

**1 INT. BEDROOM - DAY****1**

Fade up on a table fan with ribbons dancing in the air stream. Pan across the desk groaning with books, study resources and a cactus. On past a magnet board covered in remembrances and tokens of inspiration. Finally settle on JOSIE (16) in shorts and tee shirt, sitting on a bean bag in the corner. She is reading and her hair is down.

Josie stands in front of a full length mirror applying cream to her arms. She is now wearing sweat pants and her hair is tightly pulled back. A large poster of Richard III is seen on the wall behind her.

JOSIE (V.O.)

*Why, love forswore me in my  
mother's womb;  
She did corrupt frail nature with  
some bribe,  
To shrink mine arm up like a  
wither'd shrub,  
To shape my legs of unequal size,  
To disproportion me in every part.  
And am I then a man to be belov'd?*

Despite the obvious warm temperature Josie pulls on her hoodie and stares solemnly at her reflection her eyes switch towards the reflection of the poster.

FADE TO BLACK.

**2 INT. YOUTH THEATRE - AFTERNOON****2**

Vocal sounds.

Fade up to reveal a group of a dozen teenagers standing in a circle being led in a vocal warm up by NINA (40s).

The group are in a circle playing a couple of theatre games. Amidst the fun Josie is largely ignored by the other group members.

NINA

Okay pairs everyone. Get working on your scenes. Three weeks to festival.

Hubbub and chatter as the group members partner up around the hall.

Josie remains partnerless.

ASH (17) is also left partnerless. She is possessed of effortless cool in bomber jacket, boots and a bandana.

NINA  
No Callum. Again.

Josie shakes her head.

NINA  
Well this is Ash. She's thinking of joining us.

Josie briefly eyes Ash warily.

NINA (CONT'D)  
Ash I'd like you to read in with Josie. It's Richard the Third. Do you know it?

ASH  
Shakespeare's not really my thing.

NINA  
Well, don't worry. All you have to do is prompt and give queues. Have fun!

Nina leaves to assist others. Awkward silence! Josie holds her gaze towards the floor. Ash looks at Josie.

Josie crosses to her bag and fishes out a copy of Richard III.

Josie hands Ash the copy and then retreats to a safe distance.

JOSIE  
(salty)  
So in this scene Lady Anne is bringing the body of her father-in-law, Henry the sixth, for burial. She knows Richard has killed him and his son - her husband Edward. And then he turns up.

ASH  
Richard?

JOSIE  
Yeah.

Ash idly reads the blurb.

ASH  
So what happens?

JOSIE  
Well she hates him obviously and  
they have a big fight.

ASH  
And then?

JOSIE  
And then she agrees to marry him.

Ash looks up at Josie.

ASH  
(amused)  
Wow! That is messed up.

JOSIE  
I know.

The girls hold eye contact for the first time. They have  
somehow connected.

ASH  
So what's with this Callum dude?

Josie shrugs and looks away. Ash looks across the hall  
towards Nina who is working with another pair.

ASH  
Shall we get out of here?

JOSIE  
What?

ASH  
Let's get out of here.

JOSIE  
Uh..No we can't. I need to  
rehearse.

ASH  
We can rehearse. Just not here.

JOSIE  
But what if Nina...?

ASH  
What if Nina what?

Josie glances anxiously over to Nina.

ASH  
Have you never broken the rules  
Josie?

Josie looks back at a smiling Ash. Josie makes her decision and smiles back.

**3 EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON**

**3**

Ash bursts out of the building closely followed by Josie. They run down the street and round the corner before stopping. Josie is breathless from the adrenaline rush. They look at each other and grin.

ASH  
C'mon.

Ash heads off again and Josie follows.

**4 EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON**

**4**

Josie and Ash are rehearsing. Josie is on her feet. Ash is sitting on the back of a bench reading in from the script.

