

BBC
RADIO




Pica:

A play for voices
By Emilie Robson

1 x 45' Drama for BBC Radio 4

CHARACTERS

KAE
LIV
PEGGY

Producer:	Nadia Molinari
Production Coordinator:	Vick Mosele
Production Contact:	
Technical Team:	Sharon Hughes & Simon Highfield
Record:	Wednesday 27 th and Thursday 28 th April 2022
Location:	80 HERTZ The Sharp Project, Thorp Rd, Manchester M40 5BJ
Edit :	3 rd , 4 th , 5 th and 6 th May 2022
TP:	Sharon Hughes
TX:	Tuesday 7 th June 2022 @ 14:15

This broadcast material is the copyright of the author and may not be copied or sold.

BBC

Audio Drama North, BBC Production

Pica:

A play for voices.

By Emilie Robson

Characters

KAE Female, early teens. (also performs all chorus lines in Blue)

LIV Female, late 30's, Kae's Mam. (also performs all chorus lines in Green)

PEGGY Female, late 60's, Kae & Liv's neighbour. (also performs all chorus lines in Red)

Notes on the text

Geordie words are spelt phonetically.

Common homophones that can cause confusion are:

'is' - me

'a' - her

Text in
the right hand margin denotes
a monologue.

Text in *italics* in the centre margin(s)
is designed to be split between actors
with each

New line

Denoting a

Change in speaker

assigned to actor

according to colour

Text in **BOLD** in the centre margin denotes a 'real time'
exchange between characters in a shared temporal space.

Text in the left hand margin

Indicates lines delivered 'out'

as if in an interview

by each individual

and **not** in dialogue with each other.

1

KAE (cont)

Reunited

Relents.

Breathes.

2

'Home' she calls it

'Home' she calls Tyne

'Home'.

There, by the water's edge

Dreaming of the bottom

Dreaming of the riverbed

Where the silt

and salt begin

and where she ends.

Where she ends.

Dreaming of the dredge,

That once acquaintances

We could now be

Seabed fellows.

THE SOUND OF TYPING ON A KEYBOARD

3

PEGGY 'Home' she calls it

Has done for years now.

Not breathing.

Not relenting.

Just waiting.

Listening.

Listening to-

1 *No, not bonny no-*
2 *Striking though-*
3 *Aye. Striking-*
4 *Striking like a blast of cold-*
5 *Trouble they said-*
6 *Trouble aye.*
7 *Troubled more like-*
8 *Nay idea what happened-*
9 *What happened to a-*
10 *Aall heard the rumours though-*
11 *Ya can ask. Ya can ask aye but she waint tell ya.*
12 *Waint hardly let the lasses name pass through her lips nay more.*
13 *And a get it-*

14 **PEGGY** They don't get it-

15 *Aye. A get it. But it's like it hangs owa a like a dark cloud-*
16 *Hangs owa aall of wuh-*
17 *Like a mist that waint clear-*
18 *Even after aall them years-*
19 *She still...I mean-*
20 *Obviously-*
21 *She's still-*
22 *Peggy's still-*

23 **KAE** It was October brisk and unforgiving when Carol vanished. There'd been a fog. A mist so dense you could barely see your own hand in front of ya.

/ The fog horns at the front blasted, cutting through the haze like blades.

1

PEGGY /The fog horns at the font blasted,
cutting through the haze like blades.
But bar that. Nothing. Nowt. Not
even the birds. Bar those horns.
Nothing.
Endlessness.

3. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE.

2 **LIV** Aye. I remember it

3 **PEGGY** The first time I met them?

4 **LIV** I remember-

5 **PEGGY** It was June.

4. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE & CHORUS.

6 **LIV** It was June. We arrived in June. Mam died at the end of May. Slowly. Like a sink
draining. So I'm told. I wasn't with her 'cause...well I chose not to be.

Aye. It was June.

And Peggy, she-

7

Peggy writes.

8

Articles-

9

Short stories-

10

Romance-

11

Children's stories-

12

Pornos-

13

Real smutty stuff-

14

Apparently-

15

Our Kirsty's got them-

16

I've not read them-

17

I've not read them, meself-

18

Not my bag-

19

Not really my thing, yana?

20

And even if it was-

21

Which it isn't-

22

I wouldn't read a stuff anyway.

23

She's a bit-

1 PEGGY Should keep a closer eye on her.
2 LIV What?
3 PEGGY Should keep a closer eye on her.
4 LIV Aye, ya think?
5 PEGGY Try the park. Or Marsden. Seen her down the front
quite a lot.
6 LIV Right. Ok. Thanks.
7 PEGGY Found a kipping in me daisies the other day.
8 LIV My Kae?
9 PEGGY Aye. Napping in the daisies.
10 LIV Am so sorry, did-
11 PEGGY Nay harm done. Just gave is a shock. Daint expect
to see a bairn playing dead in ya flower beds.
12 LIV Well am sorry if she-
13 PEGGY Should keep a closer-
14 LIV Eye on her aye, ya said. Thanks.

THE DOOR CLOSSES.

7. INT. PEGGY'S HOUSE/MONOLOGUES

15 PEGGY Interrupted me bloody flow, where was I?
Not relenting.
Just waiting.
Listening.
Listening for the-
Pica?
Yes. Right. Ok.
Listening for the Pica

