This is a piece for a company of actors whose composition should reflect the composition of the world beyond the theatre.

A dash (—) at the beginning of a line indicates a change of speaker. If there is no dash after a pause, it means the same character is still speaking.

A slash (/) marks the point of interruption in overlapping dialogue.

In performance, the first scenario, ALL MESSAGES DELETED, may be cut.

Anne. (pause) It's me. (pause) I'm calling from Vienna. (pause) No, sorry; I'm calling from . . . Prague. (pause) It's Prague. (pause) I'm pretty sure it's Prague. Anyway, look . . . (breath) Anne . . . (breath) I want to apologise. (breath) I realise how much I've hurt you, my sweet sweet darling, and . . . (breath) Ah. Look. Look, there's somebody on the other line, Anne. I really really - I'm sorry - but I really really have to take this call. I'll get back to you.

'Monday 8.53 a.m.'

beep

Anne. Hi. Listen. I only have a moment. Are you there? No? Okay. Look. It's this. What we were discussing? You remember? Well what about this, what about this, what about if, let's say, let's say, let's just say . . . that the trees have names? Okay? That's right - the trees. You think - I know - you think I'm crazy. But let's just accept for a moment shall we that the trees have names. Then what if, what if, what about if . . . this was her tree. Shit. Sorry. Look, I have to board now. But think about that. The trees have names. And one of them is hers. I have to run.

'Monday 9.35 a.m.'
MARTIN CRIMP

— (spoken in e.g. Czech) You know who this is. You leave the device in a small truck at the back of the building. You’ll get the truck from Barry. Barry will contact you with more instructions.

'Monday 11.51 a.m.'
beep

— Oh. Hello? It’s Mum...

'Monday 1.05 p.m.'
beep

— Hello, this is Sally at Cooper’s. Just to let you know that the vehicle is now in the showroom and ready for your collection. Thank you.

'Monday 1.06 p.m.'
beep

— We know where you live you fucking bitch. You’re dead, basically. The things you fucking did. We don’t forget. (pause) You’ll wish you’d never been born.

'Monday 1.32 p.m.'
beep

— Anne? Hello? It’s Mum again. (pause) Got your postcard. (pause) Looks very nice. (pause) And the photo. Is that really you? (pause) Glad you’re making friends and so on. (pause) The thing is, Anne, there just isn’t any money to send you. I’ve spoken to your dad, and he says no, absolutely not.

We hear a man’s voice in the background: ‘Not another penny. Just you make that clear.’ Mum replies: ‘I’m telling her, I’m telling her.’ Then back into the phone:

'I’m really sorry, Anne darling, but we just can’t keep on doing it.

Man’s voice again: ‘If you don’t tell her, I’ll bloody well talk to her.’

Look, I have to go now, darling. Your dad sends his love. All right? God bless.

'Monday 2.20 p.m.'
beep

— Anne? Are you there? Pick up the phone, Annie. (pause) Okay... It’s a quarter after ten here in Minnesota and we’re just calling to say our thoughts and prayers are with you, Annie. And we love you very much.

'Monday 4.13 p.m.'
beep


'Monday 10.21 p.m.'
beep

— Anne. Good evening. Let me tell you what I’m going to do to you. First you’re going to suck my cock. Then I’m going to fuck you up the arse. With a broken bottle. And that’s just for starters. Little miss cunt.

'Monday 10.30 p.m.'
— Anne?

Pick up the phone. (pause) I know you're there.
(pause) It's no use hiding, Anne. Hiding from what?
(pause) The world? Hiding from the world, Anne?
Come on. Grow up. Grow up, Anne, and pick up the
phone.
Pause.

So what is this then? A cry for help? Don't tell me
this is a cry for help. Because what am I supposed to
do exactly about your cry for help? Mm? (pause) And
what if you're lying there, Anne, already dead? Mm?
Is that the scenario I'm supposed to imagine?
The scenario of a dead body rotting next to the
machine?

Faint laugh Pause.
The what, the larvae of flies listening to your messages?
Or if your building has been destroyed. Or if your
city has been destroyed.
The airports and the shoe shops. The theatres and the
fashionable halogen-lit cafes that have sprung up in
the disused warehouses by the disused canals. Mm?

Faint laugh.

So only the larvae of insects are listening to your
messages. Listening to me, Anne, as they tunnel
through your remains.

Pause.

I'm growing morbid, Anne.
I think you should pick up the phone and make me
smile, make me smile the way you used to, Anne.
2 TRAGEDY OF LOVE AND IDEOLOGY

— Summer. A river. Europe. These are the basic ingredients.
— And a river running through it.
— A river, exactly, running through a great European city and a couple at the water’s edge. These are the basic ingredients.
— The woman?
— Young and beautiful, naturally.
— The man?
— Older, troubled, sensitive, naturally.
— A naturally sensitive man but nevertheless a man of power and authority who knows that this is wrong.
— They both know this is wrong.
— They both know this is wrong but they can’t help themselves. Exactly.
— They’re making love in the man’s apartment.
— Doing what?
— Making love. Making love in the man’s apartment. A luxury apartment, naturally, with a view over the entire city. These are the basic ingredients.
— A panorama of the entire city. The charming geometry of the rooftops. The skylights and the quaint chimneys. And beyond the TV aerials are monuments of culture: the Duomo of Florence and the arch at La Défense, Nelson’s Column and the Brandenburg Gate / to name but four.
— The woman cries out. Her golden hair cascades as it were over the edge of the bed. She grips the bed-frame. Her knuckles whiten. There are tears in her eyes.
— The apartment is beautifully furnished.
— Well obviously the apartment would be beautifully furnished. Obviously it would have high ceilings and tall windows and date in all probability date from the end of the nineteenth century when the rise in speculative building coincided with the aspirations of the liberal bourgeoisie to create monumental architectural schemes such as I’m thinking particularly now I’m thinking of the Viennese Ringstrasse which made such an impression on the young Adolf Hitler as he stood one morning / before the Opera.
— Or one of the great Parisian / boulevards.
— Or one of the great, exactly, Parisian / boulevards.
— And meanwhile, as you say, her golden hair cascades as it were over the edge of the bed. She grips the frame. Her knuckles whiten and her pupils widen, while he —
— Let’s say he grunts.
— Grunts?
— Let’s say he grunts, yes, but sensitively. Let’s say it’s the sensitive grunt of the attractive man of power and authority, not for example the coarse pig-like grunt of a mechanic lying on his back in a confined space trying to loosen a cross-threaded nut with a heavy and inappropriately sized wrench.
— Absolutely not.

— Absolutely not, but the masterful grunt of a man who breakfasts on one continent and lunches on another, who flies first class with a linen napkin and a comprehensive wine list.

— That kind of man.

— That kind of grunt.

— That kind of light.

— What kind of light?

— The kind of light that streams in. It streams in through the tall windows transforming their bodies into a kind of golden mass.

— A writhing mass.

