**Bundle of Joy?**

**ACT ONE**

**Scene 1**

*A studio flat.*

*They are finishing getting ready for their 1st wedding anniversary party.*

**XX**  Should I wear that necklace your parents gave me for my birthday last year, to prove that I like it to your mother?

**XY**  If you think it’ll go with what you’re wearing then sure why not.

**XX** Not exactly a helpful answer is it.

**XY**  Well I just don’t think it really matters wear the/ necklace don’t wear the necklace

**XX** /Well it’ll matter to your mum, she’ll notice and comment and/

**XY /** If you want to wear it wear it but I don’t think it’s that big of a deal/ again it’s just a necklace

**XX /**You would say that considering you never wear any of the stuff my parents buy you/ even though

**XY** / That is because your parents are convinced I am the sort of person to wear funky socks. I am not a funky sock sort of person.

**XX** You could be a funky sock person if you tried harder to be a funky sock person.

**XY**  Neon pink banana socks and a suit do not go together and are not welcomed at work.

**XX** You could be a funky sock person on the weekend. Go for the fun dad look.

**XY** I could be and yet I am not a dad, or clearly in your eyes, Fun.

**XX** I think you’re fun, of course I think you’re fun. I just think you could have more fun with your socks

**XY** Well we can address the socks when it comes to that. Now, necklace no necklace. Dress, shoes. Where are we at in the getting ready process.

**XX** We are putting on socks.

*XX comes into the Kitchen where XY she is wearing a nice evening dress and bright pink socks with a random pattern.*

**XY** Maybe lose the socks.

**XX** All I’m saying is they can go with anything if you just remove the sense of embarrassment.

**XY**  Oh of course, just the simple task of living shamelessly.

**XX** Ha Ha Ha, very humorous well done.

*Small pause, the conversation dwindles and they both momentarily get back on with what they were doing. XX takes off the socks and looks for some shoes etc.*

**XX** What time did you say we were meant to be getting there?

**XY** I didn’t.

**XX** You didn’t what?

**XY** I didn’t say what time we were meant to get there.

**~~XX~~** ~~Then what am I rushing about for.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~You tell me, you’re the one that started rushing about saying we’re going to be late. I reckon we’ve got time so you can slow down and a have a drink.~~

**XX** That isn’t helpful. (*Walking into the kitchen and looking at the calendar on the fridge or somewhere)*  Your mum was saying we needed to get there at a particular time, I presume she’s planning some sort of lavish and unnecessary surprise that no-one wants, and no-one asked for, I don’t want to arrive at the wrong time and ruin / it

**XY /**You’re doing that thing again where you’re getting stressed about a situation and blame it on my mother’s enthusiasm.

**(***Grabbing XX’s arm as she heads out)*  Slow down pause for a second *(Passing her a drink from the table and picking up his)* Always in such a rush, everything has to be done and happen immediately. But, Happy One Year Anniversary to us and our marriage.

**XX** Very cute, cheers

**XY** I love you

**XX** I love you too (*they have a small kiss)*

*They both exit.*

*XX and XY then enter stage right, slightly drunker than they left.*

**XX** I do love you, all of you and your family.

**XY** I love you too and so do they. I’m glad you had a good time.

**XX** Your grandma’s right, we should make babies.

**XY**  We should what?

**XX** Your grandma and your aunts, uncles even your mum and dad they kept asking when will we hear the little pitter patter of tiny feet. It’s been a year! And they’re right, we’ve had our year of us and that’s the next step. It’s it’s it’s what’s meant to happen and we should.

**XY** You’re cute but you’re drunk, and you don’t know what you’re talking about

**XX** No no, I’m serious tonight has made me realise we need to have have our own us. Family. They went on and on and on and it's it’s the right thing, isn’t it?

**XY** You’re gonna wake up tomorrow and have no memory of any of this. Come on seriously let’s go to bed.

**XX** But they’re wanting children! No no I’m wanting children It’s what goes next you know, first comes love, then comes marriage then comes a baby in a golden carriage. And/

**XY /**And I haven’t a clue what you’re on about but if you really want children then this is a conversation that we first, need to have sober, and second, really need to think about seriously.

**XX**  Yes, yes we do. But babies. It’s what I’m built for, I’ve got all the space right here.

(Start undressing / floundering about whilst they’re chatting?)

**XY** *(laughing)* you’re being daft and I’m tired. Let’s go to bed, come/ on

**XX** COME ON, just think, little babies with little toes

**XY**  Ok we’ll having children. Just not right now we’re not

**XX** Shake on it.

**XY**  Shake on what.

**XX** Shake on that we’re going to have babies to appease the oldies and create a family.

**XY** To appeasing the oldies.

**XX** To having children. **XY** To having children

**Scene 2**

**~~XX~~** ~~ah ah hem, hmmm.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~What.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~Oh nothing, nothing…. But now that you’ve started a conversation, I was just thinking that/~~

**~~XY~~** ~~/Now that I have started a conversation?~~

(more of a thoughtful silence rather than chat, then jump into convo?)

**XX** I was thinking/

**XY** /careful you don’t want to do too much of that.

**XY** Shush, I was thinking, I was thinking about what your family were saying and No, no in fact I was talking to Chris at work, I’ve mentioned him, haven’t I?

**XX** Yeah, rings a bell.

**XX** Right yeah, but they’ve (him and his partner), they’ve just started trying for a, no erm, they’ve just started trying to bake!

