

**AGE OF RAGE**

**jibbe willems – Toneelmakerij – July 2019**

GIRL

POLITICIAN

POLICE OFFICER 1

POLICE OFFICER 2

FATHER

BROTHER

MOTHER

TEACHER

PSYCHOLOGIST

PUPIL 1

PUPIL 2

PUPIL 3

DEPUTY HEAD

## 1. A PROLOGUE

*Television footage of a female politician campaigning in a somewhat run-down urban neighbourhood. Her rage is legitimate, but she conveys it without charm and tends to rub people up the wrong way.*

Politician      This time fascism won't be wearing thunderbolts, skulls and swastikas. It won't come marching through the streets in black boots. No, this time fascism will come quietly, with a reassuring voice and a friendly smile.

It will be wearing a two-for-one t-shirt from Primark, a check shirt, a sharp haircut, comfortable trousers, unisex raincoats, an XL baggy sweater. It'll look like your neighbour, or what you see in the mirror. That's how evil camouflages itself in our times.

But make no mistake: no matter whether it's hiding in the body of a toothless old man or a 16-year-old girl, evil is still evil.

And we must fight evil.

*Uproar, people shouting, someone yells 'stop her!'. Someone else yells 'watch out!' The politician looks startled. The camera shakes. The image on the screen shudders. We hear a girl's voice. She screams.*

*Screen goes to black.*

## 1. TEN THINGS

GIRL

Ten things I like about myself.

One. I've got good teeth. They're white and they're straight. My dentist never finds cavities.

And I've got a nice smile. Not that I smile much. But if I do smile it looks nice, my smile does.

Two. I'm clever. Cleverer than my parents. Cleverer than most people. I know you're not supposed to say that, but why not, if it's true? And by that I don't mean other people are stupid. But they are. A lot of the time.

Three. I look pretty good. My body, I mean. Well, maybe not supermodel or porn pretty, but what do you expect? They spend all their whole time working on it, and exercising and only eating salad, and who likes salad? So fuck it, I'm fine as I am. It's all working fine. I think.

Four. I really think about stuff. But actually that's fucked up sometimes, so maybe that should go on the list of things I don't like about myself. Thinking means you've got an opinion, and most of the time other people have got different opinions. and they're mostly stupid. It wears you out.

Five. I'm nearly 16. That's nearly adult. And then I'll be able to decide for myself what I do and don't do. And then all those rules other people have come up with will disappear. Not that I'm really looking forward to the future. I mean who knows what's over the horizon? Trouble, I guess. A Third World War, or at least attacks and riots and stuff. Anyway. It's up to me what I want to do.

Six.

Six.

Yes. I am actually confident, so don't you come and tell me I'm not. Rubbish.

Seven. I've got really good taste. I don't cake my face with make-up. Plus I like asparagus. And I know who Rembrandt and Bach and Tolstoy.

Eight.

Eight.

Alright then, seven. It's a list of seven. Seven's enough.

...

Five things I don't like about myself.

One. I've got no sense of humour. But there isn't much to laugh about anyway, so what does it matter?

Two. I'm impatient. Especially when it comes to stupid people. Yeah, so what? I'm not going to live forever, so why should I spend my time listening to the rubbish you talk? And I'm no good as small talk. If you've got nothing to say, why say it?

Three. I can't get rid of these fucking spots. My face can get like a battlefield of pus and blood and whatever. Really disgusting. But it's normal, they say. I suppose it is.

I don't think I'm very nice, and that gets to me sometimes. I'm really just not that nice to other people. I want to be, but it doesn't work out. And then I feel sorry, but I just can't get it out of my mouth. I just can't.

Four. I've never been in love. Not that I'm waiting for it to happen. But I do think, Jesus is there something wrong with me? I mean I'm not lesbian or anything. Not that I'd mind, but I'm not. And I'm glad about that, because life's difficult enough as it is.

Five. My parents have been divorcing for a year. I know, that one's not a personal characteristic, but I am really pissed off about it.

Six. I'm poor, and that's fucked up. Because if you're poor, you've got no chance. You know how shit it is to carry your school stuff in an Aldi carrier bag? Or have fried eggs and ketchup for your evening meal three times a week? Because your mum says 'Ketchup's one of your five a day' and 'Just be grateful you're getting cooked food tonight'. There isn't always cooked food to eat. I know, it's not the end of the world, but it's not great either, like if you can't go on school trips or... not that I want to.... It would just be nice if I could. I'm not some Third World flies-in-my-eyes kid. I am a debt-relief kid though. That is so embarrassing. And you know, when those Third World kids grow up they'll come over here and they'll get a house and money and education. And it's all free, and they get priority. Is that fair? But hey, don't start thinking I'm a racist, because I'm not. I don't give a damn what colour you are. But I do care about where you were born and what you're doing here. So, yes, I am critical about that, because why put all their energy into coming here if you can put it into building up your own country? Or not. I'm just asking. It's just a question.

Seven. I'm angry. I'm so angry, all the time. I don't know why I'm angry all the time, but I am. Hey! My wrists hurt!

## 1. PROTOCOL

*A black female police officer enters. The girl looks tired, but combative, her hair tangled, red patches on her shoulders. She holds up her handcuffs.*

OFFICER 1      It's protocol.

GIRL             Protocol?

OFFICER 1      It's just how we do things here. A preventative measure.  
We work out afterwards if it was necessary.

GIRL             Easy for you.

*Silence.*

OFFICER 1      Is that blood on your shoulders?

*She sniffs. Licks it.*

GIRL             Strawberry sauce.

*The officer removes the cuffs.*

OFFICER 1      Are you all right?

GIRL             Why do you ask?

OFFICER 1      You're shaking.

GIRL             It's cold here.

OFFICER 1      Not feeling remorse?

GIRL             Remorse?

*The officer looks at her. Short silence.*

OFFICER 1      It means...

GIRL             I know what it means.  
I'm not stupid.  
I'm cold.

OFFICER 1      You could—

GIRL             That blanket stinks.

OFFICER 1      Yes.  
Would you like something to drink, then?  
A hot drink maybe?  
Coffee? Tea?

GIRL             Oh I get it, you're the good cop.

OFFICER 1      You've been watching too much television.

GIRL Don't pretend like you know me.

OFFICER 1 Nothing to drink, then?  
The machine's got chocolate.

GIRL Have you got any beer?

OFFICER 1 You don't drink.

GIRL There you go again, acting like you know me.

OFFICER 1 You're not allowed to drink.

GIRL A sweet white wine maybe?

OFFICER 1 I could get you a water.

GIRL In the past I'd have been allowed to drink now.

OFFICER 1 Yes, things used to be better.

GIRL Yes, things used to be better.

OFFICER 1 Teenagers used to be normal.  
They used to worry about boys, going out, clothes, marks, school.

GIRL Exactly.

OFFICER 1 But you're not normal.

GIRL You know what I think is weird?  
  
Girls are getting beaten up for dancing in the street. They're stoning women for standing up for themselves, for kissing another man, for raising their voice against the government. And I'm here, locked up?  
  
There are boys getting spat at, beaten up, thrown off buildings and beheaded because they're gay, by people we accept here with open arms. So how come I'm in prison?

