

(Name of Project)

(Genre)

by

(Name of Writer)

Name

Address

Phone Number

Agency Information

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
----------------	-------------------	-----	--------

THE WHITE QUEEN

Author: Allen O'Leary

Draft date: May 2020

Contact: allen@allenoleary.co.uk

PEOPLE & PLACES

The play is set in the present.

Lisa - 49, film maker. Town.

Rabbit - the older brother. Country.

Alice - 18, Lisa's daughter.

D - Mid 20s, Rabbit's daughter.

SETTING

Taumaranui.

The family home - A 30s heart Rimu state house last modernised in the 80s.

Stage it with everyone and everything you need on the stage the whole time - nothing hidden, nothing off stage. For why ask Alice.

Table and chairs. Some knitting, a tablet, glasses, bottles. The clothes you need, a motorbike helmet, a real possum or rabbit, a good knife, a tea towel, a bowl of water. A couple of boxes, some photos, a necklace, a shotgun.

1. A LONG DAY

Late.

A sister and a brother drinking hard spirits.

She is dressed casual upmarket - understated, expensive, signature jewellery.

He is dressed in work clothes. Tough polycotton trousers, old safety boots, plain collared shirt.

They are laughing.

RABBIT

You what?

LISA

I am so tired...

RABBIT

You said...

LISA

I said... I said...

RABBIT

After twenty five years...

LISA

After twenty five years I said...

RABBIT

You called him a cunt.

LISA

No.

RABBIT

What?

LISA

I didn't say that, not... not directly.

RABBIT

But he is a cunt.

LISA

He was my first... My. First. Bonk.

Tucker? RABBIT

LISA
There wasn't a lot of choice at the time.

RABBIT
Never paid me for painting his fuckin garage.

LISA
Did you finish it?

RABBIT
I stopped when he didn't pay.

LISA
Well yeah.

Rabbit pours another whisky.

LISA
No no no no no no no...

RABBIT
Special occasion.

LISA
Early call. Need to be sharp.

RABBIT
What for?

LISA
Business shit.

RABBIT
Shit can wait.

LISA
Nah can't.

RABBIT
Your father. Shit can fuckin wait.

LISA
Yeah nah. Shit don't wait.

RABBIT
Should.

LISA
Twenty eight years. I left when I was seventeen.

I remember.

RABBIT

Seventeen! What did I know...

LISA

Fuckin knew it all.

RABBIT

Jumped up little shit.

LISA

And now?

RABBIT

You you realise you know nothing much about anything, anything important.

LISA

Like your family.

RABBIT

Touche.

LISA

Was that mean?

RABBIT

You are the smart one, you know that?

LISA

Yeah?

RABBIT

You know yourself. What you want.

LISA

That right?

RABBIT

I know it. Know it.

LISA

Because you know it all. Still.

RABBIT

Double touche! You're sharp as.

LISA

I am what I am. Nothing more, nothing less.

RABBIT

That's beautiful. You're the Thoreau of Taumaranui.

LISA

RABBIT

The fuck what?

LISA

Thoreau. How men live with nature.

RABBIT

As if they weren't the same thing.

LISA

Exactly. Exactly. You are so...

RABBIT

Yeah yeah. Can we get onto it?

LISA

Practical matters. Do you know what we have to do with him?

RABBIT

To Bob Tucker?

LISA

Nah nah, fuck him.

RABBIT

Fuck Tucker?

LISA

I did that. I fucked Tucker the tucking fucker mother tuckers son. Noooo. I mean the the the the funeral.

RABBIT

That shit.

LISA

And the money and the house and the the readings and the songs and the putting him in the ground bit.

RABBIT

We should just chuck him in a box and be done with it.

LISA

That is literally what a funeral is Rabbit.

RABBIT

Church meant nothing to him. It was just a marketing thing, a show.

LISA

The show is important even if the thing itself is missing. An empty... signifier.

RABBIT

A fuck what?

LISA

Exactly. The statement points to a place the meaning once was. It's all how you read it.

RABBIT

What reading?

LISA

What reading. Exactly back to where we started. Readings and coffins and houses.

RABBIT

Is everything this fukin complicated with you?

LISA

Yep. Look we just ask the Priest the Vicar for a recommendation, something Dad would have wanted. He won't have a clue either but it's his problem then, that's what they do all the time right? That is problem solving and that is what they pay the big money for.

RABBIT

What happened to you?

LISA

When?

RABBIT

In the bit between leaving here at seventeen and turning up for your dad's funeral.

LISA

I've always been like this.

RABBIT

Talking shit.

LISA

I talk a load of shit and then come round back at you when you're not looking.

RABBIT

People like that do they?

LISA

Auckland, movies, it's not about being liked.

RABBIT

No one liked him either.

LISA

Come on... all that Rotary nonsense, the business centre, the new playground.

RABBIT

The new playground was finished in ninety five.

LISA

It's better than the old playground.

RABBIT

There was no old playground.

LISA

Zactly. A man of the community - cheers!

RABBIT

He did all that shit so he could put it on his leaflet. Big Country Real Estate, for the

LISA

Big Country Real Estate, for the locals by the locals.

RABBIT

Just wanted to be top bollocks, the king.

LISA

Of Taumaranui.

RABBIT

Grand shitfuck of Taumaranui.

LISA

Still, he'd know what to do, about the funeral.

RABBIT

Let's ask him.

LISA

Dad what the fuck do we do now eh? What do we... do now?

Listens. Nothing. Laughter. Cracks.

RABBIT

Come on...

LISA

I'm allowed to cry.

RABBIT

He was sick.

Lisa nods.

RABBIT

Past sick. He had to go.

LISA
Did he?

RABBIT
He wanted it over. We both did.

LISA
Poor bastard.

RABBIT
He died at home. That was my promise to him.

LISA
Thanks.

RABBIT
It's a fuck-ton of work, a sick man. It's shitty.

LISA
I couldn't

RABBIT
Real shitty.

LISA
I couldn't make it.

RABBIT
Yeah noticed.

LISA
You could have told me earlier.

RABBIT
Could have been any moment I said.

LISA
I just couldn't.

RABBIT
Better without you.

LISA
Yeah yeah but I'm sorry for that you know all sorry.

RABBIT
You're here now eh.

LISA
We can get it all done in under a week right?

RABBIT
Sure.

I've got a lot on. LISA

You do now. RABBIT

Yeah. LISA

When's Richard coming down? RABBIT

He'll come down for the day. LISA

For the day? RABBIT

It's hard to get time at short notice. It's a war zone up there. LISA

Is that it? RABBIT

Look... we're not... we're just not... LISA

Fucksake, really? RABBIT

Yeah yeah. LISA

Fuck. How long? RABBIT

Six months. Nine. LISA

He do the dirty on you? RABBIT

No no. LISA

You cheated on him? RABBIT

You don't cheat on a paediatric oncologist. There's no way back from that. LISA

RABBIT
Nine months and you didn't say?

LISA
I didn't want to upset dad.

RABBIT
He liked Richard.

LISA
Everyone likes Richard. He drives me fucking nuts and I still like him.

RABBIT
Big news.

LISA
You'd have gone and told dad.

RABBIT
Too fukin right. Given us something to talk about.

LISA
He would have been disappointed.

RABBIT
No shit.

LISA
It's been a long day.

RABBIT
Been a long year.

LISA
Are you trying to make me feel crap?

RABBIT
You never needed help with that.

LISA
Fuck you.

RABBIT
Easy.

LISA
This feels this feels... just awful. Bad beyond drinking.

RABBIT
Old shit comes back at you, uninvited. Time I went.

Picks up a helmet.

LISA
You're not riding, in your state?

RABBIT
Yep.

LISA
You're asking for it.

RABBIT
How many cops do you think there are in town Lis?

LISA
Three?

RABBIT
One. He's probably parked in the middle of Harukira Drive waiting for the late night skiing cunts doing 65 in the 50. If you go the back way you don't see him and that's how he likes it. He fills his quota with ski cunts like you and everyone is happy.

LISA
I don't ski.

RABBIT
You have a Range Rover, same thing.

LISA
We can do this. It's just a week right?

RABBIT
Yeah sis. We can do this well enough. One week then back to business eh? Night.

LISA
Night Rabbit.

2. HERE AND THERE

LISA is on her phone, a glass in her hand.

She has her buds in, holding the phone end on to talk.

LISA

It's me.

Y'know, funerals. I'm losing it all over the place. It's the smell, your childhood home overlaid with death and shit.

It was that bad, how Rabbit tells it. Funeral's Saturday. Better turnout on the weekend, like it's a garage sale.

Yeah yeah a celebration of life. It's grim this dying stuff. I know you know that, obviously. You don't go to the funerals do you? Of kids?

Jesus I don't know how you do it.

I'm down Richard, you don't need to put the boot in.

I wondered I wondered if Alice would come down.

Longer, maybe help with the house.

Clearing the house, the last of her grandparents. It's a thing.

Just ask her. It's important to me, I wouldn't ask if it

Can we not do this? We're both keen to resolve this as fast as we can, can we just...

I don't live there, I'm still paying mortgage and you want me to what?

The electricity?

Is that my problem?

We've done this. It's a great deal, you have a good lawyer. And a gold-plated pension. You are going to be fine.

Yes I know it all could have been different. I never wanted... it's not something I looked for, I'm not a

We've done this.

Yeah I

Yep.

Yes.

Could you just ask her? She's an adult, she can make up

Please, just ask her.

I am begging.

I'm drowning here could you... What's the real issue?

It wouldn't hurt her to take a year out would it, she's got the marks.

She's eighteen, when else should she have crazy ideas?

Maybe it's the rest of us that have it all wrong.

I'll talk to her. When she comes down.

Thank you. I know you don't have to, it would be great to see you both.

Half the electric. Alice's half.

That's my way of justifying it, to keep my head above

Yep bye.

Fucking cunt.

3. DINNER

Lisa, Rabbit, Alice and D.