**XY** Trying to bake? Like bake themselves or ingredients.

**XX** Ingredients, definitely ingredients.

**XY** ok, so they’ve just started ‘trying to bake’?

**XX** Yes! They’ve started to *…* put buns into the oven.

**XY** Ah, I see. Buns in oven. And have they already cooked any?

**XX** No this would be their first little cupcake.

**XY** Are you suggesting that we might start mixing some batter?

**XX** yes, yes yes yes, I am, I am suggesting that. I am very much suggesting that.

**XY** Are we sure it’s not too early in the day for baking/

**XX** absolutely not because then we’d have a little bun in our lives for even longer

**XY** And we can definitely afford all the ingredients?

**XX** Yes. I think we can, Including tiny little adorable dinosaur patterned socks, for miniature toes. And, I know we’ve talked about this before and your family wants it, they really want it and so do my parents so I’m sure if we’re struggling on payments for for, erm flour, then they’d chip in.

**XY** I mean there is no time like the present!

*XY jumps up wiggling and begins to slowly take his clothes off*

**XX** *(starts to clap to a beat)* da-de- da-de- da- de, no. du du da du, no dum, da dum da, no. how on earth does that song go I cannot work it out.

*XY is now topless and going to take of his shoes, he tries to kick them off but they’re on too tight and he has to sit on the edge of the bed to un-tie them, he is slightly out of breath.*

**XY** sexy isn’t my strong point.

**XX** I mean you are not entirely wrong, but that was fun!

**XY** *(defeated by shoes*) yeah, a nice little moment.

*XY leans over and kisses XX on the cheek, puts his top back on and sits down on the sofa*

**XX** I think you’d make a really good baker.

**XY** I think you would too.

*They both go back to sitting in silence. XX looks excited but nervous*

**Scene 3**

*XX is sitting at the kitchen table reading some kind of pregnancy book, a month or so has passed since the previous scene*

**XX** Are we doing something wrong.

**XY** These things take time, and you know that, we just need to be patient.

**XX**  I know but why is it taking time, does that mean something’s wrong, with us or what we’re doing or/

**XY** /stop. It’s fine, we’re fine you just need to let things take their course.

**XX**  But shouldn’t we worry, isn’t this the sort of thing you’re meant to worry about.

**XY**  Not at this stage no and I think this is the exact sort of thing they tell you to not worry about/ not yet

**XX /** well I am worried, panicked, concerned. In fact I am worried about how not worried you are

**XY** I am not worried because unlike you I don’t think everything will happen immediately or even needs to happen immediately.

*Small pause*

**XX** You don’t want to have a baby do you.

**XY**  Of course I do!

**XX** Well then why does it feel like I am doing everything?

**XY** There’s not exactly much I can do other than what I am.

**XX** You can act like you give a shit.

**XY** I do and you know I do so just, ok.

**XX** Well I was thinking maybe we could go to the doctor?

**XY** See I knew you were going to say that, and I can guarantee it’s too early.

**XX** I don’t care if you think it’s too early, at least then we’d know if there was something stopping us so that in a few months I’m not going crazy for not knowing.

**XY** It’s not me who thinks it’s too early I’m saying the doctor will.

**XX** Well, let them tell me that then.

**XY** I understand what you’re saying but what I mean is if we go to the doctors now they’re not going to do any of the tests yet because we haven’t been trying for long enough. You have to be patient.

**XX** But what if I’m broken!

**XY** How could you ever be broken ~~you idiot~~. If there is a problem, we’ll address it when we get there, but you won’t be broken, just a little different.

**XX** A little different! A little different! What do you mean a little different!

**XY** That was a poor choice of words and I see that. I’m sure you’ll be able to have children.

**XX** This conversation is getting us beyond nowhere.

**XY** Then let’s stop.

**XX** Ok good, I’ll book an appointment.

**XY** NO! No, no that is not what I meant, I meant that this conversation is getting us nowhere so let’s stop conversing and just keep trying.

**XX** I’m booking an appointment.

**XY** You’re not.

**XX** Oh and I respond to your instructions now do I.

**XY** I’m not trying to instruct/ you

**XX** /I’m just, just, I’m. I don’t know. I’m scared I’m not going to be able to have children and then what do I do, what do we tell the family.

**XY** We tell them the truth and they’ll be accepting.

**XX** I don’t think you quite understand.

**Scene 4**

*XX is alone on stage.*

It was just chunky, lumpy erm thick. Yeah, thick it was just dead thick and not normal I guess, but I sort of don’t have a normal so that wasn’t really too much of a concern. It being normal I mean. Erm it was sort of like, erm (*slight pause, she is really thinking*) I actually can’t think of anything comparable to it. At all. There was just an extra bit in it, or as a part of it that I knew wasn’t usual.

How I knew is slightly more difficult to explain, the best way I can describe is as, erm.

Ok so when I was in Uni, I would drink a lot, lots. I wouldn’t really get a hangover, hangover. I would wake up with a mouth like the Sahara and that uncomfortable mouth flavour. I mean it was uncomfortable because your mouth has flavour, and I don’t feel as though a mouth should? I’d get that, first thing at least, but I would throw up, every time, like a routine. I would always be sick, no matter how much water or bread I would cram down my throat at five in the morning. I would wake up, go for wee and immediately throw up. But I always knew. I always knew when the sick was coming, my stomach would tumble and my cheeks would fizz up a little and I’d get hiccups, or sick-ups as I would call them. My body would communicate to me when I was going to be sick, always with enough time to tie up my hair and stick my head over the nearest loo. I just knew.

My body knew.

I did. It did. It was a miscarriage. Looking in the toilet at the minestrone soup of blood, horrible analogy, something just told me it was, it was tiny, tiny way smaller than a kidney bean baby. And all of its baggage. I guess it’s now my baggage. But baggage I chose or have chosen not to share.

I want a baby, I want a baby really badly, everyone wants me to have a baby really badly. I mean that’s what you do in the second year of marriage isn’t it. You have the first for yourselves as a couple and then you have children. That’s the routine. I don’t want to break routine.