OFFICER 1 Those things don't happen here though do they?

GIRL Not yet.  
But they're going to.  
So, yes, things used to be better.  
  
We didn't used to have the whole world trying to get here in rickety boats and there didn't used to be people running around European capitals with Kalashnikovs. They used to do their attacks in their own country.

*Silence*

OFFICER 1 Is that why you did it?

*Silence*

GIRL            It's my birthday today.

OFFICER 1     Happy birthday.

GIRL            Yes.  
*More quietly*  
Happy birthday to me.

*Silence*

GIRL            Can I go home?

OFFICER 1     Go home?

GIRL            Can I go home now?

## **EVERYTHING USED TO BE BETTER**

GIRL

I didn't used to know anything about the world. When I was ill, my mum would feed me applesauce and toast, and I was allowed to stay home and watch TV.

I used to think there was a future, and that in that future nice things would happen to me.

I used to enjoy learning, because I thought that if you had knowledge you could get on in the world.

*The world that started at the front door, a world where it was always spring time, and friendly people smiled at me.*

I used to think happiness was a glass of real Coca-Cola and a bowlful of Smarties and crisps.

That's what the world tasted like: a mouthful of Coke, Smarties and crisps.



## MINEFIELD

*At home with the girl, 24 hours earlier. Father is trying to put on his shoes. It's painful. He swallows the pain, but it brings tears to his eyes.*

FATHER            Everything didn't used to be better.

GIRL                Dad. Where are you going?

FATHER            Work.

*He tries, with difficulty, to stand up straight.*

GIRL                Jesus, how embarrassing.  
You're like an old man.

FATHER            I feel like one, too. But can I get a pension? No way. 'Find suitable work, sir. Get on your bike and pedal 25 kilometres each way, for your lovely suitable job.' There I am, surrounded by Poles and Bulgarians. The team leader doesn't even speak Dutch. Is that 'suitable work'?

GIRL                And you just accept it?

FATHER            They'll cut my benefits if I don't.

GIRL                So you just do what they tell you?

FATHER            People like us never get priority.  
But we get hit the hardest.

GIRL                People like you haven't got any pride.

FATHER            I don't know what to do.

GIRL                Are you crying?

FATHER            No of course not.

GIRL                Jesus, what a loser.

FATHER            What did you say?

GIRL                You're weak. Just look at yourself.

FATHER            You can't talk to your father like that.

GIRL                You'd rather bow down than stand up straight.

FATHER            It's my back.

GIRL                That's not what I mean.

FATHER            You're right, though, I've been bending down all my life.  
Working on the roads. Knocking in paving stones.  
Carrying kerbstones.  
That's why my knees have gone.  
That's why my spine is bent.

That's why I can't stand up straight.  
So no, things didn't used to be better.  
And now isn't better either. It's always been shit.  
And it'll never get better.

GIRL It used to be nice at home though.

FATHER I don't remember that, I'm sorry.

GIRL What are you still doing here?

FATHER Yes, exactly, I've got to get to work.

GIRL No, I mean here, in the house.  
You've already been separated for a year.

FATHER Is that your mother talking?

GIRL No.

FATHER I can't do anything if 'my case' doesn't have priority.

GIRL No, you can't do anything about anything.

FATHER I'm at the bottom of the waiting list.

GIRL That's right.

FATHER And I'll stay there unless I change into a pregnant woman, a victim of domestic abuse, or an asylum seeker. there's always someone with more problems than me. I don't like it, but that's the way it is. I've got nowhere to go. I'm trapped here.

GIRL Yes, it must be terrible to have to live in the same house as your family.

FATHER That's not what I mean.

GIRL It's what you said, though.

FATHER Why do you always have to set traps for me.

GIRL Oh, so now it's my fault?

FATHER It's like a minefield talking to you.

GIRL Then don't start.

FATHER Can you just skip puberty?

GIRL Did I used to be nicer?

FATHER You were a lovely little girl.

GIRL Not any more than?

FATHER Hormones destroy families.

GIRL Jesus, dad.

FATHER Look at you, you don't even look like a little girl any more.

GIRL This is so awkward!

FATHER When did you get breasts?

GIRL Shut the fuck up!

FATHER What, should I pretend like I don't see it?

GIRL I'm getting out, just as soon as I can.

FATHER And where will you go?

GIRL I'll get a room. Go to university.

FATHER On whose money?  
Have you got money?

GIRL ...

FATHER No, you haven't got any money. And we haven't got any money either. University? Why would you do that? So you can feel better than your stupid father, right? Dream on girl, you've got no idea how expensive life is, or how difficult it is for people like us. How difficult it is to keep your head above water. Right now you've got a belly full of food and a head full of fantasies. But that'll end soon enough. Your turning 16 tomorrow. Well happy birthday to you. Say goodbye to your childhood and hello to life.

GIRL What do you know?

FATHER More than you.

GIRL You know nothing! Fuck all!

FATHER That's enough.

GIRL Fuck all, shit all, cunt all!

FATHER You'll not talk to me that way as long as you're living under my roof!

GIRL You're a loser. A benefits parasite. You bow and you bow and you bow, until the day you bow yourself into your grave.

*She walked away.*

FATHER Don't walk away.

GIRL I Need to go to the toilet.

FATHER Stay here.

GIRL I need to piss!

## 6. DOUBLE NEGATIVE

*The black female officer is busy with papers at the back. A white male officer is sitting with the girl.*

GIRL I need to pee.

OFFICER 2 Go ahead.

*He points to a seatless aluminium pot in the corner of the cell.*

GIRL I'll keep it in.

OFFICER 2 Up to you.

GIRL I won't be here for long.

*Short silence.*

GIRL Or will I?

OFFICER 2 It's not up to me.

*Silence.*

OFFICER 2 They usually want to call the parents.

GIRL Who do?

OFFICER 2 Young people we arrest.  
They usually ask for the mother.

GIRL Not me.

OFFICER 2 Or their father.

GIRL He won't come and get me.

OFFICER 2 You haven't got no idea what sort of problems you're in, have you?

GIRL It's 'got any'.

OFFICER 2 What?

GIRL It's not 'you haven't got *no* idea. It's 'you haven't got *any* idea'.

OFFICER 2 Ok.

GIRL You used a double negative.

OFFICER 2 You really haven't got *no* idea what kind of trouble you're in.

OFFICER 1 Just leave her alone.

GIRL Are you really that dumb?

OFFICER 2 You watch it.

GIRL You probably are if you chose to be a cop. Not exactly a dream career is it? It's fine for a five-year-old boy. But you're not a five-year-old boy. You're an old fart.

OFFICER 2 You watch your words.

GIRL A pathetic old fart who's going bald and comes home every night to an empty home and lies awake half the night with his hand on his dick thinking about a girl from school he never dared to ask, and then cries. He cries because he never managed to anything more than playing at being a policeman.

OFFICER 2 I don't have to take this.

GIRL Then he cries and cries himself to sleep and wakes up in the morning, crying.

OFFICER 2 Hey!

*The male officer makes a threatening gesture. The female officer gets between them.*

OFFICER 1 Okay, calm down.

GIRL I don't need to be saved – and definitely not by a—

OFFICER 1 By a what?

