

## BRAINSTORM (IFS DRAFT 1)

Ned Glasier, Emily Lim and Company Three

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### Introduction

*ANJALI walks on stage. She speaks to the audience.*

ANJALI:

Hello. So.

*EMMA enters. She sits down and takes out her phone. Throughout the scene, whenever someone enters, they take out their phone and sit sending messages to each other via a central WhatsApp group, commenting on how they're feeling, what's happening in the show, and the audience.*

That's Emma.

*(To the audience.)* Look at her.

What do you think of her?

Do you like her?

What do you think is going on in her head, right now?

Emma's 11. She's the youngest one here. She hates that. Don't you, Emma?

Emma used to live in China. And Korea. And Australia. But now she lives in Singapore. She can speak English, French and Chinese. She's a major Swiftie. She doesn't understand why we have feelings. Why we have to have tests. Why we have maths.

*AURELIEN and AOIFE enter.*

ANJALI: This is -

*AURELIEN and AOIFE cough.*

ANJALI: Sorry...

AURELIEN: This is Aoife. She's 11 years old. She loves anything related to animals and has two cats. She can make these really creepy faces. Come on. Come on. Pleeeeease.

AOIFE *makes a creepy face.*

There we go! Come on everyone, some applause for the creepy face! (*Everyone applauds.*)

AOIFE: This is Aurelien. Also 11 years old. And still pretty far from his 12th birthday. He adores writing! So far, he has written six whole novels, which are part of his first series.  
Say something, Aurelien.

AURELIEN *doesn't say anything.*

Say something.

AURELIEN *says whatever pops into his head.*

Say something longer.

AURELIEN: No.

SOFIYA *enters.*

ANJALI:

This is Sofiya. She's 11 years old but about to turn 12. She was born in Kazakhstan and is Russian, German and French. Sofiya does ballet, gymnastics and Latin dance. She doesn't understand why she has to do fast calculation if she can use paper because she isn't a calculator. Finally, she loves cats. But she's allergic to them.

SOFIYA *sneezes several times.*

You good?

SOFIYA:

And this is Anjali. She's the final 11 year old in our cast. She loves Taylor Swift, sushi, purple and pandas. She has an older brother. She hates it when he annoys her. She also hates papaya.

ANJALI:

This is a play about us.

It's about our brains.

And it's about you.

Twenty years ago scientists thought that teenage brains were the same as adult brains, but like really rubbish versions of them.

Scientists thought teenagers were just crap adults.

Most people thought teenagers were just crap adults.

In fact, most people still do.

DIANE, MAXINE, LIVIA, CLELIE, MATVII *all enter.*

This is Diane, Maxine, Livia, Clelie and Matvii. They're all 12.

So. Then scientists started using these machines called MRI machines to scan people's brains and they learned loads more about them.

And they found out that teenagers aren't actually crap adults.

They found out that our brains are different to adult brains and that that's okay, that's a good thing, they're meant to be like that.

DIANE: Hang on. This is a play about teenagers?

ANJALI: Yes.

EMMA: But we're not teenagers.

ANJALI: Well, technically we're PRE teens. But we're going to be teenagers soon enough right?

MATVII: I'm 13 really soon. I'm basically a teenager.

ANJALI: Can I carry on?

*Everyone looks around at each other. Looks back at ANJALI and nods.*

Thank you.

Scientists now know that teenage brains are different for a reason, but if you go and ask people in the street or teachers or bus drivers or politicians or parents or security guards that follow us around in shops, I bet they don't know that.

We know. And we think you should know.

MAXINE: That's Diane. She's 12. She can speak Russian, French and English. She is a swiftie. She is a cat AND a dog person. Her older brother always makes her late for school.

In Diane's brain there are eighty-six billion neurons.

A neuron is a cell that sends information.

In your brain, and your brain, and your brain right now, there are eighty-six billion neurons.

Everyone has eighty-six billion neurons.

Even Lara does.

In Diane's brain, right now, there are neurons sending loads of information about Taylor Swift music videos and easter eggs.

Whenever you think of something, or do something, or look at your phone, or dance to a great song, or think about someone amazing -

DIANE: Like Taylor Swift.

MAXINE: Whenever you do anything your neurons get connected up. They get connected by these things called synapses.

DIANE: This is Livia. Her favourite colour is sky blue, and she hates worms. She has a brother who collects anime figures. She thinks being 12 years old feels weird and overcrowded because teachers give too much homework for the next day. She loves Stray Kids.

LIVIA: Especially Felix... This is Clelie, she loves wolves and Taylor Swift (*Diane and Clelie high five*). She doesn't understand homework, swearing, and why she isn't confident. She hates it when her little sister annoys her.

CLELIE: She always does this thing where - (*Matvii clears throat*). Okay, okay. This is Matvii. He loves chess, collecting chess pieces, and reading. He has three cats and loves them with all his heart.

MATVII: This is Maxine. She likes dancing, listening to music, rock climbing, dumplings, noodles... anything you don't like? (*Maxine nods head*). What? (*Maxine smiles and 'zips' lips.*)

MATISSE AND MARCUS *enter*

MARCUS: What scientists now know is that by the time you start puberty -

DIANE: Like you and Matisse.