I didn’t have a moment of hesitation at all. I think it’s because of all the reading I’ve done.. One in eight pregnancies end in miscarriage and there’s around 700,00 births a year, never mind pregnancies, and all the pregnancies there are that people don’t know about so there must be loads of miscarriages

But I’m not gonna tell him. It doesn’t make sense to; I don’t want the complication of it and I’m fine. Completely fine I don’t want to throw a spanner in the works, cause it’ll happen. And then it’ll be happy, and he doesn’t need to know about the sad. I don’t want him to tell his family, I don’t want them to see me like that.

*Pause*

I looked at it for ages

That probably seems really morbid

But I did

I couldn’t move, my body had brought me there told me to sit down, to stare and then it stopped sending signals, it had done its bit and now it was my turn to decide what happens next.

I’d lost something I didn’t even know I had. So not sad, you can’t miss something you never had, can you?

I took a pregnancy test cause that so trustworthy internet doctor said it would show up positive. I kind of thought if I saw that two little lines then it would have been something solid that actually happened, because this piece shitty plastic says so and it wasn’t some kind of horrid fever dream.

It didn’t.

I wasn’t something solid, it wasn’t even remotely something life size. It was, well the baby itself, was the size of a pin head. Like a dot. A small dot. My small dot that never was.

But the plastic didn’t help

It wasn’t solid and isn’t sad. It’s just life. Yes. It’s just life. That is what it is, and he doesn’t need to know everything about my life well maybe he does but this wasn’t my life, this was the life of a little dot. A little dot that only I knew.

Briefly

**Scene 5**

*XY arrives home from work*

**XY** Hello.

**XX**

**XY** Helloo?

**XX**

**XY** Are you in?

**XX** Yeah.

**XY** I’ve brought some pizzas back for dinner, do you want me to put them in now?

**XX** I’m not hungry.

**XY** Hi.

**XX** Hi.

**XY** I’m sensing something’s off.

**XX** I’m ok, just getting stuff done.

**XY** Are you sure? because you just turned down pizza and I don’t think that’s ever happened before.

**XX** We’ll eat later.

**XY** Oh ok, what do you want to do in the meantime.

*XY loosens his tie and moves towards XX on the bed*

**XY** I can think of something.

**XX** I more meant I’m just not hungry yet.

**XY** Is it not the right time, I haven’t been tracking it .

**XX** It’s not that.

**XY** So it is the right time?

**XX** No.

**XY** Well what’s going on?

**XX** Something’s happened.

**XY** What’s happened?

**XX** I wasn’t going to tell you, I don’t think I can,/ I don’t

**XY** / yes you can

**XX** It isn’t working.

**XY** What isn’t?

**XX** It’s me I’m not working.

**XY** I have no idea what you’re talking about.

**XX** It’s too complicated, it is all too complicated and you’re right, it’s a what if and what ifs are whatever. We just keep trying and pushing we try even harder and it will be fine, everything will be just fine.

You don’t understand.

**XY** No I don’t because you’re not telling me.

**XX** It happened.

**XY** What did?

**XX** It was so so red, it looked like it was glowing red and that glowing feeling gave me this burning sensation, burning onto my skin, you can’t do it, You can’t manage a pregnancy. You’re failing, You’re letting everyone down/ It’s not gonna work

**XY** / TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED

**XX** I had a miscarriage.

*There’s a moment of silence*

**XY**  But, but you weren’t pregnant, you’ve, we’ve not had a positive pregnancy test. I don’t understand.

**XX** I was pregnant. I’m not anymore.

**XY** This doesn’t make any sense, how could this happen. What went wrong?

**XX** That’s what I was trying to say, I went wrong and the what if happened and now and now I don’t know.

**XY** But we could have had a baby.

**XX** I’m sorry I don’t know what I did wrong, but I’ll do better.

**XY** I’m not saying you did anything wrong I just don’t understand what went wrong with the pregnancy.

**XX** It happens though, women miscarry it happens, it’s common, I did some research it says one in eight pregnancies end in miscarriage. That’s a lot, that’s a lot of pregnancies and that many of them end before the woman even knows she’s pregnant. So so it’s not not broken, no I’m not/

**XY**/ No one thought you were broken I just don’t understand why you didn’t tell me.

**XX** I just told you, just now I told you.

**XY** I mean before, when it happened.

**XX** You weren’t in.

**XY** But when I got back, why didn’t you tell me straight away?

we need to be a team.

**XX** we are a team.

**XY** I love you .

**XX** I love you too.

**XY** I’m sorry you had to do that alone.

**XX** I’m sorry I didn’t tell you it had happened.

**XY** so what do you want to do next, do you want to take a little break from the whole trying to have a baby, let your body re-calibrate?

**XX** What! God no.

**XY**  Surely you should give yourself, give us some time to grieve the process and for your body to get ready to try again so it works out next time.

**XX** You can’t grieve something you never/had.

**XY** /that’s a bit harsh

**ACT TWO**

**Scene Six**

*XX is sitting at the kitchen table waiting for the door to open, XY walks in*

**XX** You’re late.

**XY** Hello?

**XX** You said you’d be back at five, its seven.

**XY** Yeah, I had to work a little bit later to finish off some bits before the weekend.

**XX** But these are my ovulation days, I needed you back at five so we could have sex before and after dinner, we need to be making the most us of these days if we want to get pregnant.

**XY** Ok, I’m sorry. I just didn’t want to think about work over the weekend.

**XX** It needs to be all the time. All the time.

**XY** I mean am obviously not going to complain.

**XX** This is serious; you need to be serious about this. I’m keeping it together and committing, so should you.

**XY** This is meant to be, be a fun next set in our lives and whatever, not a military program.

**XX** Well it is like a military program, it needs the same precision and organisation, and it has to happen so it will.