GIRL *Lies*  
Police officer.

OFFICER 1 Are you always so angry?

GIRL Puh-*leez*.

OFFICER 1 Or sad. are you sad?

GIRL Fuck off.

OFFICER 1 Is there anyone you can talk to?

GIRL I'm doing fine at school.  
Brilliant.  
Top school!  
  
So fuck you.  
I don't need anyone  
I can manage by myself  
  
You don't know anything.  
You don't know anything about me.

OFFICER 1 No. I don't know anything about you.

*Silence*

GIRL I'm cold.

OFFICER 1 I'll get a clean blanket for you.

OFFICER 2 Are you serious?

GIRL Thank you.

*The female officer hands her a clean blanket.*

GIRL           And can I have some hot chocolate?

OFFICER 2     No.

OFFICER 1     I'll get it for you.

*The female officer walks to the drinks machine.*

OFFICER 2     It's like she's your slave.

OFFICER 1     What did you say?

OFFICER 2     Nothing.

*The female officer is at the machine, getting the hot chocolate.*

GIRL           I didn't do it.

OFFICER 2     What didn't you do?

GIRL           Whatever I'm here for.

OFFICER 2     And what's that, then?

GIRL           How should I know?  
I told you  
I didn't do it.

OFFICER 2     Someone filmed it.  
It's got 100,000 hits on YouTube.  
You made it onto the news.

GIRL           Fake news.

OFFICER 2     You're very popular on 8chan. Do you know it? Very friendly site.

GIRL           I'm innocent.

OFFICER 2     Sure, until proven guilty.

*The female officer returns with the hot chocolate.*

OFFICER 1     No cream.  
Sorry.

OFFICER 2     Makes you fat anyway.

GIRL           When can I go home?

OFFICER 2     I don't think you completely understand why you're here.

GIRL           No, it's you who doesn't understand.

OFFICER 2     Okay.

GIRL           You don't fucking understand any of it.

OFFICER 2      What don't I fucking understand precisely?

GIRL            You lot don't fucking understand anything.

## 7. ATTACK

*The girl addresses the first sentence to the male police officer, but she opens up her thoughts to beyond the actual surroundings of the cell, to allow other memories and voices to flow into her story.*

GIRL Nobody fucking understands anything.

*From here onwards, we are in the girl's head, as it were.*

GIRL I don't fucking understand any of it either. But that's no one else's business. But okay, I did carry out the attack. But that makes it sound a lot worse than it was. I mean, I didn't kill anyone. I didn't even hurt anyone, I don't think. Nobody got wounded, so what's all the fuss about? Nothing. Right? For fuck's sake! I'm 16, it's my birthday! Not that anybody gives a damn.

BROTHER Happy birthday, sis.

GIRL Alright, maybe there's one person who does care.

BROTHER Many happy returns.

GIRL Are you just home?

BROTHER Yeah, so what?

GIRL It's 7 in the morning.

BROTHER Better get out then, or you'll be late for school.

GIRL What about you?

BROTHER I'm suspended from school.

GIRL Still?

BROTHER Again.  
Sleep tight, sis!

MOTHER Time to wake up!

GIRL If you're looking for a criminal, you'll be wanting my little brother, not me. I mean, I'm not going to snitch on him, but be a bit realistic, please.

GIRL Mum.

MOTHER You're going to be late!

GIRL It's all right.

MOTHER It's not all right. Get up!  
Come on, hurry up, I've got to get to work!

GIRL She works at Aldi and sometimes she gets food that's past its sell by date, so today there's breakfast. Hurray. But the landlord hasn't come to fix the shower, so it's still spitting cold water.



FATHER Toughens you up.

GIRL Says my father. From his couch. Shouldn't you be looking for suitable work?

FATHER Can't. My back.

GIRL So he stays on the couch. He pretty much lives on the couch, though my mother and him had been divorcing for the last year. My psychologist, the school psychologist, a fake psychologist, says

PSYCH This is not a healthy domestic situation.

GIRL What does he know about what's healthy? He only talked to problem cases. Not that I'm a problem case. I crawl out of bed. Yes, I know you're wondering: why drag yourself out of bed if the world's just gonna kick you again? *Qui dormit non peccat*,<sup>1</sup> right?

PSYCH There's nothing wrong with being angry.

GIRL I'm not angry.

PSYCH You've got plenty of reasons to be angry.

GIRL I'm not angry.

PSYCH I'm here to help you.

GIRL Are you actually qualified?

And then he looks at me, like he's sorry for me or something. Anyway, I crawl out of bed, wipe myself with a washcloth and roll on an extra layer of deodorant. And because my greedy rat of a brother has eaten all the bread...

BROTHER Munchies.

GIRL Triple layer of Nutella.

BROTHER Sugar. It helps the comedown.

GIRL I boil some water for a cup of noodles. What did I want to say? Oh yes, the attack. It sounds worse than it was, so let's not exaggerate. I didn't blow up a building or mow down a bunch of kids with a machine gun. Maybe we should begin at the beginning

PSYCH You can begin wherever you want to.

GIRL Mind your own business. Jerk. Where is the beginning, anyway?  
It's all a bit muddled up.

MOTHER You're going to be late!

GIRL Yes, I'm going to be late.

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<sup>1</sup> One who sleeps does not sin.

**8. TOO LATE**

GIRL I'm late.

TEACHER You're too late.

GIRL Yes. Sorry.

TEACHER Pick up a late note.

GIRL Can't I just—

TEACHER *Nemo est supra legem.*

GIRL No one is above the law.

TEACHER Very good!

GIRL But, *nemo tenetur ad impossibile*.<sup>2</sup>

TEACHER Why is it impossible for you to be on time?

GIRL That's the way it seems to be.

TEACHER Repetition doesn't make a bad habit good.

GIRL What does that mean?

TEACHER That you're too late, too often.

CLASSMATE 1 Just go. Pick up your late note.

GIRL But can't I—

CLASSMATE 2 We have to if we're late.

TEACHER Yes, I can't have double standards.

CLASSMATE 2 We were talking about the trip to Rome.  
You're not coming anyway.

TEACHER Really?

CLASSMATE 2 She hasn't got any money.

GIRL I don't feel like it.

CLASSMATE 1 No money? How awful.

GIRL I just don't feel like going!

TEACHER Really?  
I thought you of all people would love Rome.

GIRL What do you mean 'of all people'?

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<sup>2</sup> No one is bound to an impossibility.

CLASSMATE 2 She hasn't got any money!

CLASSMATE 1 What did you get for breakfast,  
Crisps and a roll-up?

CLASSMATE 2 Can you get tobacco from the food bank?

GIRL How would I know?

TEACHER Do you go to the food bank?

GIRL Of course not!

CLASSMATE 1 Course she does. And everything's free.  
If you're on benefits, you get everything free.

GIRL That's not true.

CLASSMATE 2 Sounds cool. I want to be poor when I grow up.  
Free ciggies!

TEACHER Why didn't I know this?

GIRL Because it's not true.

TEACHER Is that why you're late?

GIRL What do you mean?

CLASSMATE 1 Yes, she's late because she's poor.

CLASSMATE 2 She has to walk all the way.

CLASSMATE 1 From the east side of town.

