

LAUREN
AIDEN

Daniel: (**Intensely**) He looks deep in her eyes. Emotions wrestle on both sides. Struggling with the fact they both want each other so much. (**With power.**) Say a line Natalie.

Lucas: I think I understand Daniel.

Daniel: (**To Natalie.**) Say a line!

(Pause)

Natalie: (**Uncomfortably**) You should be in Paris.

Daniel: (**Strokes Natalie's hair.**) I cancelled the flight. (**Speaking to Lucas while still looking at Natalie.**) I hope you're watching this Lucas.

Lucas: (**Stepping in.**) I get it.

Daniel: Seduction is the key to power.

(Daniel's phone rings. He looks at it. His face reveals his panic.)

Daniel: I've got to take this. Five minutes break. (**Exits stage right.**)

Lucas: (**To Natalie.**) Are you alright?

Natalie: It's nothing I can't handle. He's only doing it to make you jealous.

Lucas: It's working.

(Aiden uses his screwdriver on the side of the stage right door. Lauren goes to Lucas and Natalie.)

Lucas: (**Changing the subject.**) Can I have a look at that little Lauren? I get it wrong every time.

Lauren: Which one?

Lucas: The one where I say it was an accident. (**Gently takes the script.**) That's it. Thanks Lauren. Where would I be without you prompting?

Lauren: Not a problem Lucas.

(Lucas and Natalie mime a friendly conversation. Lauren goes to exit stage right. Aiden stops her.)

Lauren: Are you alright Dad?

Aiden: Fine thanks Lauren. You?

Lauren: Yes. What are you doing?

Aiden: (**Continuing to work.**) Fixing the bloody door. I'm always having to fix one thing or another here. At least it shuts now. Kept opening on its own. I said to Natalie, it's not a phoney story you know. Anyway fixed it. Stronger magnet did the trick.

Lauren: I'm glad to hear it Dad.

Aiden: Not a real door see. The magnet holds it in place. That's the great thing about theatre. It's an illusion. The audience come in and if you've got the right lines, the right set and cast, the audience believe it – just for a moment. It doesn't matter how preposterous it is. People believe it's a real door, or you can take the books out of that painted bookcase. That's the magic of theatre. People want to believe something is real when clearly it's not. Sometimes it's difficult to see what the truth is. Like that director fella of yours. You keep telling yourself it's real and that he's a nice guy and so that's what you see. You forgive him anything as long as he says he's sorry and buys you flowers.

Lauren: Don't you think we've done this conversation to death?

Aiden: I'm just trying to look after you sweetheart. I wouldn't be here if I didn't...

Lauren: I know you only agreed to be stage manager so you could keep an eye on us. I'm not as fragile as you think.

Aiden: (**Nods and thinks for a moment.**) You would tell me if he hurt you?

(Lauren nods. Daniel enters on stage right.)

Aiden: Anyway, I better get on.

Lauren: Don't stray too far. We've got a reporter from The Novershell Mail coming.

Aiden: Oh damn. I forgot about the newspaper. (**Exits stage left.**)

Lauren: (**To Daniel.**) Dad was just telling me about the door. Daniel? Are you alright?

Daniel: (**Touchily**) Fine. Of course.

Natalie: (**To Lucas playful.**) Remember your lines this time.

Lucas: (**Also playful.**) I remember more than you.

Natalie: You don't need to push so hard next time.

Lucas: Then don't slap me for real.

Natalie: Authenticity.

Lucas: Authentically hurt as well.

(Natalie and Lucas exit stage right.)

Daniel: I wonder what his wife makes of their special relationship.

Lauren: None of my business.

Daniel: No idea what either of them see in him, apart from his wallet that is. What do you think about him?