

Can You See Me Now? Full Script**FILM 1 : OPENING/ CLOSING**

There are seats at different levels on either side of the stage facing each other. Musicians are set up SL.

There is a big screen at the back.

As the audience enters they are greeted by members of Miss Rep; some are asking questions with clipboards, some are showing people to their seats, some are offering flowers or messages, giving out tissues, asking them to jump through hoops etc

(Kadie is the only person who is just sat in the middle of the stage on her phone - maybe)

When the audience are all in, the lights dim, everyone takes their seats:

FILM 2: MAKE –UP

Caitlin is centre stage with microphone and stand.

CAITLIN: SONG – Invisible

During the second chorus everyone joins Caitlin on stage spaced out across the space.

EVIE:

I really did think it was normal. (*“Normal” flashes up on the screen*)

Feeling anxious, depressed, can't help but shout.

I've had to shout - I've not been heard any other way.

Chilled and having a laugh, next minute raging.

Moment of violence, the volume rising...

I've started, I can't stop. I carry on and on and on, ranting, negative energy, holding so much in for so long. I'm shouting about things that happened months ago. I'm raging about things that happened years ago. I'm raging about things imprinted on me, some things I probably can't even remember.

I deal with it, one day at a time.

But it's like I am wearing a mask and screaming inside.

When I've got all these weird thoughts going on in my mind, how can I just stop all that?

How can I stop getting annoyed and down over even things like a messy house?

How can I stop showing my emotions through anger and self destruction?

How can I stop all that? How can I...?

How do you stop all that? How do YOU stop all that?

This is what I've been used to, it's what I was brought up around.

I always thought I could control my mental state but I can't seem to deal with things like a "normal person"

FILM 3: "Normal" flashes on the screen

FILM 4: CLASSROOM MAYHEM

*Everyone sits down or moves chairs into classroom scene and 'teacher' begins talking from a text book. The young people in class look bored. They start sighing, shifting around in their seats, they then get up and start to move around eventually building up to a certain wildness - wrapping hazard tape round things, wrapping themselves in bubble wrap, wearing high heels, putting make up on, trying out different costumes, shouting at each other over a building cacophony of sound. Kadie remains the only still member of the class looking through her phone. The sound becomes unbearable until **KAYLAN** stands on chair and shouts through a megaphone to stop the noise. All the noise stops and everyone freezes and looks at her. She stays stood on the chair and begins her speech.*

KAYLAN:

There were 15 reasons why i got kicked out of school, including:

bullying
 fights
 harassment
 theft
 threats
 chasing teachers with a hoover
 chasing teachers with scissors
 cutting a teachers hair
 walk up to people and hurt them
 Fighting every week

i was a little shit
 i was the class clown
 i was seeing red
 I was excluded

Kaylan gets down from the chair and sits down. As Tali stands to deliver her lines.

TALI:

EXCLUDE:

1. To prevent from entering; keep out;
2. To prevent from being included, considered, or accepted; to reject:

Kaylan:

When i am angry
it feels like someone is taking over my body
those nasty words coming from someone else
i don't remember what i say
that's not who i am
not who i really am

It's just that I needed help.
I needed someone to talk to, things were not good at that time.
I was smoking weed and drinking then going into school.

FILM 5: SCHOOL**Sade:**

I look up at the building.
My stomach is filled with rocks.
I walk along the corridor, I hate it.
I open the door, I hate it.
No one sees me, not the real me inside.
I sit at my desk and ignore the occasional comment or name fired in my direction.
My mind drifts off.
I know how it feels when the floor swallows you up.
I knows how it feels when you can hardly speak but there is so much you want to shout about.
I have been bullied my whole life.

Kaylan:

I started getting bullied when I was 9 at primary school
I started toughening up in year 7. I thought I could hurt people too.

Sade looks over at Kaylan and sits next to her.

Sade:

Sometimes I can be the bully.
I think, "If I don't hurt myself, I will hurt someone else and then all the bullying might go away". But it doesn't. It gets worse. At one point I started to self harm because I got told to go kill myself.

Kaylan:

I was self harming quite young.
I stopped coz i got kicked out of school and my grandad died.
That was enough.

I used to think it might make people happy if i am hurting myself.

Sade:

I thought if I hurt myself it will make people happier.

There is a pause as Sade and Kaylan look at each other. They both sit on the floor with Kadie. Kayleigh brings over a microphone so Kadie can talk into it and joins them.

Kadie:

Feeling claustrophobic and overwhelmed. Feeling angry and frustrated. Distracted. When people are loud it stresses me out. I feel like walking out, kicking off. When there's large amounts of people I get this pain in my chest and my heart beats really fast. This is how I feel in school.