CLASSMATE 2 Is that where she lives?

CLASSMATE 1 Over the motorway, yes.

GIRL My bike's broken.

CLASSMATE 1 Just steal a new one.

GIRL I don't steal!

CLASSMATE 1 Are you going to get that note or not?

TEACHER No, that's enough.  
Just go and sit down.

CLASSMATE 1 Sure, of course, she doesn't need to get a note because she's on benefits.

TEACHER No, it's because—

GIRL Leave it.

TEACHER No, I...

GIRL I don't need special treatment.

TEACHER But, I—

GIRL I'll get the late note.

CLASSMATE 1 Yes, go on then.

CLASSMATE 2 Bye-bye.

## 9. CHARACTER WITNESS – TEACHER

TEACHER

She's got a lot of potential. Well, she did have. Actions have consequences. You can throw away your life with just one deed.

She could have been a leader of the future. Maybe not my future. On the other hand, some people soften with the years. Some children need to stand on the barricades before they understand how to fight effectively, and what to fight for.

She was so clever. And she had such an appetite for learning. It was like the more she knew, the more of the world she would conquer.

And she even liked doing homework.

I remember before she even started second year, when she was going to start learning Latin and Greek, she learned the whole *ἀλφάβητος* in her summer holidays!

And she was witty too. And wit means intelligence, of course.

But she started telling fewer jokes, and her eagerness to learn declined. Its place was taken by loathing.

And rage, apparently. Rage is such an ugly emotion.

Especially in a girl.

**10. CAKE AT LYNCHTIME**

*In the cell.*

OFFICER 2 Have you seen what they're saying about you on Internet?  
Of course not, how could you have? Ha-ha!  
Here, look.

*He picks up his telephone.*

OFFICER 2 'Someone's standing up against The Black Threat at last.

*She looks.*

GIRL I've never done a Nazi salute.

OFFICER 2 It sure re looks like one.  
And here you're wearing a pointed white hood.  
Suits you.

GIRL That's been Photoshopped. Fake.

OFFICER 2 And here you're a plantation owner. It's quite well done.  
'At last someone's putting the kaffirs in their place.'

GIRL Where did you find this?

OFFICER 2 It's everywhere. This one is funny to: "A piece of cake for lynch."  
Can you see that, hanging in the tree?

GIRL Ughh.

OFFICER 1 That's not funny.

OFFICER 2 Don't you think the pictures are funny?  
Look, they've Photoshopped you into porn as well.

OFFICER 1 Come on. Stop it. She's underage.

OFFICER 2 You've got a frog's head in this one. I don't get that one.

OFFICER 1 Everyone knows your face now.  
Is that what you want with your life?

GIRL Stop it.

OFFICER 1 Kicked out of school.  
Arrested.  
And you're going to be convicted.

OFFICER 2 You won't get off with community service.

OFFICER 1 If you cooperate, maybe we'll be able to limit the damage.

OFFICER 2 These ones are good:  
'Ape hater.'

'Slavehunter.'

'Ni\*\*er killer.'

OFFICER 2 That's what they call you.

OFFICER 1 You've got to stop this.

OFFICER 2 But it's just funny, right?

GIRL What it is, is fucking racist.

OFFICER 2 Hah! You... you should keep your mouth shut.

OFFICER 1 Let's keep it professional.

OFFICER 2 Stop moaning, bitch.

*Male officer leaves, in a bad mood.*

GIRL You let him talk to you like that?

OFFICER 1 Choose your battles.

GIRL I wouldn't take it.

OFFICER 1 When I get promoted, I'll be his boss.

GIRL Ha-ha. Then you'll get him, the bastard.

OFFICER 1 I'll help him do his work as best he can.

GIRL I do not understand that at all.

OFFICER 1 Some wars are best won without violence.

## 11. WHITE PRIDE

*In the classroom. The lesson has already started. The girl is late.*

POLITICIAN If we are not given space  
Then we will claim the space.  
  
Not by force, of course,  
But we are angry.  
  
We will not use violence,  
But we will not go down without a fight.  
  
We have a message.  
Perhaps it's a radical message,  
But you've got to be radical, otherwise you end up with a feeble compromise.  
  
Because if you start in the middle  
You're never going to end up where you want to be.  
  
Our goals are radical equality and economic justice.  
  
Because since the beginning of democracy... what am I saying? Since the beginning of  
the organised state, All the problems have been caused by white men over the age of  
30.

*The girl enters the classroom. Late.*

POLITICIAN It's time to bring an end to that.  
GIRL To bring an end to what?  
TEACHER Ha, how nice to see you again.  
Take a seat.  
GIRL Is it the fault of all white men again?  
POLITICIAN Above the age of 30.  
GIRL Ah.  
POLITICIAN Approximately.  
TEACHER Please sit down.  
GIRL What is she doing here?  
TEACHER I really don't want to have to send you out of the class again.  
GIRL Aren't I allowed to ask a question?  
TEACHER Yes, of course. She's our guest, for the lessons on state organisation.  
Democracy, politics, opposition, you know.



GIRL Yes, I know.

CLASSMATE 1 Just sit down.

GIRL I know you.

POLITICIAN Are you interested in politics?

GIRL Not in your politics.

TEACHER Here we go again.

CLASSMATE 1 Miss, she's still standing up.

TEACHER Ah. Yes.

GIRL You don't think I should be proud of who I am?

POLITICIAN Of course you should be proud of yourself.  
It's very important for young women to be proud of themselves.

TEACHER Okay, let's continue with the lesson.

GIRL But am I allowed to be proud of being Caucasian, of being white?

POLITICIAN Ah. That pride. White Pride.

CLASSMATE 1 This is so awkward.

GIRL That's right, that pride

TEACHER You really must sit down now, Or I'm going to send you out of the class.

CLASSMATE 1 Yeah, and shut your mouth.

TEACHER You too.

GIRL Why are you allowed to be proud that you're black?

POLITICIAN It's all about context and the past.  
Nothing exists in isolation.

GIRL I think it's weird.

CLASSMATE 1 Come on, it's got to do with historical reality.

GIRL Why don't you just keep your mouth shut?

CLASSMATE 1 I say!

TEACHER Boys! Tone it down!

GIRL We're not living in the past.  
We're living in the here and now.

TEACHER I'm sorry, she doesn't know what she's talking about.

CLASSMATE 1 Obviously.

GIRL I do know what I'm talking about.

POLITICIAN If your ancestors had been sold like animals, separated from their families and shipped across the oceans as cargo, then you'd have the right to speak.  
Now you're just acting spoiled.

GIRL You don't know me.

POLITICIAN I know your kind.

GIRL I'm politically aware.  
I care about the world around me, more than this lot in the class.  
They don't care about anything as long as there's Wi-Fi.

CLASSMATE 1 I say!

GIRL Born with a silver spoon in their mouth.  
Sure, if you've got money you can afford to be that way.  
But I've got an opinion.

POLITICIAN An opinion.

CLASSMATE 1 I've got an opinion too, a good opinion!

GIRL And I'll stand up for my opinion.

CLASSMATE 1 Then I think I'll stand up too!

TEACHER Boys...

GIRL I can't do anything about being 'white'.  
It's the way I was born.  
In the 21st century. In this country.