— The light, the golden mass, these are the essential ingredients.

— But now a look crosses her face.

— A what?

— A look.

— A doubt.

— A look of doubt, yes, good, crosses Anne's face.

— Even now.

— Even now in the intensity of her passion.

— Even now in the intensity of her passion a kind of shadow crosses her face.

— A premonitory shadow.

— Premonitory?

— A premonitory shadow, yes, crosses her face.
— His political masters / calling him.

— His political masters, that's right, calling him. Just as they have always called him. The very political masters that she hates with every fibre as it were of her being. The very men and women, that she, Anne, in her youthful idealism holds responsible for the terminal injustice of this world.

— The leaders who in her naive and passionate opinion have destroyed everything she values in the name (a) of business and (b) of laissez-faire.

— In the name (a) of rationalization and (b) of enterprise.

— In the name of (a) so-called individualism and (b) of so-called choice.

— The basic ingredients in other words of a whole tragedy.

— A whole, exactly, tragedy unfolds before our eyes in Paris, Prague, Venice or Berlin to name but four, as the moon, vast and orange, rises over the renaissance domes, baroque palaces, nineteenth-century zoos and railway stations, and modernist slabs of social housing exemplifying the dictum form follows function.

— Form follows function.

— This whole tragedy / of love.

— This whole tragedy of ideology and love.

— She stubs out the cigarette.

— She begins to shout.

— She begins to beat him with her fists.

— She begins to bite him with her teeth.

— She begins to kick him with her bare white feet.

— She beats and beats / and beats.

— She beats and beats. And the exquisite clock which has survived two revolutions and three centuries is smashed to pieces on the smooth and highly polished parquet as she beats bites and kicks.

— The tiny tiny shepherd and the tiny tiny bell both vanish — rather a nice touch this — vanish for ever under the / walnut bed.

— Until she stops for breath. Let's say she finally, shall we, stops, at this point, for breath.

— The woman?

— The woman, Anne, yes, stops for breath.

Pause.

— And he?

— Bows his head.

— Yes.

— Looks up at her.

— Yes.

— Takes her tear-stained / face between his hands.

— Takes Anne's tear-stained face between his hands like a precious chalice.

— Or a rugby football.

— Like a precious silver chalice or as you say a rugby football before a drop-kick he takes Anne's angry tear-stained face between his hands.

— He still loves her.
MARTIN CRIMP

— For all their ideological differences — that's right — he still loves her. Speech.

— One day, Anne, he says, you'll understand my world. One day, Anne, you'll understand that everything must be paid for, that even your ideals must finally be paid for. End of speech. At which he smooths the wet strands of hair from her lips and kisses her. These are the basic ingredients.

— He kisses her and presses her back down onto the bed. Or she him. Better still: she presses him back down onto the bed such is her emotional confusion, such is her sexual appetite, such is her inability to distinguish between right and wrong in this great consuming passion in the high-ceilinged apartment with the solid walnut bed, the polished parquet floor, the grand piano by Pleyel circa 1923 without it should perhaps be noted any visible means of protection against pregnancy in the case of Anne or in the case of either against sexually transmitted diseases including the so-called AIDS virus more correctly known as the human immune deficiency virus or HIV for short.

— A portrait of a young girl sketching once thought to be by David but now attributed to his female contemporary Constance Charpentier, and a triangular yellow ashtray with the legend 'Ricard' containing three cigarette butts and a quantity of fine grey ash.

Pause.

— A great tragedy in other words / of love.

— A great — exactly — tragedy of ideology / and love.

— These are the basic ingredients.

3 FAITH IN OURSELVES

Silence.

— The whole of the past is there in her face. It's written there like a history. The history of her family. The history of the land itself — this land where her family has lived for generations.

Silence.

— It's a valley.

— It's a valley — yes — deep in the hills.

— It's a valley deep in the hills where the traditional ways have been maintained for generations. And there are fruit trees.

— Each child who is born in this valley has a fruit tree planted in their name. In fact there's a kind of ceremony.

— A formal — exactly — ceremony.

— A kind of formal ceremony takes place in the village. And for generation upon generation this formal ceremony of naming has taken place on the birth of each child.

— The trees in other words have names.

— They have names just as the inhabitants have names. There is the person, and there is the tree. There is Anya the woman, and there is Anya the tree.

— The trees have names and so do the blades, the blades of grass. Because life is so precious, life is so felt,
things are so alive, so sacred, that even the blades of grass have names. It's something we can hardly comprehend.

- We can hardly comprehend this sacred sacred life, this sense of completeness is beyond our understanding, this sense of awe humbles us.

- But now, devastation.

Silence.

- What?

- Devastation. The harmony of generations / has been destroyed.

- Exactly. This enclosed, secure world has been torn apart.

- The harmony of generations has been destroyed. The women have been raped. The little children have been disembowelled.

- The women have been raped, and then disembowelled. The men have hacked each other to pieces.

- Brother has killed brother.

- Cousin has murdered cousin. Brother has raped sister.

- Brother has raped – yes – sister, and now the dogs are picking over the remains.

- The petrol used to fuel the ancient tractors and generate electricity for the old black-and-white TVs has been used to set people alight.

- Yes.

- First to set living people alight, and now, for health reasons, to burn the corpses.
MARTIN CRIMP

— ... the moment we realise that this is her tree.
— This is her own tree, Anya’s tree.
— Anya’s tree, planted what? forty? fifty? years ago on the day of her birth. The hole dug by her father, the roots spread out by her mother and watered and tended by the family who now lie dead.
— Her very own tree.
— The air still smells of petrol.
— It’s spring.
  Silence.
— Panorama of the whole valley.
— The whole deep valley in spring.
— The trees. The grass.
— A bee crawls into the cup of a flower.
— And now she speaks.
— Yes. Because she must. Because the words well up as she stands beside her tree.
— The tree gives her strength, the strength / to speak.
— She points to some charred timbers. That, she says, was my home. My children were hiding under the bed. They killed them both. First the boy. Then the girl. They set light to my little girl’s hair. I still don’t know why they set light to my little girl’s hair. It crackled like a pile of sticks.
— Then she breaks down.
— Who? Anya?
— She screams. She breaks down and scratches her cheeks like something / from an ancient tragedy.
MARTIN CRIMP

- Our own anger.
- A universal thing which strangely... what? what? what?
- Which strangely restores.
- Which strangely restores — I think it does — yes — our faith in ourselves.