16 KAE Pica

8. CHORUS

1 *Pica.*

2 *Pica aye.*

3 *That's the new one-*

4 *The name of the new book-*

5 *According to Liz Phipps-*

6 *The new kids book-*

7 *Novel-*

8 *Romance-*

9 *Poetry-*

10 *Porno.*

11 *That's the new one-*

12 *Not that I read the others-*

13 *Crap I heard-*

14 *Not really my thing-*

15 *Someone said it's based on the girl-*

16 *Heard it's about her Carol-*

17 *Nar the new neighbour-*

18 *A neighbour's girl-*

19 *In our Maisy's-*

20 *Our Billy's class at school-*

21 *Weird little-*

22 *Spirited little-*

23 *Scruffy little thing-*

24 *What's a name again?*

25 *Kae.*

9. EXT. LIVS FRONT GARDEN & CHORUS

1 LIV Kae!
 Kae!
 Kayleigh-

2 KAE What?

3 LIV Crikey

4 KAE Hi

5 LIV I was worried sick

6 KAE Sorry

7 LIV Empty bloody bed, didn't kna what to think. Thought ya'd
 been snatched in the night or-

8 KAE Was just at the-

9 LIV Sneaking out, sneaking out at dawn and -
 Look at the state of ya.

10 KAE Just soil

11 LIV Get that off ya, what will people – what?

12 KAE Nowt

13 LIV Not nowt, ya laughing?

14 KAE 'Am not, 'am smirking.

15 LIV Smirking, laughing, same thing. Daint sneak off in a
 morning, in a new place-

16 KAE Hardly a new-

17 LIV And not tell is where ya going-

18 KAE Ana where I'm gan-

19 LIV And daint bloody back answer is-

20 KAE Not like I daint-

21 LIV Just come in, "hello mam, gan to the park, or down the
 front to"-

22 KAE Listen to the-

23 LIV Aye, listen to the birds, bees, whatever ya doing-
 Just, let is know. Ok? Or I'll have to kill ya.

24 KAE Ok.

1 PEGGY So ya just moved in?
2 LIV Aye. Noisily apparently.
3 PEGGY The lady who lived here before was-
4 LIV Me mam.
5 PEGGY A lovely woman.
6 *Lies*
7 *Complete lies*
8 PEGGY Am sorry about ya loss.
9 LIV Thanks.
10 PEGGY She left ya the house then?
11 LIV Aye.
12 PEGGY And ya keeping it?
13 LIV Looks like it.
14 PEGGY The conifer-
15 LIV The what?
16 PEGGY A lot of the roots are on my property and are giving me
roses grief
17 LIV I dinna what-
18 PEGGY It really should come up-
Ana a guy who can do it. I'll call him later.
Am /Peggy
19 LIV /Peggy.
20 PEGGY Oh I see. Two weeks in and the rumours got ya already?
21 LIV Nay rumours, just-
22 PEGGY Nar?
23 LIV Nar-
24 PEGGY Let is guess. Number 18
25 LIV Just said that ya-
26 PEGGY Number 18, Bill and Liz Phipps. Bill's addicted to Greggs
and gambling while Liz is addicted to French bulldogs and
other people's misery
27 LIV I haven't met-

1 PEGGY Then let me guess, number 28? Karen Whitehouse?
Wrong name for her given the state of them curtains.
You'd think with the amount of twitching they do, they'd
clean themselves.

LIV SNIGGERS

What?

2 LIV Nothing

3 PEGGY Nar go on, summit funny?

4 LIV Ya've lived here a while then?

5 PEGGY Longer than any of these lot.

6 LIV And ya like it clearly?

7 PEGGY What's not to like?

8 LIV The neighbours from the sounds of things?

9 PEGGY Not all of them are terrible

10 LIV Nar?

11 PEGGY She's alright.

12 LIV Who?

13 PEGGY The sea

14 *And then Peggy tossed her fag end-*

15 *Into Liv-*

16 *Into Liv's garden-*

17 *Into a little green bucket-*

18 *And then stormed in.*

19 *She didn't storm-*

20 *Heard she stormed-*

21 *Slammed the door-*

22 *Closed it behind her-*

23 *Well no, I didn't hear it but-*

24 *Looked cordial to me-*

25 *Me painting nearly fell down-*

26 *Got this off Karen-*

27 *Heard off our Liz-*

1 *I seen it-*
2 *Peter Andrews said-*
3 *Aye.*
4 *I remember it-*

10. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE.

1 PEGGY Aye. I remember it
2 LIV I knocked one day, looking for-
3 PEGGY Kae. She doesn't like-
4 LIV Kayleigh.
5 PEGGY But she goes by-
6 LIV Kae? No. Didn't have to move far. She didn't mind, she's-
7 PEGGY She's erm.
8 LIV She's hard to explain. She's-
9 PEGGY Special. Strange, no doubt. But-
10 LIV Different.

11. CHORUS

1 *Different sort of place this-*
2 *Beautiful place-*
3 *The coastline is just-*
4 *Takes ya breath away-*
5 *Truly takes ya breath away-*
6 *So much history-*
7 *Beauty-*
8 *Litter bloody everywhere-*
9 *Folk here are different though. Friendly-*
10 *Edgy-*
11 *Thick as pig sh-*
12 *Look out for each other-*
13 *Daint like outsiders, yana?*

1 *Would give ya the clothes of tha' back-*
2 *Wouldn't give ya the lickings of a dog-*
3 *Bend owa backwards to make ya feel-*
4 *Uncomfortable sometimes, yana?*
5 *I mean not everyone.*
6 *No. Not everyone.*
7 *And Liv was well-*
8 *Well, different-*
9 *No different.*
10 *She was hardly welcomed with-*
11 *Open arms. People were-*
12 *Kind*
13 *Suspicious*
14 *There were rumours-*
15 *Stories-*
16 *About a-*
17 *About a teenage years-*
18 *Stories get lost-*
19 *Lost and-*
20 *Distorted-*
21 *Vanish-*
22 *Change over time-*
23 *But ya hear things-*
24 *Heard she was icy-*
25 *Pleasant enough-*
26 *Stuck up-*
27 *Not like us-*
28 *Aye people talk-*
29 *People were warm-*
30 *Indifferent-*
31 *Yana what they're like-*

1 *Yana what I mean-*

2 *People were-*

3 *A little cold.*

12. INT. PEGGY'S HOUSE/MONOLOGUE.

1 **PEGGY** A little cold that day, I remember.

I get back to me door after popping
to Ahmed's and there's the kid. The
daisy dwelling kid who I caught
napping in me flowerbeds.

2 **PEGGY** Forgot ya key?

3 **PEGGY** I ses.

4 **KAE** Yeah.

5 **PEGGY** Times ya mam in?

6 **KAE** Dunno

7 **PEGGY** Baltic eh?