POLITICIAN Yes, you happen to have that good fortune

GIRL Good fortune?

POLITICIAN The richest country in the world.

GIRL Not that I'm noticing.

TEACHER Nobody here dies of hunger.  
Nobody here needs to be scared of bombings, or stepping on a landmine on the walk to school.

GIRL Stop your pathetic stories!  
That's not what I'm talking about, is it?  
Fine, if there's a war, it's fine to come here and shelter for a while.  
But those people don't have to stay here for the rest of their lives do they?

POLITICIAN Those people?

GIRL Yes, you lot.

CLASSMATE 1 That is really racist.

GIRL No, of course, I'm not allowed to say anything.  
Don't have opinions, don't want anything,  
Don't do anything that diverges from your pampered norms.

CLASSMATE 1 Wow!

GIRL Maybe you can afford not to be racist, but I can't.

POLITICIAN What do you mean by that?

GIRL No, I didn't mean that at all.  
I'm not racist.

CLASSMATE 1 You just said you were.

GIRL You don't have to pick me up on my every word.

CLASSMATE 1 You could show a bit of compassion. You're human too, aren't you?

GIRL So why doesn't anybody have any compassion for me?

CLASSMATE 1 For you? But you're not a—

GIRL Not a what?

CLASSMATE 1 I just find it strange. You're a regular Dutch person.  
Nobody needs to show compassion for you.  
Maybe they would if you were a bit nicer.

GIRL Sure, as if every boat refugee is a sweetheart.

POLITICIAN Just as long as you can enjoy your white privileges—

GIRL White privileges!

POLITICIAN We need to come up with rules to level the playing field.

GIRL Preferential treatment you mean.

CLASSMATE 1 To create equal chances.

GIRL And what will those equal opportunities mean?  
  
You'll have honest people who just want to progress in life, but they won't be able to  
because their place gets taken by people who get preferential treatment.  
  
So, you tell me what those people are gonna look like.

POLITICIAN Well?  
What will they look like?

GIRL Not like me.

POLITICIAN Uh-huh.

GIRL Those people should be grateful they get a chance to build up their lives in our country.

POLITICIAN 'Our country'?

GIRL Yes, a bit of gratitude wouldn't be out of place, seeing as how people like you chew up my future and spit it out.

POLITICIAN So that's your opinion.

GIRL It's a fact.  
But people like you don't care about my future.

CLASSMATE 1 It's our moral duty to help other people.

GIRL So we bring them all over here.  
All the adventurers and gold seekers and tonks can come here and radicalise – oh no, what's the term we use now... 'become confused'?  
Everyone shouts 'racism'. Racism! Racism!  
It's all down to racism!

POLITICIAN You've got no idea what racism means.

GIRL You've got racism to thank for your whole career.

POLITICIAN *To the teacher*  
I didn't expect that sort of remark at this level.

TEACHER I'm sorry.

GIRL At this level?

POLITICIAN This is an academic school isn't it?  
I thought I'd only find intelligent young people here.

LEERING 1 I *am* intelligent!

GIRL So I'm stupid?

POLITICIAN You're behaving stupidly.

CLASSMATE 1 She's right.

GIRL Fuck you.

TEACHER Hey!

GIRL Fuck you too.

12. **CHARACTER WITNESS – PSYCHOLOGIST (ANONYMOUS)**

PSYCH

I'm not actually allowed to say anything, course.

Patient privacy. Medical confidentiality.

But if I can remain anonymous, I can say something about it.

I believe it's important to warn other healthcare workers, teachers, parents and authority figures, to warn them against the dangers of radicalisation.

Radicalisation, wherever you find it, is a problem for society.

We don't spot it soon enough, and by the time we do it's too late.

This isn't about disturbed people, that's not what they are. They've got a consistent view of the world that doesn't allow for other perspectives.

They're angry. And sometimes – often, even – their anger is justified. They're not crazy. It's just that they've faced too many obstacles. And if their anger, their justified anger, doesn't have an outlet, or get channelled into something constructive, they start seeing enemies, and who that enemy is becomes clearer every day.

### 13. APES DESCENDED FROM APES

- PSYCH You're angry, so you radicalise. after that it doesn't matter much why you were angry. It doesn't even matter much which way you radicalise.
- GIRL I'm not radicalising.
- PSYCH You're angry, so you could fall into any trap.
- You could have gone to the caliphate, with a headscarf and a baby. Or to a drug den, and an overdose. You've chosen the path where you end up with swastika tattoos on your neck.
- There's not that much difference.
- GIRL Ridiculous.
- PSYCH I agree. But that's just the way it is.
- GIRL I'm no Nazi.
- PSYCH Not yet.
- GIRL I'm not even a racist.
- PSYCH Oh no?
- GIRL If I am, then we're all racists. We all think we fit in best with people like ourselves. And we fight people who look different.
- PSYCH Do we fight apes, or beetles, or giraffes?
- GIRL What do you mean?
- PSYCH It's actually those we look like that we fight against.
- GIRL They don't look like us.
- PSYCH They? Who are 'they'?
- Silence*
- PSYCH Are you scared of black people?
- GIRL You can't fight biology.
- PSYCH If you're sick you go to the doctor. That's fighting biology. If you take the pill to stop getting pregnant, that's fighting biology.
- GIRL I don't have sex.
- PSYCH Why don't you to control your first impulses, and try to get along with people instead of pushing them away?

Try postponing judgement. Looking beyond your basic fears is what civilisation is all about, isn't it?

Maybe that is fighting your biology, but that's how we've developed.

It's called—

GIRL Evolution.

PSYCH We're all apes.

GIRL Apes?

PSYCH Apes descended from apes. There's not so much difference between us.

#### 14. STATEMENT

OFFICER 1 Do you want to talk about it?

GIRL I have the right to remain silent.

OFFICER 2 This isn't a movie.

GIRL So, what is it?

OFFICER 2 It's just another day at work, and we've got to write an official report and we'd like your statement.

GIRL My statement?

OFFICER 1 Yes.

GIRL What about?

OFFICER 1 About what you did.

GIRL I know how to be a good, well-adjusted girl. I know what I've got to say so I don't impede my progress in society. But some things just aren't right.

OFFICER 2 Some things just aren't right.

GIRL No, some things just aren't fair.

OFFICER 2 Life isn't fair.

GIRL So do we have to just lie down and accept it?

OFFICER 1 Go into politics.

GIRL Politics?

OFFICER 1 If you want to change something, you need to get talking with people.

GIRL Get talking. And what if no one is listening? How loud do you have to shout?

OFFICER 2 Shouting doesn't help. It doesn't make people pay better attention.

GIRL In this country you've either got to be rich or an asylum seeker, otherwise no one will listen to you.

OFFICER 2 Exactly. If you come from Aleppo or Kabul, you get everything served up on a gold platter. But if you're born here? Nothing.

OFFICER 1 That's not true.

OFFICER 2 No? Where were you born actually?

GIRL I sometimes have to go to school hungry.

OFFICER 1 That's awful.

OFFICER 2 And they're always saying no-one's poor in this country.



OFFICER 1      They?

OFFICER 2      They say it's your own fault if you fall through the cracks.