Just after dinner.

ALICE

You say possibility, I say certainty. All empires have fallen. Rome. Incas. There's a limit on growth and when you pass it... Boom.

Everything that relies on the grid, useless. Your bank account will just vaporise. Grey Lynn reduced to firewood, literally.

What we have made is unsupportable. So much of what we do is just tending to the pile of ephemera that we have created. Museums. Libraries. Courts. What does that kind of abstraction matter if someone is trying to steal your last can of beans?

Imagine that. Your last can of beans. Beyond that, grubbing for worms. Do you want to be face down in the mud, where your best hope is that someone kills you quickly?

No. So how do you do to prepare for that? Go to university? Do a PhD in climate science and fly around the world to conventions and tell people not to fly around the world? Naked hypocrisy.

We have to go back to an earlier playlist. Go back to planting. Solar power. Simple hydro. Mend a broken leg. Stories by firelight. Real things. Things that are stitched and repaired, not thrown away.

LISA

That's

ALICE

And that's just the beginning. Individuals don't survive. We will need groups, tight communities with strong borders. Tribes, cults, communes. You'll be in a group or you'll be dead. The die-hard individualists like Mum, they'll be wandering around trying to figure out how to get a long macchiato and while they are doing that they'll be taken apart. Drawn limb from limb and boiled for glue.

That's what I see. So what's the point of going into quote higher education unquote? And then all that work to pay off the debt? Better off learning to knit and hunt.

That's the short version. I'm writing a blog, then I'll turn that into a pod cast. Something even she can understand.

LISA

I get it, I do.

ALICE

But you do nothing.

LISA

We didn't know it was a problem.

ALICE

The problem is not 'the problem', it's coping with the shit your generation is going to leave behind is the problem.

LISA

Maybe if I wasn't busy giving you a stable home environment and an education of excellence then I could have been more engaged with the Grey Lynn Mothers Against Ecocide Facebook group.

ALICE

Don't make it my fault.

LISA

So I'd be trash talking environmental issues on my phone, the irony.

ALICE

That's my point, there is no resolution to it inside the current paradigm, we have to get ready.

D

Ready for what?

ALICE

Were you listening?

D

Lost consciousness half way through. The air was getting thin.

ALICE

Cooking food in season. Low-tech solutions. Getting by on nothing.

D

I don't want to be a fucking hippie cuz.

ALICE

Labels don't count. It's what you do that counts.

LISA

There we agree. Action. Action in the present.

ALICE
Why do I feel like that was a trap?

LISA
No no. I have something to ask you Rabbit.

RABBIT
What's that sis?

LISA
I'd like to stay on for a bit.

RABBIT
There's the garage to clear yet.

LISA
A bit longer. A year.

RABBIT
A year? You, in Taumaranui, for a year?

LISA
In this house.

ALICE
What about film?

LISA
I'm over it. I'm selling up.

ALICE
You can't be over it.

LISA
Why not?

ALICE
You love it.

LISA
I do, that's why I am over it. You could stay too.

ALICE
Why would I do that?

LISA
Good place to learn all those skills you were talking about.

ALICE
Hide from Dad and his unreasonable views on education.

LISA
That too. Rabbit?

Rabbit picks up the shotgun and holds it up.

LISA
Jesus, where did that come from?

RABBIT
Under Dad's bed, where it always was. Don't you remember this?

LISA
No.

D
Now that's a beauty.

RABBIT
Great Grandad's twelve-gauge. She's the real thing this one, German. Over a hundred years old. Impressive eh?

LISA
It's filthy.

RABBIT
You don't want to polish something like this, make it look new. That's disrespectful.

LISA
It's a gun, not a person.

D
It has a name.

LISA
A name?!

RABBIT
Brunhilde.

LISA
Brunhilde? That's ridiculous.

D
It's cool. It's Lord of the Rings n'shit.

ALICE
There are no guns in Lord of the Rings.

D
If there were they would like that, properly fucked up.

RABBIT
Properly fucked up by Brunhilde...

Rabbit swings the gun to his shoulder
and trains it on Lisa.

LISA

Jesus, 'respect bro'. Now put the fucking thing down.

RABBIT

It's not loaded.

LISA

I didn't think it would be, it's just my brother pointing a
gun at me.

RABBIT

Maybe the best way out we'll get in Alice's world.

Rabbit lowers it.

LISA

Why did you bring it out now? Was Brunhilde getting lonely?

RABBIT

Alice, want to go out shooting?

ALICE

Shooting? With that?

RABBIT

This is how you shoot rabbits and keep zombies away.

ALICE

That would be appropriate.

RABBIT

So saddle up.

ALICE

Now?

RABBIT

Action in the present you said. Fancy some spotlighting love?

D

Out Wakelin's?

RABBIT

He said we could go out the back block anytime. Feels like
anytime to me.

D

Ace.

RABBIT

Got any warm clothes?

ALICE
Umm... yeah.

RABBIT
Go on then.

Alice sits out, puts an expensive ski jacket on.

LISA
You're taking my daughter possum shooting?

D
This'll be a laugh.

RABBIT
Wanna come?

LISA
I don't like killing things.

RABBIT
Poor widdle possums.

LISA
Take it easy on her.

RABBIT
I like her. She's got something.

LISA
What she has is a fantasy. She'll be wanting to be lawyer again in a year.

RABBIT
Nah.

LISA
I know her, I'm her mother.

RABBIT
And I'm her uncle. Uncles are meant to teach the kids bad things right? Like shooting, how to roll a joint.

LISA
You don't go shooting off your face do you?

RABBIT
Ok, no weed. Got any more booze?

LISA
Jesus. Usual place. Been there forever.

Rabbit picks up a bottle.

LISA
Do drinking and shooting mix well?

RABBIT
Like lamb and mint sauce.

Alice puts on a matching ski hat.

ALICE
Ready.

D
For Whakapapa cuz.

LISA
That outfit cost eight hundred dollars, you can't

ALICE
I'm never going skiing again Mum.

RABBIT
You said you never skied.

ALICE
Mum's really good. Let's go then.

RABBIT
Shoot enough possums you can make your own coat.

ALICE
See you Mum.

LISA
Love you.

Rabbit hands Alice Brunhilde.

RABBIT
If you're going to live here you'll need to shoot.

LISA
You don't shoot possums with a shotgun.

RABBIT
More a ritual thing, you gotta use the family gun first. See you sis.

LISA
So can I can stay?

RABBIT
You can pay some rent.

LISA

Of course.

RABBIT

You won't last. You weren't cut out for this life.

LISA

Let's see how we get on then shall we?

RABBIT

Yeah, let's do that.

4. WTF

Alice puts Brunhilde on the table, takes off the jacket, picks up the knitting and a tablet, sits and starts to follow a 'how-to' online video.

D stands, looking at her.

D

Hey cuz.

ALICE

Rude to stare. Come in.

D

You knitting?

ALICE

That's how jumpers get made.

D

Nan used to knit.

ALICE

She tried to teach me once.

D

You didn't listen.

ALICE

Course not, she was old.

D

Might have been useful.

ALICE

So what do you do D, that's useful?

D

I dig holes.

ALICE

What for?

D

What do mean what for?

ALICE

I mean what are the holes for?

D

Whatever people want. Where's your Mum?

No idea. ALICE

How long? D

No idea. ALICE

Shit. D

Any reason? ALICE

No reason. D

Just to gaze on her lovely face? ALICE

Yeah, that must be it. D

So, holes. How does that work? ALICE

I've got a tractor. Loads of attachments. Holes is what people want most. Fencing holes. Foundation holes. Drain holes. D

Anything going. ALICE

Yeah, whatevs. D

Are you good at it? ALICE

Good at digging holes? D

Yes. ALICE

You just have to turn up, have the right gear. That's about it. D

How did you start out? ALICE

D
Dunno, just fell into it.

ALICE
Joke.

D
Yep.

ALICE
That's all I'm going to get?

D
Pretty much.

ALICE
Coffee? Tea? Beer?

D
Nah.

ALICE
I'm making an effort here.

D
Thanks.

ALICE
You're welcome.

D
I'm not as fucked up as you.

ALICE
How's that?

D
All that shit you were talking about. Collapse.

ALICE
That shit, yeah.

D
You're right I reckon.

ALICE
Really? You think so?

D
Fifty fifty.

ALICE
So what's fucked up about it?

D
What's fucked up about it is that you want to survive.

ALICE
Isn't that what we all want to do?

D
That world, your world, it's not worth living in.

ALICE
It's happened before.

D
The dark ages. The Ice age. Industrialisation, the age of empires. What do they call it now... The Anthritis?

ALICE
The Anthropocene. It's all going to happen again, we never learn as a species.

D
We barely know about our own families let alone how to stop the collapse of civilisation.

ALICE
We never hung out.

D
You lot didn't come down here much, you left the poor cousins to themselves.

ALICE
You're older than me, it's not like we had anything to talk about.

D
You just used to trot around like a glamorous little doll, singing Taylor Swift songs like they meant something.

ALICE
I know you're adopted.

D
Not properly.

ALICE
No?

D
When Mum ran off, Rabbit took me in. No one ever put any names to paper or anything.

ALICE
Why did he do that?

D
Dunno.

ALICE
Just fell into it?

D
Maybe no woman will have him.

ALICE
You didn't want to move away?

D
Why move away?

ALICE
Something bigger.

D
We've got the internet. We've got Amazon and Tiktok. What's bigger than that?

ALICE
Ideas. The Anthropocene.

D
I'm not stupid.

ALICE
I didn't say you were. What about culture.

D
I like Manga.

ALICE
I meant

D
I like Manga. I like drawing it.

ALICE
You're an artist?

D
Would you like that?

ALICE
'Dunno'.

D
I just draw.

ALICE
And dig holes.

D
Yeah.

ALICE
I'd like to see some.

D
Dig your own, it's cheaper.

ALICE
Drawings.

D
Do you like Manga? You know the key differences between
Evangelion Genesis and Saber Marionette J?