**XY** I think you need to pace yourself, I said about taking time and this is just making me think you need to even more.

**XX** I’ve started making a yearlong calendar of when I will be the most fertile in each month. On those days we need to have sex at least twice a day. This is what I’m talking about, if you’re late back from work and we don’t have time or we’re too tired then it might not work and we might not get pregnant.

**XY** I don’t think if I’m back form work late on one of the, how many days is your, how did you say it, erm ‘optimum fertility window’?

**XX** Three, it’s the 13th, 14th and 15th days of my cycle, roughly landing in the eighth to tenth days of the month.

**XY**  Three, three days was all I needed. If it’s three days, then not having sex twice on one day will be fine surely.

**XX** You’re clearly not listening because at no point have, I suggested I want things to be ‘fine’ I want things to be perfect.

**XY** Perfect isn’t going to happen.

**XX** Maybe if you tried a teeny bit harder perfect would at least be reachable.

**XY** No it won’t be, cause as I’ve said before and will say again, perfect is impossible and you’re being crazy.

**XX** I resent the suggestion I’m being ‘crazy’.

**XY** I resent the fact you’re being crazy.

*XX and XY sit and stare at each other for one minute, they then both get up and go into the bedroom. They begin undressing.*

**XX** Just because we are having sex does not mean I am any less cross about you arriving home later than you said you would.

**XY** That makes no sense at all since the reason you were annoyed about me being late was that there wasn’t going to be enough time for the scheduled sex, which might I add removes all of the romance and interest, and then likely the enjoyment.

**XX** This isn’t about pleasure it’s about making a baby.

**XY** Oh sorry my mistake, I thought we were having sex as a happily married couple and not engaging in dictatorship ordered procreation.

**XX** I’m not a dictator.

**XY** I never said you were.

**XX** You implied it.

**XY** No, I implied we were living in a dictatorship, you assumed I meant you.

**XX** You are unbelievable.

**XY** Actually what’s unbelievable is me arriving back from work two fucking hours late and you losing the plot because it doesn’t fit in with the little calendar you’ve made.

**XX** Little calendar, little calendar, LITTLE calendar. (to audience again?)

Little calendar, you think that it’s a silly little calendar, I’ve been tracking my period and discharge, charting my temperature and noting down each change or difference that I ever experience in my body to make sure I am in the optimum bodily position to conceive and you think it’s a little calendar.

**XY** I think you’re getting carried away with wanting to have a baby and making it into a project to distract yourself from the fact that you had a miscarriage.

*XX stops getting undressed, she quickly puts the clothes she’s been taking off back on*

**XY** Fuck*,* I’m sorry, I’m tired and frustrated and this whole process is exhausting I didn’t mean to say that.

**XX** No you did and you’re right, I am distracting myself from the miscarriage by making it right, proving that I can do, that I can get pregnant and that I can have a baby, I mean that’s what everyone wants isn’t it?

**XY** It’s what you want.

**XX** It’s what we want.

**XY** Yes, obviously of course, I mean you just said it’s what everyone wants as if it isn’t what you want too.

**XX** It is what I want, it’s what happens isn’t it. You get married and you have children and I want children, and this is what I want.

**XY** Well then, we should stick the schedule and make the most out of optimum ovulation time.

**XX** Oh should we now?

**XY** I mean if it’s on the calendar then don’t, we have to? Can’t be disobeying the almighty calendar.

**XX** Ooo so we’re continuing with this slightly awkward flirtation, are we?

**XY** Yes, we seem to be.

**Scene Seven**

**XY** I just don’t think you realise what this is going to be like.

**XX** We were both there for the conversation, we both know what’s going to happen.

**XY** I’m just worried you’re getting ahead of yourself and rushing/ into this

**XX** / I hate when you do that

**XY** When I do what?

**XX** When you talk about it like it’s just a me thing, it’s always you, you/ you

**XY** But it is you, you’re the one/ who’s

**XX** IT’S WE.

**~~XY~~**  ~~See you’re already getting cross over nothing from the stress, what’s gonna happen with all those hormones running through your body?~~

**~~XX~~** ~~What do you think happens every month when my fecking uterine wall is shedding. What’s coursing through my veins then?~~

**~~XY~~** ~~And I hate it when you do that.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~When I do what?~~

**~~XY~~** ~~When you bring up something not that relevant and super obvious, then tell me it as I’m a moron, that’s what I hate.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~You hate it do you, you HAAAATE it.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~This is the exact thing I don’t want to happen.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~What do you think is happening?~~

**~~XY~~** ~~This pointless bickering and arguing over nothing because we’re stressed. There I said it. We’re stressed.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~That’s because this isn’t happening, and I can’t take it~~

**XY** I know and it’s exhausting, I know it is and that’s the exact reason I don’t know if adding more hormones and more things you can be concerned about to the mix is really going to help. It definitely isn’t going to make you any less stressed and you’re gonna be even more exhausted in the process.

**XX** I’m already all those things/ so if

**XY /**what I’m saying is all that’s going to get worse

**XX** Just let me finish/

**XY** / I was letting you finish/

**XX** / continuing to talk isn’t letting me finish

**XY** Go on then.

**XX** I’m already exhausted and stressed and overwhelmed by this constant feeling of fucking failure and I know that might get worse but at least then we’d have a baby, and it would be worth it. The torture would get us, me, somewhere with this whole thing. So why shouldn’t we try, we’ve been trying for long enough without/ managing to

**XY** / ok ok I hear you. If you’ve thought about it and we’ve agreed, then let’s give it a go.

**XX** So we’re gonna give it a go?

**XY** yes.

**XX** Well I’ll ring the doctor tomorrow, talk it through again and then get the injections to start, next week or whenever he suggests.

