

# every brilliant thing

by **Duncan Macmillan with Jonny Donahoe**

## Every Brilliant Thing Spoiler Sheet

The following is a spoiler sheet for the That Production Company's Production of Every Brilliant Thing at Metro Arts, Brisbane. Please note that technical/staging elements may be changed following the preview of the play. The season runs from the 4<sup>th</sup> of October to the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2023. There is no interval.

**SPOILER WARNING!- STOP READING IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO KNOW THE  
SPOILERS WITHIN THE PLAY**

## Short Synopsis

Every Brilliant Thing tells the story of a young boy confronted with his mother's depression. His instinct is to try and cure his mother. He starts curating a list of all the amazing things that the universe has to offer.

1. Ice cream
2. Water fights
3. Staying up past your bedtime and being allowed to watch TV
4. The colour yellow
5. Things with stripes
6. Rollercoasters
7. People falling over

This story is told from the age of 7, then moves into the age 17 and into adulthood.

How does a young child deal with the impact of a parent who suffers from depression?

What makes life worth living?

## Content warning

**Content Warning** – This production of *Every Brilliant Thing* explores aspects of Mental Ill-Health and grief. The show contains depictions of depression, self-harm and suicide. If you have concerns for your mental wellbeing please note the following services for support.

**Lifeline** (13 11 14) offers a 24 hour counselling. Additional information can be found on their website, [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au).

**Beyond Blue** (1300 224 636) if you're going through a hard time right now, the Beyond Blue Support Service is available 24/7 for brief counselling. There are online chat options on [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au).

You may also consider speaking to a trusted source or engaging your local GP.

## **How the story is told**

### Staging in the Round

Please note that this performance is seated in the round. This means that the audience is seated on all sides of the stage. The production has endeavoured to develop a balanced performance for all sides of the stage, ensuring each audience member can engage with the story.

### The Role of the audience

The audience plays an important role within the telling of the *Every Brilliant Thing* Story. The audience members help us understand parts of the narrator's life by audience members playing characters in the story. The story is woven with these moments and the narrator invites audience members to engage with him sometimes in poignant, significant moments. Please note that engagement within the story does not require acting from the audience members but to support and respond to the narrator. These invitations are facilitated by the narrator in a caring way and seeks to invite but not force participation. Each performance is unique to the transaction and engagement of the audience, the narrator holds and curates his approach alongside the audience members.

## Long Synopsis

The following is a description of the story of *Every Brilliant thing*. The Narrator narrates throughout the play from present day to different times in his life, starting from age 7. Throughout the play the narrator engages with the audience, this could be through sitting near while speaking, asking for items on hand or relaying numbers for audience members to shout. Please note that the highlighted areas are marked for considerable audience participation which invite the audience to engage in responding to the narrator as a character in the story. Writing in purple have been marked for its reference to self-harm/suicide.

The play begins with upbeat jazz music playing, the narrator is engaging with the audience, chatting and handing out pieces of paper with numbers and words on them for the audience members to shout when the number is called.

The narrator begins to share the start of the list 1. Ice cream, 2. Water fights 3. Staying up past your bedtime and being allowed to watch TV 4. The colour yellow 5. Things with stripes 6. Rollercoasters

7. People falling over. The narrator shares that in this part of the story he is aged seven and this was all things good but not things his mother would agree with. The narrator describes being picked up late from school and taken to the hospital where his mum was.

Narrator shares his only other experience with the death of his dog. Sherlock bones. Narrator shares a telling of this experience.

**The Vet** - Narrator speaks to someone from the audience. Narrator asks the Vet to stand and takes a coat from a different audience member. The Narrator stands with the Vet holding the coat and holds the coat as if a docile animal, carefully in his arms. The narrator shares that he knows the Vet because they are a parent from school and it's reassuring. The narrator guides the audience member in the exchange to say

The Vet "You're doing the kind thing, it's not a moment too soon"

The Narrator asks the Vet to get a pen from the audience/ the vet has a pen/the narrator gets a pen from an audience member. The Narrator describes the pen as a needle with an anaesthetic. The narrator describes the use of the anaesthetic and how it can make a large dog unconscious and 'put to sleep forever'. The narrator asks the Vet to come over to Sherlock Bones (the coat) and



inject the dog in the thigh (using pen) If the Vet is smiling or laughing the Narrator makes a humorous remark regarding laughing when euthanising a children's pet and they try again. The Vet completes the task.