MARCUS: By the time you're like me and Matisse -

There are some parts of your brain that have way too many connections - loads and loads and loads of synapses.

You've grown all these connections - it's called sprouting - and your brain is like really messy. When you become a teenager you've got more connections in some parts of your brain than you'll ever have again.

This is Matisse. He has recently turned 13, and he absolutely loves it. He likes playing basketball and he has a YouTube channel where he posts videos about coding. Matisse thinks that he's small, so he is waiting for his growth spurt.

MATISSE: This is Marcus, he's 13 and he's the silly guy. He always makes people laugh. He doesn't usually get along with people his age, but when he does, life feels a lot better. But whenever he's around the people he loves, it's like when you're sick, and medicine makes it all better. He loves reading, playing video games, and collecting vintage comics. Oh, and he has a cat called Squeakers.

CLOE, BAHIA, LOLA AND ROXANE *enter*

CLOE: Hi. I'm Cloe, this is Bahia, Lola and Roxane. We're all 14 years old, so we're the most knowledgeable about being teenagers. (*Everyone rolls eyes/shakes heads in disagreement*). Bahia is always late. She loves snow and does aquathlon. Her favourite colour is navy blue. She thinks being 14 is like having a messy room - she always has to clean.

BAHIA: This is Cloe. She's Italian, likes rock climbing, and the band Maneskin. She's learning her fourth language at the moment. She's a cat and dog person. But has two cats. She doesn't understand why her parents always blame everything on her phone.

ROXANE: Lola. She is VERY smart, but very modest. She's too tall for gymnastics, is obsessed with dogs, and always has an exquisite snack.

LOLA: And finally, this is Roxane. She's just started playing ping-pong, but is starting to regret that... she thinks her sister is sometimes a spoilt brat, she's a complete Swiftie (Diane and Clelie cheer) and can't decide between cats or dogs.

ROXANE: Look at us.

What do you think of us?

What do you think we're thinking about right now? *Beat*. Do you want to see?

*Pause. Clicks and notifications. ROXANE is on her phone for a moment.*

This is WhatsApp.

*Her phone screen appears on the wardrobe behind her.*

It's a messaging app. It's like texting, but it's free. And our parents aren't in the groupchat so it's better.

Since the play started we've sent all these messages to each other.

*She scrolls back through the messages the cast have sent one another since the beginning of the show. As we read them, the cast continue to send messages to the group.*

*ROXANE puts her phone away.*

Look at us.

Think of all those billions of neurons in your brain.

All those connections you're making while you're looking at us.

It looks like lightning and it sounds like the fastest typing in the world. Like machine guns.

*They look up from their phones.*

Look at us.

Who's your favourite? Who would you sit next to on the bus? Who would you have been friends with when you were our age? Who's always in trouble? Who is in love? Who do you think tells their parents to go away? Who spends the most time locked away in their room?

Look at us.

Look at us.

Look at us.

*BAHIA stands. The others run to a drawer or cupboard (possibly a bag).*

BAHIA: Imagine you could open a door in our heads and look right inside our brains.

*Everyone opens their drawer or empties their bag.*

Imagine you see all the connections we've been sprouting ever since we were born. All lying around like wires and clothes and a whole load of crap on the floor.

*MARCUS empties a drawer/bag of clothes and objects all over the stage.*

It's a mess. A total mess.

*DIANE starts playing music through a speaker.*

*LIVIA plays DIANE'S mum.*

LIVIA: DIANE!

DIANE: YES, MUM?

LIVIA: WHERE ARE YOU?

DIANE: I'M IN MY ROOM.

*DIANE turns the speaker up.*

LIVIA: DIANE!

DIANE: WHAT?

*DIANE turns the speaker up again.*

LIVIA: WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE?

DIANE: NOTHING

*DIANE turns the speaker up and up and up and up to drown out her Mum.*

LIVIA: DIANE!

DIANE: I'M BUSY!

*As the music gets louder and louder, the cast explode their bedrooms, pulling objects and clothes out of the drawers and cupboards (bags?) and making a massive mess.*





## Bedrooms

The cast are in their bedrooms.

SOFIYA *plays* CLELIE'S *mum*.

SOFIYA: CLELIE! YOU BETTER BE CLEANING!

CLELIE: My brain is like my bedroom. It looks tidy, until you start looking properly and opening up the drawers and looking under the bed and then... mess. A total mess. It's got everything in it.

SOFIYA: CLELIE!

CLELIE: Bed. Soft blanket. Music. Texting my friends - I don't like it when my sister comes into MY room!

SOFIYA: CLELIE!

CLELIE: WHAT?!

Sherlock has this mind palace where he keeps all his information and facts and evidence and stuff all neat and tidy.

I tried to make my brain into a mind palace once. It's basically physically impossible.