**XY** Big step huh?

**XX** Big step.

*What follows is a montage of the months trying the hormone injection*

*Month 1*

*XX is leaning against the wall and XY is holding a small needle and a large instruction pamphlet, looking confused*

**XY** Well what am I meant to do with it?

**XX** What do you think you’re meant to do with it? Jab me.

**XY** Do I not need some kind of medical training?

**XX** No, you do not. Now jab me.

**XY** Where do you want me to?

*XX pulls the top of her trousers down a little bit exposing the very top of one of her bottom*

**XX** In my arse.

**XY** What!?

**XX** Well you’re meant to inject it into a fatty bit of skin, so I reckon we start on the arse then move around so it doesn’t get painful in one spot.

**XY** Ok, here goes.

*XY jabs the injection in XX’s bottom, she winces and yelps*

**XY** You good?

**XX** mmhmm.

**XY** One down.

**XX** One down.

*Month 2*

*XX is sitting on the sofa with her sleeve rolled up ready for the injection to be put into the top of her arm. XY is holding the needle ready to inject.t*

**XY** You ready?

**XX** Ready as I’ll ever be .

**XY** Here goes.

*XY jabs XX again, she winces and heavily breathes out*

**XY** You good?

**XX** mmhmm.

**XY** One more down.

**XX** One more down.

**XY** You’re doing well.

**XX** Thanks, at least can sit down for that one.

*Month 3*

*XX is in the original injection position, leaning against the wall, she has pulled down the top part of her trouser, exposing the top of her arse, ready for the injection. XY is standing ready to inject her*

**XX** Go on .

**XY** You’re ready?

**XX** Yep.

*XY jabs her with the injection. She has no reaction, immediately pulls up her trousers and leaves into the bedroom. XY sighs as she does this.*

**XY** *(talking across rooms)* You good?

**XX** Yeah.

**XY** Do you want a cup of tea or anything?

**XX** No.

**XY** Ok then, I’ll just be in here if you need me.

**XX** I won’t.

**Scene Eight**

*There is an exactly two-minute silence where both characters are just looking straight forward. After 2 minutes a phone alarm goes off.*

**XY** That’s two minutes.

**XX** I know.

**XY** So?

**XX** I don’t think I can look.

**XY** Do you want me to?

**XX** No I’ve got to do it, I’m just, I’m just scared.

**XY** I know/ but

**XX** / What if it isn’t/ you know

**XY** / we can’t know until/ you

**XX** / I know.

**XY** On the count of three?

**XX** Ok

**XY & XX** One, Two, Three

*There’s a short silence*

**XY** What does it say.

**XX** What do you think.

**XY** It’s ok.

**XX** Is it.

**XY** Yes.

**XX** I’m not sure how many more little straight lines I can look at before I lose my mind.

**XY**

**XX** It’s like they’re mocking me at this point, like they’re jumping out of their little box and laughing at me, saying look at the freak who can’t get pregnant.

**XY** I know that it feels/ like

**XX** / It doesn’t feel like anything. That’s what’s happening, the stupid pieces of plastic are getting their shits and giggles from my failings .

**XY**

**XX** The woman in Boots probably thinks I’m mad with the amount of pregnancy test I keep and keep buying each month, she knows that I’m failing it at. That I can’t do it.

**XY** I doubt she does

**XX** I can see the look in her eyes, back again are we, she knows.

**XY** I don’t know what to say.

**XX** You never do anymore.

**XY** No I don’t, all I know is that we have to be patient.

**XX** Would you fuck off with the ‘patience’ line.

**XY** But it’s the truth, and what else am I meant to say?

**XX** I’m over this conversation and I can’t do it anymore

**XY** It’s not even been that long since we started, how many times have I told you, we’ve got to / be patient

**XX** /WE, we’ve got to be patient, what exactly is it that/ you’re doing

**XY** /we are both in this situation together. We are both trying to get pregnant and its hard on both of us, but it’s not been long enough to start freaking out about it. It’s meant to been like an 80% likelihood that most couples will get pregnant in a year. If it gets to a year and we’re still struggling, then you can start worrying or investigating or whatever it is that you want to do.

**XX** Are you pushing someone else head out of a small hole? NO didn’t think so, so stop it with the fucking we.

**XY /**Oh I’m sorry, I was told off for saying you and not we and now I’m being told of for say we instead of you. How am I meant to get it right?

**XX** You don’t understand, and you won’t understand because you’re not having to do the gritty stuff, Not having to have someone inject you with hormones to try and make your body do the one thing it is meant to be able to.

**XY** I understand that its’ difficult, you know I do and we’re doing/ everything we can to make it work.

**XX** /You’re/

**XY/**  yes, you’re doing everything you can to make this work and I am doing absolutely fuck all apart from consistently saying the wrong thing apparently.

**XX**

**XY** Oh so now you have nothing to say is it.

**XX** What in God’s fucking useless name am I meant to be doing, what other torture am I meant to put my body through.

Maybe that’s it , maybe that’s what this is, some sort of religious test, saying you’ve never been religious so fuck you and your ability to have children a big old Godly sneer

**XY** Let’s not get carried away. It’s just one more negative test, we’ll keeping going keeping taking them every week like we have been/

**XX** / you’ll , like you have been/

**XY**  /I’m trying my best to help here, I am trying to keep going and stay positive despite that fact this is also difficult for me, I also want to have a baby, I’m equally frustrated that this isn’t happening, but I’m staying calm and measured so I don’t push your buttons or freak you out any more than you already are. See there you are, I use you. YOU’RE the one losing it, YOU’RE the one that can’t keep it together, that’s become obsessive about the whole situation, who’s over read and filled YOU’RE brain with the idea that if it doesn’t happen immediately then it never will. That’s all YOU and don’t worry I’m giving YOU the credit now.