The Narrator asks someone to let him know when 30 seconds have passed. The Narrator asks the vet to stroke Sherlock Bones head. The Narrator remembers Sherlock Bones, the walk they had that morning, his smell in the narrators room, toys, and dry food, his bed under the stairs, all things that could be thrown away now. Narrator holds onto the coat a little longer. "and he became lighter. Or heavier. I'm not sure. But different". Audience member tells Narrator it has been 30 seconds.

"And that was my experience of death"

Narrator is invited back to their seat. Coat and pen is returned.

The Narrator invites an audience member to be his dad, shares that the audience member does not have to do much just sit on this seat.

**The Dad** takes a seat where indicated by the narrator. The Narrator shares that normally his mum picks him up and she normally pick him up on time but this time it is his dad and he's late. The narrator indicates for the audience member (the dad) to open the passenger door. Narrator shares the feeling of when you body feels knowing when something bad happens. It's a survival mechanism.

"feeling like there's a trap door opening beneath you. Fight or Flight or stand as still as you can"

The narrator stands still looking at his dad, eventually the Narrator sits down next to the audience member. The Narrator then invites the audience member to be the narrator at age 7 instead of being the dad. The Narrator speaking to the audience member asks them to just to say "why" in response to the narrator as The Dad.



The Narrator (as the dad) makes short statements and the audience member responds with “why”. The conversation describes the Narrator's mother is in hospital and she cannot see anything worth living for.

The Narrator then ends says “at least this is how I like to remember it. But we actually just sat in silence. The only thing he said to me was...”

The Narrator then feeds the audience member the line/or states the line themselves

**The Dad “Your mother has done something stupid”**

Narrator thanks the audience member for their contribution and indicates for them to return to their seat.

The Narrator then describes being at the hospital and seeing his mum and mum saying ‘not him’ the narrator describes sitting in the corridor next to an old couple.

The narrator sits next to a couple in the audience. The narrator describes drinking juice and eating chocolate when he starts to write down the list. Narrator calls out numbers.

“1. Ice cream, 2. Water fights 3. Staying up past your bedtime and being allowed to watch TV 4. The colour yellow 5. Things with stripes 6. Rollercoasters 7. People falling over.”

Narrator does the following entities himself

“8. Juice, 9. Chocolate, 10. Kind people who aren't weird and don't smell unusual”

The narrator hands the chocolate milk back to the old couple (audience members) and describes his dad being with his mum in the hospital room for ages. When dad finally came out he followed him down to the corridor and to home. His dad went into his room before the narrator could follow any further. The narrator describes waiting to hear what kind of music his dad would play. Narrator describes the rules for entering the room. “if it was this woman singing I could go into the room”

Gloomy Sunday by Billie Holiday plays beginning with her vocal.

The Narrator then describes other kinds of music that could play indicating what kind of reception he would have if he entered the room sharing various jazz music.

He waits to see what kind of music his dad puts on. Free Jazz by Ornette Coleman plays which meant he best not go in. He leaves to make some dinner for himself. The narrator continued with the list.

The narrator shares that mum didn't come home for a week or two and while she was away, he had speak to the school counsellor. The narrator looks at a woman in the audience.

**Mrs Patterson** The Narrator invites the audience member to take off their shoe saying

“ Now what she would do is, and it seems a little weird now but remember this was the 80s and she got results...”

The Narrator invites Mrs Patterson to take off her sock and put it on her hand.

“she would talk to you through her little sock-dog which she called – what did you call the sock-dog?”

The audience member says a name for the sock dog.

Narrator “yes that’s it, I remember now. What \_\_\_\_\_ would do is he’d ask questions like ‘how are you feeling today (prompting audience member)”

MRS PATTERSON (Audience member) “ how are you feeling today”

The narrator talks to Mrs Patterson about his dog Sherlock Bones and adds the sock puppet on the list and proceeds to tell Mrs Patterson about the list, shortly after the narrator says “Its been very nice talking to you but can go now?” The narrator acknowledges the contribution of the audience member.

The narrator talking to the audience shares that mum did come home from the hospital and by that time the list was 8 pages long. He left it on her pillow with the title ‘Every Brilliant Thing’ He shares he had known she had read it because she corrected his spelling. He shares the spoke to Mrs Patterson and \_\_\_\_\_ sock puppet once a week, then once a fortnight then once a month and then one day he left the school and never saw them again. He shares that he’s doesn’t want to make it sound like he had a miserable childhood because it wasn’t. He shares about music being filled in the house and having a piano in the kitchen. Music plays, he adds ‘Having a piano in the kitchen’ to the list.