AURELIEN: I have a desk in front of my window. I have a small rocking chair. I sit on it in the morning and think of random stuff. It's good to get ideas while rocking. I mostly do it when I'm bored. You know, my brain is a bit like being in an armchair watching TV but then being interrupted by two people called School and Homework. Huh.

ANJALI *plays* LOLA'S *mum*.

LOLA: My bed is really close to the big window, which has a really nice view (so I can spy on the neighbours). I have this nice poster over my bed with loads of pictures and stickers. My cupboard is really messy and my Mum gets mad at us and then we clean it.

ANJALI: LOLA!

LOLA: WHAT?

ANJALI: CUPBOARD!

LOLA: I'M DOING IT!

MARCUS: Quite small. Crammed with stuff. Books, toys, plushies, posters, clothes, comics, and my cat. We like to hang out.

ROXANE: My safe place. My room is the best.

CLOE *plays LIVIA'S mum.*

LIVIA: Pretty messy, even though I clean it most of the time. I have like, twenty K-POP albums, a BlackPink poster, books and stuff.

CLOE: LIVIA! STOP TALKING AND START CLEANING!

LIVIA: OKAY!

My room's messy but it means I've got everything.  
My brain's messy but it means I've got everything.

The connections I've been forming for my whole life are all still there. I haven't lost anything important, it just takes a long time to find anything.

DIANE: A desk with a chair. A bed with cushions. A bunch of huge windows. A bunch of wardrobes. A light. Air con. Clean.

MATVII: A shelf full of books. Ready for my brain to absorb all the information like a sponge. A staircase leading to my bed. A small window. A desk. And cats - they like my bed.

AOIFE: Posters. Plushies. LOL dolls. Pirate map. Book shelf. Dreamcatcher. Jewellery box. And my cat's bed and cat tree.

EMMA: Bed. Bookshelf. Childhood toys. Wardrobe. Photos of when I was little - including a weird photo of me eating pasta with my hands. My sister says my room is messy, but I like it as it is.

BAHIA: I share a room with my younger sister - she's on the bottom bunk and I'm on the top. My favourite thing is my collection of snow globes - my Dad buys me one when he goes on business trips and everytime we travel.

CLOE: Basically, if i'm in my room, I'm on my phone. I'm always on my phone. You can learn so much on your phone. Like YouTube, Wikipedia, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik-Tok.  
And I can store it all too. It's like my own library.

MATISSE: CLOE!

CLOE: If I hear my Dad coming, I throw my phone across the room and lie on my bed with my books like I'm doing my homework.

MATISSE: CLOE!

CLOE: WHAT?

MATISSE: CAN I COME IN? I'VE GOT YOUR WASHING.

CLOE: LEAVE IT OUTSIDE.

MATISSE: ARE YOU DOING YOUR HOMEWORK?

CLOE: YES.

MATISSE: I KNOW YOU WERE ON YOUR PHONE.

CLOE: I WAS DOING MY HOMEWORK ON MY PHONE.

*MOVEMENT SECTION - BEDROOMS - 2 MINS APPROX.*

## **Sprouting**

MATISSE *is filming himself on his phone. His face appears projected on the wardrobe.*

MATISSE: Hello. Welcome to my YouTube tutorial. This week I'm showing you how to make money from game development.

*He films himself on his phone.*

It takes some time but it's pretty simple! Create multiple accounts across various platforms, like YouTube, Twitter, Instagram... It's all about connections.

My brain is always making new connections.

Everytime I go on YouTube and watch a new tutorial, the neurons in my brain get connected up again and again by synapses.

MAXINE: Hello! Today, I'm going to teach you how to tie your shoelaces!

LOLA: How to make a chocolate cake that melts in your mouth!

CLOE: The basics of volleyball.

DIANE: How to dress for any fancy occasion!

CLELIE: To put your makeup on professionally.

EMMA: To know everything about Taylor Swift.

ANJALI: To learn bharatanatyam.

AOIFE: All the theories of the Keeper of the Lost Cities.

LIVIA: How to learn S-class choreography by Straykids.

SOFIYA: How to draw a portrait.

MATVII: The best openings in chess.

MARCUS: How to beat anyone at Mario Kart. And I mean ANYONE!

BAHIA: To come up with an excuse for ANYTHING.

AURELIEN: To make a snowman!

ROXANE: To convince your parents to get a cat.

MATISSE: Imagine you could open a door in my head and see what happens every time I learn something new. Because I swear, right now, it feels like I do something new everyday. Like learning a new song or new basketball techniques or how to keep my sneakers looking brand-new - I love sneakers. You'd see a whole load of my neurons getting connected up in a way they never have before. And everytime I do the same thing, the same connections happen. Again and again.

*The cast ask a nearby audience member to film them using their phones.*

MAXINE: So, first of all, take the two ends. Put the right one over the left one and slip it under. Then... TIGHTEN IT! Good job, everybody!

LOLA: First, melt the chocolate and butter in the pan. Then mix the flour and baking powder in a bowl.

CLOE: Start by making your hand flat and place your four fingers perpendicularly on top of your other four fingers and align your thumbs almost at the tips.