4 THE OCCUPIER

- She's the kind of person who believes the message on the till receipt.
- 'Thank you for your custom.'
- She never stands forward of this notice...
- Never.
- ... or speaks to the driver.
  Pause.
- When a letter comes addressed to 'The Occupier', she first of all makes...
- What? A cup of tea?
- Yes. Then sits at the kitchen table to open it. She opens it and reads it as carefully as if it were a letter from her own son, who now lives in America.
- Canada, actually.
- She's the kind of person who believes the lucky numbers have... been selected...
- Toronto.
- ... just for her. Which in a way, of course, they have. And if she replies within ten days, she will receive a mystery gift. / Toronto? Is it?
- It's not a mystery gift, no. She ticks a box, she ticks a box selecting the gift she wants to receive: maybe a handy clock-radio, a camera or a set of / miniature screwdrivers.
MARTIN CRIMP

— A set of miniature screwdrivers or a handy disposable camera.
— She’s a non-smoker.
   Silence.
— She’s definitely a non-smoker. Although I think it’s true to say she may occasionally take cigarettes from other people.
— Exactly. At parties.

5 THE CAMERA LOVES YOU

The camera loves you
The camera loves you
The camera loves you
We need to sympathise
We need to empathise
We need to advertise
We need to realise
We are the good guys
We are the good guys
We need to feel
what we’re seeing is real
It isn’t just acting
it’s far more exacting
than acting
We’re talking reality
We’re talking humanity
We’re talking of a plan to be
OVERWHELMED by the sheer totality
and utterly believable three-dimensionality
THREE-DIMENSIONALITY
of all the things that Anne can be
ALL THE THINGS THAT ANNE CAN BE
What’s Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba?
A megastar
A MEGASTAR

The camera loves you
The camera loves you
The camera loves you
We need to fantasise
We need to improvise
We need to synthesise
We need to advertise that
We are the good guys
We need to go
for the sexiest scenario
It isn’t just writing
it’s much more exciting
than writing
We’re talking actuality
We’re talking contemporary
We’re saying that we want to be
OVERWHELMED by the sheer quantity
YES BY THE SHEER QUANTITY
of all the things that Anne can be
ALL THE THINGS THAT ANNE CAN BE
What’s Hecuba to her or she to Hecuba?
A megastar
(A megastar? The fuck you are)
The camera loves you
The camera loves you
The camera the camera
the camera the camera
THE CAMERA LOVES YOU

It’s not her first attempt.
It shouldn’t be her first attempt. She’s tried at various
times. Even before she leaves home / she tries, doesn’t she?
She tries at various times throughout her life.
We see the other times.
We live through the other times. We live through
these harrowing times.
Silence.
We see photos, don’t we.
We see large numbers of photos.
We see them close to, so close you can make out the
little dots. Funny, isn’t it, how everything at a certain
point turns into just these little dots - even her smile.
It's a happy smile. It's a genuine enough smile.
Oh yes, it's a genuinely happy / smile alright.
Because no one's forcing her, no one’s forcing her to
smile, are they?
No one's forcing her to do anything. The idea of
Annie, little Annie being forced to do things is quite
frankly ludicrous.
No question of it.
Silence. In the silence:
MARTIN CRIMP

'She enjoys hosting these holidays because she loves meeting people. She will introduce you to your fellow guests ensuring that everyone has a memorable time.'

- Absolutely - and this should be made clear - absolutely no question of her doing what she does not want to do.

- Everything at a certain point turns into these little dots - eyes, hair, smile.

- Smiles from all over the world.

- People from all over the world. People from all over the world photographed with Annie. Smiling with Annie. Characters I suppose who just popped in and out of her life.

- And then popped out again.

- And then - yes - popped straight out again.

- Porno, actually, some of them.


- Pretty pornographic, actually, some of those pictures.

- I'd hardly call it pornographic, just high spirits. Just the high spirits you'd expect of a girl who's always smiling, always laughing, always on the move, always meeting someone, always leaving someone, always in a departure lounge or a bus station or waiting by an airport carousel or sleeping in the corridor / of a train.

- Always by the side of the road somewhere with that big red bag of hers. Somewhere in Africa, say, with that big red canvas bag she got from Mum and Dad when she turned sixteen. Somewhere in South America.

- Somewhere in Europe with that big / red bag.

- Europe. Africa, South America, you name it. Brazil.

- Cuba. Brazil. Romania. / Nigeria.


- The Kalahari Desert, the foothills of the Himalayas.

- The foothills of the Alps.

- That's right - the what's it called -

- The / Piedmont.

- The Piedmont. Always in some foothills somewhere with that big red bag of hers.

- Because, let's face it, she is concerned.

- Well of course she's concerned. We can see that she's concerned. You only have to see her for example in those photos, the way she's rubbing shoulders with the poor. She's not afraid in those photos to rub shoulders with the poor.

- Pictures of her in slums with the smiling slum-dwellers.

- Pictures of her on hillsides with the smiling hill-dwellers.

- Pictures of her - exactly - with the smiling hill-dwellers whose land has been eroded, just swept off - fwhah! - by the wind.

- And on rubbish dumps.
— Pictures of Annie on rubbish dumps next to smiling people actually living on the dumps, actually living right there on the dumps / with their children.
— Whole families of gypsies or whatever they are, are apparently living, that's right, right there on the dumps.
— What it's not — and this is perhaps how it differs from those previous attempts — what it's not is a cry for help.
— It's quite clear that her mind's / made up.
— It's not a cry for help. It's very important to establish that, wouldn't you agree, from the outset. It's very important to establish that no one could've helped her at that point.
— No one could've helped her — not her Mum — not her Dad — and certainly none of her so-called / friends.
— She wouldn't've / wanted help.
— Help is the last thing she would've wanted.

Silence. In the silence:

'She enjoys spending lots of time with guests, and gets a feeling of great satisfaction when everyone is having a good time.
She says there are lots of hugs at the station when it's time to go home, with holidaymakers waving and calling out “see you next time” from the train window.'

They laugh all through next passage:
— Some of the strange things she says . . .
— Some of the strange things she says to her Mum and Dad as a child: 'I feel like a screen.'
MARTIN CRIMP

— She'd like to act like a machine, wouldn't she.

— Act? She'd like to be a machine. Sometimes she spends days on end, whole days on end pretending to be a television / or a car.

— A car or a television, an automatic pistol or a treadle sewing-machine.

Silence. In the silence:

‘She is an excellent singles' host, and loves to take people on guided walks.’

— A sewing-machine . . . The things she comes out with . . .

— Then of course she's off round the world. One minute it's Africa, the next it's South America or Europe.

— Somewhere in Europe.

— Europe, Africa, South America, you name it. Brazil.

— Cuba. Brazil. Romania. / Nigeria.


— The Kalahari Desert. The foothills of the Himalayas.

— The foothills of the Alps.

— That's right – the what's it called –

— The / Piedmont.

— The Piedmont, the Piedmont, the Piedmont, of course it is. Yes. Always some foothills somewhere with that big red bag of hers.

ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE

— And the same hair. Don't forget the same hair down / to her waist.

— The same long hair down to her waist at forty as she had at twenty – like a young girl still, isn't she, in some of / those pictures.

— Even at forty she still looks and dresses like a young girl half her age.

— But what's really conclusive is that the bag is full of stones.

— The fascinating thing, that's right, is that the bag turns out to be full / of stones.