GIRL            My fault? So if I don't get enough food at home, it's me who's doing something wrong?

OFFICER 2      I'm not saying that. That's just how it is, in this country.

OFFICER 1      Well...

GIRL            My dad's worn himself out working. His body is literally broken. He can't go on, but he's got no choice. If he doesn't accept suitable work, they cut his benefits.

OFFICER 2      As long as there's still something left to break, they'll never exempt you from work. Bastards.

GIRL            And why does someone who wasn't born here have more right to help?

OFFICER 1      Are you blaming it all on the asylum seekers?

OFFICER 2      Fortune hunters. Parasites. It's not fair!

GIRL            No.

OFFICER 2      The sense of injustice is swelling. It's bound to burst out somehow, whether it's with a cake, punch, or a bullet. I understand that.

OFFICER 1      You understand that. Really?

OFFICER 2      If I had to go school hungry, I'd get violent.

GIRL            I haven't been violent.

OFFICER 2      I'd come up with a plan to destroy someone – a premeditated plan to completely destroy someone, right?

GIRL            Is just unfair.

OFFICER 2      That's for sure.

GIRL            I lived here first.

OFFICER 2      So you wanted to teach that politician a lesson.

GIRL            Yes...

OFFICER 2      I get that. You wanted to hurt her.

GIRL            I didn't want to hurt her.

OFFICER 2      Yes you did, you wanted to scratch her face open, stick a knife in her liver.

GIRL            What?

OFFICER 2      And next time you'll do it, won't you? She won't get off so lightly next time.

OFFICER 1      Come on—

OFFICER 2 Shush!

GIRL I...

OFFICER 2 You can tell me. Who are you gonna go for next? Who else do you want to take down?

GIRL I...

OFFICER 2 You, yes. Who do you work with?

OFFICER 1 He's trying to trap you with your statement. Premeditated. Terrorist intent.

OFFICER 2 What's this? Loyalty among bitches? Why are you standing up for this piece of white trash? If we don't show this trailer spawn who's boss now, we'll only get more trouble from her later.

GIRL I've never lived in a trailer.

OFFICER 1 Does leave her alone, okay?

GIRL I don't need your help.

OFFICER 1 I'm only trying to—

GIRL Where were you actually born?

**15. DEPUTY HEAD (1)**

DEPUTY HEAD So, there you are again.

GIRL I missed you.

DEPUTY HEAD You're here every day.

GIRL I miss you every day.

DEPUTY HEAD Janssen tells me you swore at her guest, the politician.

GIRL I just told her my opinion.

DEPUTY HEAD And you swore at Miss Janssen, too.

GIRL She's lying.

CONRECTRO Why would she lie?

GIRL Because she's a bitch.

DEPUTY HEAD You must understand we can't tolerate this sort of behaviour. You're messing up. You swear, and you threaten people. Your marks are in freefall. You're always late. /

GIRL /My bike got stolen/

DEPUTY HEAD / You get into trouble almost every day /

GIRL / I do not /

DEPUTY HEAD / You call teachers bitches.

GIRL No I don't.

DEPUTY HEAD And you lie.

GIRL I'm having a difficult time at home.

DEPUTY HEAD You can't carry on using your domestic situation as an excuse for your unacceptable behaviour.

GIRL I'm finding it difficult to progress from a disadvantaged position. Okay?

DEPUTY HEAD There are limits to my patience.

GIRL Limits? Who takes any notice of them nowadays?

DEPUTY HEAD This is your final warning.

GIRL Woah!

DEPUTY HEAD If I don't see immediate progress, there will be consequences.

## 16. GRATEFUL

PSYCH You want to take on the whole world, because you think the world is against you. But you're wrong. The world, and I mean this positively, isn't bothered.

GIRL Me neither.

PSYCH Maybe you could try to turn your gaze inwards instead of blaming everything outside yourself.

GIRL Would you mean?

PSYCH The world is too big. It's almost impossible to change it. But maybe you could work on how you look at the world.

GIRL What do you suggest?

PSYCH You could make a list. Ten things you like about yourself, and five things you don't like.

GIRL Jesus.

PSYCH We can start looking for things to be grateful for.

GIRL Grateful?

PSYCH Do you think it's a stupid word?

GIRL What are you grateful for then?

PSYCH I'm grateful I've got enough to eat, a roof over my head, clothes to keep me warm.

GIRL I get what you're trying to say.

PSYCH I'm not trying to say something, I'm trying to talk.

GIRL So you're saying I've got nothing to complain about, and all I've got are first world problems.

PSYCH Not at all. I take your problems very seriously.

GIRL I haven't got any problems. You don't know me.

PSYCH I want to get to know you.

GIRL Piss of.

PSYCH I get that you're angry. That's allowed.

GIRL I'm not angry at all. I'm grateful.

PSYCH Fine.

GIRL Fine?

PSYCH Fine. We won't get anywhere like this.

**17. SAD**

*In the cell*

OFFICER 1 I do understand you a bit.

GIRL You don't understand anything at all.

OFFICER 1 Going to school hungry does something to you, in your head.

GIRL In my head?

OFFICER 1 It's difficult to think straight about other things If you're worrying where your next meal is going to come from.

GIRL So I'm stupid because I'm poor?

OFFICER 1 You're angry because your life is unpredictable.

We used to be poor, too. And I'm still not rich.

GIRL Don't pretend we're the same.

OFFICER 1 We're not.

GIRL No.

OFFICER 1 I'm not locked up, for example.

Pretty clever, don't you think?

For a fucking foreigner.

GIRL What did you say?

OFFICER 1 If I haven't got my uniform on, it doesn't matter that I got a Dutch passport. Then I'm a sea monkey, tonk, jungle bunny, dealer, junkie, scrounger, uneducated, workless, ghetto girl, down-and-out – but with a good sense of rhythm. You know, when I'm not in uniform, I watch out for the police as well. Even in the eyes of my own colleagues, I'm a suspect first and a human second.

GIRL So what?

OFFICER 1 Stray bullets tend not to hit white suspects.

GIRL How very sad for you.

OFFICER 1 I get that you're angry. I get that you're angry because every day you think – no, feel... no, you *know* – the world is your enemy. But I'm not sad. I'm standing, head up, chest forward. I create chances for myself. What about you? You're doing your best to destroy your chances. You're doing that all by yourself.

GIRL You know nothing about me.

OFFICER 1 That's right, I know nothing about you.

You're doing great at school.

Fantastic. Top student.  
Best behaved girl in the class!

18. **CHARACTER WITNESS – FATHER (STEENTJE)**

FATHER

I have always endeavoured to exercise my parental authority. I mean, I've always been content... conscientious... I mean I'm not an asshole, alright? Well, sometimes maybe.

I may, I know I haven't been the best father. But that doesn't have to mean I'm a bad father does it?

And she's not a bad kid, either. I mean, she can be a bit prickly sometimes, but you can see, can't you, that she's really sweet underneath?

It's not that difficult. You just have to look.

Look, I built this country. There are pavements all over the place I spilled my sweat for.

I reckon there aren't many people who haven't walked over my work.

I'm pretty proud of that.

I've pulled my weight – literally.

