

# Manchester

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A Miniaturists Play

2<sup>nd</sup> Draft (December 2010)

*A hotel room. Radisson Manchester. September 2010. The room key in the door, laughter. Lights on. Julie and Chris enter. New Labour suits. Labour Party lanyards. Conference packs that they soon discard.*

**Chris** Et voilà.

**Julie** Ooh la la.

**Chris** Ma chambre.

**Julie** Magnifique!

**Chris** Est-ce que vous voudriez quelque chose de boire, mademoiselle?

*Beat.*

**Julie** Bwar...

**Chris** Sorry, would you like a drink.

**Julie** Oh great.

**Chris** Only you sort of went with the French thing so –

**Julie** I was just mucking about really cos –

**Chris** Boire is drink but –

**Julie** I failed my GCSE French. I'm not good with languages.

**Chris** God nor me, but I have these tapes which are very good. There's no writing down you just –

**Julie** Too much talking.

**Chris** Sorry.

*Beat.*

**Julie** Nice room.

**Chris** I'm sure it's much the same as yours.

**Julie** Yes, more or less.

**Chris** More or less?

**Julie** Yeah, same fittings and stuff.

**Chris** They're all much of a muchness.

**Julie** Bit smaller maybe.

**Chris** Really?

**Julie** Well I suppose mine's technically a suite.

**Chris** They gave you a suite?

**Julie** Junior suite.

**Chris** (*pretending not to be outraged*) I'm outraged!

**Julie** Ha ha.

**Chris** Seriously, a suite?

**Julie** We need space to work on Harriet's thing that's all.

**Chris** Okay yeah.

**Julie** I thought you were in Douglas Alexander's team anyway?

**Chris** Oh Jesus no.

**Julie** In Brighton you were. And Dundee.

**Chris** I was yes but he's just too associated with Gordon Brown.

**Julie** You jumped ship?

**Chris** No one wanted to go down with THAT ship.

**Julie** True dat.

**Chris** Sad for Douglas really.

**Julie** He rode the wrong horse. It happens.

**Chris** They were inseparable, him and Gordon.

**Julie** Jonah and the Fail Whale.

**Chris** That's good. You could get a job writing for Eric Pickles.

**Julie** Ha bloody ha.

**Chris** Fat fuck.

**Julie** So what you got for me?

**Chris** ...

**Julie** Drinkswise.

**Chris** Oh yeah. (*minibar*) Vodka. Whisky. Gin. I think that's rum, yeah it's rum. Or there's wine. Or two kinds of beer.

**Julie** Any fizz?

**Chris** Right. You're in luck.

**Julie** Let's have fizz.

**Chris** A half bottle but half a bottle's better than / no bottle at all

**Julie** We should have picked one up from the New Statesman party.

**Chris** They're doing fizz at the New Statesman? That's very 1997 of them.

**Julie** I read your conference preview on their blog. I thought you might be there.

**Chris** I got stuck with IPPR.

**Julie** Oh God.

**Chris** They've worked up some new education proposal all on the assumption it would be David. So of course they're grabbing anyone they can find to get the lowdown on Ed.

**Julie** You had that haunted look about you. Thought you needed rescuing.

**Chris** And thank you for that.

**Julie** Cornered by wonks. No man should suffer that fate.

**Chris** These glasses are okay, yes?

**Julie** They're fine.

**Chris** I kept saying, I'm as surprised as you are but you know.

**Julie** You are?

**Chris** Well yes. Aren't you?

**Julie** We always knew Ed would score well with the Unions. And second-preference. The left went for Ed then Balls. The right were David then Ed. It was inevitable.

