

The Cut

First Draft

31st July 1996

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Cast of Characters:

Kelli Thompson	A young woman of fifteen
Iain Leckman ['Lecko']	A young man of seventeen.
Becky	Kelli's best friend, also fifteen.
Brodie	Iain's best friend and work-mate.
Mr Taylor	The history teacher.
Mrs Thompson	Kelli's mother.
3 mothers-to-be.	
A doctor.	
A midwife.	
3 chatterers.	

The action of the play takes place in various places around a West Midlands Town, in the Winter, Spring and Summer of 1996.

[NB This draft contains a full script of the performance sections of the programme, with some suggestions of the position and content of the participation sections. It is designed to cover a very wide range of subject matter, with teachers being provided with resources to follow-up in areas that are given only superficial coverage]

Pre-session

The pupils are put in role as Social Workers, and set the task of helping Monica, as Senior Social Worker, to compile a full report on a particular case.

She says that she will explain in detail the decisions they have to make later, but that their task is to gather all the evidence, so that the facts are known, and the right decisions can be made.

The group considers a preliminary piece of evidence.

A page from the diary of Kelli Thompson, aged fifteen:

"It happened. I knew it would. Last night, after we'd been up the duck pond, with the others, we went off down by the cut. It was dark, the water was dripping down the wall by the bridge. I thought we would sit on the lock, but there was a boat there, with no-one in it, so Lecko broke in.

It all went dead quickly. There was no light, we could hardly see each other, but we found this little bunk thing in the dark. The boat smelled old. I found myself thinking about ghosts, other people that had been there, through the years.

He seemed to like it. It was strange. I don't know what I expected. He never said anything much. I think I did it right. There was silence, and I could hear the water again.

After we went back to find Becky and Brodie. We didn't tell them, but Becky knew.

I'm glad I did it. I love him, and I think it made him happy. What's going to happen now?????"

They discuss what they can draw from this early evidence, and are asked to watch a reconstruction of other aspects of the case, and be prepared to make decisions based on evidence they gather.

Scene One

[Loud dance Music. In a series of short sections without dialogue, we are introduced to Kelli, Becky, Iain and Brodie, and their relationships.]

- 1 Brodie and Iain at the garage. Becky and Kelli dancing.
- 2 All four hanging out together.
- 3 A trip in Brodie's car.
- 4 Becky and Brodie are left, Kelli and Iain feeding the ducks.
- 5 There is a moment of decision, and Kelli and Iain go off together.
- 6 Becky and Brodie are left in the car.

[The sound of someone being sick]

Scene Two

[1996 Kelli Thompson's bedroom. It is the room of a fifteen year old girl. Kelli enters with Becky]

Becky: He's a teacher.

Kelli: I had noticed, Becky. I just said he was hot.

Becky: What about his hair ? It's disgusting. It has animals living in it.

Kelli: No it hasn't.

Becky: You going to be staying on next year, full-time history, every lesson? So you can sit alone with Mr Taylor in a room and gaze into his eyes.

Kelli: Might. I like history anyway. I'm good at it.

Becky: We know why, don't we ?

Nothing'll keep me at school. Even if Taylor took his clothes off and let me have him on his desk, I'd still be off.

Kelli: Becky!

Becky: Well, it's true. I hate the place, man. Last day of term, I'm going in that day for sure, and I'm going to tell them all what I think of them. Even your sex slave.

Kelli: He's not -

Becky: I'll tell him there's squirrels nesting in his hair, and I'm not bothered about the constipation of women.

Kelli: Emancipation.

Becky: Whatever.

Anyway, are you going to do this thing, then?

[She gets home pregnancy testing kit out of bag]

Kelli: Shut it will you, Mum'll hear.

Becky: I got a magazine too. 'More'. It's got Ronan in it, and look at this. Position of the Fortnight. Have you done that one?

Kelli: Give us the box.

Becky: I have.

Kelli: Becky.

Becky: I still don't see why you couldn't get it yourself. You owe me £9.95.

Kelli: £9.95! Where am I going to get that from?

Becky: You'd better be pregnant now, hadn't you?

Kelli: Don't joke about it, Becky.

Becky: Go on then.

Kelli: What do I have to do?

Becky: Instructions.

[She is looking at the box]

Did you tell Lecko you was doing this?

Kelli: Course not.

Becky: "Add four drops to the test slide". That must be this.

Kelli: Four drops of what?