— The stones are there to keep her under however much she thrashes, and the handles of the bag are tied to her ankles.

— No question in other words of a / cry for help.

— In other words she's planned all this, she's planned on thrashing, she knew she'd thrash, and equally she knew that the bag would go on dragging her down regardless. So there's never at any point any question of the attempt failing. There's never at any point any question of anyone being able to intervene – not Mum or Dad certainly.

— Well certainly not Mum and Dad – and certainly none of her so-called friends.

— If you can call them / friends.

— Well you obviously can't call them friends.

Silence. In the silence:

‘She likes to attend keep-fit classes, amateur dramatics, and take part in lively cabarets.'
She is also a member of her local rambling club.'

— And we're tempted to think — aren't we — that perhaps the bag was always full of stones. From the moment in fact that she left the house, her Mum and Dad's house on her sixteenth birthday. Aren't we?

Pause.

Well aren't we?

— Aren't we what?

— Tempted. Tempted to imagine that maybe the bag was always full of stones from that very first day. From the moment she went down her Mum and Dad's path and closed her Mum and Dad's gate and caught the bus. That the red bag in the photographs is full of stones. That on the trucks and trains and mules she used to climb up mountains — and on the dumps and slums and hillsides and cobbled renaissance piazzas, the bag is full of stones. And in the refugee camps where she posed at their request next to the stick-like dying just as she posed apparently without a murmur beside the Olympic swimming pools of paunchy billionaires, the bag is full of stones. And on the airport carousels, particularly on the airport carousels at 2 a.m. waiting with travellers from other time-zones and war-zones for the machinery to start and the luggage to appear through the black rubber curtain on the black rubber track — the rucksacks and the leather cases, the Samsonites and the taped-up cardboard boxes — the bag, that red bag of hers is full of stones.

— We can't be sure.

— Well of course we can't be sure. But from what we know of her, from what we see of her, it's not impossible.
The New Anny

Each speech is first spoken in an African or Eastern European language.* An English translation immediately follows.

- [phrase]
  - The car twists along the Mediterranean road.
- [phrase]
  - It hugs the bends between the picturesque hillside villages.
- [phrase]
  - The sun gleams on the aerodynamic body.
- [phrase]
  - The aerodynamic body of the new Anny.
- [phrase]
  - We see the new Anny snake along between the red-tiled Mediterranean rooftops.
- [phrase]
  - Fast.
- [phrase]
  - Sleek.
- [phrase]
  - Free.
- [phrase]
  - We now understand that the Anny comes with electric windows as standard.

* In the first production, Serbo-Croatian.

Attempts on her Life

- [phrase]
  - We now understand that the Anny comes with driver's and passenger's airbag as standard.
- [phrase]
  - We now understand that all the things other manufacturers offer as extras...
- [phrase]
  - ... are offered on the Anny as standard.
- [phrase]
  - Air-conditioning.
- [phrase]
  - Engine-immobiliser.
- [phrase]
  - And a mobile telephone.
- [phrase]
  - We understand that our children will be safe and happy in the back seat of the Anny just as the adults will be relaxed and confident at the wheel.
- [phrase]
  - Happy.
- [phrase]
  - Secure.
- [phrase]
  - In control.
- [phrase]
  - The Anny skims the white beaches of the world as easily as she parks outside the halogen-lit shoe shops of the great cities.
- [phrase]
  - When we arrive at our destination in the Anny...
MARTIN CRIMP

... we will always be embraced by good-looking men and good-looking women.

We will not be betrayed.

Tortured.

Or shot.

The two-litre Anny achieves excellent mileage in the simulated urban cycle...

... and is also available in diesel.

As a testimony to our ongoing concern for a cleaner, greener, environment...

... there are no filthy gypsies in the Anny.

Not in the Anny nor in the sun-filled landscapes through which the Anny drives.

No one in the Anny lies cheats or steals.

Dirty bastards.

Gangsters.

Motherfuckers.

ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE

There is no room in the Anny for the degenerate races...

... for the mentally deficient...

... or the physically imperfect.

No room for gypsies, Arabs, Jews, Turks, Kurds, Blacks or any of that human scum.

We understand that zero per cent finance is available.

But hurry.

Since this is a limited offer.

The Anny crosses the Brooklyn Bridge.

The Anny crosses the Sahara.

The Anny streaks through the vineyards of Bordeaux.

The Anny streaks at dawn through North African villages...

Fast.

Sleek.
— [phrase]
— Free.
— [phrase]
— . . . where the veiled women can only gaze with wonder at the immaculate rust-protected paintwork with its five-year warranty.
— [phrase]
— No one ever packs the Anny with explosives to achieve a political objective.
— [phrase]
— No man ever rapes and kills a woman in the Anny before tipping her body out at a red light along with the contents of the ashtray.
— [phrase]
— No one is ever dragged from the Anny by an enraged mob.
— [phrase]
— No child's pelvis is ever shattered by a chance collision with the new Anny.
— [phrase]
— The back seat is never made slippery by sperm.
— [phrase]
— Slippery by blood.
— [phrase]
— Slippery by beer.
— [phrase]
— Slippery by saliva.
— [phrase]
— Or sticky by melted chocolate.
— [phrase]
— Melted chocolate. Yum yum yum.

Small print:
— [phrase]
— On-the-road price includes VAT, number plates, delivery and six months' road fund licence.
— [phrase]
— Financial packages subject to status.
— [phrase]
— Smoking can harm your unborn child.
— [phrase]
— Your house is at risk if you do not keep up the repayments on a loan.
8 PARTICLE PHYSICS

- I'll tell you what: she has a kind of ashtray. The tall kind on a stalk. Like something you'd find in the lobby of a cheap hotel, the kind of hotel you visit for a few hours on a weekday afternoon in a strange city with a man you've only just met.
- With a man you'll never see again.
- With a man - exactly - you've only just met and have no intention of ever seeing again. That's the kind of ashtray it is, with its chromium bowl and its chromium stalk and its aura of sudden unprotected sex in cheap hotel rooms.
- She also speaks five languages and with the aid of the CERN accelerator in Geneva has discovered a new elementary particle which will bear her name and completely change the way we look at the universe.

9 THE THREAT OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM™

- She doesn't seem to care. She has no conscience. She expresses no remorse. She says, 'I do not recognise your authority.'
- 'I do not recognise your authority.' Just what does she mean by that? Who does she think she is? Does she really imagine she won't have to account for the lives she's destroyed? Does she really imagine that anything can justify her acts of random senseless violence? Nothing in her eyes reveals one spark of human feeling.
- Not one spark - that's right - of human feeling or any sense of shame. Is this the same child, is this the same child who once wore a pink gingham dress and a straw hat and went with the daughters of doctors, dentists, TV presenters and property developers to the school on the hill with the polished brass plate and the teachers in strict tartan skirts? Is this the same child who had Fantasy Barbie™, Fantasy Ken™ and all the outfits: the tiny tiny knickers and the tiny tiny shoes? The house, the horse, and Barbie's™ very own car?
- Is this the same little Anne who put all the tiny tiny shoes in rows and all the tiny tiny dolls in rows and all the tiny tiny beads in rows and what's more prayed to God™ each night / with no sense whatsoever of irony.
MARTIN CRIMP

— Who prayed to God™ 'God™ bless Mummy, God™ bless Daddy, God™ bless Wiggy the cat, God™ bless everyone' with no sense whatsoever of irony but rather in the sincere belief that she might invoke there on her knees and in her Minnie Mouse™ pyjamas the blessing of the Father and of the Son / and of the Holy Ghost.