DIANE: First, find your prettiest dress you have, add a purse and some jewellery, and you're good to go!

CLELIE: Take your mascara and open it. Put it carefully on your lashes... not your eyeballs, and DO NOT rub or scratch your eyes afterwards.

EMMA: She is born on the 13th of December 1989 - that means one day after me!

ANJALI: Shape your hands like this, and sort of squat. Put your hands to your chest and put your hands down, shape them like a lotus. One last thing! Put your right leg in front of you.

AOIFE: Does Keefe have an evil twin sister? Is Amy, SOphie's real biological sister?

LIVIA: For the hand movement, you want to align your right hand horizontally and left hand vertically. With your left hand, push it to the top three times. The turn right and repeat the same.

SOFIYA: First, take your pencil and paper. You draw a cross and then you draw a circle... and you have a Mona Lisa!

MATVII: If you have the white chess pieces, move the pawn on E2 two steps forward, and if you have the black chess pieces, move the pawn on E7 two steps forward.

MARCUS: Equip Baby Mario, the lady bug thing, the azure roller wheels and the cloud gliders - then you're good to go!

BAHIA: First, deny it! Second, is to say the first thing that is in your mind that is coherent with the subject. An example, 'Oh, I fell down, so I had to crawl all the way here'.

AURELIEN: Don't use a carrot for the nose or it will be eaten by a snow bunny. I've already experienced it. RIP Olaf.

ROXANE: Get down on your knees and BEG.

MATISSE: Showcase your work, and let the magic happen!

*They take back their phones and film MATISSE again.*

The more I use those connections, the stronger they get. That's why you get better at things the more you do them.

Like volleyball. Or drawing. Or Mario Kart. Or whatever.

The connections you use all the time get stronger and stronger. And the connections you don't use - as you get older they start to die off. That's called pruning.

It's a bit like tidying your room, and when you throw away all the stuff you don't use anymore. It basically means your brain gets better at doing certain things, but it's like a compromise because you'll lose loads of connections that you'll never get back.

It doesn't happen overnight. It takes years and years. It's not like you wake up one day and you just get an adult brain. And it happens in different parts of your brain at different times. That's really important. Right now I've got more connections in some parts of my brain than I'll ever have again.

I wish my Mum could see that.

## Pre-Frontal Cortex

AURÉLIEN: There's this bit at the front of the brain called the Pre-Frontal Cortex. It's right here, right in front of your brain. It's the bit that controls your planning and consequences and stuff like that. It's the really sensible bit. It's the bit that stops you doing stupid stuff. The bit that says 'Don't do that, or that will happen.' It's a bit like your Mum.

*They all find a piece of their parents' clothing somewhere in the space. They put the item of clothing on, carefully.*

*Sudden shift. The cast become their [a]rents. It's like they're caught in the spotlight.*

*AURÉLIEN speaks into the microphone. He passes it down the line.*

MARCUS: Hi, I'm Sarah, Marcus' Mum. I teach Grade 2 at the IFS.

AOIFE: Hi, I'm Emma, Aoife-Lily's Mum. I'm an English teacher.

ROXANE: Hi, I'm Aurore, Roxane's Mum...

BAHIA: What's up, I'm Abdel, Bahia's father. I love taking naps in the afternoon and telling my daughter I can speak Spanish - even though I don't.

MAXINE: Hi, I'm Marilyn, Maxine's Mum. When I travel with my husband, all we do is visit temples, which Maxine finds very boring. I love couscous and Hummus.

AURÉLIEN: Hello, I'm Daniel, Aurélien's Dad. I'm a counsellor now, but I used to be a banker. Aurélien thinks that banking is the most boring job!

MARCUS: I love cooking with Marcus and playing It Take Two together. I hope he pursues his dream of becoming an actor.

AOIFE: Some of my classes are really good and some can be annoying. Aoife-Lily can be as annoying as those classes, maybe even more. I hope that Aoife gives me some grandkids.

ROXANE: My daughter is clumsy, just like me. She always talks back like her Dad. Roxane is so forgetful and always loses her stuff, and unlike her I'M CLEAN. I wish for Roxane to get good results for her exams.

BAHIA: I want my daughter to have a happy life and a good education.

MAXINE: I started to take art classes and I really like it. Plus, Maxine finds them very pretty so I'm happy. I hope Maxine will stress less for her exams and start to listen to us more.

AURÉLIEN: I want Aurélien to pursue his dream and write. I'm sorry, I'd love to do this for longer but I have work in the morning.

*All the cast look at each other and nod. They take off the parent's item of clothing.*

The Pre-Frontal Cortex is one of the last bits of the teenage brain to develop.

MAXINE *steals the microphone from AURÉLIEN. He resists.*

It takes ages and ages to work properly.

MAXINE *plays AURÉLIEN'S Mum.*

MAXINE: AURÉLIEN?!

*Music. The cast scramble to tidy up their bedrooms as best they can, shoving things haphazardly in drawers, cupboards, and under the bed.*

AURÉLIEN: YES?

MAXINE: AURÉLIEN, OPEN THE DOOR.