ALICE
No.

D
You don't know anything about Manga?

ALICE
RTL, I know that.

D
RTL. I was bummed when I realised. Before that they were
totally fucked up.

ALICE
But you stuck with it.

D
Got to have a hobby.

ALICE
To relax from the stressful job, the pressures of life and
the family.

D
That's it. That's exactly it. I'm off.

ALICE
Should I tell Mum anything?

D
Nah. Best not tell her I was here. It was a bad idea. Not the
way to do it.

ALICE
Do what?

D
Family. Thanks for not saying anything. See you round.

ALICE

Yep..

D

You were a good shot. For a firstie.

ALICE

Thanks.

D

Later cuz.

5. CHAFF

Everyone going through old boxes on the floor.

RABBIT

This is the last of it. These boxes and we're done.

LISA

Did they throw anything away?

RABBIT

Didn't need to.

LISA

Programme from Taumaranui Rep Theatre. 1975. The Crucible.

RABBIT

I was in that.

LISA

What? You?

RABBIT

Giz it.

Lisa hands programme to Rabbit.

RABBIT

There you go. Peter Collins.

LISA

I am astonished.

RABBIT

They needed people to fill the court. More in the fukin' play than in the audience.

LISA

Who else was in it? Anyone I know?

RABBIT

Everyone you know. Directed by the queer.

LISA

The queer?

RABBIT

The one who used to run the garage. I bought my first couple of bikes off him. Acted tough but gave a good discount. Because I was in his fukin' show.

LISA

This is gold. Rabbit in a play.

RABBIT

You came and saw it.

LISA

I don't remember.

RABBIT

It was that good. Thank Christ this is nearly over.

LISA

Yeah.

RABBIT

Still sticking round?

LISA

I put my company on the market. I have a buyer pretty much ready to go.

ALICE

You live for the company.

LISA

I've been pulling eighty hour weeks for fifteen years and look where it's got me.

ALICE

You make movies, that's what you do.

LISA

I haven't made an actual movie for seven years. No one wants to front movies anymore, not with real money. And there's only so much of your life you can give to Road Kill NZ.

ALICE

Does Dad know?

LISA

He'll be pleased, he gets a cut.

RABBIT

The fuck will you do?

ALICE

No movies. I am trying to imagine it.

LISA

Movies are dead Alice. As dead as Taumaranui Repertory Company.

D

They still do a pantomime at Christmas.

Exactly my point. LISA

Alice pulls a pendant out of a small box.

What's this? ALICE

That is D's. RABBIT

It is not. That's fugly. D

It was your mother's. RABBIT

D takes the pendant from Rabbit.

Still ugly. D

It was your mothers. RABBIT

So why did Grandad have it? ALICE

For safe keeping. Do you want it? RABBIT

Sure. D

It's the only thing we kept. RABBIT

It's cheap. D

She wasn't well off. Lived over the river, in the old railway houses, in with the Maori. RABBIT

We never went over there, not as kids. LISA

Not back then. RABBIT

Us and them, even here. LISA

RABBIT

Dad used to help them out. Rent holidays.

LISA

Mum would have loved that.

ALICE

What do you mean?

RABBIT

She hated them.

ALICE

Poor people or the Maori?

RABBIT

She didn't care. Poor or Maori she hated you either way.

LISA

She used to get together with her cronies and rip shit out of them over a sherry. She thought dad was a sucker.

RABBIT

He gave people the benefit of the doubt.

LISA

A sucker.

ALICE

How about this?

She holds up a photo.

LISA

Ahh, the forced family photo. Holiday in Taupo. The big fifty mile drive every summer.

ALICE

You really don't want to be there. Granddad is pulling you in.

RABBIT

She was always the favourite.

LISA

Bullshit.

RABBIT

That year I scraped school C, put in hour after hour of study. Then you barely read a book and aced it.

LISA

School C wasn't hard.

RABBIT

Not for you. And dad bought her a car.

LISA

Dad gave me his karatene-yellow Marina. You didn't want it.

RABBIT

I didn't. But he never offered.

LISA

I know I know, and you were the one who stayed, who did the lawns, who wiped his arse.

D

I did the lawns. I did the maintenance on the rentals, I did the shopping.

RABBIT

The arse was all mine.

ALICE

Why did you do all that?

D

He looked after me when my Mum went away.

RABBIT

I looked after you when your mum went away.

D

And why was that?

RABBIT

You were an abandoned kid.

D

He paid you to.

RABBIT

He didn't pay me, he helped out a bit. I bought you up.

D

Don't get me wrong, I'm glad you did Dad, I'm glad you gave a shit about a snotty kid from the wrong side of the river. No one else did.

LISA

Dad gave you money to look after her? Why the hell did he do that?

D

His secret project. Save the bastard children of Taumaranui.

RABBIT

He'd give some kids a bit of cash until they were old enough to get a job. Or he'd give them some work.

LISA

I never knew this.

RABBIT

He didn't want Mum to know, she would have been spewing. Spent thousands a year I reckon.

LISA

Why did he do it?

RABBIT

Did he need a reason?

LISA

What else don't we know about dad?

D

We don't know shit about shit right. None of us.

LISA

Awesome insight D, thanks.

ALICE

How come you never left Rabbit?

RABBIT

Everything I want is here. Bikes. Shooting. A river, a lake, a mountain. I never wanted anything out of my reach.

LISA

You could have been in on the tourist boom early on. You could have made it happen.

RABBIT

Coconut and Manuka honey lattes before the Lost Highway?

LISA

It's not wrong Rabbit.

RABBIT

It's not for me. I like this place the way it is. I like it a bit crap and broken. I like that everyone on my street knows that if I'm working on my bike they shouldn't stop and chat, but if I'm in the garden they can. I like it that I know where to get firewood at 100% discount. I like all the small town shit that was never good enough for you.

LISA

I was seventeen when I left. I was spoiled, I didn't know anything, we've established that.

RABBIT

Yeah we have.

ALICE

Why did you leave Mum?

LISA

It was different then. No internet. No news. Just nothing. You can't imagine the buzz I got going into Auckland for the first time. 6am off the night train dragging a suitcase into town, heading straight up to K road.

ALICE

K road? You hate K road.

LISA

In the eighties it was the centre of the universe. London made it seem a bit tame later on, but it was a good stepping stone.

D

So why come back?

LISA

It's just itself. There's no bullshit.

RABBIT

You just haven't seen it yet.

LISA

Peace and quiet then.

RABBIT

You'll get tired of that.

LISA

Can you stop telling me how I'm going to feel?

RABBIT

Stop being so fucking predictable then.

LISA

I've been running things for thirty years, seven days a week, film and family. I am stuffed and shagged and shattered and munted one hundred ways to Christmas. The sum total of my ambition now is to lie down on the back porch here for a decade and drink tea in the morning and vodka in the afternoon and not have to move in the gap between.

RABBIT

No one gets to do that. Shit happens and you'll get wrapped up in it and this won't be a holiday anymore.

LISA

As long as the shit is washing the dishes and doing some weeding I'm good with that.

ALICE

When did you ever do any weeding?

LISA

Do me good to learn something new.

RABBIT

Can you hear yourself? Me me me.

LISA

That's the Aucklander in me, you have to back yourself or you get run over.

RABBIT

Blah fuckin blah.

LISA

Spoiled cunt yeah yeah, I know it.

ALICE

Mum, don't

LISA

I'm coming up on fifty, there's still hope right? Maybe I can de-shit myself.

D

Village detox?

LISA

Exactly.

RABBIT

And while you are having a spa break we can't sell the house.

LISA

So?

RABBIT

What about me? What if I want a new jet boat, or that workshop that's for sale, old Wakelin's shop? I could pick that up for 50k and then wrench bikes happily into old age.

LISA

You said I could stay.

RABBIT

I didn't think you would last. And now I want some of that money.

LISA

When I sell the company I can give you market rate plus twenty percent for your half of this house. And I'll help you with the shop, I'll take 49% of the building.

RABBIT

Go into real estate with you?

LISA

That's something I do know. Deals.

RABBIT

Cutting a sharp deal on your ignorant bro?

LISA

I won't cheat you.

RABBIT

Sure.

LISA

You've killed innocent animals with Alice, you trust her?

RABBIT

Yep.

LISA

Alice can get her almost Lawyer brain on it. You'll have to wait a while to get your slice but it will be a much bigger slice.

RABBIT

I'll think about it.

LISA

I want to stay.

RABBIT

I have no shit clue why you'd want to live here. Christ, this place isn't fashionable is it? You're not going to end up in one of those fukin magazines?

LISA

State house, pretty much original. Rimu top to bottom.

D

Honest charm of film producer's King Country Hideaway.

RABBIT

Fuck sake. No magazines or blogging or lifestyle or any of that shit.

LISA

You have your reputation to consider.

Sanity. RABBIT

Ok then. Let me sort out some paperwork. LISA

I don't want to buy half a workshop with you. It was to make my point. RABBIT

So you're all talk? LISA

Fucksake. RABBIT

There we go, last box done. ALICE

End of an era. LISA

Thank fuck. RABBIT

Listen! LISA

What? ALICE

Just listen... Hear that? LISA

Can't hear nothing. RABBIT

Yeah that. Dad's gone. We're on our own now. LISA

6. ONRYO OKAMI

Alice holds a thick work of Manga.

D
I thought you'd like it.

ALICE
Not so much the sexualised images of Japanese girls.

D
That's just how they are.

ALICE
Well my eyes were opened. I liked this one better.

A different one.

D
Onryo Okami. Ghost wolves. Ghost wolves in Tokyo.

ALICE
Ghost wolves in Tokyo. Much better.

D
No short skirts and long socks.

ALICE
That helped.

D
Loads of blood. Epic.

ALICE
Blood in black and white I can take.

D
What did you like about it?

ALICE
I liked that it didn't do all the work for you. I liked that it was... open.