**XX** Because it isn’t just one more negative tests, it’s eight month of gruelling weekly tests that keep reminding me I am no good at this, it is 32 little straight lines mocking me and laughing at me, knowing I’m doing everything right and then there’s 16-year olds who forget to use a condom ONCE getting pregnant straight away.

**XY** That’s just not relevant. Lets just, I don’t know, take a break

**XX** TAKE A BREAK no, that’s not the answer no then the little lines win! Then they Win!

**XY** You need to calm down.

**XX** No I don’t I need to get angrier and looser and drunk, I need to get really fucking drunk

**Scene Nine**

*XX has gone out and got drunk, she is beyond drunk and because she hasn’t been drinking in order to get pregnant her tolerance has gone down so she is even drunker than she would have been.*

*This is a very visual scene, XX is clubbing but in the living room space of the stage. The lights are low with a very gentle strobe effect that will grow in aggression as the scene goes on. There is a serious of songs that play throughout.*

*The scene is the version of the night that XX is experiencing in her head.*

*The tempo and style of the songs does not match the lighting, as the strobe gets more aggressive and overwhelming whether or not the song is sad and slow or upbeat and clubby.*

*XX is in a sort of trance throughout this scene and her dancing gets equally aggressive as the strobe does.*

*Each song needs to have the word baby in it multiple times, such as Don’t Worry Baby by the Beach Boys, Be my Baby by the Ronettes, Baby Love by the Supremes, Baby One More Time by Britney Spears, Don’t Upset the Rhythm by the Noisettes etc.*

*The songs will one by one most of their length with XX singing along only to the baby’s in them, if the song only has baby in a small section that section will be played on repeat.*

*XX gets more drunk in her movements and more upset. Once all the songs chosen have played for some time the sections of the song that say baby all over lap and play at once and at the peak of the strobing lights.*

*XX screams as all the lights stop, it is strained crying scream. She collapses into a ball on the floor screaming and crying.*

*She struggles to stand up and looks at the audience, then the lights cut out or some effective equivalent*

**~~Scene Ten~~**

**~~XY~~** ~~How are you?~~

**~~XX~~** ~~I don’t feel amazing.~~

**~~XY~~**  ~~I don’t suppose you do.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~Why don’t you come out? We’ll have something to eat, then things will feel better.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~I don’t think they will.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~Food always makes a hangover better.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~I don’t think it’s the hangover that’s making me feel sick.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~But we know you’re not pregnant.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~No no , I mean I think I feel sick because I know I don’t I don’t Because I want a baby I do, but I can’t have one and my body is trying to tell me something. It is nauseated by an inability to do what I’m programmed to do.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~I don’t know what you’re talking about.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~I’m gonna keep drinking, I’m going to do keep doing all the things I’m not supposed to be doing and then when my bodies had enough it will tell me, it will let me know.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~You’re still not making any sense.~~

**~~XX~~** ~~I think this is the most sense I’ve made in a long time.~~

*~~XX remains still for a short period of time, she is lost in her own thoughts~~*

**~~XY~~** ~~This is going to have to stop, this isn’t good for you and it’s getting us nowhere. I don’t know how much more I can manage.~~

**~~XY~~** ~~Ok, I get it, I have to go away for work for a few days. So, I’ll be gone, they’ll be no one to clean up all the empty bottles or make sure you don’t choke on your own sick. Please when I come back don’t be where you are right now, it’s not healthy.~~

**Scene Eleven**

(scatter baby clothes etc)

**XY** Hi, I’m back It’s erm, it’s a bit, It’s a bit of a mess in here, have they stopped taking the recycling again?

**XX** *(Speaking to the audience) /*He’s gonna now notice the mess, he’ll be bothered because I haven’t made everything all pretty pretty and been the good woman, wife that I am and should be.

**XY** *(tentatively)* Hii.

**XX** Hi.

**XY** Are you ok?

**XX** I am fan dabby fucking dosey.

**XY** Well that’s quite clearly a lie.

**XX** I thought you had a work trip.

**XY** I did.

**XX** Then why are you here?

**XY**  I’ve been and come back, how out of it are you.

**XX** Stone cold sober.

**XY** The redecoration of the kitchen suggests otherwise.

**XX** I’m just getting ready for the baby.

**XY** What baby?

**XX** The baby that’s going to be here.

**XY** There isn’t going to be a baby, not yet at least, or ever with the way things are going.

**XX** When will you realise that there will be a baby. MY baby.

**XY** How much did you spend?

**XX** Babies are expensive.

**XY** Yeah, they are, but we don’t have one!

I’m sorry but no. This isn’t what I signed up for or agreed to or even wanted, this is in no way what I want anymore.

**XX** What are you talking about?

**XY** I had a few days away and I’ve been dreading coming back.

**XX** You didn’t want to come home to me?

**XY** Not even in the slightest, not at all, you are not you at the moment/ and I

**XX** / because I’m not little miss perfect anymore you can’t handle it.

**XY** That’s not it.

**XX** Explaining to me about how it isn’t then.

**XY** You’ve changed into someone I don’t like anymore, wanting to have a baby has made you deranged and I no longer want to be a part of it. I’m leaving for a bit, or a while, I’m not quite sure yet.

**XX** You’re leaving?

**XY**  Yes, yes, I am. I cannot take any more madness and drinking and smoking and obsessing, I cannot take any more of the obsessing and obsessing over something that might or might not happen. You have no patience!

**XX** No I’m just exhausted.

**XY** You always are.

**XX** Yep.

**XY** Look I can tell you’re not really listening, and my stuffs already packed so I might as well just leave straight away.

**XX** You’ve already packed?

**XY** I’ve had stuff packed for a little while, I said when I got back from my work trip that if nothing had changed then I was going to need some time. Now I need some time.