AURÉLIEN: OKAY!

MAXINE: BAHIA!

BAHIA: WHAT?!

MAXINE: MARCUS!

MARCUS: DON'T COME IN!

MAXINE: AOIFE, OPEN THE DOOR!

AOIFE: WAIT A MINUTE.

MAXINE: ROXANE! HAVE YOU TIDIED UP?!

ROXANE: I'M DOING IT!

MAXINE: ARGHH! TEENAGERS!!



## Parent Duologues

*The music stops. The cast stop tidying.*

*One by one the parents enter the bedrooms to confront their children.*

MARCUS *plays* AOIFE'S Mum.

MARCUS: Aoife Lily Dorothy Hughes, kindly tell me why this is empty?

AOIFE: I don't know... maybe Dad ate it?

MARCUS: Your father didn't know about these crisps!

AOIFE: Maybe he found them! You always think it's ME!

MARCUS: I asked your Dad and he said it wasn't him!

AOIFE: Arghhh! (*Storms off*)

—

ROXANE *plays* BAHIA'S Mum.

ROXANE: Remove your headphones.

BAHIA: Why?

ROXANE: You can't hear me.

BAHIA: I can.

ROXANE: JUST REMOVE THEM.

BAHIA: Why?!

ROXANE: REMOVE THEM.

BAHIA: Okay, but WHY?!

ROXANE: I said you CAN'T HEAR ME!

—

MAXINE plays AURÉLIEN'S Mum.

MAXINE: Do your homework.

AURÉLIEN: Wait.

MAXINE: How long will it take?

AURÉLIEN: About 5 hours.

MAXINE: Come downstairs and do your maths homework.

AURÉLIEN: Fine. Let me finish this instruction first.

MAXINE: Stop playing Legos and get downstairs!!

—

AOIFE plays MARCUS' Mum.

AOIFE: Marcus!

MARCUS: Yes?!

AOIFE: Get off your game!

MARCUS: I'm in the middle of a round!

AOIFE: Well you shouldn't have started it!

MARCUS: FINE!

AOIFE: Have you done your homework?

MARCUS: YES!

AOIFE: Fine. In half an hour, that must be OFF!

MARCUS: Thanks Mum! I'll set a time!

AOIFE: Yeah right. I'm checking anyway!

—

BAHIA plays ROXANE'S Mum.

BAHIA: ROXANE?!

ROXANE: Yes?!

BAHIA: Your room is a mess, tidy it up!

ROXANE: But I'm doing my homework now!

BAHIA: If not now, you're never going to do it!

ROXANE: I just said, I'm doing my homework!

BAHIA: Teenagers.

—

AURÉLIEN plays MAXINE'S Mum.

AURÉLIEN: MAXINE, DON'T WORK ON THE FLOOR.

MAXINE: But it's so comfortable!

AURÉLIEN: It's disgusting!

MAXINE: But -

AURÉLIEN: I said no! Go and work at the table like any normal person would.

MAXINE: But I prefer working on the floor, it gives me more inspiration!

AURÉLIEN: STOP YOUR NONSENSE AND GO AND WORK AT THE TABLE!

MAXINE: URGH. FINE!

## Brain Scan

*A series of statements are projected onto the wardrobe. The cast answer yes or no to each statement by turning their lamp on or off (hands up or down).*

LIVIA:

Hello.

Welcome to your Brain Scan.

It's just a few questions.

Hands up = Yes.

Hands down = No.

Ready?

I am a student at IFS - 16

I live in Singapore - 16

I eat too much candy - 6

I like to read - 10

I think school is boring - 7

I love video games - 8

I'm scared I won't be able to have children - 2

I feel guilty whenever I'm on my phone for too long - 8

I hurt someone today - 2

I'm a fake Swiftie - 1

I don't think I'm good enough - 8

I have broken a bone - 4

I hate homework - 12

I'm addicted to screens - 4

I'm scared of insects - 4

I'm close friends with my siblings - 4

I hate my Dad - 1

I am too kind and people take advantage of me - 4

I want to be...

A chef

A politician

A lawyer

An actor

A parent

I can be anything I want to be

Lamps off / Hands up

## **Limbic System**

MATVII: There's this part of the brain called the Limbic System. It's in the middle of the brain and it's made up of loads of different bits and... there's one part of it called the Reward Centre that makes you want to have fun.

*CLOE is bored. She wanders over to the bed and starts texting the WhatsApp group on his phone. It appears on the wardrobe.*

CLOE: (*Texting*) BORED BORED BORED BORED.

*CLOE starts taking pictures of herself. They appear on the wardrobe.*

MATVII: It's the bit of the brain that make you do stuff you shouldn't. When you're a teenager your Limbic System is really hypersensitive. It goes wild whenever you do something fun or exciting or risky.

*CLOE recruits others to try and make MATVII laugh using a random object they find under the bed. MATVII gets as far as he can through the following speech before giving in.*

LOLA: I actually did a project at school about this. Shall I show you?

