who's on the phone?

IRENE

Do you mind?

APRIL

What?

IRENE

That was a private call.

APRIL

Sorrr-yyy.

APRIL NOSES INTO HER MUM'S LAPTOP WHICH HAS
BEEN LEFT OPEN.

Boyfriend trouble?

IRENE QUICKLY CLOSES HER LAPTOP.

IRENE

What boyfriend?

APRIL

The one on your internet dating site.

IRENE

Never you mind.

APRIL

I'm gonna have a go.

IRENE

Don't you dare, young madam. I mean it. You don't know who
you're in contact with half the time. You can't trust men, April,
remember that.

APRIL

By the way, you've got a message from Fraser. He wants you
to call 'round.

IRENE CHECKS HER LAPTOP AND TAKES IT WITH HER.

SCENE 12

FRASER’S HOUSE. HAYLEY AND FRASER ARE STILL THERE. ENTER IRENE.

FRASER

Tell her, gran.

HAYLEY

Don’t listen to him, mum.

IRENE

Tell her what?

FRASER

You’d let me and Celine stop over at yours, wouldn’t you?

IRENE

I’d have to ask your mum.

HAYLEY

He’s had my answer.

IRENE

And I’d have to ask April.

ENTER APRIL WHO HAS FOLLOWED IRENE.

APRIL

Ask me what?

(TO HAYLEY) Hi sis.

HAYLEY

Hi sis.

APRIL

Hi nephew.

FRASER

Hi aunty.

IRENE

Don't you lot ever get sick of saying that?

HAYLEY, FRASER AND APRIL

No.

FRASER

I like being older than my aunty.

APRIL

(TO FRASER) I like being your mum's kid sister.

HAYLEY

Well, I don't really like my mum having a daughter younger than my son. I mean, who's the grandma here?

IRENE

I am and don't any of you forget it.

FRASER

(TO APRIL) You wouldn't mind giving up your bed the odd night for me and Celine, would you?

APRIL

No way.

FRASER

Go on, you could sleep in my room.

APRIL

Urgh! I've seen your room, it's gross.

FRASER

Celine likes it.

APRIL

Does she work on a farm?

FRASER

What're you talking about?

APRIL

Only she seems to like animals.

FRASER

Very funny, at least she's not a fairy.

APRIL

Eden is not a fairy, he's just very sensitive. And cute.

FRASER

He's a big girl.

HAYLEY

Stop it, Fraser.

FRASER

Tell her.

HAYLEY

I'm telling you.

APRIL

(TO FRASER) You're out-numbered.

ENTER JAY-JAY, HAYLEY'S FELLA.

FRASER

Help me out here, Jay-Jay, I'm drowning in females.

JAY-JAY

Who in their right mind would live with a house full of women?

APRIL

Er, a pimp?

JAY-JAY

(TO FRASER) Are they ganging up on you?

HAYLEY

(TO JAY-JAY) Stop taking sides, you.

APRIL

Excuse me, while we synchronise our periods.

IRENE

April! Don't talk like that in front of strangers.

HAYLEY

(HUGGING JAY-JAY) He might be strange, but he's no stranger.

IRENE

(TO HAYLEY) Tell them.

HAYLEY

Don't look at me, she's your daughter.

IRENE

He's your son.

HAYLEY

She's my sister.

APRIL

He's my nephew.

FRASER

She's my aunty.

JAY-JAY

I'm out of here.

HE EXITS.

SCENE 13

A PARK.

KAY

You not seeing Fraser tonight?

CELINE

I doubt it.

THE GIRLS WAIT FOR AN EXPLANATION.

ELLIE

Come on, then, dish the dirt on him.

CELINE

I've seen him with his ex.

EM

Wondered why you were hanging 'round with us again?

ELLIE

He's dumped you?

CELINE

No.

KAY

Don't be like that.

CELINE

No, they're right. I've been ignoring my friends for that loser.

ELLIE

He's not worth it.

EM

They never are.

KAY

Is he?