D
Like were they ghosts pretending to be wolves or actual wolf ghosts? Tokyo. Ghost. Wolf. Three things, one thing.

ALICE
Do you believe in ghosts?

D
Don't need to. Reality is weirder.

ALICE

Is it?

D

We are mostly made of water but that water is mostly made of space. That's weird right.

ALICE

I guess.

D

And we are already several species.

ALICE

Are we?

D

You have three kilos of bacteria in your gut and you'd die without it. Do you know what toxiplasma is?

ALICE

No.

D

A microbe that can cause depression and bipolar. Lots of people who eat meat have it.

ALICE

Really? That sounds a bit

D

It's true. Same thing in rats and cats. When it gets into the rat it reprograms it, makes it sexually attracted to cats so the rat will go and get itself eaten by the cat. Then the microbes breed in the cats gut, get shat out where the rat eats the shit and the whole thing starts again.

ALICE

Right.

D

Two different life forces in control of the rat.

ALICE

That really is weird.

D

Just sitting here we are weird as fuck, no ghost needed.

ALICE

Got it. Is there anymore of this?

D

Eleven more volumes. I'll bring them round.

ALICE

That'll keep me busy. Where did you learn about this?

D

Just the internet, like you. I've spent a lot of time on Youtube, surfing the algorithm.

ALICE

Just trying to work things out for yourself.

D

Seeing where things lead. Trying to figure out who wants you to think in what way. One and one makes two, k'know. Or three. Like you and the end of the world.

ALICE

Right.

D

You haven't got it yet have you?

ALICE

Taumaranui?

D

Closer than that.

ALICE

What's closer than Taumaranui?

D

Family.

ALICE

Sorry?

D

You have no idea.

ALICE

So tell me.

D

Look at me. Look hard.

ALICE

Yeah...

D

Hard. Come closer.

ALICE

Yeah...

D
Imagine my hair is your colour. Now look at my nose, the way
it flares up into my eyebrows.

ALICE
Nope.

D
Do I have to spell it out?

ALICE
Yep.

D
Do I? Family.

ALICE
Fuck.

She picks up the photo.
D
What is it?

ALICE
Fuck.

D
What do you see? A ghost?

ALICE
Fuck... Really?

D
Yeah.

ALICE
Rabbit?

D
That wouldn't make sense would it? Why would he adopt me if
he was my father?

ALICE
Not mum?

D
Keep going.

ALICE
Grandad? Grandad.

D
Dad. Explains a lot right?

ALICE
Does it? Fuck. Do they know?

D
Nope.

ALICE
So why are you telling me?

D
I trust you.

ALICE
Why?

D
You think for yourself.

ALICE
Ok. Fuck...

D
Wild huh?

ALICE
What am I meant to do?

D
You can help me.

ALICE
Help you how?

D
When to tell them. How.

ALICE
I don't know. How long have you known?

D
Ten years.

ALICE
Did grandad know you knew?

D
Never said nothing. But yeah, he knew.

ALICE
So why now?

D
Should I have said something at the funeral?

That would have been ALICE

Bye dad! D

Wow. ALICE

I just want a place. My place. D

This is a whole lot of shit. ALICE

Why? D

Why? Because if you are a sister then you have a claim on the estate. ALICE

Knew you'd get there in the end. D

Fucking hell. ALICE

And everyone treats me like I am stupid, like someone who digs holes for a job. D

You are not stupid. ALICE

I am ghost wolf. Onryō okami. D

Onryō okami. ALICE

A bit weird, a bit real, a bit dangerous. D

7. METALLIC CLOUD

Alice turns the table. Lisa stands watching, drinking.

In front of Alice is a dead possum (or a Rabbit), her tablet and a knife.

Alice watches the tablet for a minute, picks up the possum and skins it, cleanly pulling the skin right off. For the last bit she picks up a knife and cuts the skin away.

Should take about a minute.

LISA

That is disgusting.

ALICE

Yeah. But now I can make glue from the carcass. Start a blanket.

LISA

Rabbit show you that?

ALICE

Wiri.

LISA

Wiri? Where did you find him?

ALICE

Just started talking to him on the street. He seems to know everything.

LISA

He does know everything. Did you know he's a world champion jet boat driver?

ALICE

Really?!

LISA

We went down river with him once, when I was about twelve. Spent too long on a picnic and as we came back an early evening mist came down. You couldn't see the water, just rocks sticking up out of the mist like a tombstones. He drove flat out for 45 minutes to get us back before dark, swinging left and right, tracking the rocks, the bank. It was unbelievable. When we got back they were about to launch a rescue boat. Wiri rolled out of the boat and collapsed on the grass, like he was in a trance.

ALICE
Part river part human.

LISA
Have you taken a bike ride with Rabbit?

ALICE
No.

LISA
He's like that. Absolutely terrifying. He could've been a champion.

ALICE
He never tried?

LISA
He never needed external approval. My advice, if he offers you a ride on the back, go for the Harley not the Ducati, it's a lot slower.

ALICE
Sounds dangerous.

LISA
I think that's the point. Intrinsic validation.

ALICE
And what was Nathan?

LISA
What?

ALICE
Nathan. What kind of validation was that?

LISA
Nathan... he was.... there was no overlap.

ALICE
I didn't say there was.

LISA
He was an escape vehicle I guess.

ALICE
Lucky guy.

LISA
I'm not going to hide my shame from you. I was needy.

ALICE
Weren't we all.

LISA

I'm sorry Alice, about all of it. Each and every day.

ALICE

I don't get it, even now. You were always so tight with Dad.

LISA

When you're young you want things that have a different rhythm, that's the magic. You're five/eight and he's four/four and it makes sense. Then over time you temper each other, you both come in at three/four and that's good when you're bringing up a kid you know, it's great. But then you feel like being five/eight again.

ALICE

And you can't do that inside the framework of your incredibly strong and stable marriage?

LISA

Auckland was driving me crazy. I wanted out of it, I wanted some air. And he didn't want to come along. He can't see beyond the martyrdom of saving children's lives which is, you know, pretty hard to argue with. And you seemed strong.

ALICE

Because that's what you wanted to think.

LISA

Isn't that what the expensive education got you? Resilience, confidence?

ALICE

And I thought it was about the grades.

LISA

Fuck the grades, you always had those. I look at you and I am amazed. Your ideas and independence. You are my best achievement.

ALICE

Better than 'Renovate or die NZ'?

LISA

Episode 47 of 'Renovate or Die NZ' is the peak of my achievement, it means so much more to me than my Bafta. I am happy you are here. For as long as it takes.

ALICE

As long as what takes?

LISA

If it's a boy thing, you know, anything like that.

ALICE

I'm not a snivelling kid on the rebound. I believe this, I'm living it.

LISA

You are. I mean if it doesn't...

ALICE

What? 'Work out'?

LISA

Well...

ALICE

This is not a trend mum, it's everything.

LISA

It's just...

ALICE

Come on...

LISA

Reality. It's all a trick of the light. You open the lens for a moment and the camera records what's in front of it - light, pattern, colour. You add words, music, costumes but it's all partial, artificial. It's our need for meaning that transforms all of that into something that looks real.

ALICE

By thinking that reality is constructed you avoid confronting truth. You stand back from things and see stories. I stand back and the things, discarded coffee cups, rising oceans, dying fish.

LISA

And then you create meaning from it, that's the point.

ALICE

Where you see nostalgia in an old record I see oil. I take the stories out of things.

LISA

Sounds pretty dull to me.

ALICE

That's what makes your lot so sad.

LISA

My lot?

ALICE

You think that being creative makes you special. You think you can create something that will save us.

LISA

Why is that sad?

ALICE

Because specialness is separation. A gap is created, between you and the discarded coffee cup, you and the poor, the homeless, between you and any consequence. And you have work to keep the gap open, you have to feed that gap with your stories.

LISA

As I pursue my freedom to create I make the gap?

ALICE

Yes.

LISA

Is that Marx?

ALICE

I worked it out myself.

LISA

I am in awe that you can think like that.

ALICE

There. You just made me special, you made a gap.

LISA

But you are.

ALICE

But I'm not.

LISA

Ok... So what would do I do with that, what should I do?

ALICE

You give up your point of privilege.

LISA

And what do I do then? I sit on a rock and wait for enlightenment?

ALICE

You have everything. You don't need more.

LISA

But what would I do?

ALICE

Do the wedding, then talk to people without a script in your hand.

LISA

No one round here talks to me.

ALICE

You could walk to Wiri's right now and talk about his sense of the river. He'd love that.

LISA

I never talk to Wiri, never will.

ALICE

Why not?

LISA

Because I sound like a cunt when I talk to Wiri.

ALICE

What does that even mean?

LISA

I don't want to sound patronising.

ALICE

Is that it?

LISA

I don't want to sound like Yoda. That has no currency in my world.

ALICE

You're scared of sounding stupid, is that it?

LISA

Yes.

ALICE

Remember all those clever girls from that expensive school I used to go to? How did they reacted when I said I was going to live with my mother in Taumaranui and skip Uni?

LISA

They thought you were a strong young woman taking independent decisions about her life.

ALICE

You wish. They were horrible, I gave my phone away. I have two friends left in the world from last year. I write to them. As for the rest of them, who cares?

LISA

You're stronger than me.

ALICE

Mum that's bullshit. Just shut up. Start with that.

LISA

You know me right?

ALICE

You are here to de-shit yourself you said...

LISA

Yes, yes I am.

ALICE

So...

LISA

So... I don't know anything?

ALICE

You don't know anything, but you already have everything you need. Start there.

Rabbit and D with a dozen.

LISA

Wasn't expecting you.

RABBIT

Picking up Alice. And I thought I collect the rent at the same time.

LISA

That not go through?

RABBIT

Nah sis.

LISA

I'll sort it out. Have you met my daughter? She is a fucking genius.

RABBIT

Why did the rent not go through?