— Amen.

— Who wet the bed each and every night until her sleepless parents took her to the doctor with his heap of magazines to pull with a big smile down her knickers on the high cold leather couch and say, 'Let's take a look then, Anne, / shall we?'

— The same Anne who came away from the hospital with a wooden box containing a bell to go beside the bed, two stiff squares of metal gauze and a number / of black wires?

— The same Anne who woke up each subsequent night to the sound of the horrible bell in the horrible / wet sheets?

— The same Anne who now — what? — stands there? Stands there in front of serious men and women with witnesses and evidence in sealed plastic bags — false passports and pieces of human flesh — who stands there and refuses / to recognise their authority?

— Pieces of human flesh, false passports, lists of names, traces of explosive, tapes of phone-calls, videotapes from banks and shopping malls and cash dispensers. Psychiatric reports which confirm (a) her intelligence and (b) her sanity. 'She set about her work,' they say, 'with all the terrible detachment of an artist.' Witnesses break down / in tears.

ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE

— Witnesses break down in tears as videotapes from banks and shopping malls show Anne as just one more person going about their business under constant surveillance, until twenty minutes after she's left, the plate glass blows out of a shoe-shop window in absolute silence and the little grey figures breaking apart and flying through the air in absolute silence with the tiny tiny flying shoes are real human beings mixed with glass. No one can find out / what her motive is.

— No one can find Anne's motive.

— She lives alone?

— She lives alone.

— She works alone?

— She works alone.

— She sleeps alone?

— Apparently, yes.

— Kills / alone? Eats?

— She lives works sleeps kills and eats entirely on her own. In fact her recorded phone-calls consist almost entirely of orders for meals to be delivered to the rooms she rented overlooking the high streets of metropolitan suburbs — a large pizza, garlic bread, and one and a half litres of Diet Pepsi™ all for just nine pounds / ninety-nine.

— Calls which are at first assumed to be / coded messages.

— Calls which are at first, that's right, assumed to be coded messages but which are simply orders for meals delivered to her door by boys on scooters / paid

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— Is this really the same little Anne who now has witnesses breaking down in tears? Who now has long-serving officers of both sexes receiving counselling for the night-sweats, impotence, amenorrhoea, trembling hands and flashbacks of human heads popping open as if in slow motion and the long long terrible wail of a buried unreachable child recurring as a kind of what's the word?

— An auditory hallucination?
— Yes. For which they're now demanding / to be compensated.

— The same Anne who woke up when the bell went and watched the shadows of the chestnut trees move on her bedroom wall in her / wet pyjamas?

— The same Anne who soldered fiddly timing mechanisms and mercury tilt-switches to printed circuit boards with her mouth full of / deep-pan pizza?

— Who summed up the mood / of a generation.

— Who appeared twice on the cover of / Vogue™ magazine.

— Who sold the film rights for two and a half million / US dollars.

— Who studied in depth the baggage-handling procedures and memorised the timetables of the principal international / airlines.

— Who was quote a loner / unquote.

— Who listens quote expressionlessly unquote to the description of quote outrage unquote after quote outrage unquote after quote outrage unquote she has perpetrated.

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10 KINDA FUNNY

— It's kinda funny and it's kinda sad.
I guess it's kinda bittersweet.
I guess it's one of these kinda bittersweet things, one of these laughing through tears things.
After so much time, after so many years, he finally comes back to his mom.
And at first, y'know, like 'Who is this?'
Then there's the moment of realisation: 'Oh God: it's my very own son.'

And they're hugging each other right there in the kitchen and y'know that is so moving.
I mean that is just so moving to see that he has found that thing, that strength, to forgive his Mom.
That he has forgiven her her alcoholism.
That he has forgiven her for running round with other men.
That he has forgiven her for destroying his father's faith in himself and driving him to suicide.
And they're both kinda crying and laughing and crying again all at the same time in the same kitchen he sat in as a little boy witnessing his parents' terrible arguments. His Dad in tears pouring her liquor down the sink at ten o'clock in the morning while she screams how if he was a real man with one iota of self-respect she wouldn't need to booze herself to death, would she. And there are these tiny scratches in the table which he recalls having made secretly with a fork. And you're aware, y'know, like of the continuity of things, of the bittersweetness of things.
And then he says, 'Hey, Mom, I have a surprise for you.' And Mom kinda breaks away and wipes her eyes and says, 'What surprise?'

And he says, 'Look out the window, Mom.' And out the window there's like this dusty pick-up with two tiny tiny kids in the back like kinda staring. Just staring into the camera. And she can hardly believe these are her very own grandchildren. Then he says, 'Mom, I want you to meet Annie.'

And that's when this woman Annie gets out of the pick-up and she's like real tall and fair and strong-limbed with these clear blue eyes that look right into your heart, and she's like - well I guess she's like every man's dream of what a good woman should be, and every mother's dream of the wife she would choose for her boy.

And it turns out how he and Annie and the kids are making this new what? Well, they are making their new, yes, life for themselves away from the city. Living off the land. Growing stuff. Trapping stuff. Boring under the earth for clean pure water. Educating their own children. In the belief that Man is free before God to forge his own destiny and take whatever means necessary to protect his family.

And over lunch - which is basically a kind of chicken salad with mayonnaise - we learn how he is in fact the commanding officer of a whole group of like-minded individuals who have armed themselves not out of any thirst for blood, but out of necessity because it is war. 'War?' says Mom. 'How d'you mean, war?'

So Annie has to explain to Mom how they don't believe in taxes or welfare or any of that shit. How
As she sits there at the family table gazing on this family she never knew she had - the son and his fine young wife, their strong and innocent children with their whole lives ahead of them - she is, yes indeed, crying her eyes out like a tiny child herself.

And Annie strokes the boy's hair - which is clipped real short, y'know - like a real young soldier - and says, 'Because she is so happy, son. Because she is so happy.'

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- What we see here are various objects associated with the artist's attempts to kill herself over the past few months. For example: medicine bottles, records of hospital admissions, Polaroids of the several HIV positive men with whom she has had intentionally unprotected intercourse, pieces of broken glass . . .

- Suicide notes.

- . . . yes, and the walls of the gallery have of course been lined with her many suicide notes. In addition to the Polaroids there are rather unpleasant, I have to say, video recordings of the attempts themselves.