8 **KAE** What?

9 **PEGGY** I said, it's baltic.

PAUSE

10 **PEGGY** Nowt.

11 **PEGGY** Cold. It's cold?

12 **KAE** Yeah.

13 **PEGGY** Ya wanting to come in?

14 **KAE** What?

15 **PEGGY** Nay use freezing ya arse off on ya doorstep when I've a
perfectly good sofa that's lonesome.

16 **KAE** Shouldn't.

17 **PEGGY** Ya got a phone?

18 **KAE** Yeah.

19 **PEGGY** Text ya mam, say ya next door. That way when I chop ya
up, at least she knas which bin to check.

1 **PEGGY** The kid smiles. Starts to giggle.
She comes inside. All tentative and wide eyed like she's never been inside before. Like a bloody rabbit or summit.

2 **PEGGY** Ya want a drink?

3 The kids still standing. Staring at me sitting room walls.

4 **PEGGY** Ya like them? The birds?

5 Aall about me room, I've these paintings. Paintings Carole did. Of birds. A load of different ones but mainly magpies. I remember a spending donkeys on them, trying to nail the iridescent spectrum of those tail feathers, perfecting them owa the years.
She's staring at them, all rabbit like again. Barely blinking. Barely breathing.

6 **KAE** They took ages.

7 She ses.

8 **PEGGY** Sorry?

9 **KAE** They took ages.

10 She ses again. She's not asking. She's telling.

11 **PEGGY** Aye. My Carol did them. If she'd paid more attention to a school rather than a bloody painting then she might have-

12 I stop. She notices.

13 **PEGGY** Ya can have one?
The middle one? That the one ya like?

14 **KAE** Nar honestly. Me mam'll-

15 **PEGGY** Ya mam'll what?

16 **KAE** I dunno.

17 **PEGGY** Well it's not a one-time offer. Ya can change ya mind. Did ya want a drink?

13. MONOLOGUE

1 **LIV** “Sit down” they said. “Sit down” like I daint already kna what that means. We aall kna what “sit down” means.

She’d left wuh the house. Thought she might have left it to some dog home or summit, but nar.

She’d hoarded a lot of crap in the attic. Daft sentimental crap. Kae’s. Kae’s cards, milk teeth, rubbish poems, all sorts. And drawings of birds. Hundreds of drawings of birds.

14. INTERVIEW ROOM/ CHORUS

2 *Hundreds of drawings of birds-*

3 *Always drawing-*

4 *That Kae-*

5 *These creepy bloody pictures-*

6 *According to our Billy-*

7 *According to our Maisy-*

8 *Drawings of-*

9 PEGGY Magpies. She liked, likes magpies. I bet she’s just-

10 *Drawing them all the time-*

11 PEGGY Lost track of –

12 *Bit weird if ya ask me-*

13 *A little bit juvenile-*

14 *Not really how ya make friends, is it?*

15 PEGGY Lost track of the time, she does that-

16 *Like, if ya’ve just moved schools-*

17 PEGGY From time to time, she just gets-

18 *And ya just scribbling away-*

19 PEGGY Carried away.

20 *Not talking, not mixing, just-*

21 *Scribbling away.*

15. INT. PEGGY'S HOUSE/ CHORUS

A PENCIL SCRIBBLING

1 **PEGGY** Scribbling away when I heard the door again

THE SCRIBBLE STOPS ABRUPTLY

2 *Saw Liv knocking-*

3 *Bang bang-*

4 *Not aggressively-*

5 *Very aggressively*

6 *Peggy answers-*

16. EXT. DOORSTEP/ CHORUS

7 **PEGGY** Am writing

8 **LIV** Did you-

9 *"Did you-"*

10 *"bloody let-"*

11 **LIV** Did you let Kae in yours?

12 **PEGGY** Aye.

13 *"Why?!"*

14 *"Why?"*

15 **LIV** Why?

16 **PEGGY** Bairn forgot her key.

17 *"So ya thought ya'd let a in?"*

18 *"Invite a in"-*

19 *"To your house?"*

20 *"Without asking is?"*

21 **LIV** So ya invited her in?

22 **PEGGY** Aye. Couldn't leave her on the step.

1

Liv looked-

2

Furious-

3

Tearful-

4

Grateful-

5

And she said-

6

Screamed-

7

Real quiet-

8

Real loud-

9

Sinister-

10

LIV Thank you.

11

“Eff you”

12

LIV But next time could you get her to text is.

13

PEGGY I told her to. Didn't she?

14

LIV Nah she didn't. She's terrible with a phone.

15

PEGGY Refreshing. A kid that's not glued to their phone.

16

LIV Aye. Just wish the price wasn't me sanity.

17

And then I heard-

18

Through the door-

19

Through the window-

20

From down the street-

21

From our Karen-

22

Peggy say-

23

PEGGY Look.

24

“I daint kna-“

25

“Who ya think ya are but-“

26

PEGGY Am sorry if it was inappropriate of is to invite a in.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27

And Liv said-

"Me mam never had a bad-"

"Good-"

"Nowt nice-"

LIV Me mam never had a bad word to say about ya, which strikes me as miraculous...

PEGGY Charming-

LIV Nar, I mean...she had bad words to say about everyone. What I'm saying is...I daint listen to gossip, ok?

PEGGY Me neither.

LIV And am sorry.

PEGGY What for?

LIV Ya lass.

PEGGY Long time ago

LIV Never goes away though, does it?

PEGGY Ya not wrong.

And then Liv-

Kae's mam-

Is that her name? Liv?

Liv went to leave-

Backed off-

Got up in a face-

And Peggy went-

PEGGY The bairns took a shine to one of my Carol's paintings. Telt a she could have it.

LIV Ar right?

PEGGY So, can she?

LIV Thanks. That's very kind

PEGGY She likes art?

LIV Drawing, aye.

1 PEGGY I've a studio, well office now I guess. What used to be
Carol's old room. She's free to use it. if that's alright by you
obviously?
2 LIV Erm....
3 PEGGY Carols stuff is just gathering dust and-
4 LIV Thanks. I'll erm, I'll think about it.