LISA

The company sale's not going so well. There's some arseholes from Tauranga that have Chinese money that means... Look, it's all going to be fine in the end. But Alice, you have to get this... We were talking about how to live, how to live here and

RABBIT

You still want to be here?

LISA

Yes.

RABBIT

Six months in, winter soon.

LISA

I'm sticking it out. Despite the fact no one here will talk to me. They talk to her though.

RABBIT

She's involved. They think you're on holiday.

D

When we look at you we just see white woman tourist, again and again, no matter how many times you walk around town. It's like... What's that tube thing with the broken up light?

ALICE

Kaleidoscope?

D

Yeah, like there's a lot of you but you never... focus.

LISA

I just don't exist. Ok, so what do I do about that?

D

The Discovery. You gotta drop that.

LISA

But it's designed for the country.

RABBIT

Not this fuckin country.

LISA

It smooths the ride.

RABBIT

'It smooths the ride' Fuckme.

D

Get a ute. A ute doesn't do that.

LISA

Which is why I don't want a ute.

RABBIT

If a ute doesn't smooth the ride, then what do you have to do when you're driving it?

LISA

Slow down?

RABBIT

Slow down. You stick your arm out the window, smell the cow shit, you wave to the postie. You stick it in low and climb to the top of the ridge and have a joint at sunset. Or you go and help someone with a fence, then go shooting. And when you're done the kill doesn't stink out the cab and you can hose out the blood, back to the earth.

LISA

Thoreau's ute. I feel a phd coming on.

RABBIT

If you can't drop your bullshit then you're gonna stay an outsider forever.

LISA

Drop my Auckland bullshit and take up the Taumaranui bullshit?

RABBIT

Yep. Where do you live?

LISA

Ok... how?

RABBIT

You weren't listening. Start with the Disco.

LISA

Me in a ute?

D

Don't buy new, some kid will just key it.

LISA

Sell the Disco? Really?

RABBIT

It's white Lisa.

LISA

Metallic cloud.

RABBIT

Fucksake. I know someone with an old Patrol. You'll see what I mean.

LISA

What else?

RABBIT

The clothes. Nothing clever, no camo. Go for the colours you see around you. Water. Mud. Trees. No fukin white.

LISA

That rules out all my wardrobe.

D

No one I know has a 'wardrobe', they just have clothes.

LISA

Clothes. Got it.

RABBIT

You wear it until it wears out. No goretex, no boots with squishy soles. You don't have an ebike, you don't read the Auckland papers, or the fucking ladedah 'proper journalism' online shit.

LISA

I have give up the rest of the world?

RABBIT

You ignore all that so you have time to look at the land and the weather, so you can see where the hunting might be good this week.

LISA

I do all these superficial things and then someone will talk to me?

RABBIT

And you help people out without taking their money because no one's got much of that around here and anyway one day they will help you back.

LISA

Barter economy.

RABBIT

Is that what it's called? Just be a good cunt Lisa.

D

Feel the web. Become a strand.

LISA

Ensnared.

RABBIT

Or you go and jump in your metallic cloud and go back to white land and make shiny white TV for skinny white people. No one will even notice you fucking left.

LISA

Maybe I want to leave a hole somewhere. A hole someone notices, a hole in a heart.

RABBIT

Jesus fuck... Even your language wears white.

LISA

Ok, I'll sell the disco.

RABBIT

We'll take it up to Hamilton.

D

They like white cars up there.

LISA

You'll help?

RABBIT

You'll just get ripped off. I know somewhere for a good price.

LISA

When I got here I thought I would feel different, less like a dog chasing it's own tail.

RABBIT

And?

LISA

Now I have nothing to do but listen to lawyers, and relax, and I feel - exactly the same.

RABBIT

You've always been the same.

LISA

I need a hobby. Maybe I'll build a life-size model of the Titanic out of vodka bottles.

RABBIT

You don't need a hobby, you need a life. And I need the rent.

LISA

Rent, got it.

D

Dad's in trouble.

LISA

What trouble?

RABBIT

It's nothing.

D

Yeah it's a whole lot of nothing.

Rabbit?
LISA

I just owe some guys some money.
RABBIT

Not good cunts then?
LISA

I know them. It's just business. Delays.
RABBIT

How much?
LISA

Twenty.
RABBIT

Fuck. Well.
LISA

I thought I'd cover it, with the house.
RABBIT

I'm selling the Disco.
LISA

You are.
RABBIT

Problem solved.
LISA

Good.
RABBIT

Thanks?
LISA

For money that should have been mine anyway? Thanks.
RABBIT

So I won't ask what it's for.
LISA

Bike parts.
RABBIT

Bike parts.
LISA

That's what I said.
RABBIT

LISA
Right.

RABBIT
Hamilton, Saturday morning. I'll tail you on the bike and dub you back.

LISA
The Harley?

RABBIT
Harley's off the road. Taking the Duke.

LISA
Christ.

LISA
That's my payment for helping, getting to scare the shit out of you on the Waimiha Road. Ready Alice?

ALICE
Yep.

RABBIT
See ya sis.

LISA
Bye. And thanks.

RABBIT
What for?

LISA
Just being around.

RABBIT
You moved here, I didn't have a fucking choice.

LISA
I know, still...

RABBIT
Saturday.

LISA
What are you doing now?

D
Corner post holes for McPherson. Wanna join the fun?

LISA
You're going to dig holes?

Something new. ALICE

It's a big thrill that's for sure. D

Can I come too? LISA

You? RABBIT

Sure. I was thinking... maybe I can buy a section one day,
build something. LISA

Fill that hole? RABBIT

I'll shut up now. LISA

Now you can come along. RABBIT

8. MORE SHIT

Lisa on her phone.

LISA

It's me.

Yeah she's good. Permaculture, knitting, shooting. Revenge of the seventies.

She's learning Maori with kids on Saturday morning.

Turns out she's everyone's friend. They save things for her at the op shop.

Yeah. So how's the head nurse?

Your girlfriend the head nurse.

Oh. I'm sorry. Alice didn't tell me.

That's a shame.

No I mean it. It would have made things easier.

The buyers, the rapacious cunts from Tauranga, have been stringing me along. They were waiting to see my last round of books so that could beat me down on price, again. There's so little in the business now, so little actual work going on, that really all they are buying, all they want it turns out, is my name and rights to my back catalogue. They don't want to make movies or TV they want to do some digital distribution bullshit using my name and my Bafta for cred.

Yeah, I'm never underestimating someone from Tauranga ever again.

It means I'm going to have to move very quickly to keep my head above water.

Seven employees, a lease, an office to run, lawyers, it all adds up pretty quick.

So if things get really bad I'm going to have to call in my half of the house.

Because I won't have a company, I won't have made any money selling it and I won't have an income.

Like a nine to five? No one will have me.

I was hoping that you and your nurse would buy me out and you could live happily ever after.

That's the reality of it. I'm sorry, I really am.

And obviously I'm going to stop with the extra money to you. Alice is an adult, she doesn't live with you, so...

It's not like you're poor.

No I haven't told her.

Because I can't continue to run a company that used to make movies but now makes reality TV.

I can't come back, Auckland would

You mean back back?

Despite everything?

It wouldn't change anything, I'd still be in the shit.

Yes, everything. Close to everything. I'm sorry.

Yep yep ok bye.

Yanks out buds.

Fucking cunt.

INTERVAL

9. NOTHING

Alice, alone, staring into space.

D wanders in.

Hey...

Hey. Don't you ever knock?

Why?

Maybe I want to be alone.

Do you?

Not really.

What are you doing?

Nothing.

Right.

Waiting.

For...

An idea.

Does this work?

Something usually comes along.

Like me.

Like you. What's up? ALICE

Nothing. D

Just passing. ALICE

Yep. D

It's a dead end street. ALICE

Always has been, yep. D

So just passing. ALICE

Yeah well. Bored. D

Ahhh... ALICE

Seeing if you were up to something. D

I'm up to nothing. ALICE

I can go. D

Grab a beer. ALICE

Nah. D

Something I always meant to ask you. ALICE

Wassat? D

What does D stand for? ALICE

Fuck no. D

Can't be that bad. ALICE

Could. D

Try me. ALICE

Ok. Diana. D

Diana, like goddess of hunting? ALICE

No, like Lady Diana fukin Spencer. D

You're named after Lady Di? ALICE

Yeah. Mum loved all that royals shit. D

Really? ALICE

Yeah, crazy about them. Loved Di hated Charles. Mugs and plates and all that. D

So irrelevant. ALICE

Took that shit with her, left me behind. D

Sorry. ALICE

No drama. D

Did Grandad leave her? Did she run away? ALICE

Other way round. She got swept up with this guy from Gisborne way. A pastor in some fake church. He didn't want a kid stinking out his purity. D

He didn't want the complete package? ALICE

D
Nope.

ALICE
Do you know where she lives?

D
I worked it out, yeah.

ALICE
Do you ever see her?

D
What for?

ALICE
Hear her story.

D
Her story is she put 500 bucks and dad's phone number on the kitchen table and walked out carrying a box of bullshit mugs and plates.

ALICE
And grandad gave you to Rabbit to look after you.

D
Yeah.

ALICE
Did you like Grandad?

D
Well he made sure I was alright didn't he?

ALICE
I liked him.

D
You didn't come down much.

ALICE
Dad didn't like coming down, the endless questions about grandma's treatment. What he wanted to say was hurry up and die you horrible old cow.

D
You don't remember me from back then.

ALICE
No.

D
I was in the background.

ALICE

So when are you going to come forward?

D

Time's not right.

ALICE

You have to tell them soon.

D

What's the rush?

ALICE

Mum thinks she's going to get half of the value of this house, that she's only got Rabbit to deal with.

D

And she's only going to get a third.

ALICE

Yes. They need to know that, so tell them.

D

Not yet.

ALICE

You want to punish them, is that it?

D

What do you mean?

ALICE

The longer you wait the more damage you will cause.

D

Hadn't thought of that.

ALICE

She's not going to roll over like a puppy and let you scratch her tummy D, she's going to fight you.