They promised us everything. They promised us a future, prosperity for everyone, a fair society. If we worked hard we would all get ahead. But all I got from my hard work is a broken life, benefit cuts, and 'suitable employment'.

A cake!

Tell you what, we should have a war again. At least it would be about something, something real, instead of all this bickering about nothing.

19. **WASPS AND MOSQUITOES**

*In the cell.*

GIRL I sleep in the attic.

OFFICER 1 In the attic?

GIRL Well, it's more like a crawlspace under the roof. It's not much to look at. And in the wall, or under the tiles – I'm not sure where – there are wasps.

OFFICER 1 Ugh, gross.

GIRL The nest is difficult to get at, so the landlord can't get rid of it. Or won't. There's not much difference.

They're not that much of a bother. Most of them fly outside from under the tiles. But once in a while one gets into my room.

Buzzing like mad.

So I swat it dead. The floor is covered in dead wasps.

OFFICER 1 Wasps are useful.

GIRL Rubbish.

OFFICER 1 They eat mosquitoes.

GIRL I'd rather be stung by a mosquito than a wasp.

I'd rather have an itch than pain.

OFFICER 1 If you don't bother the wasp, it won't trouble you. Mosquitoes will suck your blood, whatever you do.

I'm more scared of mosquitoes than wasps.

GIRL I'm not scared.

OFFICER 1 I am. Often. I reckon it's just part of being human.

GIRL I'm not scared of those creatures.

OFFICER 1 No.

GIRL Do I seem scared?

OFFICER 1 You seem angry.

GIRL Yes.

I am angry.



**CHARACTER WITNESSES – FELLOW STUDENTS (SENSE OF COMPASSION PREVAILS)**

CLASSMATE 1 You shouldn't really compare people with each other, of course.

CLASSMATE 3 No.

CLASSMATE 1 And if you did, just for argument's sake, you would see that her parents' combined income is about a third of what my father pays in taxes.

CLASSMATE 3 Possibly a quarter.

CLASSMATE 1 So you see, and I say this without prejudice, she does have a different background.

CLASSMATE 3 And the lower class does have a different culture.

CLASSMATE 1 One does hope that with an education she would be able to drag herself out of the swamp, but it's clearly difficult.

CLASSMATE 3 I feel sorry for her. Truly.

CLASSMATE 1 So do I.

CLASSMATE 3 She can't do anything about where she was born, of course, but it does have an effect. In the end you're a product of your upbringing, surroundings and social class.

We, for example, are well educated and polite. We understand how things should be done.

CLASSMATE 1 *Comme il faut*, one might say.

CLASSMATE 3 For us, etiquette is a given, but if one doesn't experience it from a young age, one can never be truly cultivated. She can do nothing about it, but one does notice it.

CLASSMATE 1 We are given an advantage in life.

CLASSMATE 3 And we must use that advantage to help the disadvantaged.

CLASSMATE 1 And we want to.

CLASSMATE 3 Volunteer work. Getting your hands dirty. Making the world a better place.

CLASSMATE 1 But she refuses to be helped.

CLASSMATE 3 And how does one help someone who does not want it?

CLASSMATE 1 And the things she is capable of are... shocking.

CLASSMATE 3 But compassion must prevail.

CLASSMATE 1 Yes, compassion must prevail.

## 20. SOMETHING WARM

CLASSMATE 3 You stink... of exhaust fumes.

CLASSMATE 1 And deep-frying oil.

CLASSMATE 3 And poverty.

GIRL Assholes.

CLASSMATE 1 Woah! So insulting.

CLASSMATE 3 White trash.

CLASSMATE 3 Chav.

CLASSMATE 1 Pleb.

GIRL Shut up.

CLASSMATE 3 You mouth off about asylum seekers but you're abusing the system too.

CLASSMATE 1 You get benefits.

CLASSMATE 3 At least the asylum seekers have got an excuse, but what have you got?

CLASSMATE 1 Nothing.

CLASSMATE 3 Being lazy isn't an excuse.

CLASSMATE 1 Slumped on the couch with your dad all day. Parasite.

GIRL Don't talk like that about my father.

CLASSMATE 1 We'll talk however we want. Freedom of expression, *biatch*.

GIRL Seriously, stop it.

CLASSMATE 1 I pay his benefits. You should be grateful.

CLASSMATE 3 Yes, show your gratitude!

CLASSMATE 1 You should show us your tits.

GIRL Fuck off.

CLASSMATE 1 Come on. If you're good I'll let you suck my dick.

GIRL Ugh!

CLASSMATE 1 You could do with something warm inside you.

*She hits him. Hard. She bites him. He bleeds.*

**21. DEPUTY HEAD (2)**

DEPUTY HEAD People who resort to violence—

GIRL I—

DEPUTY HEAD You'd be well advised to stay quiet.

GIRL But I—

DEPUTY HEAD You had really better keep your mouth shut.

GIRL I want to explain.

DEPUTY HEAD There's nothing to explain.

GIRL He started.

DEPUTY HEAD Did he hit you?

GIRL No.

DEPUTY HEAD Did he bite you?

GIRL No, but—

DEPUTY HEAD Are you bleeding?

GIRL ...

DEPUTY HEAD Well?

GIRL No.

DEPUTY HEAD We have a zero-tolerance policy here.

GIRL What?

DEPUTY HEAD Anyone resorting to violence has to face the consequences.

GIRL I don't understand.

DEPUTY HEAD We can no longer support you at this level... not at this school.

GIRL What did you say?

DEPUTY HEAD Miss! 'What did you say, Miss?'

GIRL I don't understand.

DEPUTY HEAD We are imposing drastic disciplinary measures.

You are hereby excluded from all exams.

And you are suspended indefinitely.

GIRL What...? What am I...?

DEPUTY HEAD You are no longer welcome here.

GIRL

I'm not welcome?

I'm not?

I?

## 22. CHARACTER WITNESS – MOTHER (SACRIFICES)

MOTHER I never felt as nauseous as when I was pregnant with her. It was worse than a really bad hangover!

That doesn't sound very kind, but what good is kindness?

It's a tough world.

Maybe I didn't give her enough attention. But what do you expect? I had to keep everything going. I was working day and night, and the debts kept piling up. But I still had put food on the table every night. Don't blame me if it wasn't always pleasant. Just be happy I didn't leave!

Well I'm sorry. It's been difficult enough getting you out of bed every morning. Life's difficult enough already.

I had a future until I got pregnant. I could have been somebody. I was clever! Cleverer than most people. I could have been somebody.

But I became a mother.

It's not exactly what I expected of life.

But, yeah, everybody makes sacrifices.

I did cuddle her of course, when she would still let me. I'm not made of stone.

But the world is hard. You can't snuggle up against it.

**23      WHY NOT?**

OFFICER 1      So why did you do it?

GIRL              You tell me.

OFFICER 1      I don't know.

GIRL              Why? Why not?

OFFICER 1      Is that a good reason?

GIRL              How should I know! What do I know? I don't know anything!

I sometimes feels like I can't even finish my own thoughts. Like whenever I try to express an opinion, it gets pushed back down my throat.

Wrong! Wrong! Wrong!

And the harder you push, the louder I'll shout.

Otherwise I wouldn't be able to hear myself.