**Chris** You sound like it was a foregone conclusion. Should have put money on it.

**Julie** I did, in May: £120 on Ed at 7 to 1.

**Chris** Wow. That's... what –

**Julie** 840 / quid.

**Chris** ... 40 quid exactly.

**Julie** It's a new flatscreen TV.

**Chris** Or a weekend away.

**Julie** Dirty weekend.

**Chris** If you like.

**Julie** Or if you like.

**Chris** Is that an invitation?

**Julie** Ha ha.

**Chris** There you go.

**Julie** Ta.

**Chris** I'll take the toothpasty one.

**Julie** Ooh a gentleman.

**Chris** Sometimes.

**Julie** We can always do room service.

**Chris** What?

**Julie** If we want more fizz.

**Chris** Oh yes, right.

**Julie** Cheers.

**Chris** Bottoms up.

**Julie** If you play your cards right.

**Chris** Ha ha ha. (*drinks*)

**Julie** It's alright.

**Chris** Minty.

**Julie** Ooh.

**Chris** So, the Big Question: do you think we're doing the right thing?

*Beat.*

**Julie** Oh God.

**Chris** What?

**Julie** Look, you're not married. I'm not married. A fuck is a fuck. It's not –

**Chris** No, God, no! Not *this*, I meant the leadership, I meant are we doing the right thing electing Ed Miliband? Not –

**Julie** Oh! Right.

**Chris** God sorry, that must have –

**Julie** Well it did a bit –

**Chris** Because no I'm absolutely –

**Julie** Glad to hear it

**Chris** Gung-ho.

**Julie** That's nice, I suppose.

**Chris** I just mean –

**Julie** Too much talking.

**Chris** Sorry

**Julie** What I think is Ed's fine. He'll be okay. Ed's not smooth. He won't get a ton of press but that's good. It'll be rough for us for a couple of years. Ed can weather that, lie low, be statesmanlike, do a policy review, all that bullshit. Sackcloth and ashes. Speak up for the jobless. And if there are some big juicy scandals on their side, or the Coalition falls apart, or the economy double dips, or Cameron starts saying what he actually thinks, Ed'll be in a good place to capitalise on it.

**Chris** I hope so.

**Julie** Anyway, it's done. I don't see the point in fretting.

**Chris** Well no.

**Julie** Never regret is what I say.

**Chris** Good.

**Julie** Whatever you get up to.

**Chris** Uh huh.

**Julie** As long as it's legal.

**Chris** Well of course.

**Julie** Or illegal in Texas.

**Chris** Top up?

**Julie** Why not?

**Chris** There.

**Julie** I'll say when.

**Chris** Oh okay.

**Julie** Just joking that's fine.

**Chris** Ha ha.

**Julie** So.

*Silence.*

Why am I here, Chris?

**Chris** In the sense of...?

**Julie** Why did you invite me up to your room?

**Chris** I don't know what you mean.

**Julie** I drag you away from the wonks. We have a drink and a chat. You ask me if I'd like to continue the conversation upstairs.

**Chris** Right, yes.

**Julie** What do you want with me?

**Chris** Well, I don't usually do that sort of thing.

**Julie** Course not.

**Chris** I just –

**Julie** Tell me.

**Chris** I – I found you interesting.

**Julie** Okay...

**Chris** I wanted to get to know you better.

**Julie** That's nice but it's not what I mean.

**Chris** What do you mean?

**Julie** I mean, tell me what you really feel.

**Chris** That is what I really feel.

**Julie** Get to know me better, bla bla yeah.

*Beat.*

You want to fuck me.  
I know you want to fuck me.  
You can say it.  
I might even like it.

