

WISE GUYS

by Philip Osment

Notes

First produced at Theatre Centre and Red Ladder Company 1997.

Three young guys living on the edge of society are trying to survive in a fractured world; out of frustration, they turn to crime and drugs.

At the opening of the play, Mike describes how awful it is to live with his drunken abusive father:

MIKE – LATE TEENS (UK)

So that bastard comes home drunk again. Front door slams. Falls over my brother Martin's bike in the hall doesn't he?

I can hear him coming up the stairs. Freddy Krueger. Knocking the picture off the wall. Gave it to my Mum for her birthday. Can hear the glass splinter.

I look over at Martin. He's just lying there. His eyes open. Got the look my hamster used to get when the cat came in the room.

And then his fist smashes into my face. And I'm on the floor and he's laying into me. And she's trying to stop him but he sends her flying along the landing and she bashes her head against the toilet door. He's got the end of the Hoover and he's beating me over the head with it.

And then it's over. He's out the door. And she's running after him trying to stop him. Stupid cow. She's running down the street and all the neighbours are watching. Blood dripping off her chin down her night-dress. What a sight. She wants him to stay. Couldn't give a toss about me.

My brother Martin looks like one of those kids you see on TV at Christmas singing carols. Angelic. He's not. But he looks like it. I always felt like I had to protect him. 'Cos he was so much younger. I've been mean to him, don't get me wrong. Stole my Walkman and broke it one time. Closest I ever came to losing it with him. I mean I thumped him but not like to really hurt him. I'd never do that. At the end of the day he's the only person I care about. And I'm the only person he cares about. My Mum says I got too much influence over him. She's scared I'm going to lead him astray. I nearly got done for nicking car stereos and she's scared I'll get him into that. But I wouldn't. I'd kill him if he started that.