*XY goes into the bedroom and gets a duffle bag of stuff. XX has sobered up quite quickly at the relative shock of XY actually leaving.*

**XX** How long/

**XY** / I’m not sure yet I’ll have to see

**XX** No, how long have you been thinking about leaving.

**XY** I don’t know the exact amount of / time

**XX** / yes you do. How long?

**XY** I really don’t know, a month or / so

**XX** More or less then 3 months.

**XY** Less.

**XX** How much less?

**XY** I honestly don’t know and I don’t see how this is relevant to the fact I’m leaving now, because I am.

**XX** It was before wasn’t it?

**XY** Before what?

**XX** It was before I stopped trying wasn’t it?

**XY** I DON’T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

**XX** YES YOU DO.

**XY** It was before you stopped trying, it was just before that final pregnancy test you took. I was, I am exhausted too and so I packed a bag because I thought I might go anytime, then you took the pregnancy test and I thought it might be positive/ and

**XX** / and what that we might have a save the relationship baby.

**XY** No, I don’t know, I just thought it might be the one and then it wasn’t, and you were distraught, and I didn’t want you to think I was leaving because you hadn’t got pregnant. But maybe I should have left, because this is isn’t final it’s not an ending, it’s just break, so we can both catch a breath.

*XY leaves*

**ACT THREE**

**Scene Twelve**

*XX is alone on stage.*

**XX**  I didn’t really know what to do at first, it was just shock, I think. I’d erm, shock yeah. Well what I mean is,

No. What I’m trying to say is,

Well, my average period is exactly 29 days so my ovulation happened around day 15, I worked out on day 13, 14 and 15 I would be the most fertile, it was my ovulation window. I only had to google ‘how to work out when’ and all the results that came up where when I’m ovulating, when to conceive, when I’m most fertile. The internet knew what I wanted and it was helping me get there. I learnt to track it with the calendar and my discharge, or as the many online forums or medical webpages say, cervical mucus. I mean it changes constantly throughout the month, from hormones and thrush, PH balance and everything. Thinning and thickening in rhythm with me.

But I wasn’t in rhythm.

I didn’t get pregnant straight away and I couldn’t bear it.

Then, there it was. There in the little space the grey little gap. One plus then two and, and he was gone. I was a mess and I’d got it. All the exhaustion, all the feeling of failure the, the self-torture. It went away as quickly as the stupid little lines appeared in the first and second, all the way to the 20th test I took.

I didn’t really know what to do because as soon as all that went, went away, when it dissolved I...

I was engulfed by this overwhelming fear, this terrified nausea that rumbled through my stomach all the way up to my throat right into my head. There was this rippling feeling all throughout my body that felt like pins and needles but aching and itchy, my throat tightened and constricted , I was losing air rapidly and I could feel it. This, this, I suppose, miracle baby, I could feel like a sickness moving in me filling me up with horrible things.

I didn’t really know what to do and then I knew exactly what to do

*XX pauses*

**XX** I didn’t want a baby. I don’t want a baby.

*Pause*

I self-referred, it was a form and a call and an appointment, a check before a scan. A conversation about the risk potentials, about the decision I was making. How my body would and wouldn’t be. Where I would go, what they would do, how I might feel, would feel, did feel. It was this and that person making, making and making sure I was 100% and that I wouldn’t wake up the next morning in a suicidal state because I couldn’t live with what I had done. It was the most thorough medical experience I’d ever had, I appreciated some of it

When you’re constantly told that you’ll be great mum, you’d have such pretty children. Of course you’ll want them when you get older, you always get broody once you’re married, you think that you will be all those things. No matter your personality or who you are you just will want children and you just will be good at raising them because it’s biology.

I willed myself into the mindset I’d been so convinced I was going to have.

*Pause*

In the first assessment they do routine blood tests, and STI test and then an ultrasound. I wanted to opt out of this, I didn’t want to know anything about it, not its size its gender its heartbeat. I couldn’t bear the thought of the little thuds thumping through the scan.

But none of that happened, I don’t why I was surprised but they turn the screen so you can’t see anything and there’s no sound. Just silence and cold jelly.

When I arrived at the clinic on the day everything was very soft, the staff all spoke in velvety hushed tones and everyone had a gentle touch, I was lulled into a sense of security. Not false security, genuine actual safety.

I opted for a medical abortion cause, well, I figured it would be pretty much like the miscarriage and I’d managed that so I could manage this.

I was partly right. It was sort of similar to the miscarriage; I mean I suppose it’s sort of the same thing. Sort of. But it definitely wasn’t the same.

When you give birth, the adrenaline kicks in and makes you forget the pain so that you’ll still want to do it again.

The same doesn’t happen for an abortion.

*Pause*

I didn’t tell him. You might think that’s a bit selfish, because it was technically his baby too. You might think, well didn’t he deserve a say, what if he wanted to keep the baby, raise it alone, or maybe it would have helped the relationship.

And if you do think that I’d respectfully tell you to Fuck Off.

He wouldn’t have had to carry it around for the best part of a year then rip his body open to push it out, so he didn’t have a say, And he didn’t get to know, and I am ok with that, Very ok with that.

**Scene Thirteen**

*They aren’t communicating to each other, just to the audience*

**XY** She really wants a baby. She wants a baby too much I think, I don’t think you should ever nearly kill yourself over something you don’t have yet. I think you should always be working to keep what you’ve got, she lost sight of that.

Got lost in all the expectation and wanting, doing the right thing until she’d done all the right things and the only things left to do were the wrong things, I understand that. At least I understand that now, I’ve had some time and I’ve done some thinking and, and I realise that I should have been more aware of her spiralling, more aware of the downwards trajectory she was on, I got too busy, too caught up with work, too busy expecting her to just get pregnant. When we try again, I’ll be more patient, more available and then maybe it’ll happen quicker, without all the pressure. I think she’ll understand why I left, I think it will make sense to her, she’s had some time to re-evaluate her choices too. I think she’ll have changed, calmed down. I know she really wants a baby, but if there’s no one there to make a baby with surely that’d make you, her see sense. I think she’ll have become more measured.

