

CONCUSSION

by Ross Mueller



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Next Stage is supported by



CHARACTERS

JULIA, 35, female, a medical doctor

CAESAR, 49, male, a police detective

KATERINA, 35, female, a spin doctor

JAMES JUNIOR, 37, male, ex marketing consultant (referred in script as JAMES 1)

JAMES JUNIOR, JUNIOR, 33, male, a marketing consultant (referred in script as JAMES 2)

SERGIO, 15, male, a potential dropout

The actors should walk through each other's scenes as their narratives overlap. One story gets just as much prominence as another. There is no discrimination and there is no real history beyond the last few days.

The slash / (as indicated) serves as an interruption point in the dialogue.

ONE

JULIA: This is not going to be another tragedy. I'm sorry but I don't want to see that and you don't want to see that. I am not going to sit back and watch while our lives unravel into a suspended world of disbelief. I know this is hard to understand but (stay with me here) I accept responsibility for our rejuvenation. Yes!... We still have a window of opportunity—a chance for change—we can become a comedy! A wonderful—racy romp! A sexy, smiling romance. Vivid—stupid—contagious and we *can* and we *will* and we *must*—reinvent ourselves if we are going to survive. It's all up here! It's all in our heads. We imagine and we dream, one third of the human race is doing that right now! Billions of people are alive in bodies other than their own, completing never-ending tax returns, making love to far-off faces, licking and murdering and standing on stages, sitting in theatres and the truth is on a billboard! Shattered, broken, torn into pieces—we have to put it back together if we want to wake from this dream. We cannot censor our slumber, and I need more than a monologue to deal with the anvil of this reality. I am going to need... dialogue, voice-overs, maybe a puppeteer, a choir—contemporary dancers! A collection of professional actors performing a series of scenes! An Ensemble!—with a minimum of four weeks rehearsal!

Music begins underneath.

And this Company will consist of four men and two women. Four male faces, looking at me. See?... And this one image says more than any monologue I could deliver. Undeniable evidence. There are too many men in my life. Tragedy is an incident, comedy will be our landscape.

The ensemble create spaces performance around her.

This is how it begins.

JULIA walks into the following scene with CAESAR. KATERINA is in the restaurant.

TWO

JULIA: James Junior, Junior is accusing me of being a paedophile.

CAESAR: I see. Well—are you?

JULIA: No. Caesar. I am not a fucking paedophile.

CAESAR: So why is he saying this?

JULIA: He hates us. He wants to kill us—spiritually and financially.

CAESAR: Well, if it's just money... let him have it.

JULIA: But this man—is branding me a pervert all over the internet!

CAESAR: I was in an accident... Right? / Was I in an accident?

JULIA: Yes, Caesar—you were in an accident. What am I going to do?

Silence.

What if he was saying shit about you? What if he is on the internet right now, posting: 'Caesar is a cocksucker! Die Pig, Filth, Scum'?...

Would you counsel silence, in that case?

CAESAR: Is he posting that? /

SERGIO: Somebody is. /

CAESAR: Is it Bob Dylan?

JULIA: No. I don't think it's Bob Dylan.

Pause.

CAESAR: You look like you're about to cry.

JULIA: Do I?

CAESAR: Yes, and in a healthy society... there should be a reason for your tears.

JULIA: In a healthy society... there should be a reason for our violence.

SERGIO enters the restaurant. He is a waiter. He has an earring for

KATERINA. She puts it on.

KATERINA: [*putting it on*] How do I look?

SERGIO: Symmetrical—

CAESAR: Yesterday—I was going to give evidence about something, wasn't I?

JULIA: Yes.

CAESAR: Who was I going to condemn?

THREE

SERGIO: My dad got beaten up yesterday.

KATERINA: So what?

SERGIO: So... you were with him. What happened?

KATERINA: I don't know. He was attacked.

SERGIO: By who?

KATERINA: By me, Sergio.

SERGIO: You?

KATERINA: Yeah. I beat the shit out of him.

SERGIO: You are so totally lying.

KATERINA: I'm pretty tough.

SERGIO: You're not the type—

KATERINA: What type am I?

SERGIO: You're not the type to bash a cop.

KATERINA: What type am I?

SERGIO: You're a slumber party.

He tries to kiss her. She stops him.

KATERINA: Where did you find my earring?

SERGIO: I didn't find it—I had it.

KATERINA: You stole it?

SERGIO: No—

KATERINA: Don't play games, it's very unattractive.

Beat. He comes to her and holds her first, but then he progresses the action. They fall onto the table and he begins to lick her.

JAMES 1 suddenly appears and he is in a rage!

JAMES 1: 'Our planet is polluted with infotainment porn and fundamentalist cop shows! I am disenfranchised by their moral hypocrisy and ironic plot twists! Television and advertising! I used to work in that shit and that's why I'm so angry! Because if you look at it, if you really spend serious time looking at that shit, then the shit is all you will see, for fuck sake!' They cut me off. They go to commercial! Whitebread American music—they cut me off, *not* because they think I'm insane, *not* because I'm overreacting! *Not* because I'm wrong, because I'm right! And they agree! The whole world agrees television and advertising is perverse! But they cut me off because their Code of Practice won't let me say the word 'fuck' on air! How fucked is that?! Fuck, fuck, fuck! What is this? Maoist China?! Why not?! Let's all bind our feet and sing 'The Internationale'! I

get in my Subaru and I drive over the bridge to the city and a few callers later—the whitebread host says: *'You know that guy who was angry about TV—the first caller we had today—I think he's right—my life is infotainment cop porn and I'm mad as hell and I'm not gonna take it anymore!'* I almost ditch over the edge! Right there and then! I mean, Jesus Christ! Lives in a market economy and I have a constitutional right to voice my pointless impotent rage immediately! /

KATERINA: / Why aren't you licking me?!

JAMES 1: This is the First World, baby! The least you can do is listen to the sounds that I am making. *'Thanks for calling, James Junior?!'*

SERGIO: Who the fuck is James Junior?! You're supposed to be screaming 'Sergio'!

JAMES 1: Now that really makes me angry!

SERGIO: I'm going to change my name by dead poll.

KATERINA: *Deed* Poll.

SERGIO: Whatever. I'm gonna change it.

KATERINA: Changing your name—won't change who your father is.

SERGIO: If you were a priest they'd throw you in jail.

KATERINA: I'm not a fucking / priest.

SERGIO: I'm gonna change my name and join the fucking army.

KATERINA: A lot of boys think they wanna / do that.

SERGIO: Hey! I don't think I wanna fuckin' do it—I am fuckin' *gonna* do it. They will give me a gun and I will kill the enemy.

KATERINA: Now you're just being offensive. /

SERGIO: No! You fucked me up. You are to blame. Totally. I am all your fault!

Beat.

KATERINA: What if he's a bad cop?

SERGIO: My father?

KATERINA: Yeah. Maybe he got he shit kicked out of him because he deserved it. Did you ever think of that?

SERGIO rips the earring from KATERINA's ear. He places it in his mouth. SERGIO shows KATERINA his tongue, grabs her face and kisses her again. He then walks to JULIA and CAESAR. They stare at each other and the scene plays out.