5 *And then Liv said-*

6 *Snarled-*

7 *Muttered-*

8 LIV Goodnight Peggy

9 *And she-*

10 *Gently closed-*

11 *Slammed-*

12 *The door-*

13 *I would kna-*

14 *I heard from Karen-*

15 *I was there-*

17. CHORUS/MONOLOGUE

16 *I was there-*

17 *That October-*

18 *Brisk and unforgiving-*

19 *Way back-*

20 *Donkey's years ago now-*

21 *When the girl-*

22 *Wiry girl-*

23 *Peggy's girl-*

24 *Vanished-*

25 *I saw her-*

26 *Think it was her-*

27 *At the station-*

1 *Had ran away-*
2 *Was aalways running away-*
3 *Came back-*
4 *Back that day-*
5 *Out of money-*
6 *Asked is for-*
7 *A quid-*
8 *For directions-*
9 *For a light-*
10 *She caught the bus back home-*
11 *Rumours, ya hear things, yana?*
12 *So they say-*
13 *I didn't see-*
14 *I saw-*
15 *But our Kev remembers-*
16 *And then the mist-*
17 *There's was a mist, creeping in from the sea-*
18 *Curling its way around the shop and the houses-*
19 */Wrapping its fingers around the streets-*
20 **PEGGY** /Wrapping its fingers around the streets.
Twisting itself around the afternoon until it's opaque
Until the air is opaque. Until it's dense. Until it weighs something.
And then-
21 *Gone-*
22 *Vanished-*
23 *Wasn't seen-*
24 *Spotted in London-*
25 *Seen someone with her eyes once-*
26 *Ever again-*

1

PEGGY There'd been a fog. A mist so dense you could barely see your own hand in front of you. The fog horns at the front blasted, cutting through the haze like blades. But bar that. Nothing. Not even the birds. Bar those horns. Endlessness.

18. MONOLOGUE/CHORUS

2

KAE Endlessness. That's what it feels like. That's the only way I know how to describe it. And then it stops. It stops and- I'm back. I'm new. I'm something else. I'm-

3

Pica.

4

Pica.

5

KAE Aye. I'm Pica-

19. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE.

6 PEGGY

Pica? It's erm.

7

The new one she's writing?

8

Total twaddle I imagine

9

Smutty-

10

Juvenile-

11

Pornographic-

12

Nonsense-

13 PEGGY

It's about...it's not finished. It's-

14

About the girl, I heard-

15

Her Carol-

16

Nah not Carol-

17

The creepy kid-

18

What's her name again? Kae?

19

Totally inappropriate-

20

If you ask me-

1 PEGGY It's poetry, I guess. I- I daint really know what this has to do with-

2 LIV I dinna anything about it.

3 PEGGY I dinna anything about it.

4 LIV She's very private. I never asked.

5 PEGGY Shouldn't yas be out there? Looking for a?

6 LIV What's this got to do with-

7 PEGGY She didn't tell is where she was going-

8 LIV I've told ya,-

9 PEGGY She never telt is-

10 LIV I was at work, I-

11 PEGGY She never said out-

12 LIV I couldn't find a-

20. INT. LIV'S ATTIC.

13 LIV I couldn't find a one day. Nowt out the ordinary about that.

Then I heard a bang, upstairs. Summit in the attic. I shouted up for a-

14 LIV Kae!

15 LIV Nowt.

So I crept up, heart in me ears, wielding a baseball bat like I'd even kna what to dee with one.

And she was up there.

I mean, she *was* but it wasn't...she was -

21. MONOLOGUE

16 KAE Nobody. Nobody in particular.

Nowhere in particular. Just floating, yana? Suspended. Does that make sense?

1 PEGGY Didn't say out. Just lead is to the desk and pulled the chair out.

So I stayed.

23. INT. LIV'S ATTIC.

2 LIV I stayed. Watching her in the attic. She was cradling a fledgling. Hadn't realised there were birds roosting up there. She was humming away to herself, miles away. Worlds away even.

Barely even my girl.

3 KAE Pica

4 LIV She whispered to herself. Or at least that's what I think she was saying. Over and over again. Then I left.

24. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE/ CHORUS

5 PEGGY Then I left. I headed home. I telt ya all this

6 *Well yana what the' say?*

7 *What folk like Liz Phipps say-*

8 *Lying bint-*

9 *'bout her Carol, daint ya?*

10 *What do the' say?*

11 *Found out she was-*

12 *Sleeping about-*

13 *On drugs-*

14 *Moving away-*

15 *Up the duff-*

16 *So she did her in-*

17 *Smashed a heed in-*

18 *Hacked her up-*

19 *Buried a up the hills-*

20 *On Duck Island-*

21 *Dropped her in the Tyne-*
 1 *Couldn't cope-*
 2 *Cope with the shame-*
 3 *The embarrassment-*
 4 *Duck island?*
 5 *That's what they say-*
 6 *Where's that?*
 7 *But I daint-*
 8 *I daint believe it-*

9 **PEGGY** I daint believe it. I already telt the other lass this an hour ago. I went to Ahmed's, I came back. I expected the bairn around half past and she never arrived. I tried her phone. She didn't answer. She never answers. We'd had a. A tiff. A tiny run in. So I didn't really expect a. I never thought much of it.

25.MONOLOGUES/CHORUS

10 **LIV** Never thought much of it. I daint think I wanted to. Because...

11 **PEGGY** Well there's summit about her, isn't there? Kae, she's....timeless?

12 *Weird-*

13 *Not right-*

14 **PEGGY** Earthy?

15 **LIV** All ana is, it scares me. It scares the shit out of me if I let it.

16 **PEGGY** It's as if she's seen and done everything but is also seeing and doing it all for the first time. She's-

17 *Strange-*

18 *Worldly-*

19 **PEGGY** She's so alive. Does that sound mad?

20 **LIV** She's mine. She's my child but it's like she doesn't belong to is, yana?

21 **PEGGY** She's so. Familiar.