JOSIE  
*Oh wonderful, when devils tell the  
truth!*

ASH  
*More wonderful, when Angels are so  
angry. I did not kill your husband.*

JOSIE  
*Why then he is alive.*

ASH  
*Nay, he is dead, and slain by  
Edward's hands.*

JOSIE  
*In thy foul throat thou lie'st.  
Queen Margaret saw  
Thy murd'rous falchion smoking in  
his blood.*

ASH

*I was provoked by her sland'rous  
tongue.*

JOSIE  
*Did'st thou not kill this King?*

ASH  
*I grant thee.*

JOSIE  
*Do'st grant me hedgehog?*

They hold a look before bursting into laughter.

ASH  
It's so true. He totally is a  
hedgehog. He's so spiky.

The laughter eventually subsides.

JOSIE  
(reflects)  
Hedgehog.

Josie smiles and nods to herself.

**4A EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON**

**4A**

Josie and Ash run down the hill shouting 'Hedgehog'. They collapse in a heap at the bottom of the hill and lie on their backs looking up at the sky.

**5 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING**

**5**

Josie's DAD (50ish) is dishing up dinner. The front door is heard closing.

DAD  
(calls)  
Hi.

Josie dumps her bag and crosses to the sink to wash her hands.

JOSIE  
That smells great. I'm starving.

DAD  
Someone's perky. How was rehearsal?

JOSIE

Good.

DAD

Callum behave himself then?

JOSIE

It was fine.

Josie sits at the table and notices a letter bearing an NHS logo.

JOSIE

What's this?

She picks it up and reads.

DAD

It's just from the hospital confirming your appointment.

Dad serves up two plates of spaghetti bolognese.

DAD

There you go. What you grateful for?

Josie places the letter down on the table next to her.

JOSIE

Um, Hedgehogs.

DAD

Hedgehogs?

JOSIE

Yeah.

DAD

Okay. I'm grateful for no traffic at the tunnel. Bon appetite.

They get stuck into their dinner. Josie goes back to the letter.

JOSIE

(surprised)

It's addressed to me.

DAD

Is it?

JOSIE

It's because I turned sixteen.

DAD

I didn't even notice. Anyway I've booked the morning off work so it's all good.

Josie is thoughtful as Dad continues with his dinner.

**6 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT**

**6**

Josie is brushing her teeth. Her phone buzzes. She picks it up.

Message from Ash (TEXT) *That was fun.*

Josie smiles and sends back a *thumbs up emoji*.

She gets an immediate *hedgehog emoji* back.

She chuckles and replies with a *laughing emoji*.

Josie puts down her phone and looks closely at herself in the mirror and checks her CALs and fibromas. As she does so her smile fades.

JOSIE

*And am I then a man to be belov'd?*

She covers herself up with her bathrobe. After one final check in the mirror she exits.

**7 INT. YOUTH THEATRE - AFTERNOON**

**7**

Josie and CALLUM (17) are rehearsing. Ash watches whilst following the script. Josie's performance is more subdued than last time.

JOSIE

*In thy foul throat thou lie'st.  
Queen Margaret saw  
Thy murd'rous falchion smoking in  
his blood.*

CALLUM

*I was provoked by her sland'rous  
tongue.*

JOSIE

*Did'st thou not kill this King?*

CALLUM  
*I grant thee.*

JOSIE  
*Do'st grant me hedgehog?*

Josie struggles to suppress a giggle. Distracted, she glances at Ash who is grinning and buries her face in the script.

CALLUM  
*'Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed!'*  
I thought you said you'd learnt it?

JOSIE  
(suppressing laugh)  
I'm sorry.

CALLUM  
We've got the festival in two weeks and you don't even know your lines.

JOSIE  
I said I'm sorry.

Callum's phone is buzzing.

CALLUM  
Honestly, I don't know why I bother with you. I need to take this.

Callum takes the call.

CALLUM  
(into phone)  
Yeah hi.. No, it's nothing. Just my useless scene partner.