Becky: What do you think ?

Kelli: I've got to pee in this?

Becky: Don't be soft. You have to pee in this, and then pick it up with the dropper.

Kelli: I can't do that. What if I do more than that much?

Becky: [Demonstrating] You just have to catch as much as you can, like this...

Kelli: I know how to pee...give it here.

[She takes the stuff and goes into the bathroom. Becky hovers outside]

Becky: [Talking to door] Are you doing it?

Don't forget to get your knickers right out the way will you ?

Kelli: Shh, Becky

Becky: That was quick.

Kelli: [Whispering] I haven't gone yet, I just came out to shut you up. Mum's downstairs.

[She points downstairs, and goes back in]

Becky: I shouldn't worry, Kelli. There isn't any way. You've hardly ever done it with him. Have you?

Kelli: [From inside] Please, Becky!

Becky: [Talking to door] I thought I was pregnant last year, once. I wasn't even late, it was just that I was sick in the morning. I was dead scared, I remember. I think it must've been a kebab.

Kelli: I haven't had a kebab, though.

Becky: No, but you've had Lecko haven't you?

Kelli: Becks!

Becky: You never really told me what happened. How did you manage it? I never thought he'd go for you.

Did you promise to do anything he asked, was that it? Did you go up the duck pond, or back to his place? What's he like? I bet he's dead smooth and romantic, isn't he? Slushy music and candlelight. I like my men best that way. Is he, you know...big?

[Kelli comes back out, with her tray of urine]

Don't bring it out here, Kelli! Do the drops over the toilet or somewhere. Watch out, you're spilling it.

[She pushes her back in]

Kelli: Shh!

Becky: Ugh! You mucky monkey! How would you explain that to your Mum. 'Do you know anything about the strange smell here, Kelli dear?'

[Pause]

[Talking to door again] It was terrible at the chemists. It wasn't on the counter so I had to ask. She said, 'Is it for you?' Cheeky cow. What she think I'm like? I mean...she gave me this look.

Kelli: [Coming back out, with the 'test slide'] What?

Becky: Nothing. Give it here.

[She gingerly takes the slide and consults the instructions again]

If Lecko's got you pregnant, will we keep having to go out with him and Brodie ?

Kelli: I thought you liked Lecko.

Becky: I do. It's just that while you're off doing God knows what smut with him, I get stuck talking to Brodie, don't I?

Kelli: He's sweet.

Becky: Yes, if you like cars.

Kelli: Well you do, don't you?

Becky: I don't.

Kelli: You like his enough. So long as you're on the back seat, chewing his lips off.

Becky: Well I'm just an animal, me.

Kelli: What now?

Becky: You have to wait for a line.

Kelli: A line.

Becky: Two lines, if it's positive. Oh my God.

Kelli: What?

Becky: It's gone purple. Oh no.

Kelli: What does that mean?

Becky: Purple and yellow stripes. It means you're going to have six elephants.

Kelli: Don't do that Becky, you scared me.

Becky: I really got you didn't I ?

Look, we just watch here, and if a line starts to show it means...

[They watch, a line starts to show]

....it's positive.

Kelli: Jesus.

Becky: How did that happen?

Kelli: How do you think?

Becky: But to you.

[Pause]

Don't worry Kelli. It's probably gone wrong because you spilt some.

Kelli: Yes, that must be it.

[Pause]

You'd better go.

Becky: Are you sure you -

Kelli: Tara, Becky. I'll see you tomorrow.

Becky: OK. You going to school?

Kelli: Tomorrow, yeah.

Becky: Of course, it's history isn't it?

Scene Three The garage

[This is Brodie's little workshop, where Iain works as a mechanic. They are talking as they work]

Iain: What do you think of Becky then?

Brodie: She's a girl.

Iain: Not a lot gets past you, does it Brode? Good one.

Brodie: She's alright.

Iain: She's gagging for you, I'll tell you that.

Brodie: Yeah?

Iain: You just need to play it right.

Brodie: You reckon?

[Pause]

How's that then?

Iain: What?

Brodie: How should I play it?

Iain: It's up to you. I'm just saying she won't need much encouragement. Give her half a chance and she'll jump you.

Brodie: Yeah?

Iain: Trust me, Brode. She's one of these girls that'll just keep going all night. She'll be like a Duracell bunny mate. Switch her on, and enjoy the action.

Brodie: Right, yes. Switch her on.