The narrator shares that he forgot about the list until just over ten years later after **mums second attempt**. Narrator shares that his dad showed up at school and the narrator had the fight or flight feeling again. There was the same wordless drive to the hospital. Narrator shares that as a teenager he dealt with it less well. Narrator describes mum had come home and she sat at the kitchen table and said that if it wasn’t for the ham and pineapple pizza lining her stomach from the night before she’d be dead. “**And I said ‘You took three weeks’ worth of anti-depressants, a packet of Aspirin and half a tub of antihistamines. You’re probably healthier than I am. If you’re going to kill yourself go jump off a bridge”**

The narrator continues to eat at the table. The table is silent when mum begins to laugh, a genuine laugh and the narrator began to join in. Eventually Dad when into his study to listen to records. The narrator describes not being able to sleep that night, he describes shaking and feeling really upset, until he finds the list, he sits on



the floor and reads it through. "1. Ice cream". He shares that his younger self had dealt with this so much better. He picks up a pen and begins to add to the list. He describes the next morning he had sat at the end of his mother's bed and read the list to her. Mum got up and left the room. The narrator shares that he followed her and read louder. "516. Winning something, 517. Knowing someone well enough to get them to check your teeth for broccoli."

The narrator shares that over the next few days and weeks he would leave messages on the answer phone. He spent a lot of time talking to her back. The narrator continues shouting the list numbers. He describes leaving post-it notes around the house and on various things. Lists more numbers. He describes becoming more creative and carving the list into fruit, rearranging lettered fridge magnets, writing in cereal boxes. He lists more numbers. He shares his aim was to reach a thousand. He lists more numbers. He shares the list became his sole focus. He lists more numbers.

He shares he started to be bothered by the thought that his mum no longer loved my dad. He describes putting that thought out of his mind and returned to the list. He lists more numbers. He states "However much you know your not to blame, you can't help feeling like you failed them. Its not fair to feel this way. But its natural"

The narrator shares that the first week of university he posted the list to his mum. When he returned that Christmas he found it on his desk, unsure if she read it but it hadn't changed. He put the list in pages of her favourite book. That Christmas was quiet difficult. His dad drove him back to university in at new years. They didn't speak, they just listened to the radio.

The narrator describes being shy at university. Mostly listening to records in his room. He shares that he would even avoid lectures and seminars but there was lecture he would not miss.

**The lecturer** He looks the audience and invites a member to be the lecturer.

"Would you mind being my Lecturer? It's just because you really look like her"

The Narrator selects someone from the audience to be the Lecturer, leads them to the centre of the room and gives them a copy of *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.

The narrator shares that this lecture series was on the Victorian novella and built up to this one book, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. What she would do is, at the start of the lecture, should hold the book aloft...

The Lecturer holds up the book. The narrator says "and then she would leave a dramatic pause... And when she felt she had everybody's undivided attention....she would give a very accurate and detailed precis of the novel" The Narrator sits down and waits.

Eventually, the Lecturer (audience member) realises that can read the plot summary on the back of the book. The summary will be different depending on the copy, but will basically say something like.

“Visiting an idyllic German village, Werther, a sensitive young man, meets and falls in love with sweet-natured Lotte. Although he realises that she is to marry Albert, he is unable to subdue his passion and his infatuation torments him to the point of despair. The first great ‘confessional’ novel *The sorrows of Young Werther* draws both on Goethe’s own unrequited love for Charlotte Buff and the death of his friend Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem. The book was an immediate success, and a cult rapidly grew up around it, resulting in numerous imitations as well as violent criticisms and suppression on the grounds of its apparent support of suicide”

The narrator asks “ excuse me, I have a question”

The narrator gestures to the audience member as lecturer as a prompt

Lecturer “yes?”

Narrator “Are you saying that a book, that this book caused people to take their own lives?”

Lecturer “Yes”

Narrator “and you want *us* to read it?”

Lecturer “yes”

The narrator thanks the lecturer and indicates for them to return to their seat.

Narrator describes that he left that lecture that day and went to the library research social contagions, obesity, divorce, suicide and how we are all sub-consciously affected by our peers. He describes the affect of Marilyn Monroe’s death by overdose and the increase of suicides in the US of 12 percent. Every time suicide is front-page news, everything a celebrity or character on prime-time television takes their own life there is a spike in the number of suicides.