D

I'll still get the money.

ALICE

She's used to tying things up in court for years if it suits her. She's hung the best of them out to dry D, co-producers, funders, actors, writers the lot.

D

You admire that.

ALICE

No. Just how she is.

D
I deserve that money. For keeping quiet.

ALICE
For doing nothing.

D
For doing nothing. I could have put a bomb under this family years ago, but I didn't.

ALICE
Because you don't really have a plan do you?

D
I do.

ALICE
What is it?

D
Not telling you.

ALICE
Right.

D
I have a plan.

ALICE
Ok, so just get on with it will you? I hate knowing about you when they don't, it feels dishonest.

D
Or what?

ALICE
Or what? I don't have a threat ready for you D.

D
You've got nothing.

ALICE
Nothing.

D
You could tell them yourself.

ALICE
I'm not going to do that, it's your secret D, I'm not going to take it away from you, but you have to tell them soon. Please.

D
Please?

ALICE
Yes, please. Tell them because it's the right thing to do.

D
Ok.

ALICE
When?

D
Couple of days. Big wake up call.

ALICE
Couple of days.

D
You'll wake up too.

ALICE
How's that?

D
All this posing, waiting for ideas, nonsense.

ALICE
You don't get to tell me it's nonsense.

D
Tell me you're not bored then, really. Tell me you don't want to go back up north and go back to talking about the end of the world over a double macchiato on Ponsonby Road. What do you say to that?

ALICE
Nothing.

10. EMPTY THE TANK

Everyone at Lisa's.

Champagne bottles - one used, one open,
one to come. Mismatched glasses.

LISA

I looked around the house and I saw it, I really saw it. How many types of tea do you have Rabbit?

RABBIT

Tea? One.

LISA

Exactly. One. I made a list. (*Reads off phone*) English breakfast, Lord Grey, Lady Grey, Manuka, Assam, detox, relax, revive, chamomile, peppermint, green tea, ginger tea, Himalayan tea, roibois, jasmine, nettle, liquorice, valerian, Lapsang Souchong. Gunpowder tea, for fucks sake. What is that?

Twenty six types of tea in all. Three people. Ten years supply. Madness. And then there was the soap.

ALICE

You need soap mum.

LISA

But do you need it in a pump bottle? What was wrong with a bar of soap? You can't buy a bar of soap. Did my parents and grandparents suffer from lack of pump soap? Coal tar, sunlight, and pears. Did they feel emotionally crippled because they didn't have antibacterial vanilla blush pump soap their lives?

D

You don't get hairs on pump soap.

LISA

Special washing machine liquid for towels, for woollens, for silks. Don't start me on technology. Drawers full of conclusively better things. We had a house stuffed full of excellence and variety. What we never asked was... is this improvement worth anything? No, we just bought it, like the suckers we are. Miles of it. Product.

ALICE

Mum...

LISA

And the thing is, the killer is, my work was the same, just product, filler. Kids comedy for Disney, that series about lost roads, The great kiwiana hunt, Don't you know who I am down under. Jesus that was toxic. Selling distraction by the commercial hour. Shitty up to my eyeballs. What are we chasing? What are we trying to buy?

ALICE

Mum.

LISA

The rest of the world lives in boxes stacked on top of each other. Even the mega rich in London live in terraces. But we have to have a zillion foot house we can drive a truck around with a view of the harbour or else we've failed. Is it not enough that we live in the most beautiful and free country in the world?

We are spoilt, rotting from the inside with greed. Everyone knows that, but when you see it in yourself, when you start to try to dig that out, then you see there is nothing left under it. That is grim.

RABBIT

Go easy.

LISA

Go easy? Should we go easy Alice, easy on our failings?

ALICE

Hard on the future, easy on yourself.

LISA

You sound like your Dad. I'll be all right, I'm a resilient old hag. I'll get by even as the house falls down around my ears.

ALICE

What about the house?

LISA

Metaphorically.

RABBIT

What's up?

LISA

My champagne days are over.

SUZE

Fifty's the new forty Mum.

LISA

My days of being able to afford champagne are over.

RABBIT

What are you talking about?

LISA

I've told the cunts in Tauranga to fuck themselves. If that's anatomically possible.

RABBIT

You're not selling?

LISA

I'm winding the business up. They can't have it.

RABBIT

So what do you get left with?

LISA

A lot of memories. My producer credits intact, my reputation.

D

What's that worth?

LISA

Maybe ten thousand a year. Not enough to live off, not enough to fill the crater at the bank.

RABBIT

Jesus...

LISA

After I sell everything I will have no money. Zero. I used to be a paper millionaire.

ALICE

Sell everything?

LISA

Yep.

ALICE

Grey Lynn?

LISA

Half of that house is mine and I've borrowed on it already.

RABBIT

You didn't?

LISA

I had to, pay out my staff. And the fukin lawyers. It's expensive winding up.

ALICE
Can you even do that?

LISA
It's pretty easy when your names on the mortgage.

ALICE
What about Dad?

LISA
He has to or buy me out, or sell.

ALICE
That's not fair. You left him.

LISA
Let's not feel too sorry for him Alice, he's a consultant.

ALICE
It's still a lot of money right?

LISA
They wanted my name Alice.

ALICE
What does that matter?

LISA
What else do we have? I thought you'd see that.

ALICE
Couldn't you have found another buyer?

LISA
I'm done with it.

RABBIT
You're broke.

LISA
Yep.

RABBIT
For a while.

LISA
For a while.

RABBIT
So this house.

LISA
Yes?

RABBIT
I want to sell it.

LISA
This is where I live now.

RABBIT
You can move.

LISA
I've got four months left in my year. I want to see spring.

RABBIT
I want to sell, now.

LISA
Give me some time to start again.

RABBIT
How much time?

LISA
Six months I guess.

RABBIT
Six months?

LISA
Maybe a year. I have to make a plan. What is it?

RABBIT
It's your birthday. We can do this tomorrow.

LISA
Let's do it now. Things can't get much worse.

Rabbit pulls a letter out of his
jacket, hands it to Lisa.

LISA
Who's this from?

RABBIT
My lawyer.

LISA
You have a lawyer?

RABBIT
I do now.

LISA
What does it say?

RABBIT

Read it.

LISA

Never read a lawyers letter, puts you at a disadvantage.

RABBIT

You know how much that fukin thing cost?

LISA

About a grand a page.

RABBIT

So give me my money's worth, read it.

Lisa drops it to the table.

LISA

You want me to sell. This asserts your rights to wind up yada yada.

RABBIT

I want to move on.

LISA

Where do you go from here, Te Kuiti?

RABBIT

I've got an opportunity in Aus.

LISA

Yeah?

RABBIT

Specialist bike dealers, Harleys, Ducatis, Triumphs, anything not Japanese.

D

Rabbit doesn't like anything from Japan do you?

RABBIT

If you're talking about Manga and Playstation and motor bikes, then no, I fukin don't.

LISA

If we sell now I'll be totally screwed.

RABBIT

You'll be all right. Take your half, head back up north, put yourself around you'll get something.

LISA

If I sell I'll have to give it all to the bank.

RABBIT

If you owe that much they'll come for you anyway.

LISA

Which is why I might have to file for bankruptcy.

RABBIT

I had a plan, a simple plan. See the old man out then move on. Then you come along and decide you want to belong to something. You fucked everything up by leaving all those years ago and now you've fucked everything up by coming back.

LISA

I didn't fuck things up when I left, I just left.

RABBIT

A week didn't go past when dad didn't compare us.

LISA

That is not my fault. If that's what Dad felt then that's what he felt, nothing to do with me.

RABBIT

Like not telling him you had broken up with Richard. You were always shiny. Metallic cloud.

LISA

It wasn't a special show for him. No one invests in failures.

RABBIT

Bullshit.

LISA

People want to believe in you, even against the evidence. That's the great Kiwi confidence game.

RABBIT

Double bullshit.

LISA

Ok, ok, but look, we don't need lawyers, we're family. You can level with me.

RABBIT

I just did. I want money from the house. Now.

D

There's something that I want to say Dad.

RABBIT

Now?

D

Something serious. About the house. About me.

Ok. What's that love? RABBIT

I know who my father is. D

No you don't. RABBIT

I do. Here... D

She places an envelop on the table.

What's that? LISA

Proof. A DNA kit. A couple of letters. D

DNA? RABBIT

Yeah. D

Rabbit goes to pick it up.

Don't touch it. LISA

Why not? RABBIT

Make her say it. LISA

We all know I'm not her father. RABBIT

Do we? LISA

Yes, we do. RABBIT

He's not my biological father. D

So... is it the milkman? LISA

Close. The real estate agent. D

RABBIT
What? What the fuck are you

LISA
Shut up Rabbit.

RABBIT
She can't be serious she can't

LISA
Rabbit! Keep talking.

D
That's it. It's all in there. The DNA, a couple of letters
from him to my mum.

RABBIT
So you're my sister?

D
Makes sense doesn't it? Why did he pay you for me? Nothing
special about me right? Some dumb poor kid.

RABBIT
Because you were abandoned.

D
Because he was my father. You believe me.

LISA
I do yeah.

RABBIT
How can you?

LISA
Because Alice hasn't said a word.

ALICE
Mum...

LISA
You knew.

ALICE
It's her story.

LISA
Ok. This is a bit of a shock D.

D
Sure.

ALICE

It's important she knows where she fits in.

LISA

Or not. Maybe there's no room for her here.

ALICE

Why are you so hostile?

LISA

Why? I don't want a new sister, I don't want my father to have hidden this from us. I don't want him to have cheated on mum. I don't want to share this house with anyone other than Rabbit and Alice. I don't want to look at her.

D

Tell it.

LISA

It's too much.

ALICE

Mum...

LISA

What?

ALICE

You're upset and angry.

LISA

No kidding.

ALICE

Don't just do what you normally do.

LISA

Which is?