CELINE

No.

KAY

Which sounds like “yes” to me.

EM

Is he going out with her?

CELINE

I don't know.

ELLIE

I bet he is.

EM

I'd smack her one, if it was me.

KAY

Don't listen to her.

EM

He's an animal.

ELLIE

Yeah, that's what she likes about him.

CELINE

I don't know what to do.

KAY

Ask him. Talk to him about it.

CELINE

He knows where I am, if he wants me.

SCENE 14

A PARK.

NAZ

You're seeing both at the same time?

OZ

You jammy bastard.

PETE

My girlfriend wouldn't let me do that.

OZ

Don't tell her then, stupid.

NAZ

You have to decide which one you want to go out with.

PETE

Or they'll decide for you.

FRASER

I know, but I don't know how.

OZ

Easy, who's the fittest?

FRASER

They're both fit.

OZ

That's just greedy.

PETE

You mean, you can't even get one girlfriend.

OZ

At least mine's not a dog.

PETE AND OZ WRESTLE.

NAZ SEPARATES THEM.

NAZ

Pack it in, you pair.

OZ

I take it back, she's not a dog, she's a bitch.

THEY WRESTLE AGAIN.

NAZ

(SEPARATING THEM AGAIN) Pack it in.

PETE

Bet you daren't call her that to her face.

NAZ

I said!

THEY CALL A TRUCE.

FRASER

Why can't I go out with both of them?

NAZ

You could ask.

FRASER

Do you think they would?

NAZ

No chance.

FRASER

There should be a rule, right, that you can sleep with whoever you want until you're older, like 25 or something, unless you're married.

OZ

Even if you're married.

NAZ

There is, only it's an unwritten rule.

FRASER

For guys, yeah.

NAZ

And girls.

OZ

Really?

FRASER

They're same as us, they just don't feel the need to shout about it.

PETE

Would you share your girlfriend?

FRASER

No way.

NAZ

How do you know you're not already?

SCENE 15

A PARK. GENE AND IRENE HAVE MET UP.

IRENE

I feel like a teenager all over again.

GENE

I've forgotten what to do.

IRENE

Has it been a while?

GENE

Yes. And you?

IRENE

Too long.

GENE

Why don't we go for a walk?

IRENE

I'd like that.

GENE

Can I hold your hand?

IRENE

If you like.

GENE

(IN A PANIC) Oh, no.

IRENE

Sorry?

GENE

Don't look now, but my daughter is heading this way.

Turn 'round quick.

IRENE

What shall we do?

GENE

Hide.

IRENE

We could just say hello? After all, we are the grown-ups.

GENE

Right now it doesn't feel like it.

IRENE

You're right, let's hide.

THEY HIDE IN THE BUSHES.

BEA AND APRIL APPROACH.

APRIL

You'll never guess what?

BEA

What?

APRIL

I've met this proper man, right. I mean man, he's 25.

BEA

25!

APRIL

That's not too old.

BEA

You're 15.

APRIL

And? I can look older. Anyway, let me tell you, he's loaded.

BEA

Hold on, where have you met him?

APRIL

On the internet.

BEA

So you haven't actually met him?

APRIL

No, but I'm gonna. He drives this red convertible, it's not an Escort or anything like that, it's a dead posh affair with cream leather seats.

BEA

And you believe him?

APRIL

I've seen the pictures.

BEA

Er, hello? I've seen pictures of unicorns, ghosts, aliens with two heads...

APRIL

I'm meeting him this afternoon, if you don't believe me. He's coming in his car.

BEA

It's not safe, you can't go off in his car.

APRIL

I'm not stupid. He's meeting me at Macdonalds. I'm not getting in his car. I'm just meeting him.

IN THE BUSHES.

IRENE

You won't believe this: that's my daughter.

GENE

No, it's mine.

IRENE

I mean the girl with her.

GENE

You're joking?

IRENE

I wish I was.

MEANWHILE.

BEA

Have you told Eden?

APRIL

Told him what?