Kaylan:

If I get asked to do things and I don't know what I'm doing it's embarrassing. So instead of saying I don't know, I panic and then get angry and then I kick off.

I get angry with my mum when she's waking me up for school, because I really don't want to go. The school system means she might get fined. We don't have that kind of money. Money is a struggle, what can we do? We don't wanna get rid of the dog, he's my best friend. When everyone's out I sit there and have a conversation with him.

Kadie (/ Kayleigh):

Just get your head down

This feeling growing in her chest

If you don't go to school your parents will get fined

This feeling in her chest

They could be taken to court

This feeling in her chest

They could go to prison for three months

This feeling in her chest

You could end up in care

This feeling in her chest

Pain and pressure in my ears

Forcing myself. I need smaller groups, to be in a smaller environment.

Kadie goes back to being on her phone.

Kaylan:

Yeah smaller groups works. In that way being kicked out of school was actually good.

It calmed me down

There were people like me.

I've had to go back into mainstream school now. The aim is always to get you back there. I don't fit in at mainstream at all. It's not easy, being around so many new people all over again.

I understand it you know, why some people bully.

Kayleigh:

It makes them feel strong.

Kaylan:

They've usually got stuff going on themselves, and, yeah, it makes them feel more powerful. I felt stronger because no one would bully me, bother me, come near me. I was protecting myself in some ways, but I didn't like how I was hurting other people.

Sade:

People pass on their pain. If you've got stuff going on in your life, you could try talking to someone, even though it feels hard.

Try not to let it out on other people.

Friendship is important, having people you can trust and who back you up.

I want to be happy and trust people.

I want to speak up.

All 4 girls stand up.

Kaylan:

I actually wish I was God so I could stop the bullying, stop cancer, stop the wars, stop the fighting. I am emotional you know!

Kayleigh:

She's got a big heart.

Kaylan:

Yeah, like, if I wear one pair of shoes, I feel really bad for the other pair - I'll start crying!

I used to wear one of each sometimes!

I do want to get an education, I want to work with disabled kids, I want to sing.

SONG: Will You Be My Friend?

At the end of the song the girls return the microphone as Evie, Caitlin, Chloe, Tali and Jo take their chairs and line them up along the middle of the stage. They sit down.

EVIE:

Asking an audience member -

Have you ever been out at the weekend and got caught up into a fight?

CHLOE:

Have you?

EVIE:

For us it was every weekend.

Everyone I ever hung around with had some sort of shit situation, either growing up in poverty, around drugs or domestic violence but mostly all the above. You've got all these angry kids out on the streets, all fueled by alcohol and drugs, hating on the world already.

CAITLIN:

Whole groups of young people hanging out, all with chaotic lives, and then it's like a ripple effect of stuff happening, police getting involved...

OTHERS FROM THE BACK:

"hoodie", "louts", "heartless", "evil" "frightening", "scum", "monsters", "inhuman" "threatening".

TALI:

"A nation of bad parents: Britain's youngsters amongst world's worst for drinking, smoking and teenage pregnancy".

CAITLIN:

But you don't talk about stuff when you're younger. You don't really listen when you're young and you've got loads of shit going on.

EVIE:

Yeah, you don't actually sit around with you're mates and talk about stuff. Everyone knew that it wasn't to be spoken about.

CAITLIN:

We were all getting in trouble.

- One: Dad left
Two: Lost my sister
Three: Alcohol and substance misuse
Four: Hate my mum's new partner
Five: Mum was asleep most of the time.

TALI: (To audience) Mum was asleep? Why do you think Mum was asleep?

- a) She was playing sleeping lions
- b) She simply could not be arsed
- c) She loves dreaming, bed is her favourite place to be
- d) She was just pretending
- e) She was going through a major traumatic life event pretty much alone trying to take care of three kids and carry on working even though she was earning the same as if she was on benefits.

Maybe we don't need to answer that?

CAITLIN:

Mum was constantly worried about meetings thinking 'I'm gonna get my kids taken off me'.

My baby was on a child protection plan as a neglected child before he was born.

I was 17 making all the decisions about someone who wasn't here yet. I thought it was going to be the happiest moments of my life, until a dark cloud appeared. I wanted to enjoy being pregnant, knowing I'd have this new life in the world. Instead I felt like a tiny mouse being trampled on where I had no control.

Everything I said or did was written down. Everywhere I went had to be approved because of my family's background history. I wasn't allowed at my mums for five months. The dog literally went mental because it barely recognised me.

Social Worker:

What breed was this dog? Did it have long ears? Did it seemed malnourished?

CAITLIN:

What?

