

ROYAL COURT

off the endz
by Bola Agbaje



BACKGROUND PACK

CONTENTS

1. About The Production
2. About The Writer
3. Synopsis of Off the Endz
4. Notes from the Assistant Director's Rehearsal Notebook
5. About the Set Design
6. Interviews with Cast Members
7. Interview with the Director
8. Classroom Activities
9. Extract from Off the Endz (Scene One)
10. About Royal Court Education

1. ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

The Royal Court Theatre presents

OFF THE ENDZ

By Bola Agbaje

First performance at the Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Downstairs, Sloane Square, London, on 11 February 2010

Cast

Sharon
David
Keisha
Kojo
Marsha
Boys

Lorraine Burroughs
Ashley Walters
Madeline Appiah
Daniel Francis
Natasha Williams
Brandon Benoit-Joyce,
Omar Brown, Thomas
Eghator, René Gray

Director
Designer
Lighting
Sound
Composer
Casting Director
Assistant Director
Production Manager
Fight Director
Voice Coach
Costume Supervisor
Stage Manager
Deputy Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Stage Management Work Placement
Set Build

Jeremy Herrin
Ultz
Jo Joelson
Emma Laxton
Sophie Soloman
Amy Ball
Vernon Douglas
Paul Handley
Kate Waters
Charmian Hoare
Jackie Orton
Katy de Main
Holly Handel
Ralph Buchanan
Ellie Williams
Weld-Fab & Objection
Construction

2. ABOUT THE WRITER

Bola Agbaje was a member of the Royal Court's Critical Mass Programme, and her first play, *Gone Too Far!*, premiered at the Jerwood Theatre Upstairs at the Royal Court in 2007 and then transferred to the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs in 2008. She is Pearson Playwright in Residence for Paines Plough, is under commission for Tiata Fahodzi and is adapting *Gone Too Far!* into a full-length screenplay for the UK Film Council and Poisson Rouge Pictures.



The Big Interview with Bola Agbaje

The Metro. Claire Allfree – 16th February, 2010

The Peckham-raised playwright tells about the how the inner-city estate provides a wealth of inspiration for her latest Royal Court play.

Bola Agbaje is defiant. 'People say to me: "Why should we see another story about a black guy on an estate?" They say: "We've seen it all already." Well, I don't think you have,' she says. 'I think there are loads of people out there who'd say: "No one's told my story yet." I want to write about the lives I think we should talk about.'

Just like her Olivier Award-winning debut, *Gone Too Far!*, Agbaje's new Royal Court play is indeed set on an estate and, yes, it features black characters, drugs, gangs and gun crime.

But it also takes in dreams, aspirations and people trying to live a good life as best they can.

Ashley Walters plays David, just out of prison, who persuades his mate Kojo, struggling with debts and the threat of unemployment, to make a bit of dodgy money on the side.

Against an urban backdrop blighted by recession, poverty and limited horizons, the play confronts head-on issues of responsibility, choice and the freedom people have to control their own lives.

'People might assume David is a negative character whose story we don't want to hear,' says Agbaje, 'but just because someone has made bad choices doesn't mean they are all bad.'

Now 28, Agbaje is one of the fearless new star playwrights to have emerged from the Royal Court under Dominic Cooke.

She grew up on the North Peckham estate in south London dreaming of becoming an actress and only wrote *Gone Too Far!* – in which two boys pop out for a pint of milk and encounter on their doorstep a divided world – because she was sick of not finding any roles she could play herself.

'I thought I should stop complaining and create opportunities,' she says. 'It turned out I wasn't much of an actress.'

Instead I write plays because I want people to relate to them and think: "Wow, theatre is for me."

Meeting Agbaje is a bit like coming face to face with a tornado. She's a whirligig of positive thinking, pragmatism and frank-talking.

She currently manages 600 tenants on a Beckton estate, a source of terrific 'stories' which has also informed her highly opinionated world view on the problems facing those she writes about.

She thinks housing benefit doesn't work ('it sets people up to fail') and that the English 'us and them' culture puts people in boxes they can't climb out of.

She also rails against an endemic attitude of blame – from Parliament to the poorest estates – in which everything is always someone else's fault, attacks the recent credit boom that encouraged everyone to buy plasma TVs for 'free', and hates our celebrity fixation that has reduced ambition to wanting instant fame.