Callum wanders away from Josie and Ash.

ASH  
He's a total dick.

JOSIE  
Uhha.

ASH  
He's completely in love with himself.

JOSIE  
Yup.

ASH  
You need to dump him.

JOSIE  
Dump him?

ASH  
Tell him he's sacked.

JOSIE  
Yeah, I wish.

ASH  
You don't need him Josie. Seriously  
either you do it or I will.

Callum has wandered back towards them.

CALLUM  
(into phone)  
Yeah. I'll be round later.

Callum hangs up.

CALLUM  
So, are you concentrating now?

Josie meets Ash's questioning glare.

JOSIE  
(without conviction)  
Get lost Callum!

Callum laughs from surprise.

CALLUM  
Excuse me?

JOSIE  
(stronger)  
I said. Get lost Callum!

CALLUM  
(mocks)  
I'm sorry..

JOSIE  
(growing strength)  
No. I'm done with you. I don't need  
you. You're sacked.

Callum is speechless. Ash beams proudly. Josie has fire in  
her eyes - empowered.

Music in.

- 8 EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON 8**  
 Josie and Ash laughing and walking with linked arms.
- 8A EXT. STREET SEATING - AFTERNOON 8A**  
 Josie and Ash having fun walking up on mosaic seating.
- 8B EXT. STREET SEATING - AFTERNOON 8B**  
 Ash mirroring mosaic face.
- 8C EXT. STREET SEATING - AFTERNOON 8C**  
 Josie and Ash taking selfies.
- 8D EXT. STREET SEATING - AFTERNOON 8D**  
 Josie blowing bubbles.
- 8E EXT. STREET SEATING - AFTERNOON 8E**  
 Josie and Ash trying to catch popcorn in their mouths.
- 8F EXT. STREET SEATING - AFTERNOON 8F**  
 Josie and Ash dancing together.
- 9 INT. VINTAGE CLOTHES SHOP - AFTERNOON 9**  
 Josie and Ash cross road and enter vintage clothes shop.  
 They peer into at a jewellery cabinet. They laugh and giggle as they try on shades and hats as the shop assistant eyes them warily. They don't care. They're too busy having fun.  
 Ash suggests a couple of clothes items for Josie - no way and maybe.  
 Music cuts.

**10 INT. VINTAGE CLOTHES SHOP - AFTERNOON****10**

Josie and Ash check out clothes items from the rails. Ash pulls out a cute denim jacket.

ASH  
Here. Try this.

JOSIE  
Oh that's cute.

Josie moves in front of the mirror and begins to pull the jacket on over her hoodie.

ASH  
Take your hoodie off.

Ash takes back the jacket. Josie looks uncertain.

ASH  
What? What's wrong? It'll look better.

JOSIE  
I've got these marks on my skin.

Pause. Josie pulls up her sleeve and shows Ash her CALs and fibromas.

JOSIE  
I have this thing called Neurofibromatosis Type 1 - NF1 for short. So I've got these fibromas and CALs on my skin.

ASH  
CALs?

JOSIE  
Café au lait spots.

Josie pulls her hoodie sleeve back down. They look at each other in the mirror.

**11 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING****11**

Dad is sitting at the kitchen table. An empty plate in front of him.

He hears Josie let herself in at the front door. She enters holding a shopping bag and leans against the kitchen door frame.

JOSIE  
(guilty)  
Sorry I didn't return your call.

DAD  
I spoke to Nina. She said you left early.

JOSIE  
I went shopping.

DAD  
I can see. Dinner's in the oven.  
Dad is about to get up and get it for her.

JOSIE  
(urgently)  
Dad. Stop.  
Dad remains at the table.

JOSIE  
(with resolve)  
I don't want you to come with me to the hospital.  
Dad is confused.

JOSIE  
I have to go alone.

DAD  
But..

JOSIE  
I need to do stuff without you. On my own. You too.