“suicide is contagious. Its call the ‘Werther Effect’ names after Goethe’s protagonist. Discovering this fact really scared me. Then it made me angry. I thought about the way suicide was present in films and on TV and how it was reported in the news. I found that the Samaritans had published a set of guidelines for how the media can report suicide intelligently. Its astonishing how rarely these guidelines are followed they’re really simple:

- Don’t place stories about suicide prominently and don’t unduly repeat such stories
- Don’t use language which sensationalises or normalises suicide, or presents it as a constructive solution to problems
- Don’t explicitly describe the method used
- Don’t provide details about the site/location

- Don't use sensational headlines
- Don't use photographs, video footage or social media links
- Don't publish suicide notes
- Do educate the public about the facts of suicide and suicide prevention, without spreading myths
- Do report stories of how to cope with life stressors or suicidal thoughts, and how to get help
- Do apply particular caution when reporting celebrity suicides
- Do apply caution when interviewing bereaved family or friends
- Do recognise that media professionals themselves may be affected by stories about suicide
- Do provide accurate information about where to seek help

Lifeline - 13 11 14

Beyond Blue - 1300 22 4636

Suicide Call Back Service - 1300 659 467

Headspace - 1800 650 890

Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800

MIND Australia - 1300 286 463

Griefline - 1300 845 745

DirectLine - 1800 888 236

Support Act - 1800 959 500

Switchboard (LGBTIQA+) - 1800 184 527

13 YARN (for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples) -13 92 76"

The Narrator puts away the paper. "Don't supply simplistic reasons such as 'he'd lost his job' or 'shed recently become bankrupt'".

The narrator shares that he read the book, and did not connect with it. He had never been very interested in romance. Until he locked eyes with the only other person who was always in the library.

Sam

A hugely romantic song begins to swell and the Narrator locks eyes with an audience member. This is now Sam. The Narrator waves, blushing. The vocal starts and the song continues as the Narrator speaks.

The “For weeks we would sit opposite each other without speaking. Occasionally we’d make eye contact and then immediately look away as if blinded by the sun. For the first time in my life I understood the lyrics of pop songs. And then finally, after weeks, I summoned up the courage to say hello”

Slowly, bashfully, the Narrator walks towards Sam.

On his way he asks the person who read out 517 to check his teeth for broccoli, then gives *The Sorrows of Young Werther* to someone else (audience member).

“Can you just... deal with this?”

As he is about to reach Sam, he suddenly turns to the person next to her.

“Can I move you?”

The Narrator gets the person next to Sam (usually their partner) to vacate their seat and move to the other side of the room. This is done very apologetically. Once relocated, the Narrator returns to Sam.

“Is anyone sitting here?” (Romantic jazz music plays)

For the purpose of this draft, Sam is a woman.

SAM (audience member) “Not anymore”

Narrator “Oh good.”

The Narrator sits down in the empty seat.

Narrator “Hello.”

SAM (Audience member) “Hello”

Narrator “What’s your name?”

The audience member says their name.

“No, in real life her name was Sam. What’s your name?”

SAM (Audience member) “Sam”

Narrator “Hi Sam. Nice to meet you. What are you reading?”

The Narrator addresses the audience.

“Oh, I forgot, does anyone have a book? We’re in the library so I need a couple of books.”

The Narrator indicates *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.

“Not that one”

The Narrator gets a couple of books from the audience and throws one into Sam's lap.

"What are you reading?"

Sam reads the title of the book.

"\_\_\_\_\_ What's it about?"

Sam (audience member) reads the back of the book.

"Sounds really good."

The Narrator tells Sam what he's reading and tries to explain how great it is.

"It's really good. In fact, why don't I lend it to you? And I could read (Says title of Sam's book.) and we could meet up and talk about them, perhaps get a coffee sometime or a cup of tea or an or an or an orange juice, maybe, perhaps, if you'd like to, if you think that would be..."

Sam agrees

"I had a date! We began to meet up in the library. We'd swap books and discuss them over coffee. I read things I would never have encountered otherwise. I probably learned more from the books Sam gave me than from any of my course texts. After several months of reading and meeting and trying not to look at each other Sam returned a book to me, one of my favourite childhood books and said"

The Narrator says the lines and encourages SAM to repeat them back to him.

Narrator "really interesting read"

Sam "really interesting read"

Narrator "There's something really interesting in this book..."

Sam "There's something really interesting in this book..."