BEA

That you're finishing with him.

APRIL

Get real, I'm going out with Eden. That would be asking for

trouble.

BEA

And you wouldn't want that.

APRIL

What they don't know can't hurt them. You musn't let on,
you're my best friend.

BEA

I'm Eden's friend too.

APRIL

Bea, this is a girl thing.

BEA

No, it's an April thing.

APRIL

Promise me.

BEA

I can't promise to lie for you.

APRIL

You don't have to lie, just don't tell the truth. It'll be over with
this man before you know it.

BEA

Then why bother?

APRIL

Duh, fun?

THEY EXIT. IRENE AND GENE EMERGE FROM HIDING.

IRENE

Now what are we going to do?

GENE

Run away.

IRENE

Can it be far away, please?

GENE

We'll have to tell them.

IRENE

About us?

GENE

They're going to find out sooner or later.

IRENE

It's all so embarrassing.

GENE

Do you wish we hadn't met ?

IRENE

I don't know. I'm sorry, I mean –

GENE

It's okay. Like you said, it's up to us to act like the grown-ups.

IRENE

And split up? Before we've even got it together?

GENE

I don't want to.

IRENE

Me neither.

BEA AND APRIL RE-APPEAR.

BEA

Dad, what are you doing?

GENE

Aaarrgh! Bea, it's you. Fancy seeing you here.

APRIL

Mum? Are you spying on me?

IRENE

Of course not, sweetheart. I met this gentleman in the park
and we, er, we –

APRIL

Decided to hide in the bushes?

GENE

I can explain. It's not what you think.

BEA

I don't know what to think.

APRIL

Did you hear what we were saying?

IRENE

No, I swear –

GENE

Not a word. We were on a first date when you two –

BEA & APRIL

Date?

BEA

No, you can't do that.

GENE

Why not?

BEA

(SIGNALLING HERSELF AND APRIL) Duh, because “we” are friends.

GENE

Keeps it in the family.

APRIL

(ABOUT BEA) Woe, she is not my family.

BEA

I am not going to be her sister.

IRENE

Hey, hey, no one's getting married here.

GENE

We should have run away.

BEA

You were going to elope? Without telling us?

APRIL

Thanks very much.

GENE

No.

IRENE

No one's eloping.

BEA

I'm sorry, but you can't carry on seeing each other.

APRIL

It has to stop.

GENE

What?

IRENE

Excuse me, who are the grown-ups here?

APRIL

Certainly not you two.

(TAKING HER MUM BY THE HAND) Wait 'til I get you home.

BEA

(TAKING HER DAD BY THE HAND) Come with me now, you have got some explaining to do.

BEA AND APRIL DRAG THEIR RESPECTIVE PARENTS AWAY IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS LIKE NAUGHTY CHILDREN.

SCENE 16

“THE ALPHABET OF RESPECT” RAP

CHORUS

all the talk is of Separation,
families and friends in Conflagration,
Generation against Generation,
Nation versus Nation,
so much Discrimination between rich and poor,
Populations at war,
the Xclassification of human behaviour,
in the name of Modernisation,
the Occupation of sovereign states,
the Frustration of international aid,
illegal Assassinations
and oppressive Legislation,
the Westernisation of the world,
the Zonation of wealth,
the Justification of celebrity culture,
the Karaoke-ation of fame,
the Yuppyfication of morality,
the Humiliation of humanity,
will there ever be Salvation?
where is the language of Reconcilliation?
it's not just about Education and Qualifications,
the sharing of Information

and the Unification of the united nations,
but the Validation of all human life,
a Transformation in our thinking:
if we're all letters from the same alphabet,
then let's here it for the Beatification
of the word, “respect”.

QUENTIN STEPS OUT OF THE CHORUS. HE IS AGED
ABOUT 12.