DAD  
Right. Of course.

JOSIE  
Please don't be upset.

DAD  
No. No you're...You grew up.

Josie crosses to Dad and they hug each other.

JOSIE  
(whispers)  
Thank you.

## 12 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

12

Josie is still in her PJ's with a bed hat over her hair. She is staring at a large poster of Richard III on her wall.

Her phone buzzes. She looks at the message.

Ash (TEXT) *Hey hedgehog. Look out the front.*

Josie heads to the front bedroom.

## 13 INT/EXT. JOSIE'S HOUSE - MORNING

13

Josie opens the window and looks down to see Ash sucking a lollipop.

ASH  
(blankly)  
*But, soft! what light through  
yonder window breaks?*

JOSIE  
I thought Shakespeare wasn't your  
thing.

ASH  
Yeah well I make exceptions for my  
friends. To be fair it's quite a  
hard line to unremember.

JOSIE  
Unremember?

ASH  
Fancy coming to the seaside with  
me?

JOSIE  
Do I fancy coming to the seaside  
with you?

ASH  
Yes. Are you going to repeat  
everything I say?

JOSIE  
When?

ASH  
Now.

JOSIE  
I can't.

ASH  
Why not?

JOSIE  
I've got a hospital appointment.

ASH  
You could miss it.

JOSIE  
I could. But it's important.

ASH  
What happened to Rebel Josie?

Josie smiles.

JOSIE  
(suggests)  
We could go tomorrow.

Ash smiles and chuckles to herself.

ASH  
You know what, I think it's time I  
got going.

JOSIE  
Is it?

ASH  
It is.

Ash is about to head off.

ASH  
Oh by the way, I get it.

JOSIE  
Get what?

ASH  
Your obsession with Richard.  
Scoliosis. Symptom of NF. But not  
one of yours.

Josie smiles and nods gently in acknowledgment.

JOSIE

Have fun at the seaside.

They share a final smile. Josie watches Ash go then closes the window.

**14 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - DAY**

**14**

Phoebe (7) is sitting with her MOTHER (30s), legs swinging and holding Patches - a soft toy Giraffe. She is looking at Josie who is sitting opposite.

PHOEBE

My name's Phoebe. What's yours?

JOSIE

I'm Josie.

PHOEBE

This is Patches.

JOSIE

Hello Patches.

PHOEBE

Have you got NF1?

PHOEBE'S MUM

Phoebe.

JOSIE

It's alright. Yes, I've got NF1.

PHOEBE

How old are you?

PHOEBE'S MUM

That's enough now Phoebe.

FEMALE CONSULTANT (40s) enters the waiting area.

FEMALE CONSULTANT

Josie.

Josie stands up and gathers her bag.

JOSIE

Nice to meet you Phoebe.

They wave at each other as Josie follows the Consultant.

## 15 INT. CONSULTATION ROOM - DAY

15

Josie follows the Consultant into the room.

FEMALE CONSULTANT

Take a seat.

They both sit.

FEMALE CONSULTANT

Oh before we start, this was left for you at reception. I've been asked to give it to you.

The Consultant hands Josie a small gift bag.

Josie unwraps and discovers a small porcelain hedgehog. She smiles.

FEMALE CONSULTANT

That's pretty.

JOSIE

Yes it is.

FEMALE CONSULTANT

Now today I want to talk to you about family planning with NF1. Are you okay with that?

JOSIE

Yes. I'm okay with that.

Camera holds on Josie's calm, contented, confident face as the Female Consultant continues speaking.

FEMALE CONSULTANT

You're at an age when you could be, perhaps already are, sexually active. So it's important that we discuss all the potential outcomes of having children for people with Neurofibromatosis. That way you can make informed decisions about your future. Of course there are many things to consider that may not seem important to you right now but it's good to start thinking about at this stage...

Music fades up.

SNAP TO BLACK.

PRODUCTS  
SHANTY