Narrator "That I want you to read"

Sam "That I want you to read"

Narrator describes being confused as he had already read the book and had lent to book to Sam. He then realised that the list was in the pages of the book. Mortified. He had never told anyone about his mum. He shares that as a kid there were times when he had nothing in his lunch box or wouldn't have socks on or something and he didn't want people to think that because of his mother was.. he wasn't sure.. he shares that out of context the list could seem childish, that the idea of nice things could combat hardwired depression was embarrassingly naïve. He was so upset he went to rip in half when he noticed someone else's handwriting. The narrator reads list numbers that Sam had entered onto the list.

"1000, When someone lends you books"

Narrator continues to read aloud entries Sam had written describing her thinking about the Narrator.

“I have some advice for anyone who has been contemplating suicide. Its really simple advice. It's this

Don't do it. Things get better. They might not always get brilliant”

Narrator indicates Sam

“but they get better”

The narrator describes dating in 1998 without instant messaging or Facebook. He stared at Sam's contribution to the list for three hours and eventually continued the list from where Sam had left off. He continues with the list while music plays. He shares that he wanted to get to 2000 and kept writing as the sun came up and his hand had cramped. He continues with the list as his day moves on. He continues with the list (calling numbers) he then calls entries himself at speed. Music begins to play. He describes the next morning taking the list to the library and he and Sam kissed for the first time. From then on they were inseparable. The Narrator wrote new entries everyday as a gift for Sam. The Narrator continues with the list as it builds with excitement as the Narrator declares that he will HIGH FIVE everyone.

The Narrator High-fives as many people as he can in the audience. The narrator indicates to stage manager to stop the music playing. The Narrator is out of breath

“My mum.. She would do this. Get carried away. Ups and downs. As a little boy, it was never shyness, or thoughtfulness. Happiness scared me because it was usually followed by...know”

The Narrator looks at Sam

“This was all very new. Feeling like this. Studies have shown that children with depressed mothers have a heightened reactivity to stress. Mothers who are withdrawn leave children to fend for themselves and it actually changes the chemistry of the brain, the fight or flight impulse. But the real risk as I perceived it... The real risk, that I'd felt my whole life, was that I would one day feel as low as my mum had and take the same action. Because alongside the anger and the incomprehension is an absolute crystal clear understanding of why someone would no longer want to continue living... I took Sam back home to meet my parents. They were amazing. They were wonderful. They were fantastic. It was awful. It made it see like I'd exaggerated everything from my childhood. My Dad made lasagne and played Cab Calloway records. My mum laughed a lot and told a story about breaking a guys nose on a tram in Egypt. We drank a few bottles of wine and sang songs at the kitchen piano”

### Keyboard holders

The Narrator produces an electric keyboard and stands in the centre of the room. He then recruits two people from the Audience to hold either end of it while he

plays. He thinks about the logistics of the room and speaks to the people holding the keyboard.

“um because we’re in the round, we’re just going to do a slow revolve. Clockwise, obviously”

The narrator then sings parts of a selection of songs as he shares that one this night his dad sang, something he would not ordinarily do. Sam sang the last song of the night. *Some things last a long time by Daniel Johnston*. The Narrator sings few lines of the songs ending then takes away the piano and his assistants return to their seats. The narrator share that with Sam’s encouragement the list grew. People asked if they could read it and add to it. The narrator continues with the list items with other people contribution. The narrator shares that a year after university he and Sam got married. Sam proposed.

“it was beautiful, it was... in fact, no, lets just do it.”

The narrator describes the day of the proposal while encouraging the audience member (Sam) to go on one knee. The narrator turns around and Sam is on one knee.

“she took my hands and said...”

Sam “will you marry me?”

Narrator “and I said yes..lets kiss later”

Sam returns to their seat.

The narrator describes their wedding in a hall. Dad did a speech though he hated public speaking.

## The DAD

The Narrator gets the microphone, takes dad (audience member) by the hand and leads him into the middle of the room.

“...no I really want to. I really want to take this opportunity to talk to everyone, so..”

The narrator speaks into the microphone

“...ladies and gentlemen, in a break from tradition, please welcome the father of the groom”

The Narrator gives the Dad the microphone, asks him to wait for a moment and then sits next to Sam and links arms.