Social Worker:

Mmm Hmmm (*she is scribbling stuff down*).

CAITLIN:

I had to prove myself. I had to go to EPAP

Social Worker:

“Early Parenting Assessment Programme”

Caitlin:

I had four hours twice a week in a centre being watched and scrutinized.

Sessions at home 2 days a week.

Out of seven days a week, that’s 4 days.

Some of it felt really unnecessary and patronising.

I said to the woman at EPAP, I’m just going to the toilet can you watch him?

She said “Can you tell him you’re going to the toilet so he knows?”

He’s three weeks old!! How’s going to know I’m going to the toilet!! It’s not reality...

Social Worker:

So, this toilet trip? Was it a number 1 or a –

CAITLIN:

I think you might be missing the point!

I felt constantly on edge.

I would be in meetings with loads of different professionals and just me.

I’d want to get angry but where I felt so in the spotlight and everyone looking at me, I just cried all the time. I felt so small and uncomfortable where everyone was observing me and recording everything I did. I felt like everyone was expecting me to fail.

I felt like decisions were being made anyway, before I had chance to prove myself.

When Social Services know your family, you already feel written off and judged.

CHLOE:

I've had Social Services involvement in my life since I was 12. They've given me things I wouldn't have been able to get anywhere else.

It feels like they've controlled everything since then. I mean, without it I would have been fucked, but it has been really hard, feeling judged and observed all the time.

Now I don't feel like I will ever be able to be without support.

EVIE:

My uncle died when I was in Year 6, my Mum's brother. That was when my Mum really started to struggle with her mental health. The school noticed I had anger issues so put me on anger management until year 8. Then, when my Mum actually left, I had to go to CAMHS

TALI:

"Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services"

EVIE:

Then I started acting up and ended up at YOS.

TALI:

"Youth Offending Service"

Evie:

Mostly for shoplifting – it made me feel brilliant at the time! When I was feeling down I would just go into town and grab loads of stuff. I got greedy I just wanted more and more, until it didn't make me feel better, it made me feel worse. I was obviously trying to replace something with all that stuff... but you can't replace what you feel with stuff.

At YOS you had to be assessed by members of the public. You had to sit there and talk about your family situation. The woman was just like, hmmm, looking at my Dad like he's a piece of shit and I was thinking you know what? Not everything is just black and white. There's situations where it's not exactly how it's painted to be. Shit happens. It felt like instead of helping the situation they just belittled us.

Chloe:

Kids just end up robbing, dealing... Police caught my mate stealing a Yankee Candle once. Straight away he asked her are you a crack head? She got tested for opium at the police station. Never thought for a moment, oh maybe she's struggling, trying to make things just a little bit better in her temporary accommodation, she's skint, living in a shithole. Assumed it's drug abuse. She said the best thing she could've done at that time was to get a job but she wasn't mentally stable, she was crushed, low self worth.

She keeps thinking it's gonna come, some sort of change, but it doesn't – then she's heartbroken.

Caitlin:

Even though all these young people are hating on the world, the love for each other was there – united by wanting to change but stuck in what areas they're from, who they were born to, choices they've made. Those that do start making changes can sometimes be laughed at or looked down on in their own community, and no one wants to feel like they don't belong.

Chloe:

On paper we were all criminals, arrested for violence or shoplifting with some ending up in prison. Behind all them offences were still those situations hanging over them as teenagers, the upbringing they had still unspoken and held within them, wanting to burst every time someone mentioned the word home. I look back to all them offences and I see a cry for help, wanting to be accepted and seen.

Caitlin:

It's hard to build trust with a Social Worker because you don't feel like they're on your side. Not everything you say needs to go in a report, maybe you just want to share stuff.

A social worker from a meeting has said to me before, "this is why people don't trust us because we keep promising things and then not doing it" and that made me feel so much better, she actually came up and asked if I was ok.

Without Social Services things would be totally different, in a bad way. I don't think I would be as mature as I am, but it's mad in a way. Social workers do help people but the way it's done sometimes, the shame that you can feel – to being poor, feeling judged and scared- it's hard to believe in yourself sometimes, you can feel weak and lost.

Tali:

Everyone's afraid, families don't trust social services -what if they lose their children? Social Workers are terrified - what if they make the wrong decision? what will happen? There's fear on all sides – it's not good, how can you ask for help when the trust isn't there? People don't always tell the truth in those situations, or make the decision that might be right for that person.

All girls take their chairs away and go back to the side of the stage as Caitlin, Jess and Kaylan enter.