QUENTIN

When I was about ten, there was a big fall-out in the family. We didn't get on with grandad and he was threatening to upset us all by telling the truth about something. My parents got me in the living room and said,
“There's something you should know: your dad's not your real dad.”
“Oh,” I said, “All right, then.”
It felt a bit weird. Looking back, everyone's always said to me,
“You don't look much like your dad; are you sure he's your dad?”
I was upset, but I'm glad they told me. I've never seen him, my real dad. My mum says he's not the sort of person you'd want to know. Apparently, when I was a baby in my pram, he didn't believe that I was his. He just looked at me and said,
“That's not my kid.”

And he’s not seen me since. I don’t even know if he knows he’s got a son. Mum says I do look like him. She sees him sometimes, but if I’m with her, she’d never say. It’s a bit spooky knowing I could walk past him and never know. I’ve got half-brothers and relatives and all sorts out there somewhere. I’d like to see him, see if I am like him. It’s only natural to be curious, isn’t it?

QUENTIN RETURNS TO THE CHORUS.

THE TWINS STEP OUT OF THE CHORUS. ARNIE AND ESTHER ARE AGED ABOUT 12-15.

ARNIE

You’re staying with mum, I’m going with dad.

ESTHER

That’s original.

ARNIE

They’ve agreed.

ESTHER

They can’t divide us up like we’re bits of furniture.

ARNIE

I think it’s hard for them, with us two being twins.

ESTHER

I want us to be together.

ARNIE

We can visit each other. Mum’s buying him out.

ESTHER

It'll end up in court, you wait and see.

ARNIE

No, it won't. They agreed to separate.

ESTHER

Dad left.

ARNIE

Mum had an affair.

ESTHER

Dad had affairs.

ARNIE

A long time ago.

ESTHER

They should have split up when we were little.

ARNIE

That would have been worse.

ESTHER

For who?

ARNIE

For us.

ESTHER

Did you enjoy all the rows?

ARNIE

Don't be stupid.

ESTHER

Because I didn't.

ARNIE

Then why are you still wanting them to stay together?

ESTHER

I don't, I want “us” to stay together; they can do what the hell they like.

ARNIE

When we leave school, we could get a flat.

ESTHER

Do you really think so?

ARNIE

We get on well, don't we?

ESTHER

Between fights, yeah. We wouldn't have to put up with their stupid rules.

ARNIE

Dad's worse than mum is.

ESTHER

You're joking. Mum's stricter.

ARNIE

Dad's petty.

ESTHER

I knew you preferred mum; why do you want to live with dad?

ARNIE

How can you prefer dad?

ESTHER

Why is it always the boys stay together and the girls stay together? Where's the sense in that?

ARNIE

Let's tell them then, we want our own flat together.

ESTHER

They'll say, they can't afford it.

ARNIE

It wouldn't cost them any more. Dad could pay us the maintenance instead of mum.

ESTHER

And mum could pay us what she saves, with not having me in the house.

ARNIE

It would only be 'til we're both 18.

ESTHER

Yeah, it's our lives, innit? Why can't the kids live on their own? We're used to looking out for each other – that's what twins do best.

THEY SHAKE HANDS ON IT AND RETURN TO THE CHORUS.

A LITTLE GIRL, “T”, AGED ABOUT 5-6, STEPS FROM THE CHORUS.

T

I thought it was Friday, but last time it was Saturday and I don't know what day it is this time. I asked daddy on the 'phone when is he coming home? Daddy says mummy doesn't want him to live with us no more. Mummy says he's nothing but trouble. That's what my teacher says about me, but she doesn't stop me coming to school.

Last time I saw daddy I wanted to play with my castle, but it was at mummy's and we couldn't go and get it 'cause weekends are mummy's time and she might be at the seaside. My cousin says I'm too little to understand but I'm not the littlest in our class.

Daddy's looking for a house with a bedroom for me. I'll have two beds but only one teddy. I don't mind sharing a bed, but daddy says I talk in my sleep and end up facing sideways. My cousin says I'm lucky 'cause I'll have two birthdays and two Christmases. My cousins got two daddys. I don't want two daddys, I like the one I've got. I have a photo of mummy at daddy's and a photo of daddy at mummy's, but I have to keep them in the draw.