Agbaje credits her Nigerian parents for her forthright outlook. 'They've always supported me,' she says.

'People are sometimes condescending when I say I grew up on an estate, but you know what? It wasn't that bad.'

She's determined to become a full-time writer once she's paid off her student loan.

'I don't have a social life,' she says. 'I write every evening after work.' She's currently under commission from Paines Plough and is turning *Gone Too Far!* into a film.

You suspect she'd also make a damn fine politician. 'Most politicians don't understand estate problems.

Instead they bracket them under tower blocks or single-parent backgrounds,' she argues. 'It's more complicated than that.'

For Agbaje, the core issue – evident in *Off The Endz* – is identity. 'So many people I know don't know who they are or what they want to achieve,' she says.

'Partly it really is a lack of role models. The reason why so many kids on estates look up to drug dealers or rappers is because drug dealers and rappers often come from the same place as them.

'And partly it's because people don't take advantage of the opportunities offered to them.'

Blimey. Agbaje sounds almost frightening. 'Drugs and crime affect us all,' she says. 'I see it every day and the kids are getting younger and younger.

But we're not gonna solve it by brushing it under the carpet. Actually, I'm a dreamer. I honestly think we're all gonna live in a better world eventually.'

So what would she say to the young people who live on her estate? 'Get yourself to the Royal Court. Just because this play is happening in Sloane Square doesn't mean it's not for you.'

3. SYNOPSIS OF OFF THE ENDZ

A contemporary tale set on a South London Estate known as The Endz. Sharon, Kojo and David are childhood friends who, now in their 20's, have moved on to totally different lifestyles. Sharon and David are an upwardly mobile couple who are struggling with insurmountable debts but dream of buying their own home. David has just been released from prison. Sharon invites him to stay with them and soon David tells Kojo about his business idea - a scheme to make money quickly. It's a plan that eventually tests their friendship to the limit.



As David's business begins to take off, Kojo has the threat of unemployment hanging over him and eventually his company goes into liquidation. David starts contributing towards the rent, but unbeknown to Sharon, Kojo decides to join forces with David.

One evening Sharon comes home late from work and catches David weighing the drugs he's been selling. She is completely devastated by Kojo's betrayal and throws them both out of the house. As this is about to happen, one of the boys from the gang on the estate shoots Kojo accidentally due to an altercation they had with David.

David visits Kojo in the hospital where he meets Sharon and begs for another chance to put things right. Sharon wants none of this and tells him that she and Kojo wants nothing more to do with him

and that he must leave. Her priorities are now Kojo and the baby she is expecting.

Out of hospital, Kojo meets up with David and tries to persuade him to leave the Endz as the gang will be after him. David refuses even though Kojo has bought him a train ticket to Nottingham where his sister lives and a spare room is waiting for him. A fight ensues and eventually Kojo overpowers David, then walks out of his life for good.

Off The Endz is a story of identity, friendship, loyalty, family, love and choices we make in our lives and the consequences of those choices. And it's about the responsibilities we have to take for our actions.

-Vernon Douglas
Assistant Director



4. NOTES FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REHEARSAL NOTEBOOK



Week One

Meeting with actors, writer, and rest of the creative team working on the production. Read through of play. Discussing history behind writer's inspiration in writing of play. Viewing of set design box, concept behind function of set and lighting. "Doughnut Day"- (meeting of all the personnel staff working in the theatre, including Artistic Director Dominic Cooke). Start of rewrites to play.

Week Two

Jeremy's (director) and Lorraine's birthday this week. More rewrites of scenes 9 to 11 of the play, consulting with writer along the way on her thoughts and ideas. Working through each scene from the beginning of play along with all changes made with actors.

Discussing their thoughts, feelings on characterisation. Research into world of characters, offstage characters, cost of three bed houses in Sydenham, minimum wage, nurses pay scale.

Week Three

Running lines with actors before the beginning of days work on each scene. Continuous journey of discovery for actors and director on blocking, questioning the clarity of storytelling.