“Say what’s in your heart dad”

The dad (audience member) improvises a short speech, after which the Narrator hugs the dad and lets them return to their seat. The Narrator describes the rest of the reception and the holiday with Sam following the wedding. They moved, got jobs, a car. *They settled into a routine, saw less and less of each other, they argued about money. One argument Sam suggested the narrator get professional help. This*

made the Narrator angry. He knew what depression looked like and this was not it. The narrator describes becoming more isolated listening to records. The Narrator describes Sam encouraging to continue the list, but the narrator was stuck. The list ended. He then describes Sam packing and leaving signalling the end of their marriage. The narrator describes the fight or light feeling again and that he had been feeling like this for a long time. He described that Sam wrote a note in the sleeve note, she had said that she loved him and when he was ready they should try again but he didn't find the note for seven years. When he eventually found the note he did the oddest things he's ever done.

### Mrs Patterson

"Mrs Patterson?"

Mrs Patterson "yes"

Narrator asks Mrs Patterson if she remembers him

Mrs Patterson "yes"

Narrator asks to speak to the sock puppet. Mrs Patterson takes off her shoe and sock once more and puts the sock over her hand.

Sock "hello"

Narrator "Hello \_\_\_\_\_ how are you?"

Sock "I'm fine, how are you?"

Narrator "Well, I'm Talking to a sock dog on the phone so apparently not great...I'm Sad...I'm really sad \_\_\_\_ and I don't know how to change that. And I wanted to speak to you because when I was a little boy you knew me better than anyone. I wanted to ask you: was I always like this? Do you remember what I was like?"

Sock "Yes"

Narrator "Was I happy?"

Narrator leads the sock puppet through a brief conversation until a conclusion is reached that allows the Narrator to take the next step- either he's always been sad or he was once happy. He says goodnight to the sock puppet. He says he did talk to someone, a support group. The narrator addresses the group (The audience)

"hello everyone"

The Narrator encourages to audience to respond. The Narrator shares that its been difficult to talk about this before but its important to talk about things. He shares about how he was better at being happy. Feeling joy. But being an adult is much more complex, conscious of the problems in the world and the disappointments. He shares that he is not sure if he can ever fully allow himself to be joyful. He's just not very good at it. Its helpful to know there are other people who feel the same.

"I made a list. Everything that's brilliant about the world.. I began making it as a present for my mum, its kind of a long story.. actually, wait a second, I have it with me.."

The Narrator exits the stage, then returns with a trolley on which sit several large, worn boxes. He shares that he had thrown it away but unbeknownst to him his partner at the time got it out of the trash and hid it in the garage under an old tablecloth and then left a note. He reads pieces of paper with the list. And then another. And another. He smiles around the room.

"If you live a long life and get to the end of it without ever one having felt crushingly depressed then you probably haven't been paying attention"

"I wasn't around for the last time. I was away with work when I got the call, I was at the beach. Dad wasn't around either. A neighbour complained about the exhaust fumes and eventually the police cut through the garage door. Hosepipe through the driver-side window...That surprised me, because mum hated driving. She had poor circulation and would always complain about her ankles on long journeys. They say that it's a masculine way to choose to die. But I don't know what that means. There was a pad and pencil on the passenger seat but she hadn't written anything. I drove dad to the funeral. We sat in silence. He smoked with the window down. I helped him with his tie. After the service, meeting my mums friends and colleagues, I realised how much the list had changed the way I see the world. 31. Birdsong, 45 Hugging, 341 Alcohol, 577 tea and biscuits, 1092 conversation. The list hadn't stopped her, Hadn't saved her. Of course, it hadn't... I got a text from Sam"

The Narrator gives Sam the phone to read/or reads the text aloud.

"I heard about your mum. I'm so sorry. Give me a call. Anytime. I'd love to hear your voice. Love, Sam x P.s I heard the other day that Beyonce is related to the composer Gustav Mahler. It Occurred to me that this is a fact that should be on your list. Truly a brilliant thing"

The narrator describes staying with dad for a few months after the funeral, spending their days walking and listening to records. He begins to type the list at his fathers desk. He completes typing the list. He printed it out and left in dads chair. He never mentioned it directly but few weeks later he said 'thank you'

## The Dad

Dad "Thank you"

Narrator " and he said I love you"

Dad "I love you"

Narrator "I told him that sentimentality didn't suit him...999997 The Alphabet, 999998 Inappropriate songs played at emotional moments..999999 completing a task...1000000 listening to a record for the first time. Turning it over in your hands, placing it on the deck and putting the needle down, hearing the faint hiss crackle of

the sharp metal point on the wax before the music begins, then sitting and listening while reading through the sleeves”

The Narrator shakes hands with or hugs the members of the audience who played the principal characters the Vet, Lecturer, Mrs Patterson, Dad and Sam.

Exits

**End of Show**