I'd like a baby sister. I saw one at my friend's house and it was like a doll, only it rolled about a lot more and made noises like a boiled egg. I like boiled egg with soldiers for breakfast.

My mummy makes it runny, but my daddy always forgets until
the steam makes the alarm bell scream. My daddy calls me
his little boiled egg. I wish I knew which day was Friday.

T RETURNS TO THE CHORUS.

SCENE 17

CHORUS OF BOYS AND GIRLS, INCLUDING KAY, ELLIE & EM AND NAZ, OZ & PETE, ARE IN THE PARK WITH BEA AND EDEN.

BEA

I told April I wouldn't tell you; but I have to, you're my oldest friend.

EDEN

It's okay, really, it's a bit of a relief.

BEA

What will you do?

EDEN

It's give me an excuse to finish with her, so it's probably for the best.

BEA

Please don't tell her I told you.

EDEN

I promise. I'll say I've seen them together.

BEA

Thanks, Eden. I didn't want you to get hurt.

EDEN

You're such a lovely person, Bea.

BEA

Am I?

EDEN

I don't know how I'm going to say it. There's no easy way to tell someone, is there?

CHORUS

We're all really sorry, but “you're dumped!”

KAY

This is not going to work. No, don't come near me. Deal with it, it's over.

CHORUS

Kay says, “You're dumped!”

ELLIE

It's not that I don't love you any more, I'm just not “in love” with you. Yeah , I must be lesbian then, whatever you say.

CHORUS

Ellie says, “You're dumped!”

NAZ

You're holding me back. I want to go out with my friends and have some fun. I'm sorry, I need some “me” time.

CHORUS

Naz says, “You're dumped!”

OZ

Oh hi, no, I haven't been avoiding you; it's just that I'm moving out of the area. No, I'm not seeing anyone else. Erm, I'm moving to Australia actually, tomorrow. See you, bye.

CHORUS

Oz says, “You’re dumped!”

PETE

I don’t feel the same way about you any more. My head’s all over the place. It’s not you, it’s me.

CHORUS

Pete says, “You’re dumped!”

EM

The thing is, I know you and me have had some brilliant times; but, well, I don’t know how to say this. I just don’t like you any more.

CHORUS

Em says, “You’re dumped!”

BEA HIDES AS APRIL JOINS EDEN. THERE IS AN AWKWARD SILENCE BETWEEN THEM.

APRIL

Are you doing that silent thing where you’re too scared to dump me?

EDEN

April, I know you’re seeing someone else, it’s not about him or his age or his flash car, if we’re honest it wasn’t working between us, you don’t really like me, you like the fact that I’m popular and I don’t actually like the way you, you know, so what I’m trying to say is –

CHORUS

Will you get on with it? Eden says, “You’re dumped!”

APRIL

(EASY-GOING) Fine. See you around, babe.

(AS SHE’S LEAVING) Oh, and tell Bea, I’m still friends.

BEA RETURNS.

BEA

Well, how did she take it?

EDEN

She’s cool.

BEA

No tears?

EDEN

No. She said to tell you, she’s still friends.

BEA

Really?

EDEN

No problem.

BEA

What about you and me? Where does that leave us?

EDEN

Friends, silly.

BEA

I thought, now April’s off the scene, you might – can I kiss you?

EDEN

(OFFERING HIS CHEEK) ‘Course you can.

BEA

(PULLING HIS MOUTH TO HERS) I mean...

EDEN

(PULLING AWAY) Bea, I don’t think of you like that, you’re more like the sister I never had. I’m sorry.

BEA

Your “sister”? I see, of course.

EDEN

I’d like you to meet someone.

DEE APPROACHES EDEN AND HOOKS

HIS ARM.

EDEN (CONTINUED)

This is Dee. Dee, this is my best friend in all the world.

SCENE 18

FRASER

Can we have a serious talk?