Facilitating schools workshop for the Education Department. Had a great time working with a group of about 25 young people from a school in SE London. They were totally focused and committed to the work, enjoying the work so much decided to work a further 20 minutes with the group. I am discovering so much about the process of directing and confirming many of the thoughts and ideas regarding my own process and approach to my future work as a director.

Week Four

First meeting with the four young boys who will be playing the roles of gang members in scene 10. I worked alongside them very closely, starting with a workshop on characterisation and physicality of the characters. Introduction to the world of the play, characters attitude and intention, blocking of the scene with them before meeting the other actors they will be working alongside in scene 10.

Jeremy taking them through their paces. Each young actor having to learn all three roles in scene 10 as they will be alternating every evening once we start previewing and through the duration of the play.

First half of the week spent running the first three scenes. Getting a sense of the shape, timing, rhythm and dynamic of the play as a whole. Second half of week slowly running whole play getting a sense of length of playing time.

Week Five

Technical rehearsals delayed by a day, as set was not ready so could not move into main theatre space. Finally began working with lights, costumes, set, music etc. Now the excitement really begins, this is where the magic starts. First previews of show as now need to see and experience the work in front of an audience. Responses from audiences are very positive. We have an exciting, funny, and extremely well acted production on our hands.

-Vernon Douglas
Assistant Director



5. ABOUT THE SET DESIGN

The design for *Off the Endz* had to meet two challenges. The script calls for several different locations - a flat, a job-centre, an office, a police station, a hospital and a basketball court, but the set also needs to convey a sense that the characters are stuck in one place, the Endz. So, the designer, Ultz, and the director, Jeremy Herrin decided they would create an open space to represent the estate, complete with imposing high walls graffitied with phosphorescent paint. As the scenes shift to the other locations furniture and objects are flown into this set space. Thus the Endz becomes an omnipresent backdrop to the piece. Whilst the characters move from place to place, we the audience always see the Endz hanging around the edges like an oppressive reminder of Kojo and Lorraine's struggle for escape to a new life.



6. INTERVIEWS WITH CAST MEMBERS

A. Daniel Francis, playing Kojo

What drew you to the play?

The Royal Court! Ha ha. It's always been a dream to work here, the director, Jermei is awesome. And also the character and what he's going through, it does always interest me as an actor to have a character that is so conflicted and with a dilemma, someone that's interesting to play, because over the course of a run you can always be discovering new things and keeping it fresh. And rather than having a simple one track objective it's complex, it's meaty – which is also the stuff that frustrates you to begin with. Haha! It's a gift and curse, and the gift is that it's interesting and it's exciting to work on but it is infuriating at times, when you can't find it or the process of finding it can be frustrating at some times. But it's an awesome character.

What do you think his main kind of complex or dilemma is?

I mean off the bat, it's in terms of protecting and providing for his family. And the baby that's coming, but also his loyalty to his friend, and looking after his friend. And it's a deep relationship. It's a relationship that is like brothers basically – it's that long and it's that deep, and it's not an easy relationship to sever. And also his desire to live....good! Which most of us want, we want success, and by doing it the right way, staying on that path. But where the righteous path and the reality of providing it all comes into conflict, it's compromised. And that's a very real dilemma for him.

How have you gone about developing your character?

There's various ways, I mean every actor has their different processes, and for different roles there are different processes. I work with the script first and foremost and just see what the writer has intended. I don't try and impose my stuff on it until I've read and got what the writer is trying to communicate. And then just really finding out what the drives are, what motivates them, what pushes them. Throughout the play and then through the individual scenes as well. And then just getting it deep and making it something that as me, as Daniel can connect with by seeing the parallels and making it personal to me. That's the early stuff, the beginning stuff and then you flesh it out from there. That's the starting point.

What do you think is at the heart of this play?

Good question. I think it's about choices under pressure. Because we don't usually communicate, we don't really know ourselves until we look at the choices we make under pressure. It's easy to say

'this is what I would do' but when you're actually in it, it's very different. Just say, relationship wise, until you've had that first argument. You see how they respond to it, and how they treat you when the stakes are raised. It's not just choices, it's the choices under pressure. When your morals and when your conscious decisions are compromised. When there'd no stress or dilemma you make certain choices but when it's there, when your face to face with it, the choices that you make then. And that's what gets interesting; the choice and the conflict and the dilemma.