**Chris** Okay. Okay yes, yes I do.

**Julie** Do what?

**Chris** I do want to fuck you.

**Julie** Good. Cos I want you to fuck me. Really fucking fuck me.

*Beat.*

**Chris** Hurrah!

**Julie** 'Hurrah'?

**Chris** Sorry.

**Julie** That's worse than 'gung-ho'.

**Chris** I'm sorry. I'm nervous.

**Julie** Don't be. It's just you and me in a room.

**Chris** I know, yeah.

**Julie** This is okay, isn't it?

**Chris** Yes. Very okay.

**Julie** Good. Talk to me.



**Chris** Yeah.

**Julie** Tell me what made you want to fuck me.

**Chris** Because.

**Julie** Tell me. It turns me on.

**Chris** It's just, okay.

**Julie** I am unshockable. Tell me what turned you on about me.

**Chris** Because I like your tits.

**Julie** That's better. What else?

**Chris** And your arse. I like your arse.

**Julie** You like that do you?

**Chris** And I think you're a bit of a dirty girl.

**Julie** You're right. I am a bit of a dirty girl.

**Chris** Good. I like dirty girls.

**Julie** And I like a horny fucker.

**Chris** Well, bingo. (Sorry.) Good.

**Julie** What do you want to do to me?

**Chris** Everything.

**Julie** Better get us another drink then.

**Chris** You can finish that. I'll have a whisky.

*Gets the drinks. Tries not to hurry while trying to hurry.*

**Julie** We don't have to do this if you're not happy.

**Chris** Oh God, no, I am happy.

**Julie** Honestly, Chris. I won't think badly of you if you just want to finish our drinks and say goodnight.

**Chris** No, really. It's taking me a bit of time to adjust. From conference mode to, well, this. I wasn't expecting – this isn't the sort of thing I do. Not that I think it's a bad thing.

**Julie** Good because it's not.

**Chris** Yeah.

**Julie** You like role play?

**Chris** What?

**Julie** Just a bit of fun.

**Chris** I've never done it.

**Julie** You should try it. Might like it.

**Chris** Fantasy stuff.

**Julie** Yes, might help you let loose a bit.

**Chris** Naughty nurse.

**Julie** ... that kind of thing.

**Chris** That might be good.

**Julie** Get out of yourself.

**Chris** Actually yeah.

**Julie** Okay good.

**Chris** Question is: what?

**Julie** Anything you want.

**Chris** Spoilt for choice.

**Julie** Oh God.

**Chris** Why don't you choose?

**Julie** I want you to choose.

**Chris** No really. Look, I'll love it whatever you suggest.

**Julie** Well if that would be easier.

**Chris** Yeah, or I'll spend the time worrying I made a bad choice.

**Julie** You're sweet. And very annoying.

**Chris** You choose for us.

**Julie** You sure?

**Chris** Yeah.

*Pause.*

In fact, give me something personal.

