

ROBIN. the Crystal Maze, exactly, and that's it, all it is, is now there's just a little clock counting down in the corner of the screen and there's a bald fellow outside the door playing the harmonica. You know, and that's, Alarming, but, I've always been better with a deadline. You know that.

HAZEL. And what about me. What about what I, the things that I

ROBIN. What is it, Lauren?

HAZEL. Of course Lauren. Always Lauren.

STACEY

ROBIN. Because you know a hundred years ago you'd probably be in the ground by now.

Dead from... Flu, or an ear infection... childbirth even, but because of science, and because we've decided that natural decay is unnatural, and because of the distance the human brain has travelled us, forcing our bodies to keep up, here you are, alive and kicking and that's of course, you know, marvellous, but you're a terrifying act to follow my darling, do you know that? You are, and so, when I want to shake her, Lauren I mean, when I feel like attaching a pair of jump leads to her fucking ears, I remind myself of that, that her mother is a giantess (a pain in the arse, also, true) and but d'you know what I think? I think the only thing that will force Lauren to grow is for her to wake up one day and find that we're not there any more, and I know what you're about to say, you'll say you're her mother, and you'll want to talk about duty, but what I think, what I honestly think is this is your duty, you have a real duty to that child, to fuck off at some point.

Pause.

END

HAZEL. But... but what, um... what about the cows?

ROBIN. The cows are dead my love. I'm going to pack a bag.

ROBIN goes out. HAZEL looks at ROSE.

ROSE gets her cigarettes and walks towards the door.

HAZEL grabs her by the hair and pulls her back.

It comes off in her hand.

HAZEL. Rose. What.

ROSE. It's fine, it was a while ago, I'm fine now. It's just it takes forever for it to grow back. Specially at our age.

ROSE fixes her wig.

Do you want to call your children?

HAZEL. Why?

ROSE. To let them know your plans.

HAZEL. What plans? I haven't said anything, I haven't got any... plans, what plans?

Is that what people do? Is that what the others did?

ROSE. Some of them. The others are waiting till they get there because otherwise it gets a bit, they get emotional, don't they, children? Douglas's daughter, oh God, we had a time of it there. She spat in my face. Crying, lying on the floor, 'you can't take him, it's not fair, I'm not ready' all that jazz.

ROSE laughs.

They don't like having things taken away from them.

HAZEL. But... but you're doing it for them. That's why you're doing it.

ROSE. No I know, it's funny, isn't it?

Maybe you'd prefer Robin to call them, / or

HAZEL. I haven't said -- stop -- rushing me!

Pause.

ROSE. You don't have to worry. I won't, I won't go near him.

HAZEL. Oh, okay then.

ROSE. No, I know, I wouldn't believe me either. But it's true.

I went to a therapist once, in America, she said to me, 'Rose, are you familiar with the definition of madness as doing the