What have you found exciting about this role?

Just come out of a really tough rehearsal session!! It's a tough question. Haha! The challenge is getting it balanced and just making sure that it's truthful and that I've showed the full dynamics of the character. Because it's in the play, it's written there, but it's just finding it and illuminating that character through the scenes, and getting the proper arc and the journey of that character. I get excited about that because as an actor that's the kind of stuff that keeps it interesting. Oh and the costume – I could do worse than have a costume fitting at Hugo Boss on a Monday morning! First thing in the morning at Hugo Boss! I could get used to that!

B. Interview with Lorraine Burroughs, playing Sharon and Ashley Walters, playing David

Lorraine, what drew you to the play initially?

Lorraine: I have an interesting struggle within the play - Trying to do the right thing, but finding that holds you back.

And how about you Ashley?

Ashley: The same I suppose, and also that it's going to appeal to a lot of people that wouldn't usually come and see shows at the Royal Court. It's going to push them to have a new experience, and I like that.

How would you describe your characters?

Lorraine: She is a fighter. She is very comfy and is not going to change her life. But she is actually looking for a way to get out of the Endz, get a nice house, nice life, the perfect two point four children sort of family really.

Does she have a dilemma in the play?

Lorraine: She's quite...sort of what's the word, she's not seeing straight. She's quite gullible, she thinks everything's perfect, that they're getting out and that's what they're doing, but she doesn't realise that the world doesn't work like that - that there is a huge

amount of debt and they're not going to get where she thinks that they'll be getting to. It's not easy and she believes that it is, so her world basically crumbles around her and she has to pick it all back up.

And your character Ashley?

Ashley: He is someone who....he wants success, and he wants the nice things in life, but he wants love and support and it doesn't matter what it takes to get them. And he doesn't really understand the value of doing things the right way. Going to school, and earning. And that's pretty much his character. I think he understands that part of life, but doesn't feel it's for him, maybe it makes him feel stupid and that it's like another world, that he should be able to follow his dream. But it's more than that; he affects other people's lives, and in a way that is very selfish.

How did you start to develop the character? Did you start before rehearsals?

Ashley: Before, yeah. I mean for me, when I start with a role I need to draw on my own experiences, that's the way I work, that's what's best for me. So it's about thinking about your character's situation - countless people I know that are in the same situation, and drawing them into the character.

How what do you think is at the heart of the play?

Lorraine: I think it is the struggle within, because everyone's fighting for something. Fighting for something to change, whether it's a positive change or a negative change, or a negative result in a way and you're trying to change it. And I think it's everyone's individual journey, and their trying to see it through.

What was it like to have Bola in rehearsal with you?

Lorraine: Well she hasn't been in for a while, but it was great having her there because it's a new play and of course we want to get the play to be as good as it can possibly be and having the writer in the room really aides that. And you can always ask her opinion, and she'll actually put a light on it that you haven't seen. And you think 'of course!' maybe we should change that scene. She shines the light, and you know the scene then, and 'maybe we should change it to this'. And it just becomes clearer and it just comes alive, rather than a script you've picked up from the library, and just done over again and again.

Were you involved in the early stages of script changes?

Lorraine: Yeah, it was exciting, it was nice. Doing a show, it is about a company creating the piece together. And actually writing the

script, working alongside Bola for those weeks was ideal input with all the people on board.

What's been the most exciting thing about playing your characters?

Lorraine: I think I like Sharon's feistiness. I think she's quite sharp, and quite sincere actually.

Ashley: For me I suppose I get a chance to – well, as much as David is a negative role model, I think he's quite funny, and I get to have a laugh! And I don't get that in many roles, so it's nice to try and bring some comedy to the play, it's something different.



7. INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR

What were your initial thoughts about the play when you first read it?

I think there's a really strong setup in the play. I think a play written by a young black woman from South London taking on an idea of an aspirant black middle class couple trying to get off the estate and improve their lives, albeit on very limited materialistic terms, and then being confronted by the obstacle of their friendship and loyalty with a character called Dave who is essentially a sort of sociopath - very damaged, selfish, limited person - it's just a really robust and interesting thing to put on the stage. And it really takes its gloves off when dealing with David's behaviour. It kind of presents it conveniently at first, but then learning of his disengagement with society is really challenging and quite provocative.