Yes I live in a different world from you lot, but that doesn't make my world less real, does it?

I see what I see. Every day. I hear what I hear. Every day. I live where I live every day, don't I?

Is what you see around you more real than what I see?

Why? Because it's better? Don't you think I want things to be better?

I'm scared. That's right, scared.

I flew in a plane once, and they showed how adults should put on their face mask first, and only then give one to their child. Because if you suffocate, the child is going to suffocate anyway. And we pretend we're adults, but what if we're nothing but helpless children?

Do we just suffocate? And crash?

I'm scared, yes.

I've hardly got any past. I'm 16 years old, and I'm scared my future is going to explode.

OFFICER 1      You've every right to be scared.

GIRL              I want to go home.

OFFICER 1      Tell me exactly what happened.

GIRL              It's my birthday today.

OFFICER 1      Just tell me exactly what happened, in your own words.

**24. DUMB LOSER**

MOTHER You're home early.

GIRL Me? How come you're even home?

MOTHER I brought a cake.

GIRL Mum.

MOTHER It's from Aldi, but still.

GIRL Why are you home now?

MOTHER Is your birthday! You're 16 years old!

GIRL Happy birthday to me.

MOTHER Yes, let's sing! Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear—

GIRL What's going on?

MOTHER My little girl is all grown up.

GIRL You never know your luck, I might be gone before dad.

MOTHER That's right. Ha-ha-ha-ha!

*She starts crying.*

MOTHER I wanted to make it look a bit more festive, hang up some steamers, but you got home too early.

GIRL What is going on?

MOTHER I know, we'll invite your friends around.

GIRL Invite people round here into this mess?

MOTHER I'll just tidy it up.

GIRL I haven't got any friends anyway.

MOTHER We're going to celebrate your birthday! One step closer to your future!

GIRL I don't want to.

MOTHER Oh come on, it's party time!

GIRL I haven't got a future anyway.

MOTHER Listen sweetie, I've had a bad day. They fired me /

GIRL / What? /

MOTHER / It'll be fine, but. /

GIRL / Why? /

MOTHER / Too old, too expensive, too... whatever.

GIRL What now?

MOTHER It'll be fine. It'll all be fine. We'll just have to go to the food bank, won't we?

GIRL No!

MOTHER I feel like doing something happy. It's your birthday... party... cake.

GIRL There's nothing to celebrate. I don't want to celebrate. Mum... Jesus, please stop this.

MOTHER When you're a student you'll get a loan want you? We can use it to buy food.

GIRL I'm not going to uni.

MOTHER Of course you're going to uni.

GIRL School suspended me.

MOTHER What?

GIRL Bastards.

MOTHER Did you behave badly again?

GIRL It wasn't my fault.

MOTHER No, of course not. It's never your fault. Nothing is ever your fault.

GIRL You weren't there.

MOTHER When are you going to start taking responsibility for yourself?

GIRL Sure, young people nowadays....

MOTHER No, not young people: It's about you. You, you, and only you. What sort of future do you think you're going to have? How many chances do you think you're going to get? Don't you realise what an opportunity it was to be at such a good school!

GIRL I'll find work. I will.

MOTHER Sure you will, with no qualifications and a fuck-you attitude. At McDonald's maybe. And you'll work until you're hunched from frying burgers, and you've got fat in your hair, your skin, your spots, and you're too fat for your red and yellow uniform.

And then you'll be too old, too expensive, too ugly. And they won't extend your contract. And you'll be stuck at home with no job and no money.

And with a useless prick of an ex on the couch, a son who's half-criminal, and a daughter who could have it all, but doesn't want it /

GIRL / I do want it! /

MOTHER / You're making all the same mistakes I made, and before you know it you'll be pregnant in a deprived neighbourhood and no future /



GIRL / stop it /  
MOTHER / with a fucked-up family /  
GIRL / stop it! /  
MOTHER / and you'll be just like me /  
GIRL / I won't! /  
MOTHER / a loser /  
GIRL / I won't! /  
MOTHER / a dumb loser! /  
GIRL / I won't! /  
MOTHER / because you fucked up the biggest chance you ever had! /  
GIRL / no, no, no!

**25. PUKE**

- GIRL I feel like crying.  
But I'm not going to cry.  
And I feel sick.  
But I swallow it all.  
And I clench my fists.  
And I see my mother.  
She looks frightened.  
And I notice I'm screaming.  
And screaming so loud.  
That it hurts.
- And I've got to cry, and I'm feeling sick  
And everything comes out, floods out  
My poison, my bile, my instant noodles
- I can't do anything but throw up, throw up all over the Aldi cake.
- And the door is open, and I can feel the draught.  
My mother is crying outside on the street, and she's being filmed
- What the fuck?
- And she's being filmed for some stupid current affairs show.
- POLITICIAN We will raise our fists against the white fascism rising up from the national under-belly.
- GIRL This must be a joke.  
And what did she do?  
What did she do, that goody-goody do-gooder, sooty-faced politician bitch?
- POLITICIAN This time fascism won't be wearing thunderbolts, skulls and swastikas. It won't come marching through the streets in black boots. No, this time fascism will come quietly.
- GIRL What's she doing here?  
What is this?  
The campaign?
- POLITICIAN It will be wearing a two-for-one t-shirt from Primark, a check shirt, a sharp haircut, comfortable trousers, unisex raincoats, an XL baggy sweater
- GIRL Connecting with the people on the street. Filming your mother's tears, filming you, as you stand in the doorway holding a puke-covered Aldi cake.
- POLITICIAN Or you could look around and see what they're wearing in this neighbourhood:

GIRL           And that bitch is standing and talking in front of my house and filming me... using me... to get her point across

POLITICIAN   This is how evil camouflages itself in our time. But make no mistake...

GIRL           But that is not, that is not, that is not going to happen

POLITICIAN   ...it doesn't matter if it's hiding inside a toothless old man or a 16-year-old girl, evil is still evil.

And we must fight that evil.

**26. PUKE**

GIRL            Can I go home now?

OFFICER 1     It depends.

GIRL            On what?

OFFICER 1     On whether she brings charges.

POLITICIAN Right, what now? What should I do?

Is this just an insignificant thing that is only going to grow and become dangerous if you feed it, or is it a warning, but or is it a warning, something that'll spread its tentacles if you ignore it, until it's too late?

Should I take it seriously, or let it go?

Should I ask them not to charge this young woman, ask her school to lift the suspension so her life is not ruined before it's even properly begun? Should someone like her get a second chance, so she can reshape her life? What do people like hers simply not deserve a second chance?

I think that... If we are to move forward together, we sometimes have to give each other second chances.

Especially young people who have strayed need a chance to get on the right track.

We should be loving, and allow young people their mistakes.

And I'd rather call for mercy than revenge.

...

But there are times when we must demand that justice be done, and choose punishment over mercy.

Today it was a cake, tomorrow it will be a bullet.

An attack is an attack. Terrorism is terrorism.

This violence must be rooted out before it has fatal consequences.

She and others like her must understand that her actions affect no one but herself, and wreak irrevocable damage on her life.

So... I shall ask the public prosecutor to take this threat seriously, and to try the defendant as an adult... so that we – democracy, the rule of law, society – can be rid of her.