When we spoke on the phone she seemed much more together, sounded sober and healthy, really healthy, as if she’d managed to get her life together a bit more and like she was ready to be married again, not that we ever stopped being married we just put the, I put the marriage on pause and now we can press play. That sounds a bit schmaltzy but the sentiment is what I mean.

**XX** He’s been non-stop calling for a while now, I try to let as many of them go to voicemail as I can. He’s just so patronising on the phone so, so I don’t know what the right words are but . He says things like, ‘don’t you sound healthy’ and ‘ how have we been, have we been keeping well’. He babies me, that’s what it is, he talks to me as if I am child and he is the adult and he babies me, checks in on me.

*Pause*

I never wanted children, never. It wasn’t in the plan, I knew I wasn’t cut out for it and no. It doesn’t matter.

**XY**  I’m going round tomorrow; I’ve told her I’ll come and pick up some of the extra bits and pieces I left. I think it’s just some ties and what not, nothing important so I’m sure she’ll have clocked onto the fact that’s not really what I’m going round for. I want things to rewind and go back to exactly how they were before, when everything made sense and everything was working.

**XX** I bet he won’t even have talked to his parents about their insistent talk of children. I know I said it doesn’t matter but it does, cause that’ll hinder him if he ever marries again or gets into a long term relationship, though I don’t imagine they’ll be wanting him to have children out of wedlock. Lock is an acutely accurate description of marriage actually, it is being locked away. I suppose he might not be aware actually, he has a tendency to be clueless about this sort of thing.

**XY** My mums always loved her, always thought she’s really clever, always said what a great mum she’d make. I agree, I think she’d make a great mum, I can just picture her pushing a pram down to the park in summer for a family picnic, she’d fill the role wonderfully, it’s a good thing she wants it so badly. But then again, I suppose when you’re inherently built to fill a specific role, and you’re the sort of person who would just be great at it then you probably end up wanting it loads cause your body knows, it knows that’s what you’re meant to be doing with your life.

We didn’t even need to have the conversation about kids before we got married, we both just knew it’s what we wanted and that our life plans made sense together.

**XX** I knew never talking about kids before we got married was an error, I just didn’t want anything to burst the perfectly little happy bubble we had.

**XY** We made sense together, in fact we make sense together.

**XX** I don’t know how I’m supposed to talk to him I just know that/ I don’t want to seem too apologetic

**XY** / I might even take some flowers tomorrow, maybe, I don’t want to seem too apologetic

**Scene Fourteen**

*XY arrives*

**XY** I’ve missed you.

**XX** I’ve missed you too.

**XY** I don’t really know what to say or how to have a conversation with you but I’ve missed you and/Should I put the kettle on.

**XX /**No it’s fine, I’ll do it. Why don’t you go and look through the stuff I’ve left out and see if I’ve missed anything?

**XY** Sounds like a plan.

*XX walks to the kitchen, fills up the kettle and stands facing the audience as it boils. At the same time XY goes into the bedroom and instead of going through the clothes on the bed sits on the edge of it and stares into the audience.*

**XY** (*Shouting from the bedroom over the sound of the kettle boiling) /*Can I have an earl grey if you have any.

**XX** *(Shouting back to XY*) Oh sorry I’ve just run out, it’ll have to be Yorkshire, is that ok?

**XY**  More than ok it’s great, do you need a hand carrying them through.

**XX** I’ll be fine thanks.

**XX** You alright? Tea’s in here.

**XY** No yeah, I’m fine, just stewing over things.

**XX**  Ok.

*Pause*

**XY** I’ve been thinking and, I, I don’t know how you’re feeling about/

**XX /**I didn’t miss you I lied.

**XY** You what?

**XX** I lied about missing you because you seemed more, more nervous when you arrived than I had anticipated and then you said you missed me/ and I replied and

**XY /**But you didn’t miss me

**XX** No.

**XY**  But I shouldn’t have left/ I came here

**XX** / You should have.

**XY** You’re glad I left?

**XX** Glad isn’t the right word.

**XY** What is the right word?

**XX** Relieved .

Not straight away, it wasn’t an instant relief/ but

**XY** /relieved.

**XX** I’m sorry I’m probably saying this too bluntly, but I don’t want to get nowhere with this conversation.

**XY** I was gonna say I don’t know how you feel about me moving back in but it feels like the right time but I’m clearly wrong about/ that

**XX** / yeah/

**XY** / yeah I’m wrong?

**XX** Yes. Sorry… The the the aftermath of all all, it’s, erm, it’s cleared me. My, my head. It’s cleared my/ head

**XY** /and I’m glad and we can take some time and then start again/ but

**XX**/ Start again?

**XY** With having a baby, we’ll take a break, travel maybe do some us stuff and then when we’re settled and ready, we’ll try again/ no one is

**XX** / I don’t want to try again.

**XY** Children are all you’ve talked about for the past/ year

**XX** / exactly. All anyone talked to me about and told me about and asked me about was babies and pregnancy and ‘being a mum’ and I became obsessive and reckless and/

**XY** / but less pressure this time. I mean you have to have children, not have to I mean, you meant to/ no I mean

**XX** / There are so many other things I want to do with my life than have a baby and I know that now. And you know that now. And and I, I think you should get your stuff and go.

**XY** This isn’t really how I’d imagined this going. I even brought my toothbrush back/ with me

**XX** / I’m Sorry

**XY** Well not really are you

**XX** No I don’t think I am

END