And it seemed to be a really good idea to put the play on because it wasn't a simple morality tale. David is the sort of character who in most plays, all those plays on with that subject, engaging with black audiences, would simply pose David's behaviour and just say that it was wrong. But also there's a really interesting analysis of Kojo's behaviour. Kojo wants to join the mainstream; he wants to fit in with wider society, no black and white. He works in the city, and he wants to progress, but he and his partner Sharon become victims of a sort of economic aspiration, and I think that's really what the play's about. It condenses David's behaviour but it pits it against what the alternative is which is being involved with what is at the heart of advanced capitalism. Clearly what history has shown is that this isn't a kind system, it isn't a system that values people's sense of themselves. And so I think that that is just a really nice, thorny, difficult dramatic situation to stage. It really makes it more difficult for the writer to get there, but get there she does, and she effectively puts all those arguments, those strong arguments in David's mouth, that the system isn't all that it's cracked up to be, and still she exposes his behaviour as essentially unhelpful and wrong. I think within that community, and even within a quite liberal community that kind of simple condemnation is quite interesting. The play doesn't go into David's back story to find excuses or find historical reasons why he should be let off. The writer forces us to face up to the facts. And there's something great about that.

The play reads very differently on a page to how it's performed. I was interested in the play initially, and then I did a workshop on it and, through the course of a couple of days work on it, I realised

that it's kind of a gift to actors. It requires front foot, energised playing that works really nicely in theatre.

How did you work on developing a triangular relationship between the three main characters?

Did the usual stuff, went into the back story - improvising and talking about where they were from, what happened on what date and all that sort of stuff. But the argument is more instructive for me, being a white middle class person; it's more instructive for me to hear the stories from the actors about their lives. I think most of the actors came through a very similar social situation as the characters, you know grew up on estates and that sense of loyalty and that sense of territory is all new to me.

And Bola was involved in the rehearsal process?

Yes, she was around for the first ten days or so. And we changed the script a lot, and cut and shaped it and got rid of lots of material. It's already been said but her plays are quite talky. If you were being generous you would say her plays have a sort of Shavian quality in that they present very robust arguments but she's also got a real gift of the gab. We spent quite a long time cutting back and reorganising it so that it would just be a bit sharper, slicker and have a bit more punch to it.

When you say 'we' who was involved in that - the actors, you..?

Each of the actors were involved, and me. Dominic Cooke the Artistic Director and Ruth Little the Literary Manager were also involved. And Bola of course.

And you must have done work ahead of time with Bola, how much?

Well we read the script and we talked about it and then we did this workshop that I mentioned. We got the actors in for a few days rehearsal and we improvised around the story, and then we talked about alternative structures and different events happening here and there, and just throwing things around really. And then Bola did a rewrite and presented that for discussion, and then took that away and did another draft..

And at what point did the designer come into the pre-production process?

As soon as we got a date booked and when Ultz, the designer, was free. And that was quite an arduous process because the play has got lots of little locations, and yet it's on in the Theatre Downstairs. The demands for Downstairs with it's proscenium arch is that you're hoping to find some sort of visual, pictorial language that you wouldn't really need in our upstairs space, where you could just create an environment for the play, with the characters, in a more

experiential sense. So it was quite a difficult process trying to get a look for the play, but also really practical things like how to keep the play looking different from one situation to another without long scene changes. And I think we are doing it pretty quickly, but there are certain set and costume changes that you need to acknowledge.

And in terms of the look, how much were you hoping to create visual metaphors for the messages in the play?

We were going for Brechtian, in that we're not trying to pretend it's a piece of theatre. The opening image of the play is of Sharon on her own, as a sofa and a living room wall assembles around her. So we're making a statement that it is a piece of theatre, that we're making a story up, and that's why we're using the header that says the thing that was on the second page of Bola's draft which was 'Off the Endz' where it starts and where it ends becomes a big mission.' And the fact that she wrote that in such big type in the script gave the play a sort of mythic, almost comic book type of feel. Ultz and I thought it would be a really nice, strange way of presenting the boldness and almost naivety of the play. We thought it might be quite cool. So, there's this kind of base environment that looks like the theatre, but it's all covered in phosphorous paint, and we've added a whole load of tags and graffiti that comes up under ultra violet light – it's not there all the time, but it's kind of underneath everything.