Well I don't know about other people, but after a few minutes of this I rather began to wish she'd succeeded the first time round.

Silence. In the silence:
MARTIN CRIMP

cold
stem
to dance
village
lake
sick
pride
to cook

— Well I think that's an inexcusably frivolous comment to make about what is clearly a landmark work. It's moving. It's timely. It's distressing. It's funny. It's sick. It's sexy. It's deeply serious. It's entertaining. It's illuminating. It's dark. It's highly personal and at the same time raises vital questions about the world we're living in.

— What fascinates me is her use of textures. I think there's a great sensitivity here in the juxtaposition of materials: leather and glass, blood and paper, Vaseline and steel, which evoke in the viewer an almost visceral reaction.

— I'm afraid what we're seeing here is pure narcissism. And I think we have to ask ourselves the question, who would possibly accept this kind of undigested exhibitionism as a work of art? ...

— Yes, but exactly, that's surely the very point she's attempting to make: Where are the boundaries? What is acceptable? ...

— ... because it's pure / self-indulgence.

— ... Where does the 'life' - literally in this case - end, and the 'work' begin?

— With respect to you I think she'd find the whole concept of 'making a point' ludicrously outmoded.

— The what?

— The darkest place. It's / Chinese.

— Why can't people learn to draw? Why can't people learn to paint? Students should be taught skills, not ideas. Because what we see here is the work of a girl
who quite clearly should’ve been admitted not to an art school but to a psychiatric unit.

Silence. In the silence:

money
stupid
exercise book
to despise
finger
dear
bird
to fall
book
unjust
frog
to part
hunger
white
child
to pay attention
pencil
sad
plum
to marry

— A what?
— A mental hospital. Somewhere where she could / receive treatment.
— Well I have to say I think that’s an extraordinary remark which I would not expect to hear outside of a police state . . .
— Oh please . . .
— . . . and which - no, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, this has to be said - which appears to be an attempt to reinstate the notion of Entartete Kunst . . .

— Oh rubbish. What an absurd / over-reaction.
— . . . the so-called ‘degenerate art’ prohibited - rubbish? I don’t think so - prohibited by the Nazis. I mean listen to yourself: you are saying that this artist should not be allowed to produce work but should instead be compelled to undergo psychiatric treatment.
— I’m simply suggesting that this poor girl . . .
— ‘This poor girl.’
— . . . this poor girl, yes, requires help - and I have not as you well know at any point suggested that she should be / ‘compelled’.
— Requires help? Oh really? And in whose opinion? The opinion of Goebbels? The opinion perhaps of Joseph Stalin? Isn’t Anne actually anticipating the terrifying consequences of that argument and asking us what ‘help’ actually means? Isn’t she saying, ‘I don’t want your help’? Isn’t she saying, ‘Your help oppresses me’? Isn’t she saying the only way to avoid being a victim of the patriarchal structures of late twentieth-century capitalism is to become her own victim? Isn’t that the true meaning of these attempts on her life?
— Her own victim - that’s fascinating.
— Oh really, this is such flabby reasoning.

Silence. In the silence:

house
darling
glass
to quarrel
fur
lumbering towards the embarrassing dénouements of the *theatre*, Anne is offering us a pure dialogue of objects: of leather and glass, of Vaseline and steel, of blood, saliva and chocolate. She's offering us no less than the spectacle of her own existence, the radical *pornography* — if I may use that overused word — of her own broken and abused — almost Christ-like — body.

— An object in other words. *A religious* object.

— An object, yes. But not the object of *others*, the object of *herself*. That's the scenario / she offers.

— But surely we've seen all that. Haven't we seen all that in the so-called 'radicalism' of the sixties stroke seventies?

*Silence. In the silence:*

department
narrow
brother
to fear
stork
false
anxiety
to kiss
bride
pure
doctor
to choose
hay
contented
ridicule
to sleep
month
nice
MARTIN CRIMP

— Seen it - perhaps. But not seen it afresh, not seen it now, not seen it in the context of a post-radical, of a post-human world where the gestures of radicalism take on new meaning in a society where the radical gesture is simply one more form of entertainment i.e. one more product - in this case an artwork - to be consumed.

— Theatre has nothing to do with this and I bitterly resent the implication that I am some kind of a Nazi.

1.2 STRANGELY!

— She's driving away from the bombed-out city in a metallic red Cadillac circa 1956...

— NAME!

— ... when she reaches a checkpoint lit by burning tyres and is asked - exactly - for her name.

— STRANGELY!

— Strangely enough she doesn't reply to this reasonable request but begins instead a tirade of foul-mouthed abuse. 'You mother-fucking shit-faced murderers,' she says. 'You pig-fucking cock-sucking bastards.'

— LANGUAGE!

— 'You sister-fucking blaspheming child-murdering mindless fuck-faced killers.'

— LANGUAGE!

— 'I shit on your graves and on the graves of your mothers and fathers . . .'

— IDENTITY!

— '... and curse all future generations.' And then when asked once more - that's right - for her identity falls silent.

— SILENCE!

Silence.

WHAT?
Silence.
WHAT?
— Then she's mumbling something about her garden and the plum trees and the city's dried-up fountains.
About - what's this? - the water she used to warm in plastic bottles so as not to shock the roots. She's mumbling something about...
— SPEAK UP!
— ... she's mumbling something about - that's right: speak up you bitch - something about loss of electricity, nights spent in complete darkness and the decay of frozen meat. About the women banging saucepan lids in the streets as a kind of lamentation...
— NAME!
— ... about the burning of entire libraries full of books and irreplaceable manuscripts and about stale bread thrown off the back of trucks and on and on about the plums and the white flowers...
— MEANWHILE!
— ... and the smell of sewage coffee and human remains and meanwhile - that's right: meanwhile - thank you - the soldiers crowd round this nameless woman with the long grey hair streaked with blood and round the red Cadillac lit by the stacks of burning tyres and ask her just where the fuck, where the fuck on this Godforsaken earth does she think she's going?
Silence.
— WHAT?
Silence.
— WHAT?
— STRANGELY!
— So - what? - yes - sorry - strangely as you say the light from the torch reveals on the back seat of the vehicle only two shiny black plastic bags each tied at the neck but no child whatsoever.
— CHILD? WHAT CHILD?
— And now she's mumbling something about...
— SPEAK UP!
— ... something about a garden swing, something about her little girl, her little Anne, her little Annushka. Something - what's this? Speak up - something about her Annushka 'being in the bags' and about her need, her urgent need to take these bags to the airport with her education and her bank account in US dollars and buy air tickets. Doesn't she realise the airport is closed? Didn't she hear the runway being bombed? Didn't she see the intelligent rockets splash up the concrete like stones dropped into a pool?
— STRANGELY!
— Can't she feel the white heat of the burning aviation fuel? No. Strangely as you say she seems to believe the airport is functioning normally. Strangely she seems to think that the world's white beaches and cosmopolitan cities are still a few hours away by regular scheduled flights.
— STRANGELY!
— This nameless woman strangely seems to imagine she can still operate a bank account with a plastic card and fly first class with little Anne, with Annushka, out of the range of rifles and axes, to a city full of art galleries, halogen lamps, charming cafés and attractively displayed shoes.
— STRANGELY!
— Silence.
— And yes - strangely - no one asks her what she means by Annushka 'being in the bags'.
— STRANGELY!
— Silence.
— And yes - strangely - no one asks to examine the bags.
— STRANGELY!
— Silence.
— And yes - most strangely perhaps of all - no one questions why a child should be in two bags as opposed to one.
— Silence.
— STRANGELY!
I3 COMMUNICATING WITH ALIENS

— *Then* we discover that she is being penetrated by mysterious rays which make her invisible in photographs.