ALICE

Go off on one. Just look at what's in front of you.

LISA

I don't want to.

ALICE

It's not like you've got any choice is it? She's not going away.

D

Nope.

LISA

Ok ok. So what di I do?

ALICE
Look at what you've got.

LISA
Yoda?

ALICE
Yoda.

RABBIT
Fukin Yoda?

ALICE
It's a code Mum and I have. A way to help each other out.
Mum?

LISA
Yeah.

RABBIT
Code for what?

LISA
For not knowing anything. Let's try it.

ALICE
Got to start sometime.

LISA
So D, tell us what happened.

D
Your dad, dad, fell for this solo mum who rented one of his
houses. Fell hard. Ten years.

RABBIT
And she loved him back?

D
She was poor, he was rent. I don't know, maybe she did. I was
a kid, six when she left town for a new guy and I ended up
with Rabbit.

LISA
And she left you behind?

D
Yeah he was an asshole, that I could figure out. One of
those Christians whose first religion is money. Him or me.
Money or me. Take your fucking pick woman.

LISA
Did mum not notice anything?

D
She was off her face.

LISA
She was in pain.

D
She could barely see for diamorphine. Did he pay you for that too Rabbit?

RABBIT
What?

D
The extra pain killers.

RABBIT
They never gave her enough.

LISA
Jesus...

RABBIT
She begged me.

ALICE
How did you get it?

RABBIT
She knew I would know someone who would know someone.

LISA
What a mess.

D
For real.

RABBIT
Fukin mental family.

D
Right there.

LISA
So why now? What are you hoping will happen?

D
The house.

LISA
Is that all? The house?

D
Yeah.

LISA
This is about money?

D
My cut.

RABBIT
You got a lifetime of money out of me already.

D
Dad paid you.

RABBIT
You think that covered everything? The playstations and games and manga? It covered some of the bills.

D
I was a child.

RABBIT
You still live in my house.

D
I pay my way.

RABBIT
Your cut. My fukin blood is what comes out of that.

D
If you hadn't looked after me I would still be entitled to it.

RABBIT
If I hadn't looked after you you'd be in foster care, being fiddled by some fukin perv.

D
No one fiddles me.

RABBIT
That's because we kept you safe, so you would grow up strong.

D
Thanks.

RABBIT
And now this?

D
What's the problem Dad?

RABBIT

I gave up a ton for you. I wanted to, I fukin liked it. I don't care that you're my sister, I wouldn't have treated you any different. The problem is being lied to.

D

Coming from you.

RABBIT

What?

D

Come on...

RABBIT

Don't.

D

She's had it right all along. There's nothing special about Taumaranui, no golden halo of peace, no fukin special silence. It's as shitty as anywhere else in this country. Worse.

LISA

Can't be worse.

D

Could be.

LISA

Rabbit?

RABBIT

What?

LISA

You know all my shit, we all know hers.

D

Just tell her.

RABBIT

Or what?

D

I know it all, I've been watching for years.

Rabbit takes a drink.

RABBIT

There are three kingdoms in this town, first is the pakeha kingdom, that's the council and the golf club and all that shit - dad's one. Then there's the Maori, their culture, their enterprise.

LISA

Bicultural.

RABBIT

And then there's the third, the crims. Gangs.

LISA

Gangs? I haven't seen any of that.

RABBIT

There's no HQ with machine guns on it in the middle of Marae street but this place still belongs to them. Always has.

LISA

Isn't it all Asians and East Europeans now?

RABBIT

That's Auckland, where the money is. Down here it's the originals, the Mob, the Power, the Mothers.

LISA

So the kiwi gangs are here.

RABBIT

Kiwi gangs? They're not the All Blacks. They're fucking scary.

LISA

Not just old guys on bikes then?

RABBIT

It's the full shit, nominated entry, their own law, absolute loyalty.

LISA

Like Auckland Grammar.

RABBIT

Yeah, just like that. But with drugs and whores and guns.

LISA

The key difference being the guns.

RABBIT

Being on the end of beating have you?

LISA

Of course not.

RABBIT

Of course not.

LISA

You have?

RABBIT

That's their version of a lawyer's letter. Cheaper, more effective.

LISA

That 20k.

RABBIT

Started as ten.

LISA

I've never seen a patch in town.

RABBIT

That's just amateur theatre, distraction. You still don't see it do you? Why do four iwi meet here? Why did Whitey think this was a good place to build a railway station back in the day?

LISA

Alluvial soil?

RABBIT

The meeting of two rivers, a lake over the hill, sixty miles to the coast. Existing trade routes.

ALICE

Cross roads. Distribution.

RABBIT

And remote.

D

Lots of dead end valleys with old farms on them. Lots of sheds. Lots of secrets.

RABBIT

A great place to hide anything before you trade it on. Use motorbikes instead of canoes, nothing much has changed.

LISA

Bikes... that's the connection.

RABBIT

Everyone loves their bikes. The mob, the power. And who do they get the bikes off?

LISA

Trademe?

RABBIT

The Mothers. Whitey. So someone has to run that trade right?

LISA

Are you a member?

Rabbit laughs.

RABBIT

I couldn't be a gang member, not here. Wrong colour, wrong father. That's why I'm Rabbit.

LISA

Why?

RABBIT

Rabbits are cute, bouncy. That's me. I'm not in any one of those kingdoms, but I can jump between them. I keep secrets, I run messages. Oma-fukin-rapeti.

LISA

So what do you do?

RABBIT

I run all the bike deals from Palmie up to Hamilton and out to the coast. And I have my own small operation here in town in quarters, because they all let me. The Mothers like it that I know my bikes. The Power let me because I can drink with the cops and find out what's going on. And every now and then I give the cops something useful about some dickhead from outside who tries to rip the gangs off. They get the bust, the gangs get the territory and the cops turn a blind eye to a bit of dealing, long as I don't do meth. Devil you know.

LISA

How did you let this happen?

RABBIT

There's no money here. There's no future that's not a lost highway, or railway carts to fucktown or whatever other bullshit they can dream up.

LISA

What about Dad's business? You could have taken that.

RABBIT

I worked my arse off for him for ten years then he sold it to that cunt Myers and spent the money on bullshit cures for mum. He could have given it to me, but he chose not to.

D

He knew you had gang connections.

RABBIT

He did. And he used me for them, used to buy and sell for them. Buying houses with cash is a great way to clean money. He took advantage of that. Truth is he didn't like me.

LISA

And you want to move on.

RABBIT

Gold coast. Big roads. Cunts with money for bikes.

LISA

Why didn't you say? When I took it.

RABBIT

I didn't trust you. I didn't like you much.

LISA

We could have sold then, I would have if you forced it.

RABBIT

I didn't want to go then, I do now. I want to get out. Things are going to change soon. Those Auckland gangs, they're going to want the rest of the country soon.

LISA

You'll have more kings to keep happy.

RABBIT

Someone will want me to choose. I'm only safe because I don't belong to any of them.

LISA

Is that why you keep a gun under your bed?

RABBIT

How'd you know that?

LISA

I didn't.

RABBIT

Yes I have a gun under my bed. Sorry Alice.

ALICE

What for?

RABBIT

Bit of a shock all this.

ALICE

I don't like it Rabbit, but it's not a surprise.

RABBIT

Yeah it should be. This is what happens when your tribes run the show, when the law is less important than money and what they call respect.

D

A preview.

RABBIT

I'm getting on. I want out.

D

And now I can help you.

RABBIT

How's that?

D

There's three children. Three people who own their dead parents house.

RABBIT

So now I get less money, what's good about that?

D

Less money, more choice.

LISA

Two against one.

D

Just a case of which two.

RABBIT

What?

LISA

You two against me for the immediate sale of the house.

RABBIT

That would fuck you.

LISA

It would. Luckily she's wrong.

D

I'm not wrong.

LISA

The house is in a trust. Two siblings in that trust, with their children as beneficiaries if we should both die first.

D

Don't believe you. Show me the papers.

LISA

My lawyer's in Auckland. She's got all my shit up there, as far away from me as possible. I'll email her tonight if you like.

D

Rabbit signed this?

LISA

He might not remember it, but he did.

RABBIT

I don't remember.

D

Signed against his will.

LISA

Stoned. Rabbit doesn't understand money. This protects us.

D

Protects you.

LISA

Benefits everyone. Slows down any sale, takes the heat out of any rash decisions, means his cut is safe from my creditors if it comes to that, means it goes to our children if we die.

RABBIT

We've only got one child now.

LISA

Diana's name is on it too, believing at the time that she was one of our children in fact, if not in law.

ALICE

So she will get her cut when you guys die?

LISA

I'm hoping that's a while off yet.

ALICE

D would get more then right?

LISA

Much more. If she waits.

D

We can't wait.

LISA

You could. Be nice thing to have in thirty or forty years wouldn't it? By then a shed in Palmerston North will be worth a million.

D

We can't wait. Rabbit?

RABBIT

I can't stay here Lisa.

D

I could contest the foundation of the Trust right? You should have consulted all the owners of the house, all the children.

LISA

We didn't know you were entitled at the time did we, because you hadn't got around to telling us.

D

I could though.

LISA

You could, if you could afford the lawyers.

D

I want to see the documentation.

LISA

You'll have it in the morning.

D

I'm going to get my split.

LISA

You will get what you are entitled to, in due course.

D

I don't trust you.

LISA

Don't have to, it's all about the documentation.

D

You're the queen of documentation.

LISA

The queen of documentation and deals and whitey shit, that's me. The White Queen.

RABBIT

This is fukin nuts. Give me a drink will ya.

Lisa pours him a drink.

LISA
Let's celebrate. To the sister!

No one raises a glass.

LISA
Ok, to my fiftieth birthday, to new beginnings.

ALL
New beginnings.

LISA
So let's say you had a hundred thou D, what would you do with it?

D
Dunno. Nothing.

LISA
Nothing?

D
I'd just have it because I could, because I never had any before.

LISA
No vision for the future? No dream to fund?