CAITLIN Song: The Lies

Tali stands DSL and is carrying a Log Book

TALI:

When someone finds out she's in care, they're like, "oh my god I never knew, you keep yourself looking so good, I would never guess"

Why do you have to look like a tramp just for someone to think ah yeah she's probably in care, she looks like she don't wash herself or whatever. And you know the worst thing? When she says she's in care and someone's like, "ah is it like Tracey Beaker?"

No one actually knows anything about the care system, that's the worst thing, no one knows anything about it.

It's a very controlled environment. They observe you and write stuff down. One day she went into the office and saw a book and it said log book on it, she was thinking what's this?

She was being a bit nosy so opened the book and saw her name.

Chloe creeps up behind Tali and snatches the Log Book from her, Evie and Caitlin stand with her looking at the log book over her shoulders.

CHLOE:

8pm LE and CK in living room. TL upstairs.

8:05 TL asked for money, it was explained she isn't allowed.

8:06 Loud noises coming from TL's room

8:07 TL asks again, still no

8:15 TL comes into living room being aggressive

8:23 TL goes to room

TALI:

Every minute of the day she felt like they were watching and logging. She felt like, they write stuff down but it's their interpretation. I mean, she would recognize what they were trying to get at, but the way they would put it would make her sound like a terrible person. Why could they never write down the REASON she might be acting a certain way, or what happened before to make her act like that?

She felt like everyone was talking about her but not to her.

EVIE: *(Snatches log book from Chloe)*

8:30 TL comes downstairs for breakfast

8:32 TL appears to be in a bad mood

8:35 TL seems angry and distracted

CAITLIN: *(Snatches log book from Evie)*

8am TL opens her eyes

8:02 TL yawns

8:05 TL closes her eyes again

8:06 TL opens her eyes

8:07 TL blinks

8:08 TL is breathing in

8:08 TL is breathing out

TALI *(walks up to them and snatches the log book back, going back to SL)*

8am TL opens her eyes

8:01 TL remembers where she is and her heart drops

8:02 TL wants to go back to sleep forever

8:15 TL drags herself out of bed and tries to think of positive things

8:17 TL thinks of her friends and family so far away

8:20 TL feels very alone

8:23 TL wants to cry

8:25 TL wonders how she might escape

When she's 18 she'll get her own flat. This may sound easy to some but she's been working towards that since the age of 13. From when she was young these people have been assessing her to see if she can look after herself. That's what she's working towards, every single day; cooking for herself, cleaning for herself whatever. It's not just so that she can eat, it's so she knows that when she is accommodated at 18 her ability to be independent will be proven.

She has had to grow up really fast. It has made her stronger in some ways and there is something good in feeling independent. But she gets tired, she doesn't always want to be doing everything on all on her own.

Piano music starts

Being in care is a type of grief. Grieving a loss for someone even though they are still there in the world.

FILM 6: Care/ Baby Boy

JESS: Song Baby Boy.

There is a faint rhythm that begins to play like a heart beat. This grows throughout the speech.

Caitlin S enters the stage with a basket and starts picking things up, attempting to tidy the stage.

Every time she put the basket down to attend to something else, someone tips everything out of the basket and someone else spreads it around. The stage remains a mess no matter what she does.

CAITLIN:

One step out of line and they might be back
I feel like I'm walking on eggshells
I don't have any emotional support
Nobody respects my parenting.
Don't give him sweets I say
They take him to the shops and give him sweets.
I try and discipline him
They cause a row.
I've been let down by every male in my life.
I feel unwanted – single so long.
I'm starved of adult company.
I'm repeating myself 24/7.
Don't do that
Put that down.
He opens a bottle of water
He pours it all over the floor
Constantly in the fridge
Throws things on floor

Don't do that
Put that down.
Repeating myself
Saying the same things all the time
Tidy front room
Make the sofas
Put Reuben on the sofa
Put the TV on so that I can go and wash up
He's tipped all his toy box out
He's got food all over the floor
He's got all the pillows off the sofa
Which does my head in because they've all got to be a certain way.
I can't tidy upstairs unless Reuben is in the bath
He doesn't like the bath anymore
He gets out after two minutes
I can't even make my bed and I hate getting into my bed when it aint been made.
Constant arguing to try and get my point across
Constant battle to feel respected and supported
Constant tidying up over and over again.
Constant circles, like a revolving door
Melted time I'll never get back
Waiting, waiting, waiting for something to change.
So much trapped inside
I want to get it out.
Lonely, sad, isolated
Fighting a losing battle

Caitlin starts to speak more quickly and is frantically putting things in the basket.

Constant circles, like a revolving door
Feels like it's all for nothing
No peace of mind
No respect for my wishes or my parenting
I feel like everyone's talking about me.