**Julie** What do you mean?

**Chris** Something you've never done before.

**Julie** I don't know.

**Chris** Your most private fantasy.

**Julie** You sure?

**Chris** Yeah. Something you've never told anyone.

**Julie** Why?

**Chris** It would be fucking horny. To be your fantasy guy.

**Julie** ...

**Chris** Really deep down. What you want. What you've always wanted.

**Julie** My turn to feel nervous now.

**Chris** You can trust me.

**Julie** Can I though?

**Chris** You know you can.

**Julie** No actually, Chris, I don't know I can. I don't know you.

**Chris** I promise.

**Julie** Because if I say something –

**Chris** Whatever it is.

**Julie** You have to be –

**Chris** Trust me. I promise you. You can trust me.

**Julie** I'm not fucking about.

**Chris** Julie, it's just you and me in a room.

**Julie** Hah, right.

**Chris** Anything.

**Julie** You're not going to freak out.

**Chris** We're all fucking perverts in our heads.

**Julie** You better be.

*They laugh slightly.*

**Chris** I'll turn the lights down a bit yeah?

**Julie** Okay.  
Thanks.

*Chris turns off the nearest light, leaving only a standard lamp behind them.*

**Chris** Who are you?

**Julie** I'm poor. I need help. I need your help.

**Chris** Okay.

**Julie** I'm nothing. I'm worthless. I'm a piece of shit.

**Chris** You need me, you worthless piece of shit.

**Julie** I'm no good. I'm no good for anything.

**Chris** Bad girl. Dirty girl.

**Julie** I'm helpless. I'm in your power.

**Chris** Who am I?

**Julie** You're powerful. You're rich.

**Chris** I'm your master.

**Julie** You're my master. You are tall and powerful. You have money.

**Chris** I'm the Lord of the Manor.

**Julie** You're snooty, you're a posh boy. Rich and powerful and arrogant.

**Chris** (Boy?)

**Julie** (I just mean you went to a posh school.)

**Chris** You oik. You peasant. You nobody.

**Julie** You can do what you want with me.

**Chris** And I'm going to.

**Julie** What are you going to do with me?

**Chris** What do you want me to do with me?

**Julie** Use me. Abuse me. Call me names.

**Chris** I'm going to punish you.

**Julie** Yes, punish me. I've been lazy. I'm stupid. I'm worthless.

**Chris** I'm going to treat you like the piece of shit you are.

**Julie** Fuck yes. Hurt me. Use me.

**Chris** You want me to make you my slave.

**Julie** I'm at your mercy, George.

**Chris** You're my slave, my – what?

**Julie** What?

**Chris** What did you call me?

**Julie** George.

**Chris** Who's George?

**Julie** It doesn't matter.

**Chris** Just if you're thinking of someone more specific –

**Julie** No it's fine, just a name.

**Chris** You dirty little slut, you want to be used like the whore you are.

**Julie** That's all I'm good for, to be your slave, your toy.

**Chris** I'm going to use you and abuse you.

**Julie** You're going to cut me.

**Chris** Oh – okay. I’m going to hurt you. I’m going to hold you down and fuck you (is this too much?)

**Julie** No it’s good. I want you to cut me and hurt me and treat me like shit.

**Chris** I’m your worst nightmare.

**Julie** You’re my worst nightmare. Use me, posh boy. I’m a beggar, I’m begging in the street and you pass by with your posh friends.

**Chris** Look at the dirty little whore.

**Julie** Posher.

**Chris** Posher?

**Julie** Bit posher.

**Chris** Oh look at the dirty little oik.

**Julie** Bit higher. More nasal.

**Chris** (*slightly higher pitched*) Oh look at the dirty little oik.

**Julie** What are you going to do with me, George?

**Chris** I’m going to drag you off into those bushes – wait a second.

**Julie** Yes – take me –

**Chris** Hold on a sec.

**Julie** What is it?

**Chris** I’m not – I’m not George Osborne, am I?

*Beat.*

**Julie** Why?

**Chris** Am I Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne?

*Pause.*

**Julie** You might be.

**Chris** You want to be fucked by George Osborne?

**Julie** It’s a role play thing.

**Chris** I know and I mean, if that’s what you really want...

**Julie** It's fantasy, it's not real.

**Chris** I'm just a bit surprised.

**Julie** I'm not me anyway.

**Chris** I'm going to drag you off into those bushes and – well who are you then?

**Julie** Does it matter?

**Chris** I need to know who I'm fucking.

**Julie** Who cares? It's role play.

**Chris** Still, I'd like to know.

*Pause.*

**Julie** ... I'm the public sector.

*Silence.*

**Chris** What?

**Julie** You're George Osborne and I'm the public sector.

**Chris** I don't understand.

**Julie** You know, schools, hospitals –

**Chris** I know what the public sector is.

**Julie** I'm role playing the public sector.

**Chris** How can you role play the public sector?

**Julie** It's a fantasy.

**Chris** It's not a fantasy. It doesn't even make sense.

**Julie** I knew you'd be like this.

**Chris** You have to be a woman, even in role play. I can't fuck a sector of the economy.

**Julie** I am a woman, it's just an idea.

**Chris** The public sector is a loose aggregate of material and immaterial assets, services, and labour. How am I supposed to fuck that?

**Julie** You're taking this too literally.

**Chris** How are *you* taking it? How does a person role play being the public sector.

**Julie** It's a feeling, obviously.

**Chris** Anyway, I don't think I could. Actually. Sorry but I don't think I want to fuck the public sector. I cherish the public sector. I've dedicated my life to protecting the public sector. I'm not, actually, up for for for for using and abusing the public sector. It's just not in my nature to take the public sector and drag it into the bushes and hurt it sexually.  
Now maybe I could make *love* to the public sector.