25 *Did a chant-*
1 *Clenched her fists-*
2 *And then the boy-*
3 *That Brian-*
4 *Brian with the big head-*
5 *She-*
6 *Him-*
7 *The whole class-*
8 *All got nosebleeds-*
9 *Aye-*
10 *That's what I heard-*
11 *That's what happened.*

27. EXT. LIV'S DOORSTEP.

12 **LIV** What happened?!

13 **PEGGY** Brian Bloody Morley that's what happened.

14 **LIV** Who the hell is Brian Morley?

15 **PEGGY** Karen Whitehouse's precious grandchild. I've seen the little bugger round here at weekends. Wicked creature. Massive head.

16 **LIV** Why didn't the school call?

17 **PEGGY** She told them it was an accident

18 **LIV** And nay one else saw?

19 **PEGGY** Nay one who'd be willing to speak up

20 **LIV** Well, I have to tell the-

21 **PEGGY** Well, here's the other thing...

22 **LIV** Oh god, what?

23 **PEGGY** She may have...lobbed him one back?

24 **LIV** What?

25 **PEGGY** She punched him back. In the face.

26 **LIV** Ya kidding?

27 **PEGGY** No. Bost his nose.

28 **LIV** Kae, down here now!

1 PEGGY And to cover their mutual violent transgressions
they both agreed to say they'd ran into one
another.

2 LIV Kae, down here now!

3 PEGGY Go easy on her

4 *And that's when I heard-*

5 *From my doorstep-*

6 *Through my window-*

7 *Putting the bins out-*

8 LIV I'll decide how to handle this, ok Peggy?

9 *And Peggy said-*

10 *Yelled-*

11 *Murmured-*

12 PEGGY You're the boss, Liv.

13 *And then stormed-*

14 *Walked away-*

15 PEGGY Check the park.

16 LIV What?

17 PEGGY She's not upstairs. She'll have gone to the park. Or
the beach.

28.CHORUS

18 *She's aalways at the park-*

19 *Or the beach-*

20 *Every time I'm in there-*

21 *Giving is a complex-*

22 *There she is-*

23 *Hanging about-*

24 *Listening-*

25 *Watching what's gan on-*

1
2
3
4
5

6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Hanging out with the plants-

Drawing in the sand-

Liz said she'd seen her lying down in the bushes-

Casting spells or summit-

Smiling away to asel'-

29. INT. PEGGY'S HOUSE

PEGGY Smiling away to asel' as she paints.
Like she's in a completely different
world to me. To everyone else.

PEGGY Why the magpies?

I ask.

KAE I dinna.

She ses.

PEGGY Are ya just copying?

KAE Copying what?

PEGGY My Carol's. These ones.

KAE Nar. Done them for years

PEGGY Really?

KAE Just comes to is. Like...like my hands just dee it.
Can't say am even thinking about it, I'm just deeing
it.
Sorry.

PEGGY Nowt to be sorry about?

KAE Am not trying to be weird yana?

PEGGY Ana.

KAE Just feel like. Wrong?

PEGGY Wrong?

KAE Like I'm not right. I dinna.

PEGGY Ya just different, pet lamb. Different is good.

KAE Doesn't feel like it.

PEGGY Not yet it waint. But ya'll see one day. All the
things about yasel' that ya think are problems to
solve, they're gunna be ya superpower.

1 KAE Carol was different.

2 PEGGY She ses.

3 PEGGY Aye. Carol was different.

4 And again. She's not asking.

5 KAE Ya daint talk about a much.

6 PEGGY Not much to say.

7 KAE Sorry if-

8 PEGGY Carol wasn't always nice. Or kind. Or easy to love.
Not always easy to talk about a fondly.
She erm...she was very talented. Like you. And she
was very alive. She seemed to feel things very
intensely. And as she got older that got hard. I
guess you'd call it wilful. But it'd call it a pain in the
arse.

9 KAE Language.

10 PEGGY Sorry. Backside.

11 KAE Am sorry.

12 PEGGY Sorry. She ses. She ses she's sorry.
And I don't ask a what for and why. I
just say-

13 PEGGY It's alreet, pet lamb. Long time ago now.

14 And she grabs me hand. Looks up at
the magpies on the wall. And just
holds me hand.

15 KAE Fledgling's in wah attic yana?

16 PEGGY She ses.

17 KAE Held one the other day.

18 PEGGY Careful ya daint scare them

19 KAE Nar. I'm dead careful. I'm dead quiet.

30. INT. KAE'S ROOM.

1

LIV I'm dead quiet when I sneak in her room. A lifetime of walking on egg shells or summit. If I do wake her, she never lets on.

She lets is nestle in the dip in her rib cage. I listen for the whoosh of worlds that tick over inside her. I listen for clues. I listen for the rhythms.

31. INT. PEGGY'S HOUSE.

2

PEGGY Listen for the rhythms. Listen for the unmistakable rhythms of worms waking to burrow and conspire, fleets of greenflies revving their engines, networks of ants, unionising, the hum, the buzz of life beneath her, under her finger nails-

3

PEGGY Ya not listening are ya?

4

KAE I am. This is me listening face

5

PEGGY You're the one who wanted to hear it

6

KAE Am listening-

7

PEGGY Fine

8

KAE Under her finger nails, go on-

9

PEGGY The soil's alive-

10

KAE Intensely.

11

PEGGY What?

12

KAE Nowt.

32. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE.

1 PEGGY She said piss off. And she stormed out. She stormed out.
Well, because I was embarrassed. I'd lost me rag at the lass and I shouldn't have.
Well it didn't seem relevant. And it isn't relevant.

2 LIV How is that relevant?

3 PEGGY Got nowt to do with anything.

4 LIV I really daint understand why ya asking is about that, that was years...
Where is me child? Where the hell is me child?