*She takes a folder from a shelf and shows us a diagram.*

So this is the brain and it's divided into different parts, this is the diagram i drew, um, it's... So basically the Limbic System is a complex system of nerves and networks in the brain, so that includes, er, the olfactory bulbs, hippocampus, amygdala, that's really important that's like the main bit and the bit that does rewards and stuff and then there's hold on i'll just read these out, there's the... the anterior thalamic nuclei, fornix, columns of fornix, mammillary body, septum pellucidum, habenular commissure, cingulate gyrus, parahippocampal gyrus, limbic cortex, and limbic midbrain areas...

*Eventually LOLA gives in.*

For fuck's sake. (*Can be changed to 'For god's sake' or a French expletive.*)

*CLOE calls out to the stage manager.*

CLOE: Lara, can we put the lights on the audience please?

*CLOE, DIANE AND SOFIYA start filming the audience, zooming in on different people. Their faces appear on the wardrobe. They start to wander into the audience - it feels dangerous, like they might do or say anything. They choose someone to speak to and walk up to them.*

CLOE: Hello. How are you? Are you enjoying the show? Do you want to play a game? You do, don't you?

*She convinces them to play the game. If they refuse, she asks someone else. When someone agrees, the cast celebrates.*

DIANE: *(To the audience member)* Hello, what's your name? Hello, (Name).

*DIANE takes a selfie with the audience member. It appears on the wardrobe.*

Everybody, (Name) wants to play a game, so we're all going to play a game. I'm going to need a microphone for this.

*DIANE gives the phone to CLOE, who films her. DIANE grabs the microphone.*

Okay. This game is called 'Never Have I Ever'. And we're going to say something that maybe we've done... maybe we haven't. And if you've done that thing too, then you have to stay standing up. But if you haven't done that thing, then you're out of the game and you have to sit down. And you've got to be honest.

SOFIYA: Okay, so we're going to do a test round. Just so everyone understands. Could everyone stand up please.

First one, never have I ever seen a play at IFS.

So everyone should be standing up because you have all been to the IFS to see a play. You're at IFS right now! So well done, you're still in the game!

CLOE: Okay, so here's the next one... Never have I ever had too much caffeine. So, if you've ever had too much caffeine, stay standing. And if you haven't, sit down.

*CLOE checks with an audience member who has sitten down.*

Just checking - you've never had too much caffeine? Like, ever?

*She checks with a member of the audience who is still standing up.*

And you have had too much caffeine? So you're still in the game.

Okay, good! So, if you've done it, stay standing up. If you haven't, you're out of the game and you have to sit down. Does everyone get how to play the game? Shall we play for real?

DIANE: Can everyone stand up again please? Lara, can you put some music on? Ready? Let's play!

*One by one, cast members come forward to say 'Never Have I Ever' statements. The other cast members watch the audience play and cheer them on.*

MATVII: Never have I ever skipped class.

DIANE: So, just checking, everyone sitting down has never skipped class? So you're out of the game.

SOFIYA: Never have I ever been on a date.

EMMA: Never have I ever had a sugar rush.

CLELIE: Never have I ever pulled an all-nighter.

LIVIA: Never have I ever had a crush.

CLOE: Never have I ever lied to my parents.

DIANE: Never have I ever got drunk.

SOFIYA: Never have I ever been horrible to my Mum.

EMMA: Never have I ever had a sibling brawl.

CLELIE: Never have I ever cut my own bangs.

LIVIA: Never have I ever screamed at someone.

CLOE: Never have I ever vaped or smoked.

DIANE: Never have I ever betrayed a friend.

When only a small number of audience members are left standing, a klaxon sounds.

CLOE/DIANE/SOFIYA: We have our winners!!

CLOE asks the audience member/s name and the cast starts chanting them. The cast gives the winners sweets and pulls confetti canons.

MATVII: THE LIMBIC SYSTEM. The Limbic System is the bit that gives you the kick out of taking risks. It's the bit that says 'Go try that! Now that!'

LOLA: Try that! Do that! Now! NOW! NOW! NOW! NOW! NOW! You've got a brain full of ideas. And you're young. And you're hot.

*MATVII starts pulling the others off the bed. They move around the space getting ready for the party.*

*The cast say the following lines one by one, some two at a time. The cast take on some of the dares.*

I DARE YOU to do an embarrassing dance.  
I DARE YOU to scream 'I HATE EVERYONE!'  
I DARE YOU to laugh at your teacher.  
I DARE YOU to do a cartwheel.  
I DARE YOU to kiss your crush.  
I DARE YOU to face your biggest fear.  
I DARE YOU to slap the person next to you.  
I DARE YOU to steal something.  
I DARE YOU to push someone over.

I DARE YOU! DO IT! DO IT! DO IT! DO IT!

LOLA: And your Pre-frontal Cortex is going...

*LOLA jumps on the bed. She holds the microphone up to the sky. The sound of wind.*

Hellooooo? Pre-frontal cortex? Are you there? Can you hear me?

*Music starts to build. The cast members split into three groups, as if about to launch into battle, shouting at each other.*

CAST:

DO IT!