So the opening image is of a theatre that has been tagged, and then there's the flats, the council flats. Sharon and Kojo's flat was quite difficult to represent, because it's a council flat that they've adapted, scooped out the interior, so now they have the swanky kitchen units and a great telly. So we wanted to present that but we didn't want anyone to think it was a loft house apartment. And always keep it in the context of the world of the play. In designing the play, it's really about trying to achieve that *mythic* location 'The Endz', something that people are trying to get away from. It's more than just a place, it's a sense of self, it's a sense of limitation, it's a sense of entrapment, so obviously it didn't take too long to get that sense that everything should be there.

And if you could say in one sentence, what is at the heart of this play, what's driving this play?

Well I think it's an anchor, from Bola, who's driving the play. She sort of vigorously wants to engage with the world that she was brought up in, that she experiences. And she's very interested in young men, particularly young black men, taking responsibility for their lives. And I think ultimately, despite all the other things in there, that's what's at the heart of the play. She's interested in the psychology of somebody who can behave in such a counter

productive way socially. And she's still questioning where that might come from.

Last question: What would you hope that the audience take away with them from seeing the show?

I suppose an engagement and understanding of those characters. They might see themselves and their struggles in that context - that sense of the 'endz', whether it's that you're stuck in a council estate that you're desperate to get out of or you have a sense of yourself that's really holding you back. Life seems to be a journey full of those sorts of obstacles. And hopefully they'll have a sense of being impressed by a young woman who can write funnily, generously, with a lot of passion and authenticity.



8. CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

In the rehearsals for *Off the Endz*, the director and the actors spent much of the first week discussing the background of each character and the triangular relationship between David, Kojo and Sharon. They then explored the relationships by trying out several different ways of playing each scene. These rehearsal room techniques can be used with students to help them develop a character and understand the dynamics of the relationships in the play.

i. Character Collage

This exercise can help an actor form a rich, three-dimensional image of the character s/he is playing.

A. Begin by searching the play for clues about the character. The clues can be organised into four lists:

1. Facts about the character
2. What the character says about himself or herself
3. What the other characters say about him or her
4. What s/he says about the other characters

It is important to write the lists verbatim from the text in order to avoid any interpretative comment on the character at this point. Once the lists have been compiled, then the actor can look at the lists together and analyse the information as a whole. This leads to many discoveries about how the character perceives him or herself as well as insights into how s/he relates to the other characters in the play.

B. After examining the character based on the text, the next step is to develop a visual sense of the character. Gather together magazines, newspapers, bits of fabric, colour charts, old postcards, catalogues, posters, etc. Any visual stimulus can be used for this exercise, so be creative! Once these have been collected, start cutting out any images, colours or textures that you feel express your character's personality. Then, on a large piece of paper, create a collage of all the images. In a group, look at the collage for each character and discuss what is most striking about the images that have been selected.

ii. Where Do I Stand?

This exercise allows actors to explore the relationships between characters by experimenting with their physical and emotional proximity to one another.

- Ask the group to organise themselves into pairs (**A** and **B**) and read through Scene One from Off the Endz (see Extract overleaf). **A** reads the part of David and **B** reads Sharon.
- After they've all had a chance to read through the scene once, ask for a pair to volunteer to get up on their feet. The rest of the group forms an audience.
- Ask the pair to stand opposite each other and read the scene again, but this time, after each of their own lines, they must make a movement. They are only allowed three options:
 1. S/he can take one step towards the other character
 2. S/he can take one step back away from the other character
 3. S/he can stay rooted to the spot
- Once they have finished performing the scene in this way, ask the group for any thoughts on what might have emerged about David and Sharon's relationship.
- Then ask all the pairs to find their own space and try the exercise themselves. Finish by feeding back any discoveries made through the exercise.