— What? X-rays?

— No, not X-rays. It's a new kind of ray. It's a new kind of ray produced by a catastrophe in *deep space*.

— You mean—okay—that she is in communication are you saying via these rays with *aliens*?

— *Not communication*. No. The aliens are *using* her. They are using her, but *without her knowledge*.

— The aliens—that's right—are using her mind as a kind of Trojan Horse by which they can gradually invade all of human *consciousness*.

— And the frightening thing is, is she could be any one of us.

I4 GIRL NEXT DOOR

She's the girl next door
She's the fatal flaw
She's the reason for
The Trojan War.

She is royalty
She practises art
She's a refugee
In a horse and cart.

She's a pornographic movie star
A killer and a brand of car
A KILLER AND A BRAND OF CAR!

She's a terrorist threat
She's a mother of three
She's a cheap cigarette
She is Ecstasy.

She's a femme fatale
She's the edge of the knife
She's one helluva gal
She's Intelligent Life.

She's a presidential candidate
For every little warring state
EVERY LITTLE WARRING STATE!

She winters in the south
She collects antiques
MARTIN CRIMP

She has a big mouth
But she never speaks.

She’s given a spade
At the edge of a wood
To dig her own grave
By a man in a hood.

She drives a tank
Over neonates
While choosing to bank
At competitive rates.

She bombs by stealth
Has unlimited wealth
White knobbly knees.
WHAT? KNOBBLY KNEES?
Yes. Knobbly knees
And speaks fluent Japanese.

SHIGOTO WA NAN DESU KA?
OKU-SAN WA IMASU KA?
OKU-SAN WA IMASU KA?

She’s an artificial tan
She’s the fat in the pan
She’s the film in the can
She’s the shit in the fan.

She’s the one who ran
When the shooting began.

She’s a girl with a plan
She’s a boy with a man
She’s a dyke with a femme
She’s a man with a van.

ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE

She’s a dedicated football fan
With limited attention span
LIMITED ATTENTION SPAN!

She’s the predator
She’s the god of war
She’s the fatal flaw

She’s the girl she’s the girl
She’s the girl she’s the girl
She’s the girl she’s the girl
SHE’S THE GIRL NEXT DOOR!
The Statement

Silence.
— You say she rides her bike in all weathers?
— All weathers. That's right.

Silence.
— And wears a hat.
— Yes. She wears a hat.
— Which, you state, she has knitted herself.
— I believe so.

Silence.
— She grows tomato plants in . . .
— Margarine tubs.
— Margarine tubs.
— That's right.

Silence.
Or yoghurt . . .
— Yoghurt pots.
— Yes.
— I see.

Silence.
Why do you think she does that?

Attempts on Her Life

— What? Grow tomato plants?
— Yes.

Silence.
— For fêtes.
— For what?
— Fêtes. She sells them at fêtes.
— Of course. And I suppose she takes them to the fêtes on her bike.
— Yes she does.
— In all weathers.
— Yes she does.
— In a cardboard box.
— Yes she does.
— Now why do you suppose she does that? Why do you suppose she takes these, what, these tomato plants in yoghurt pots, why do you suppose she takes them on her bike in a cardboard box to fêtes in all weathers?

Long silence.
You state quote as a child she often shared a bed with two or three of her younger siblings unquote. Do you abide by that statement?
— Yes.
— Why?
— Because she did.
— 'Because she did.'
— Because she did, yes. Because they were poor. Because they had nothing.
Different world, eh?

Silence.

If you could just sign here.

What?

Yes. If you could just sign here to say you have read the statement, and consider it accurate.

Silence.

Well, don't you consider it accurate?

If I could have a pen...

A pen is produced, the cap removed. The paper is signed and passed back.

Silence.

Is that all?

For the time being. Thank you.

Silence.

Thank you very much.

Silence.

The principal speaker is a very young woman. As she speaks her words are translated dispassionately into an African, South American or Eastern European language.*

— The best years of her life are ahead of her.

— [translation]

— She may be seventeen or eighteen...

— [translation]

— ... but ideally she's younger...

— [translation]

— ... fourteen perhaps or younger still.

— [translation]

— It's really really important to understand that she is in control.

— [translation]

— She's always in control of everything that happens.

— [translation]

— Even when it looks violent or dangerous.

— [translation]

— Which it is not.

— [translation]

— (faint laugh) Obviously.

— [translation]

* In the first production, Portuguese as spoken in Brazil.
— (faint laugh) Of course there’s no story to speak of ...
— [translation]
— ... or characters.
— [translation]
— Certainly not in the conventional sense.
— [translation]
— But that’s not to say that skill isn’t required.
— [translation]
— Since we still need to feel that what we’re seeing is real.
— [translation]
— It isn’t just acting.
— [translation]
— It’s actually far more exacting than acting – for the simple reason that it’s really happening.
— [translation]
  A pause. She seems to have forgotten what to say and looks for a prompt.
— Yes?
— (prompt) She enjoys her work.
— What?
— (more emphatic prompt) She enjoys her work.
— She enjoys her work.
— [translation]
— She’s young and fit, and happy with her body.
— [translation]
— How she uses her body is her decision.
— [translation]
— Obviously.
— [translation]

Porno doesn’t stop her leading a normal life.
— [translation] (In the translation ‘Porno’ should have a distinctive stress: ‘Pornó’.)
— She has a regular boyfriend ...
— [translation]
— ... and all the normal interests of a girl of her age.
— [translation]
— (faint laugh) Clothes.
— [translation]
— Boys.
— [translation]
— Make-up. Pets.
— [translation]
— Music.
— [translation]
— The difference is ...
— [translation]
— ... is that Porno is building up for her the kind of security and independence many women would envy.
— [translation]
— Porno.
— [translation]
— ... is actually a way of taking control.
— [translation]
— Porno ...
— [translation]
— ... is actually the reverse of what it seems.
— [translation]
— Because rather than consuming the images ...
— ... she is producing them.
— [translation]
— That, for her, is one of the beauties of Porno.
— [translation]

Again a pause. She seems to have forgotten what to say: but this should imply a distress which is never allowed to surface. She looks for a prompt.
— Yes?
— (prompt) She is not insensitive to the evening light.
— What?
— (more emphatic prompt) She is not insensitive / to the evening light.
— She is not insensitive to the evening light when it strikes the tops of the pine trees with brilliant orange.
— [translation]
— She has an inner life.
— [translation]
— She responds sensitively to the world.
— [translation]
— The scenario in fact of the drugged and desensitised child ...
— [translation]
— ... humiliated ...
— [translation]
— ... and then photographed or filmed without her knowledge ...
— [translation]
— ... is a ludicrous caricature.
— [translation]

Again a pause. Again she looks for a prompt.
MARTIN CRIMP

— Obviously.
— [translation]

The young woman gradually begins to join in again, supported by the other voices.