I'm anxious, I'm worried, don't know even know why. Half the time I can't explain my own thoughts in my own head, I can't explain how I am feeling inside because I don't even know myself.

Caitlin loses it and throws the basket and all its contents on the ground. Towards the end of Caitlin's speech a low drone had started to play, it gets louder as the screen starts to flicker bringing in the next film

FILM 7 – Tali CYCLES *(the following words are part of the film)*

When she would run away from her foster carer they said they would send her to a secure unit because “we can’t keep you safe”

When she didn’t go to school, she was threatened to be put into secure unit because “we have your best interests at heart”

When she got older and got really fed up there were arguments and dramas. She used to get so angry. She would lash out at the staff and then she had to go to YOS. There it was “If you carry on like this we’re gonna put you in a secure unit”.

She learned to blame herself. She feels like she has ruined things.

This is what she feels like she’s been through. Maybe most people who have been in care or been through stuff feel it as well. She feels like she goes through stages and it happens all the time.

Things will be good at the start.

It will slowly, slowly deteriorate

Things start getting bad for her

She just thinks, “Fuck it I might as well ruin the whole thing”.

She’ll make it go bad and bad, worse and worse and worse until it ruins everything.

Then it’s the same thing again.

It starts good for one or two months then things go bad, worse, worse and worse and then it starts again.

It starts good for one or two months then things go bad, worse, worse and worse and then it starts again.

SONG: Can You See Me Now? – Sade

CHLOE: *(Stands where she is to deliver lines)*

RECOVER.

To get back (something lost or taken away), especially by making an effort

To search for, find, and bring back

To cause to be restored to a normal or usual condition.

FILM 8: “Normal “ flashes up on the screen again.

FILM 9: EVIE AT HOME (*Plays whilst Evie talks*)

EVIE: (*DSR*)

Everything I ever feared is happening. Am I repeating history? Is the cycle starting again?

It feels like things are crumbling. If my life so far were a cave around me, big chunks of it are crumbling off, I can hold them in my hands. They are heavy, earth dropping off the sides.

Talking and bringing up your past is hard, it makes me feel vulnerable. And the more I understand, the more the feelings come. The more I unravel the past, the more I actually begin to unravel. Waves and waves of it.

How couldn't you feel like that in those moments where you travel back to those dark days, moments of fear hitting you like a car.

I want to make changes. I'm scared and it's hard. How long does it take?

How is recovery meant to actually feel?

FILM 10: CHLOE ON BEACH (*Plays whilst Tali talks*)

Tali: (*DSL*)

You can't remake, you can't re-do anything

It's happened

There's never going to be this day again, so whatever happens is what happens on this day.

If you every day wake up and think about all the things that you're angry for it will become a routine. It's learning when enough is enough. Something has to change.

Try to appreciate what you've got.

Learn to count your blessings.

See what you can do with your time and your space.

Learn what makes you happy and do it. Even if you haven't got a lot of time for yourself.

The stresses you have around you are always going to be there, you have the ability to decide how it makes you feel.

Last night I was thinking about how every day time goes past and either it goes fast or slow and so much things happen in a small period of time. But have you not noticed how any place you are, if you look at the moon, it's like a face. That's one thing that doesn't change. These things that you go through, the little struggles, you can look at the moon and remember that the same 24 hours are still going round, you're still gonna wake up the next morning to a fresh day.

SONG: Constant Cycles – Jess

I don't want be defined by the things that have gone before (CS)

These eyes have been full of hatred (CM & EM)

They can be full of love, flipped feelings (EM)

This mouth has defended so many actions, choices and decisions. (KC & TL)

This heart has opened up to those who don't deserve it (JW, CE)

This heart blocks and pushes away (KC & CM, CE)

I am staying calm and trying not to lose my temper (SW & CS)

I am learning, all the time. (EM)

I am more than a statistic, or what you may read about. (PB)

I want to believe I can do anything I want to do (JW)

I want to be able to inspire with my words (EM & KW)

I am hoping for stability (EM)

I want to love myself more (CS, CE)

I am who I am (CS)

I am beautiful (KW)

I have love in my heart (JW)

I am sister

Friend

Daughter

Mother

It takes time to unravel (CS)

It takes love for beauty to shine (CW, TL)

It takes a whole community and those who lead (JB & EM)

To change stigma and lead with love (JB & EM)

Who are the policy makers? (BF)

How can these words reach their ears? (KZ)

This heart has skipped so many beats, has felt so many feelings. (CM, KW)

This heart is your heart – all

Blackout

FILM 11 : OPENING/ CLOSING – when people actually leave the space, after the Q&A?
Maybe or during the poem or perhaps not needed at all....