CELINE

You? Serious?

(PAUSE) Well?

FRASER

Nothing.

CELINE

I'm listening.

FRASER

Are you seeing someone else?

CELINE

That's rich coming from you.

FRASER

Do you want to see someone else?

CELINE

No.

You obviously do.

FRASER

What if I did?

CELINE

Fine, I'm off.

FRASER

Don't be like that, I'm trying to talk.

CELINE

I suppose that's progress – for a guy.

FRASER

What if we allowed ourselves to see other people, but stayed together?

CELINE

Typical male.

FRASER

Don't you fancy other guys?

CELINE

Yeah, but I'm seeing you – maybe.

FRASER

Some couples do it, have an open relationship.

CELINE

Yeah, if they're hippies living in a commune or they're old and don't have sex.

FRASER

I know people who –

CELINE

It can't last.

FRASER

Why can't it?

CELINE

Look, just find yourself a different girlfriend.

FRASER

I don't want to lose you.

CELINE

Then tell that slag to sling her hook.

FRASER

I've never heard you talk like that before.

CELINE

Well, you're hearing it now. It's called "jealousy", all right, and it's raging inside all of us. Or are you telling me you don't feel jealous?

FRASER

Of course I do, but we have to control it.

CELINE

Stop trying to be emotionally clever, it doesn't suit you, you're male.

FRASER

It's not easy, is it, this relationship stuff?

CELINE

At least we're being honest with each other.

SCENE 19

FRASER’S HOUSE. BOTH FAMILIES HAVE GATHERED FOR A MEETING. FRASER AND CELINE HAVE CLEARLY MADE UP, BUT APRIL AND BEA ARE AWKWARD IN EACH OTHER’S COMPANY.

GENE

We’ve asked you all to join us tonight because we’ve got something to tell you.

HAYLEY

Please tell me you’re not pregnant, mum?

IRENE

Just listen up, will you?

GENE

Me and your mum, Irene, we realise how hard it must be for some of you to accept us as a couple – and we did talk about not seeing each other anymore; but, well, we really like each other and we’d like you to be happy for us.

FRASER

Cool by me.

HAYLEY

I suppose.

JAY-JAY

And me.

HAYLEY

You don’t count.

JAY-JAY

Oh, cheers.

(TO GENE) Get out now while you can, you don't know what you're letting yourself in for.

CELINE

I think it's dead romantic.

IRENE

Thank you; but it's the younger girls we're worried about.

APRIL AND BEA LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

GENE & IRENE

Well?

FRASER

I don't think they're speaking – “boy” trouble.

APRIL

Yes, we are.

BEA

'Course, we are.

(TO HER DAD) I'm sorry I reacted the way I did. I can see what it means to you. I know how hard it is to love someone.

APRIL

(TO HER MUM) Who am I to judge others? You know what I'm saying?

GENE

That sounds to me like a seal of approval?

IRENE

We don't, for a minute, imagine it's going to be one big happy family; but as long as we can get on, that's good enough for us.

SCENE 20

ON SCREEN (OR LIVE, IF PREFERRED) SELECTED CAST MEMBERS, AS THEMSELVES, TALK ABOUT HOW THEY SEE THEIR FUTURES.

SCENE 21

CHORUS JOIN REST OF CAST FOR “ABC 123” FINAL RAP.

CAST

I want to please you,
You want to please me,
It should be easy,
ABC 123,
Get down and get jiggy.
We all need love,
We all need to be loved,
Why is that so hard to achieve?
These things go together
Like the record and the sleeve,
Like the trees and the leaves,
Like the cloth and the weave,
Like god and believing,
Like death and grieving,
Like arriving and leaving.
I want to please you,
You want to please me,
It should be easy,
ABC 123,
Get down and get jiggy.
It might be cheesy,
It might be sleezy,

“ABC 123” by Kevin Fegan ©

It might make you queezy,
You might like to tease me,
But it should be easy,
ABC 123,
Get down and get jiggy.

PLAY ENDS