5 PEGGY She'll have gone to the park. Or the beach.

6 LIV She's out there, lost or-

7 PEGGY She's aalways at the park. Or the beach.

8 LIV And ya asking me...stupid questions about-

9 PEGGY She'll have gone to the park

33. EXT. THE PARK.

10 **LIV** She'll have gone to the park. She's aalways at the park. If she's not at Peg's she's at the park. Or the beach.
She'll have gone to the park. She'll be lying down in the soil like I tell a not to. Getting all muck in a hair and under a nails and that.
She'll be listening to the earth. Lying down listening to it all. My weird, wiry, nature girl.

11 **LIV** **Kae!**
Kayleigh!
Kae!

12 What's the point in getting a a phone if she's not gunna-

13 **Karen, hi! Have ya seen Kae?**
Ok. Nah just checking.
Yeah, I heard, is his face ok?
Well, I heard it was just a run in, an accident-
Can we...can we do this another time Karen, I-

1 LIV It...it's very complicated.

2 PEGGY Well I dee. I'm one of the very few unfortunate enough to kna exactly how that feels. And I can see it. I can smell that grief a mile off. I've been wearing that stench mesel' for more years than I care to recall. Liv has nowt to dee with this. Whatever happened in the past, is the past and I daint kna and I daint care. But Liv has nowt to dee with this.

3 LIV Please. Just. Just find a.

35. MONOLOGUE

4 **KAE** Just find a. Just find a.
She wants to be found now. She's ready to be found.

Reunited. After all this time. Can ya believe? Can ya imagine?

36. CHORUS

5 *Can ya imagine?*
6 *Daint want to-*
7 *Doesn't bear thinking about does it-*
8 *Load of hoo-ha owa nothing-*
9 *Aalways said there was summit about Peggy-*
10 *Aye summit off.*
11 *I mean folk have been saying for years-*
12 *That kid of hers-*
13 *Carole was a name-*
14 *Did ya not hear this?*
15 *Donkey's ago now-*
16 *Missing-*
17 *Missing presumed dead-*
18 *Gone-*
19 *Vanished-*
20 *Without a trace-*
21 *Never to be seen-*
1 *Thought I seen her in London-*

2 *Never to be seen again.*

3 *Should take summit round -*

4 *Divn't want to interfere-*

5 *Take summit round to Liv's-*

6 *Load of hoo-ha over nowt-*

7 *Mind wah own business-*

8 *Lasagne or summit-*

9 *I've made a facebook group-*

10 *Holding a vigil-*

11 *Started a go fund me-*

12 *Organising a search-*

13 *Got down on me knees and prayed-*

14 *Called the local-*

15 *National-*

16 *Newspaper-*

17 *Prayed to God for a safe return-*

18 *That wonderful-*

19 *Freaky little-*

20 *Spirited young girl-*

21 *I'll make a lasagne-*

22 *I should take summit round-*

37.MONOLOGUE/CHORUS

1		LIV	Time's stuck. The wheels have come off it.
2	<i>Go home, try to sleep-</i>		
3		LIV	But how am I gunna cry for eight hours if I'm sleeping?
4	<i>Try to eat-</i>		
5		LIV	How am I gunna be light? Light enough to fly away, to disappear if I'm weighed down?
6	<i>Try to-</i>		<p>Try to count to a hundred, no, a thousand and when you get to the end she'll walk through the door. She'll just come right through that door.</p> <p>Ok, then maybe it's not a thousand. Maybe its two thousand. Or maybe you have to turn the light on and off that many times. Or maybe you have to say sorry. Sorry for stepping on the cracks, putting new shoes on the table that time, limbo-ing under those ladders when you were eleven, sorry for- Sorry for what ya did. Sorry for what ya did when ya were fifteen. Sorry for what ya did when you were fifteen. Am not sorry. Am not sorry- I throw another lasagne in the bin. I'll buy Karen Whitehouse a new casserole dish.</p>

38.CHORUS

1 *How many days has it been?*
2 *Hours more like-*
3 *Fuss over nothing-*
4 *At least three days now-*
5 *Hadn't made it to school-*
6 *But Liv has seen a in the morning-*
7 *Lifted in broad day light then-*
8 *They daint kna that-*
9 *Ran away I reckon-*
10 *Spoke to Liz Phipps-*
11 *Lying bint-*
12 *Loves other people's misery-*
13 *And she was living for it-*
14 *Couldn't get enough-*
15 *Selling her story to the local-*
16 *National-*
17 *Paper-*
18 *Telling them about what she'd heard-*
19 *Comings and goings-*
20 *Arguments between Liv and Peg-*
21 *Of which there were many-*
22 *Absolute hell on apparently-*
23 *Reckons Peggy's done a in-*
24 *Cannit say that-*
25 *Had the lass at hers-*
26 *Totally inappropriate-*
27 *And killed her-*
28 *Liz Phipps said-*
29 *Probs hid a where she hid her Carol-*
30 *Press camped outside both their houses-*

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

Questioning Peggy apparently-

Camera crews now, the lot-

Our Kev reckons he's in the shot-

Filming the coastline all poetic and that-

Will keep me eyes peeled for your Kev-

Liz Phipps ses she'll get a few grand for it-

But that Liz Phipps-

Lying bint-

Doesn't half chat shite-

39.MONOLOGUE

10

PEGGY It doesn't get any easier, yana? Ya just learn to dig ya heels into it and make a bed of it. And so, ya feel it less viscerally. It doesn't live in ya blood anymore but that's just 'cause it's relocated to ya bones instead. And ya miss a. Ya miss a still, aye. In fact, ya miss a more and more 'cause with each hour, that's another hour ya never holding a in. That's another hour where ya not getting to ask a how a day was, where she's been, who she's seen. Not that she ever really answered ya anyway.

Nar I never got to bury my lass. But I've dug a thousand graves for that girl. I bury her every bloody day.

Maybe it's just time passing? Maybe it's the internet or the news? The commodification of tragedy or summit? Makes a good story, sells papers?

But when Carol vanished, when she evaporated into thin air, nay one cared like they seem to now.

'Cause Carol was trouble. Carol slammed doors. Screamed blue murder. Hung out with wronguns. Wasn't beautiful.

There were no sirens. No cameras. No lasagnes in *my* bin. I didn't make the evening news. I barely even made the local paper.