9. EXTRACT FROM OFF THE ENDZ (SCENE ONE)

We are inside a modern day open plan flat. It is well decorated with a big plasma screen TV on the wall, Leather sofa, marble flooring. A Mac is sitting on a glass computer table and a Mac laptop on the floor. The house is well lived in. A lovely dining area with a half eaten plate of cereal and a cup of tea on the table. Sharon is offstage getting changed for work. She is singing to herself real loud and bad. Her singing is interrupted by the loud banging on the door. David is at the door he looks very scruffy with a bruised swollen eye and a cut lip.

Sharon WHO'S THAT!

The knock continues.

Sharon I'M COMING I'M COMING.

She comes on stage wrapped in a towel.

Sharon I'm coming!

She gets no reply and the knock continues.

Sharon I'm here stop banging!

The knock continues.

Sharon I'M HERE! WHO IS IT?

The knock continues. She begins opening the door, starting the Chad lock, mortise lock, she turns the key.

Sharon Are you deaf, I said...

She opens the door leaving the chain on.

Sharon David! Oh my gosh!

David Hey how are you doing?

Sharon When did you get out?

David enters the house battered and bruised.

Sharon What happened to your face?

David Nothing.

Sharon Look at your face!

David Its nothing man. How are you babes. Long time no see.

Sharon How can you say its nothing....

David Okay its something.

Sharon You are treating this as joke. The wound looks fresh are you okay.

David A smile a day keeps the doctor away.

Sharon That's not a saying!

David How are you love?

Sharon I'm okay but...

David ...You look good by the way.

Sharon David.

David Yep?

Sharon Why you not answering my question?

David What question?

Sharon What **happened** to you?

David Nothing.

Sharon Let me take a look at it.

David I'm good. Can I have a drink?

Sharon goes over to the fridge and gets him a drink.

Sharon Pineapple Juice?

David Just like the back of your hand.

Sharon What that?

David How well you know me.

Sharon Yep and I know you wouldn't have come here if you didn't want some help so please let me take a look at your face. It looks infected.

David I'm fine man

Sharon *You don't look fine, you look hurt!*

David What this little scratch.

Sharon goes to pick up a first aid box. She finds it and goes over to David to help tidy his wound. He does not stop her.

David ouch. Careful man!

Sharon I thought it was a scratch

Sharon continues to tend to David wound.

David You guys have done real well with this place.....What scams Kojo running

Sharon He is not running any scam! Thank you.

David Where'd you get all this stuff from?

Sharon We brought it.

David *Full price!*

Sharon Off course. Where have you been staying? *When did you get out?*

David I was in a hostel...

Sharon ...But

David how do you know there was a but?

Sharon Cos I am guessing that is how you got this on your face

David Yes and no

Sharon You haven't changed one bit

David No need to

Sharon I'm listening.

David What?

Sharon Finish the rest of your story.

David I came here to check you not to tell tales. You give me jokes.

Sharon Why's that.

David Always trying to fix something that's broke.

Sharon Is that a bad thing?

David Not all the time. Where's Kojo?

Sharon Work.

David What time he finish I need to go check him

Sharon You need to go to hospital for them to do some x-rays

David Babes I am not going.

Sharon Why not?

David Look like you done a great job on me already.

Sharon I am only a nurse. A doctor needs to look at you.

David I trust you.

Sharon I will make you a deal.

David No deal.

Sharon If I let you stay here...

David ...How do you know I want to stay here...

Sharon Promise me you will get this check out properly

Pause

David I'll think about it.....

End

10. EDUCATION AT THE ROYAL COURT

As the Royal Court is a centre for excellence and innovation in theatre-making, the Education Department aims to stimulate and inspire students of all ages, encouraging learning and participation in every aspect of the theatre's work, from the process of writing plays to pioneering rehearsal room techniques.

We offer a wide-ranging programme of work designed to open up and de-mystify the craft of making theatre. Royal Court Education activities include:

Workshops for productions
INSET workshops for teachers
Education Matinees
Post-show talks
Royal Court in a Day Study Day
Drama School in a Day Study Day
Performing Arts Business Study Day

A full description of all education events can be found on the education pages of the Royal Court web-site, www.royalcourttheatre.com. If you would like more information, please e-mail Lynne Gagliano, Education Associate, at lynnegagliano@royalcourttheatre.com or phone 020 7565 5174.

For more information about Royal Court productions and the Young Writers Programme, please visit our web-site, www.royalcourttheatre.com.