**Julie** I don't want you to make love to me. I want you to fuck me.

**Chris** Well I can't do that, I'm sorry.

**Julie** Course you can.

**Chris** No I'm sorry. I don't want to.

**Julie** Everybody wants to fuck the public sector.

**Chris** No they don't.

**Julie** Yes they do. Nurses and schoolgirls and teachers and firemen and nuns and cops and –

**Chris** Nuns aren't technically public sector.

**Julie** You're being silly now.

**Chris** *I'm* being silly?

**Julie** Yes. You're being pompous.

**Chris** What, because I don't want to sexually abuse one of the pillars of civil society?

**Julie** I'm not asking you to fuck a quango.

**Chris** What?

**Julie** 'Civil society'. You talk like I'm asking you to fuck the Charity Commission.

**Chris** Oh right, because *that* would be ridiculous.

**Julie** Yes it would.

**Chris** Why is *that* ridiculous and what you're you're you're proposing...

**Julie** Because those aren't victims. It's not sexy to imagine being the Charity Commission. It's sexy to imagine being the public sector because the public sector is noble and



good and fine and poor and virtuous and vulnerable and just waiting there for some Tory bastard to come and fuck it.

**Chris** Does Harriet Harman know you think like this?

**Julie** Don't be stupid.

**Chris** I'm not saying I'm going to tell her, just –

**Julie** The problem here, Chris, is basically that you are scared of sex.

**Chris** I'm not scared of sex.

**Julie** Yes you are.

**Chris** I'm not scared of sex. I *am* scared of catching something nasty if I fuck the NHS.

**Julie** You're scared of sex because you're scared of what you want.

**Chris** Where the fuck has this come from?

**Julie** Your own desires shock you. It's true isn't it?

**Chris** It most certainly is not true.

**Julie** You are shocked by your own desires and you pretend you don't have them. You think you're a nice guy and you are a nice guy but you can't cope with your desires.

**Chris** I do not desire to be George Osborne.

**Julie** Course you don't, no one does.

**Chris** Well maybe George Osborne.

**Julie** ...

**Chris** No you're right.

**Julie** You want to believe that everyone is nice and reasonable and listen to good argument and acting for the best motives and you can't understand that out there, Chris, out there there are people, loads of people, who badly want to fuck up the public sector, who want to brutalise the public sector. And just as many people who basically think the public sector is asking for it and deserves everything it gets.

**Chris** A few nutters on the blogs.

**Julie** That's not the world, Chris.

**Chris** One or two extremists.

**Julie** Forget about the middle ground. We're about to be fucked, Chris. In what's about to happen, there is no middle ground.

**Chris** Look, I know you're embarrassed...

**Julie** Oh don't be a prick.

**Chris** ...but I'm not the one with the problem here.

**Julie** Oh do tell.

**Chris** I'm not the one who wanted – I'm sorry to do this because well anyway – the one who wanted to be abused by George Osborne.

**Julie** No you weren't.

**Chris** The one who, not to put too fine a point on it, fantasises sexually about the public sector being screwed over.

**Julie** It's a fantasy, okay? Not real. That's why they call it a fantasy.

**Chris** But why is it your fantasy?

**Julie** Oh send the police in, why don't you?

**Chris** But it's the whole problem with the Labour Party. This whole victim mentality.

**Julie** Oh for fuck's sake.

**Chris** It is, this whole pride in being downtrodden. Where's the aspiration? Where's the desire to get back on your feet?

**Julie** Not that sexy is it, Chris? Who has sexual fantasies about taking out a career enhancement loan?

**Chris** You know what I mean: the whole of the left is so full of this pity-me bullshit. Proud to be oppressed, always shouting about being exploited. It's even in your sexual fantasies.

**Julie** Oh this is just your crap.

**Chris** You want to be a victim because then it's someone else's fault.

**Julie** Sometimes it *is* someone else's fault.

**Chris** How did we get onto this?

**Julie** I don't know. I guess this didn't work.

**Chris** Well no. It didn't.

**Julie** Chris, we've spent fifteen years dragging ourselves to the middle ground.  
I don't think there is a middle ground.

**Chris** I don't happen to think that.

**Julie** Really? It's just you and me in a room.

*Silence.*

**Chris** Well, it's been, whatever.

**Julie** Okay.

**Chris** Sorry for, you know –

**Julie** Yes, sorry it didn't –

**Chris** No, I guess I –

**Julie** It doesn't matter.

**Chris** You won't –

**Julie** Obviously not.

**Chris** Well sorry.

**Julie** No it's fine.

**Chris** I'm sorry you feel that way.

**Julie** So am I.

**Chris** Night.

**Julie** Night.

*She goes. He picks up the whisky.*

*End.*