D
Nup.

LISA
No ambition at all?

D
Like you're some big deal?

LISA
I was. A Bafta winning bid deal. There's not that many of those.

D
When was that?

LISA
Fuck you.

ALICE
Mum...

LISA
A fukin Bafta... Do you know how much work it is to make even a bad movie?

The vision, yes, but also the paper work, the health and safety, the unions, distribution, marketing, it's all difficult. Then, after years and years of hard work, someone puts you on pedestal for five minutes and says - good job. That's vision, that's an achievement.

D

Maybe one day I'd buy a unit.

LISA

Jesus. Their legacy, on a unit.

D

Legacy? That what you call it.

LISA

It has to mean something.

D

And you're just going to sit in this house feeling sorry for yourself, how is that any fukin legacy?

LISA

I am going to use the time to make a film. Lowfi, like the kids. Micro budget.

ALICE

What about?

LISA

About what you said. Yoda.

D

You gonna make a Star Wars fan thing?

LISA

No. It's about this town, the people.

D

You can make a lot of money on Youtube with fan stuff.

LISA

I'd rather die.

D

Movies are already dead.

ALICE

That's great Mum.

LISA

I could learn more about digital distribution I guess.

D

I could help you there.

LISA

And how would you do that D?

D

I have a Manga estate.

LISA

Estate?

D

Digital estate. Catering to Manga fans from the West. Monetised through affiliate sales, paid-for content, advertorials. I do pre-release reviews on Youtube, unboxing, merch. Another year it will earn me more than digging holes.

LISA

Did you know about this?

RABBIT

I know she spends a lot of time in the back shed. She's got a coloured screen and stuff.

LISA

Green screen?

D

Course.

LISA

And you said you wouldn't do anything with the money.

D

Money would kill it. It's me doing it because I love it.

LISA

Have you seen this?

ALICE

Yes.

LISA

You didn't tell me.

ALICE

It's just what she does mum, it's just what our generation do.

LISA

Broadcast.

ALICE

Interact, converse.

D

I suppose if I had the money I could knock off the digging for a bit.

LISA

You could, yeah.

D

Still don't believe you.

RABBIT

I don't like this.

D

What's that Dad?

RABBIT

I have to choose. You and her. Between two sisters.

LISA

You want to give our money to her?

RABBIT

I want to get out of here.

LISA

I'll get the money for your Australian adventure.

RABBIT

And how will you do that if you're going bankrupt?

LISA

I'll figure something out. I'm good like that. Give me three months. I can do it from here.

RABBIT

Three months?

LISA

Six tops.

RABBIT

Six. Then twelve.

LISA

You wait, you get more money.

ALICE

You're just going to cut her out?

LISA

I can't afford to let her in.

ALICE

Is that what it comes down to?

LISA

Isn't this what it's going to be like in the future? Clan groups and tribes looking after their own interests in the most direct way possible?

ALICE

In the future.

LISA

So we're practicing. Are you with us or against us?

ALICE

You're not serious.

LISA

There's no real choice to make, you're with us.

ALICE

I can't even think in those terms.

LISA

If you want you can use your university fund to pay her out.

ALICE

What University fund?

LISA

The money your dad and I put aside to give you a comfortable run through university. Enough for fees and accommodation and full time study for five years. Over a hundred and fifty k last time I looked.

ALICE

You never said anything about this.

LISA

We wanted you to decide to study, to want it.

RABBIT

You can't touch it?

LISA

That's what trusts do, lock things away from chancers.

ALICE

But I'm not going to university.

LISA

If you can get your dad to sign it over to you, you can do what you want with it.

ALICE

That's not fair, it's about you are her not me and her.

LISA

I need somewhere to live while mu life goes down the drain. Perhaps if she withdraws her claim on the house we could see what happens over time, in a couple of years.

D

Not doing that.

LISA

It's not really about money. Money's just perceived value. What you want is for someone to take you seriously, not write you off.

D

It's about the money.

LISA

You're the cleverest of the three of us.

D

Not.

LISA

You have a niche media company in the back shed, you've sat on a huge secret for many years, waiting for the moment to cash it in. If you had a way to take those skills to the market.

D

Why would I do that?

LISA

Validation.

D

I don't need that from you.

LISA

Means nothing from me. But you have a place in the bigger world of you want it, you could make your own way easy enough, it would mean more than a lottery win from your father's death. The promise of money has blinded you.

D

So what should I do?

ALICE

Find your mum.

D

That's not going to be a happy ending.

ALICE

At least you'd know where you stand.

RABBIT

There you go, there's something worthwhile to do.

D

No.

RABBIT

Why not?

LISA

She's scared.

D

Not.

RABBIT

No one's parents are perfect D. Dad was a log way from perfect, but I knew him, I know what his shit is and I know what my shit is and that helps, as you grow up.

LISA

It's time for you to go D. Time to grow up.

D

I don't want to go.

RABBIT

That's why you should.

Lisa pulls out her keyring and puts it on the table.

LISA

Take my Patrol. Go for a drive, find her.

Rabbit picks up Brunhilde.

RABBIT

Take this for good luck. In case religion gets in your way.

LISA

Fucksake Rabbit, she can't go waving a gun around.

RABBIT

She can take it hunting though.

Lisa takes it, breaks it, checks the cartridges, snaps it back together.

She hands it to D.

LISA

Ammo's out of date.

RABBIT

Where'd you learn to handle a gun?

LISA

Dad taught us. Don't you remember?

RABBIT

No.

LISA

He took us up Wakelin's farm, the back paddock, it was infested.

RABBIT

Still is.

LISA

He showed us how to keep it safe, how to load, how to brace. First shot knocked me off my feet. Second one was better, by the fifth I was loving it, by the tenth I was hitting rabbits. You were pissed off.

RABBIT

You were better than me?

LISA

So I stopped and said I hated the sight of blood.

RABBIT

For my sake.

LISA

Once upon a time I used to be decent human being.

D

Ok. I'll go and see her.

D picks up the keys off the table.

D

I'll head off first thing.

LISA

You won't regret it.

D

Don't make me.

D leaves.

ALICE

That went well. You put her into touch.

LISA

She'll be back.

ALICE

You think?

LISA

She just has to sort her shit out. By then we'll know what to do with her. How to help her.

RABBIT

She's not going to want our help.

LISA

We'll see. Nothing good happens in less than a year, right Rabbit?

RABBIT

Guess not. And what was all that shit about the house in a trust?

LISA

It's not shit.

RABBIT

I don't believe you.

LISA

You don't have to, it's done.

RABBIT

Without my consent?

LISA

With your signature and a witness.

RABBIT

Who witnessed that?

LISA

No no, my lawyer.

RABBIT

Your lawyer knows me?

LISA

My lawyer has never been south of the Bombay hills. It was a good idea and it paid off.

ALICE

And this university money?

LISA

No pressure, you might want to go one day, when you want to learn how to fight.

ALICE

Fight?

LISA

For the planet. Law. You'd be great. And now you can afford it.

RABBIT

You'd be good at that. Better than staying here and making blankets out of dead animals.

ALICE

I don't want to go to university.

LISA

It's an option, be happy about that.

ALICE

Ok.

LISA

My pleasure love.

RABBIT

You weren't lying about my money for Aus?

LISA

I'll get you some money, somehow.

RABBIT

And you're going to stay here?

LISA

Yeah. Make my movie. Look at some opportunities. People are going to want what we have here.

RABBIT

Poverty?

LISA

Dead end valleys with nothing in them, nothing but silence.

RABBIT

Jesus. You're going to be that one. The local made good, giving something back. The white queen.

LISA

I know about business, maybe I can do some good on the way. Development trusts, regional money, cut some deals with the iwi for education and training.

RABBIT

You don't just cut deals with the Iwi.

LISA

I can learn. I can be an idiot. Alice can help me. I know Rabbit, up my own arse, but I am half way through my life, I can see a few things now. Youth here, old age and decline there. I am standing at the top of the mountain looking down at Taumaranui, the shitty little town where I was born and where I will be buried with the rabbits and possums, lying in the rich earth, inching my way back to carbon.

What a view. How privileged I am to be here, to be able to choose how I will carry on down, free to imagine a better life.

Maybe I can live a life that generates love rather than consumes it. I'm done with lying to tell a story for the sake of it, like you said Alice, lets look at what is really there.

No queens, no kings, just fools with crowns on trying to do something worthwhile.

ALICE

Mum?

LISA

Yes?

ALICE

You're not that old.

LISA

Yes and no Alice. Old enough to admit that I have totally fucked up.

ALICE

Knowing you're wrong doesn't mean you are going to do the right things next time does it?

LISA

No guarantees love, not here, not ever. Enjoy what you can, park up in my ute and look at the weather. Isn't that the right way to start a good life in a small town?

RABBIT

Now you're talking.

LISA

I am glad I stayed. It's nothing like what I imagined, it's so much sharper, so much more painful.

ALICE

You make it sound bad.

LISA

I love it, all it has to do is learn how to love me back. That might take a bit longer.

11. BACKING

On the phone.

LISA

Hey.

You know, rock bottom I guess. I'm going to file for bankruptcy.

I'll bounce back, no worries.

Did Alice tell you about D?

Pretty wild.

I don't know how I feel about it. I was horrible to her but then I'm not going to fake anything, that would be shit all round right?

Look I wondered... I wondered if you wanted to talk.

Life and death. Us. The small stuff.

You could come down for a few days, wouldn't kill you. See what Alice has done to the garden, amazing. She would love to see you.

Zero expectations. Well you can't want me for my money.

I was looking for the wrong thing. I thought I was looking for simple, for less shit.

Connection. The hardest thing. Just stop, say hello, don't turn it into a drama. Be a bit less clever than you thought you were because no one's got this all worked out.

Yes you hear me. No drama.

Yeah, weird eh?

Think about it will you, that's all I'm asking for, connection.

Yeah yeah, I know. I'm aware, but how else do we grow?