1 **PEGGY (cont)** And aye. I guess I didn't have skeletons then. Skeletons sell papers. Liv. Liv has skeletons.

40. CHORUS

2 *Ya seen the paper-*
3 *Not yet-*
4 *Got it this morning-*
5 *About Liv-*
6 *When she was younger-*
7 *The house-*
8 *The fire-*
9 *The arson-*
10 *Missing Girl's Mum in Youth Arson Scandal-*
11 *Aye-*
12 *It should say mam, not mum-*
13 *Wild init?*
14 *Knew there was summit about her-*
15 *Local paper and they still write Mum?*
16 *Eeh ya never kna do ya?*
17 *Me mam says she remembers-*
18 *Waint keep that out the national, shocking eh-*
19 *Remembers hearing about it years ago-*
20 *Never put two and two together-*
21 *Somewhere nearby, Hebburn or summit-*
22 *Yana how stories get lost-*
23 *Didn't move far enough clearly-*
24 *Shit like that'll follow ya about-*
25 *Stinks if ya ask me-*
26 *Well ya daint dee that-*
27 *And grow up to be-*
28 *Well adjusted-*

1 *Well rounded-*
2 *Normal-*
3 *And that explains the kid eh-*
4 *Apple doesn't fall far from the tree-*
5 *Runs in the family-*
6 *Probably just ran away-*
7 *To get away from her-*
8 *And meanwhile she lets Peggy-*
9 *Poor bloody Peggy-*
10 *After all she's been through-*
11 *Take the fall for it-*
12 *Dragging that poor old woman into the station-*
13 *When the whole time-*
14 *She's the psychopath-*
15 *Can't believe it-*
16 *Doesn't mean she's-*
17 *And to think-*
18 *Think she was living on this street-*
19 *The bairns still missing-*
20 *To think-*
21 *Daint think it's got out to dee with a-*
22 *Made her a bloody lasagne-*
23 *The bairns still missing-*
24 *To think-*
25 *Liz Phipps bought a Ford Focus with that paper money-*
26 *Pasts the past, doesn't mean Liv-*
27 *Terrible that-*
28 *Capitalising off misery, shocking-*
29 *The bairns still missing-*
30 *Must have edited Kev out-*
31 *Coastline looked spectacular though eh?*

1 *Looked bloody magnificent on the news-*
2 *Deeing nowt for tourism though-*
3 *This shit show?*
4 *I couldn't see him in the segment-*
5 *Absolutely shocking-*
6 *The bairns still missing.*

41. INTERVIEW

7 LIV I was fifteen. I think. It started a lot earlier though.

Ya forget the details 'cause...'cause there's no earth shattering moment, yana? It's not a cliff edge ya fall off. It's just ya life. It's just like brushing ya teeth or summit.

He drank a lot on the nights he did it. To either forget or to make it easier. He'd passed out on the sofa. Figured he was too pissed to wake up. Mam was out. Nightshift. So I lit a bunch of newspapers. Let them catch onto the curtains and I left.

It wasn't 'cause I'd worked out it was wrong. It wasn't 'cause I wanted revenge or anything like that. It was 'cause I knew he was leaving. Knew he was leaving us. Had some other bird in town who he'd been seeing.

I did it 'cause I was jealous.

Aye. I was fifteen.

42. MONOLOGUE

2 **PEGGY** I've forgotten what she smells like.

3 **LIV** I've forgotten what her footfall sounds like. The way she closes a door.
I've forgotten the reasons we fall out. How could we ever fall out?
What possible reason could I have to not love her with every ounce of meself?
/I go in her room and I try to remember her smell and her footfall. I go in her room and I look at the pictures. I look at the magpies. The iridescence of their wings. The skill it took to get them right. The universes that must-

1

PEGGY /I go in her room and I try to remember her smell and her footfall. I go in her room and I look at the pictures. I look at the magpies. The iridescence of their wings. The skill it took to get them right. The universes that must-

2

PEGGY Must *have*-

3

LIV Must move within her. How did she get like that?

4

PEGGY How many turns of the world does it take to get like that?

5

LIV /How did she get this spectacular?

6

PEGGY /How did she get this spectacular?

7

LIV I've forgotten what she smells like.

43.MONOLOGUE

8

PEGGY It was October, brisk and unforgiving when Kae went missing.

There'd been a fog. A mist so dense you could barely see your own hand in front of you. The fog horns at the front blasted, cutting through the haze like blades. But bar that. Nothing. Not even the birds. Bar those horns. Endlessness.

It just goes on and on and on. It never ends. It never ends does it?

44. MONOLOGUE /CHORUS

1 **PEGGY** North and South accept
2 *They're bound by Tyne*
3 Split by Tyne
4 *Are held by Tyne*
5
6 Tyne breathes.
7 *Relents.*
8 Kicks up its heels here.
9 *Here. At the mouth or-*
10 'Home' as Tyne calls it
11 *After 73 miles.*
12 Reunited
13 *'Home' as she calls it.*
14 *She calls it home.*
15 Ana where she is.
Ana where she is.
Pica.

45.CHORUS

16 *Six days-*
17 *Was that it?*
18 *Aye six-*
19 *Six days she was gone for-*
20 *Felt like longer-*
21 *Fuss over nothing-*
22 *Peggy found a-*
23 *So I heard-*
24 *Headed straight to the tanks-*
25 *"Had a feeling" apparently-*

1 *Called on Liv first-*
2 *Out of nowhere-*
3 *Anonymous tip off-*
4 *Load of shite-*
5 *Scaled the fence apparently-*
6 *Bust down the gate-*
7 *Just Peggy-*
8 *Liv and Peggy-*
9 *And found the lass-*
10 *Kayleigh-*
11 *Kae-*
12 *In a disused tank-*
13 *On top of a tank-*
14 *Right next to a tank-*
15 *At the old plant-*
16 *Right by the riverside-*
17 *Miracle she didn't freeze-*
18 *And then-*
19 *This is the mad bit-*
20 *Are ya sitting down-*
21 *This bit is mental-*
22 *She was in the tank-*
23 *Not Kae-*
24 *Yes Kae-*
25 *But Carol-*
26 *They found Carol-*
27 *Peggy's Carol-*
28 *After all these years-*
29 *Peggy's Carol-*
30 *In the tank-*
31 *Said she was practically preserved-*