SMOKE THIS.  
DRINK THIS.  
LICK THAT.

DO IT!

COME ON! YOU SCARED??

NAHHH, YOU'RE SCARED. YOU'RE NOT GONNA DO IT.

YOU ARE SOOOO BORING!

HIT ME. IN THE FACE. HIT ME.



GIVE ME MORE. GIVE ME MORE. GIVE ME MORE. GIVE ME MORE.

SUGAR RUSHHHHHH!

DO IT THEN... DO I LOOK LIKE I GIVE A SHIT? GONNA CALL YOUR MUM FIRST? DO IT!!

*Music breaks. A massive party: wild, chaotic, out of control. The cast dance, fight with pillows, down energy drinks and throw marshmallows at each other. Mess and chaos everywhere.*

*AOIFE, BAHIA, ANJALI and MARCUS scream in unison.*

## Stand-off

*The rest of the cast back off. AOIFE, BAHIA, ANJALI and MARCUS turn to the audience and shout.*

ANJALI:

Why do you always have to tell me what to do.

Why should you be judging how i look.

Why are you always telling me NO!

No! No! No! No! No!

Why?!

Why is it every time I'm on my phone, you scream at me? But maybe I'm doing work! Why do you have to be so mean all the time! Why do you scream at me?

I'm no doll or toy! You make fun of me in public and you embarrass me too!

MARCUS:

Why do you have to lecture me everytime you come?

When you talk about building a strong relationship.

When I have to listen to your crap for hours on end!

I don't want to look at photos of your girlfriend. She seems nice, but still.

DO I WANNA LOOK AT THAT?!

THE ANSWER IS NO!

And then you nag, nag, nag, nag!

LOOK. I understand that you love me. I love you.

BUT.

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ALL YOUR LECTURES! OK!

BUT you got to promise not to do that!

I've changed. So please. Please understand that it bugs me.

BAHIA:

Stop yelling at me all the time! It's just a bed sheet! I just forgot to make my bed!

You really don't have to get mad for every word I say! Seriously!

Stop yelling at me. Don't yell at me all the time!

I can never have a normal conversation with you.

You always blame it on me. You always get mad at the smallest things! Every bad thing that possibly happens, it's my fault! Stop! Just say it nicely!

Don't yell at me!

Stop yelling at me!

AOIFE:

What do you mean?

What do you mean why am I like this?

Because

Because something in me changed

Because my life feels boring

Because I like my friends more

Because I need space

Because I don't care

Because you're getting in my way

Because I'm old enough

Because I'm big enough

Because I'm not you

Because your way isn't the only way

I don't know why

Just because

I just am

I'm sorry

## Risks

*LIVIA stands. She opens WhatsApp on her phone. The group chat from earlier appears on the wardrobe. The following lines are sent as messages to the group.*

LIVIA:

My brain isn't finished yet.

My Limbic System is hyper.

My Pre-Frontal Cortex isn't ready.

But think of all the things you can do.

If you've still got all those connections.

And you don't have the part that days.

'No, don't do that, that won't work.'

*Everyone starts sending messages.*

EMMA: Mozart was 14 when he wrote all that stuff.

SOFIYA: Mark Zuckerberg made Facebook when he was 19. FACEBOOK!

ROXANE: Yeah. We take risks. Loads of risks.

EMMA: Like talking loud in class when you don't know the answer for sure.

SOFIYA: Or eating chewing in class.

CLELIE: Spending too much pocket money.

MARCUS: Playing video games all night.

AURELIEN: Talking about someone behind their back.

LIVIA: Passing notes in class.

DIANE: Asking if you can eat lunch with someone.

AOIFE: Dyeing your hair.

MATVII: Accepting someone's dare.

LOLA: Sharing secrets with people.

ANJALI: Sneaking someone into the Era's tour.

MAXINE: Going shopping on my own.

BAHIA: Talking to a stranger.

CLOE: Getting a tattoo.

MATISSE: Urban exploration.

ROXANE: Breaking toxic friendships.

*ROXANE clicks the phone off. It disappears from the wardrobe.*

## **You Say to Me, I Say to You**

*The cast each take a stack of handwritten placards out of the drawers and sit holding them face down.*

ALL (lines to be assigned):

You say to me

Your brain is broken.

It's like an adult's brain, but it doesn't work properly.

It's like you're in a city you've never been to and you don't have a map and you don't know what you're doing.

And you keep taking the wrong turns.

You say

Listen to me.

Don't worry.

One day you'll be okay.

Probably.

Your brain will start working properly.

One day your brain will be just like mine

And then you'll be okay.

But until then:

You've got to try and be more... like me.

I say to you

My brain isn't broken.

It's beautiful.

I'm in a city I've never been to and I see bright lights and new ideas and fear and opportunity and a thousand million roads all lit up and flashing.

I say

There are so many places to explore but you've forgotten that they exist because every day you walk the same way with your hands in your pockets and your eyes on the floor.

I say

When I'm wild and out of control

It's because I'm finding out who I am.

And if I was a real wild animal

Then I'd have left by now.