— She could for example become a model...
— [translation]

— a TV personality...
— [translation]

— run her own country pub or travel the world.
— [translation]

— She could paint...
— [translation]

— swim professionally...
— [translation]

— or study for a degree in chemical engineering.
— [translation]

All with growing elan.

— Anne could change the world...
— [translation]

— end animal suffering...
— [translation]

— end human suffering...
— [translation]

— and learn to fly helicopters.
— [translation]

Passionate gypsy violin music begins.

— Anne will distribute the world's resources evenly across the earth...
— [translation]

ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE

— ... raise from the dust the faces of the disaffected...
— [translation]

— ... while guaranteeing not to erode the privileges of the middle class.
— [translation]

— She will popularise psychoanalytic theory...
— [translation]

— ... by probing the roots of human behaviour...
— [translation]

— ... in a series of weekly magazine articles.
— [translation]

The music intensifies.

— Anne has seen the world from space...
— [translation]

— the wrinkles of the mountains...
— [translation]

— and the cobalt threads of the rivers.
— [translation]

— She has excavated the shallow graves...
— [translation]

— ... and picked over the shattered skulls of the dead.
— [translation]

— She has scattered information in the optic fibres...
— [translation]

— ... and danced with the particles of light.
— [translation]

Music intensifies. The speakers divide, creating two simultaneous strands, each strand impassively translated into a different language:
MARTIN CRIMP

Anne has hosed down the streets of Bucharest... and listened to the foetal heart.

She has melted with the ice-caps... and flowed into the fertile deltas.

She has personally endorsed a brand of imported lager.

She has bought an entire newspaper page... to print a full and unreserved apology.

She has exterminated gypsies... and bought a sprig of lucky heather.

Anne will now demonstrate the crash position... which you should adopt when instructed by the stewards.

Head down.

Knees drawn up.

She has hung on a cross to die... risen on the third day from the dead... grown a beard... and entered Mecca in triumph.

Anne will save us from the anxiety of our century... and usher in an age in which the spiritual and the material... the commercial and the trivial... the wave and the particle... will finally be reconciled!

Anne will save us from the anxiety of our century... and usher in an age in which the spiritual and the material... the commercial and the trivial... the wave and the particle... will finally be reconciled!
Okay, so there's a lot on her mind. Things have.

Well that's right.

... things have what? Things have changed for her over the past few years.

Well that's absolutely right.

I mean we can see - let's face it: we can see that something has died.

Something has what?

Has died. Something / has died.

She feels she's failed.

Exactly. She feels her work's failed.

But also personally - her work, yes - but also personally she feels that something, something inside of her has died.

And has it?

What?

And has it died?

Has what died?

This thing, this so-called thing inside of her.

What so-called thing?

The thing, the thing, the thing, the thing / inside of her.

In her case, yes, let's say it has died. Let's say that everything she's ever worked for - her whole life - has died. (laughter) Let's say her life up to this point has been what? what? what? what? like a . . .

Book?

Like a book, like a . . .

Thread?

Like a book, like a thread, like a . . .

Boat?

Like a boat. Let's say her whole life - yes, very good - up to this point has been like a boat, like a small boat . . .

Drifting.

... drifting quite happily across a lake. But now she feels the water . . .

Coming in through the cracks?

Creeping.

Creeping into what?

Her broken heart.

Laughter.

Her broken - exactly - yes - absolutely - heart. She feels the water of the lake creeping into her / broken heart.

Her work abandoned. Her home abandoned by her children.

Herself abandoned by her husband. Where is he now?

— Paris? Prague? Fucking? Fucking is he someone half her age in a city of Renaissance palaces and baroque domes? Enacting some adolescent fantasy, while she attempts to reconstruct her life.
— But she never had a husband.
— She never what?
— Never had a husband. She never believed in marriage.
— Okay. Perhaps she never believed in it, but she had a husband all the same.

Laughter.

— Paul.
— Who?
— Paul.
— Paul? Paul wasn't her husband.

Laughter.

— Well who was he then?
— I don't know. He was just some kind of, some kind of, some kind of.../person.
— Like smoking.
Silence.

— Talking of which, d'you know she still has that tall ashtray on a stalk?
— Talking of what?
— Of which. Talking of which.

— She doesn't.
— She does. She still carries it round with her from room to room.
— It's a ghastly thing.
— It is not a ghastly thing.
— It's like something out of the lobby of a cheap hotel, the kind of hotel you visit for a few hours on a weekday afternoon in a strange city with a man you've / only just met.

— What thing is that?
— That thing. That word. That other word.

— With a man you'll never see again.
— What? For spittoon?
— With a man — exactly — you've only just met and have no intention of ever seeing again. With its chromium bowl and its chromium stalk and its aura of sudden unprotected sex in cheap hotel rooms. A cuspidor? What's that?

— A thing. A thing you spit in.
— She doesn't spit. What are you talking about? She doesn't marry. She doesn't have children. And she certainly / doesn't spit.
— No one's saying she spits.
— So why then does she have a thing you spit in?
— She doesn’t have a thing you spit in, she has a thing that resembles one.
— But in that case, what’s a humidor?
— Humidor is Spanish. Like matador.
— Like conquistador.
— It’s a box where you keep cigars.
— It’s a box— that’s right— where you keep cigars.

Silence.

— So. What? She doesn’t work?
— She does work.
— She has worked.
— She can work.
— She will work.
— She won’t work.
— What?
— She won’t work.
— But she has skills.

— Oh yes, she has skills but whatever skills she has seem inappropriate to the world she’s living in. Whatever work she’s done seems inappropriate to the world she’s living in. All she can do is pace round the ashtray or pull down books at random from the bookshelves.
— Don’t tell me: classic texts.
— That’s right— the classic texts she should’ve read as a student twenty or thirty years ago.
— That thing about the killer. How he'd inflicted a total of 37 stab-wounds on the child's mother as the child slept.

— And it was his own child.

— No, it wasn't his own child. But his own child was there.

— He brought his child to watch.

— He brought his own child — that's right — to watch him murder this other child's mother.

— Brought his own child. Brought his own child in his pyjamas to watch him do it. Stab her. Yes.

Silence.

— And can it?

— Can it what?

— Mean 'previously frozen'?

Silence.