1 *In the chemicals-*
2 *She was there the whole time-*
3 *Murdered-*
4 *Then stashed-*
5 *Not even a mile away-*
6 *Under wah noses-*
7 *For all those years-*
8 *Nay idea how-*
9 *Nay idea how the kid knew-*
10 *Can't have known-*
11 *Coincidence init-*
12 *Aalways said she was weird-*
13 *She must have known-*
14 *And how Peggy-*
15 *Peggy and Liv knew-*
16 *Knew where to look-*
17 *Stinks if ya ask me-*
18 *Proper weird-*
19 *Both in on it-*
20 *Why'd they do it though-*
21 *Peg wanted the press-*
22 *For a new book-*
23 *Doesn't make sense to me-*
24 *Nah, daft conspiracy that-*
25 *And the girl-*
26 *Kae-*
27 *Kae wouldn't say-*
28 *Wouldn't say how she knew-*
29 *Freaky kid her like-*
30 *She just headed for the tank-*
31 *Like a magnet-*

1 *Like she was pulled-*
 2 *Compelled-*
 3 *Told-*
 4 *Destined for it.*
 5 *And found a-*
 6 *Found Carol.*
 7 *Found that poor girl-*
 8 *There in the tank-*
 9 *After all this time.*

46. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE.

10 KAE Endlessness. That's what it feels like. That's the only way I know how to describe it. And then it stops. It stops and- I'm back. I'm new. I'm something else. I'm-
 I'm sorry. I forgot the question?

47. MONOLOGUE

11 **PEGGY** I scattered a in the Tyne. That's what she'd have wanted. That's not a guess. Ana 'cause Kae telt is. Kae telt is that that's where she wanted to be.
 I daint ask. I daint need to kna. I've got my girl. My pica, rested at the bottom of the river. Her and the dredge, seabed fellows. Reunited. After all this time.

12 **LIV** Endlessness. That's how it feels. Like, I have to carry it, endlessly. Carry what it means to be used. To be met with suspicion and distain. To be the victim and the villain at the same time. On the news. In the paper. I carry it with is at all times. Wearing it like a second skin or summit.
 Not just me either. All of wuh. Carrying it. Carrying the grief.
 And then they inherit it. The lasses, they inherit it like hairlines. It becomes their grief, their pain. Just a chain, a cycle that never ends. It just repeats and repeats and repeats and I dinna how ya break it.

48: DOORSTEP

1 PEGGY Kindness.

2 LIV What?

3 PEGGY Kindness. Ya have to pour love on a broken places.
And hope it makes a seal.

4 LIV How can you have kindness? After Carol, how-

5 PEGGY Ya dig deep.

6 LIV And what if I've none left?

7 PEGGY Then I'll pour some of mine onto you. That's how
we'll do it. That's how we'll break the chain.

PAUSE

Ya've got ya girl back, Liv.

8 LIV Aye. Not sure she was even mine to start with.
But aye.

49. INT. INTERVIEW SUITE.

9 KAE Really cannit explain it. Wish I could. But I cannit. Same as the birds. Just came to is. Just felt right. Just felt. Like breathing.

THE CLICK OF THE DICAPHONE BEING TURNED OFF.

50. MONOLOGUE/PEGGY'S HOUSE

1 PEGGY 'Home' she calls it
'Home' I call Tyne
'Home'.

2 KAE There, by the water's edge
Dreaming of the bottom
Dreaming of the riverbed
Where the silt
and salt begin
and where she ends.
Where she ends.
Dreaming of the dredge,
That once acquaintances
We could now be
Seabed fellows.

1 KAE It's really good Peg.
2 PEGGY Needs a tweak here and there.
3 KAE Can I read the rest?
4 PEGGY It's not quite finished yet.
5 KAE When do ya kna?
6 PEGGY Kna what?
7 KAE When do ya kna that it's finished?
8 PEGGY When the publisher stops granting ya extensions.
9 KAE Really though?
10 PEGGY Hard to explain. Ya could always improve, cut that
bit, edit that out. But one day ya just kna. Ya look at and ya
go aye, there it is. That's the story. Ya just kna it's done.
11 KAE And it isn't?
12 PEGGY Nar. Not yet. Nearly.

51. MONOLOGUE

13 PEGGY We were at the beach. We'd gone
down Marsden. Early morning. Tide was
right out. Ya could climb all the way onto
Camel island without hitting the water but I
telt Carol no.

She didn't fuss then. Never fussed when she
was little. She stayed by me side and we
walked up, aall the way up to Souter,
collecting sea glass. And that's when we
found it.

Wee magpie fledgling in the sand with it's
neck all bent out of shape, its wing at an
angle. Must have been a fox or summit.
Carol didn't look horrified or anything. Just
fascinated. Asked if we could take it home.

14 PEGGY No me darling, I'm sorry. The bird stays here.

15 PEGGY She spent the rest of the afternoon
with her face in the encyclopaedia and all
her da's old nature books. obsessed.
We reached a compromise. Went back to
the bird, picked it up in a towel and buried it
in the park by the house.

16 "So it's close"

1

PEGGY She said.

She started sketching, drawing magpies over and over and over. It was like a switch had flipped in her and she was compelled to do it. They were very good. Too good. They frightened me.

2

“Pica pica”

3

She said.

4

“That’s the latin name for them, isn’t that funny?”

5

Aye me darling. I guess it is.

6

She said

7

“If I draw them/”

8

KAE /If I draw them, they can’t die. These one’s can’t die. These ones will live forever.

9

PEGGY And that’s what she did. She sketched and painted that Pica anew, over and over, keeping it alive. Making it invincible. Making it never ending.

10

PEGGY “If I draw them/”

11

KAE /If I draw them, they can’t die.

12

PEGGY Aye. That’s it. That’s what Pica is.

That’s the story.

END.