I say  
My brain isn't broken  
It's like this for a reason  
I'm like this for a reason  
I'm becoming who I am,

And I'm scared  
And you're scared  
Because who I am might not be who you want me to be.  
Or who you are.

And I don't know why, but I don't say  
It's all going to be okay.  
There are so many things I stopped saying to you.

I want to say them  
But I can't.

I pick up my plate  
Put it in the kitchen  
And go upstairs.

*The cast turn their placards over. The first word of each is 'hello' or 'hi'. They start to drop them one by one. OR voice recordings that are played to the audience. TBC*

EMMA:  
Hello  
I need to tell you something  
Thank you for being with me all my life  
I love you  
I truly do  
However  
You may worry too much  
I will always be safe if I am with you  
Even if I don't have a phone  
Even if I am in a different country  
Anyway, that's it  
Thanks.

AOIFE: TBC

AURELIEN:

I know you are doing all of this for me  
I know you are doing all of this for us  
I know you are trying hard  
I know you are trying your best  
Even when I get mad at you  
Even when you get mad at me  
I know you love me  
You know I love you  
Because I do love you  
And I always will

SOIFYA:

Hi  
Nothing can replace you  
You are always helping me  
I love you

ANJALI:

Hey  
This is important  
I love you and nothing will go above you  
I just need you to remember that I will never not love you  
BUT  
You worry too much about me  
And you just need to accept that  
I'm older and more independent.

DIANE:

Hello  
I need to tell you something  
Nothing can replace you  
You light up my day  
Everytime I got hurt  
You have been my nurse  
You are...  
The one who raised me  
The one who helped me  
You're always there  
I do love you but  
I want you to accept I need space  
Don't worry about my future... I'll figure it out!  
I love you  
You make me happy  
And I'll always be your little Princess



MAXINE:

Hello,  
I want to tell you something  
Even though I always annoy you  
I want you to know that I love you  
And you are always there for me  
You support me  
And you light up my life  
You are my sun  
But please nag me less about cleaning my room!  
And how I'm so slow!  
Which is true but, you know

LIVIA:

Hello,  
I want you to know I love you  
And I know that you care  
However, I want to tell you  
That I'm trying to take care of myself  
And I am old  
I can sort it out  
I love you.

CLELIE:

Hello,  
I am your little girl  
But I am also growing up  
I am grateful for everything  
And all your love  
I want to tell you  
I am growing up  
I want you to know that  
I will always love you.

MATVII:

Hello,  
I'm totally fine.  
I want to say...  
I'm grateful for everything  
So please don't think I'm not thankful.  
Thank you again.

MATISSE:

Hey,  
I don't know how to format this  
But I want you to know how grateful I am to have parents like you  
All you do for me  
Keep on pushing me to my limits to keep on getting better.  
I know you were hard on me but I understand it was to shape me.  
Shape me into a better man, a gentleman, not to judge others for what they look like or how  
much they have.  
I just wanted to say.  
I love you now matter what.

MARCUS:

Hi,  
I love you and respect you. I always will.  
And I kinda understand your point of view.  
I know you're trying to do what's best for me.  
I know you care.  
Thank you.  
For everything.

LOLA:

Hi,  
You know this already.  
I love you.  
You're the best.  
Thank you for always being there.  
I'm sorry I'm not organised, I'll try harder.  
I know it's my fault  
But I hate it when you get annoyed.  
Thank you for everything.

BAHIA:

I know I'm not the best sister  
And I'm sorry  
No one can replace you  
And I can't imagine a world without you.  
It's just sometimes I need space and so do you.  
But I love you.  
I really do.

CLOE:

I'm sorry.  
Sorry that sometimes my grades take a dive.  
Sorry that I'm not always kind

Sorry that I don't plan in advance  
Or that I'm on my phone too much.  
But I do love you.  
I will always love you.  
I know I'm kind of still figuring it all out  
But I will.  
Just remember there are people out there doing worse.  
It'll be okay.

ROXANE:

I wanted to tell you I love you  
You're always worried about me  
But I should be more scared  
You're always disappointed when I get bad grades  
But I'm responsible for my actions  
You force me to train for later in life  
But I know way more than you think  
I'm grateful for a shelter  
However, sometimes I need to breathe!

## **You Don't Know This Yet**

*The last placard is dropped. EMMA stands.*

EMMA:

Look at us.

She points to each cast member as she reintroduces them.

That's Bahia.

That's Cloe.

Roxane, Diane, Lola and Anjali.

Aurelien, Aoife, Matvii and Sofiya.

Maxine, Marcus and Matisse.

Clelie and Livia.

I'm Emma. I'm the youngest one here.

And I can't be sure of what will happen next.

I don't know. But you do.

Before the show, you wrote a message to your teenage self. Something you didn't know when you were our age. Do you remember?

*A bucket containing the cards written by audience members is brought onto the stage. The cast, apart from EMMA and ROXANE, take one each to read out. From youngest to oldest - 'you don't know this yet, but...'*

EMMA: You don't know this yet.

ROXANE: But you will.

THE END.