[Pause]

Kelli like that?

Iain: Sort of. I mean she's kind of quiet, isn't she? Nice though.

Brodie: You been seeing her a lot, haven't you?

Iain: Since the night on the canal I have. That was awesome. So wild there was steam coming off the water.

Brodie: What happened?

Iain: I couldn't tell you everything, Brode. You'd get too excited and drop your tools. It just clicked, that's all. When that happens, you can't describe it.

Brodie: Right.

Iain: It was like this really smart old boat - holiday boat or something, and they'd left it for the night I guess, and I just pushed the door in. Simple. It was like it was all set out for us. The bed was made and everything. Kelli was all over me. I think it was the danger or something. They love that. It was easy, Brodie, smooth and simple. She didn't need nothing, I tell you. Nothing. We were just poetry in motion. We were at it for hours.

Brodie: You didn't seem to be away that long.

Iain: That must've been because you were with Becky. You didn't notice the time.

Brodie: I suppose.

Iain: When are you going to try that with her then?

Brodie: Becky? I don't know. Don't think I want to. Want a cup of tea?

Iain: You're mad, Brodie, do you know that?

Scene Four Family Planning Clinic

[Kelli and Becky arrive outside the Family Planning Clinic]

Becky: Go on then.

Kelli: I'm going. Give me a chance.

[Tries to go in, her nerve fails]

What shall I say?

Becky: What do you think? Just go in and say, I'm Kelli, I think I'm up the spout.

Kelli: That's good.

[Tries again, and fails again]

Seriously, Becks.

Becky: Come on. We'll go in side by side. Straight in, just normal.

[They go to the entrance, then both duck suddenly]

Mr Taylor!

What's he doing here?

Kelli: He didn't see us.

Becky: Come on.

[This time they get in, and go up to the 'desk'. None of the other characters in this scene are seen or heard]

Yes, thank you. Good morning. No, it's her.

Kelli: No. Yes. Kelli Thompson.

Other name? Yes I have. Thelma.

[Becky giggles. Kelli glares at her]

75 Lothian Road. With my parents yes. My brothers did live there but, no...sorry.

A counsellor, yes I think.. Over there? Thanks.

[They sit down to wait]

Becky: Old bag.

[Pause]

Kelli Thelma Thompson ? Shame.

Kelli: You knew that. It was my nan's name. Stop laughing will you.

Becky: Sorry.

Good posters. Look.

Susy said you can get free whatsits here.

Kelli: What?

Becky: Condoms. As many as you want. Free.

Kelli: Great.

Becky: It's true. Steve Gumbley picked up a whole load and blew them up last christmas, for his party decorations. He just came in here and said he was having an orgy, and they gave him a whole box.

Kelli: Who told you that?

Becky: He did.

Kelli: Must be true then.

[Pause]

Becky?

Becky: What?

Kelli: Nothing.

[Her name is announced]

This door?

[To Becky] Will you come in with me?

Becky: OK.

[They go in to the counsellor's room, and sit again]

Kelli: Yes. This is Becky.

Becky: I'm her friend.

Kelli: Yes, if that's OK.

Yes.

Yes.

No, I'm still at school.

I'm 15, last month.

No. I think I might be pregnant.

The last one was seven weeks ago.

Unprotected? Yes, I suppose so.

Becky: She's done a test from the chemist.

Kelli: Yes.

I see.

Yes.

Yes.

What, now?

The nurse.

OK.

In this bottle?

[Becky is pulling faces]

Back in here. OK.

[Kelli goes out to do another sample. Becky decides to stay]

[Pause]

Becky: Could I just ask you something, while we're waiting?

No, it's about ... [mumbled] contraception.

Contraception.

Am I what? Oh.....well no, not really. I've done it twice.

It's just, well...if you, you know... do it...standing up...can you still fall pregnant?

Oh.

No, it's just someone said....

No, I shouldn't should I. Thanks.

Nice pictures. On the walls.

[Kelli comes back in. Gives piece of paper to counsellor]

Kelli: They said to give this to you.

[Pause]

Right.

Yes.

I see.

Well, I don't know. I didn't think.

[Becky puts her arm around Kelli]

To talk to you. Yes.

No I haven't told anybody. You won't tell them will you?

It's just my Dad. He gets angry sometimes.

Good.

Yes, of course I know who it is. We've been going out for about seven weeks. Nearly two months.

Not yet.

He's 17.

Yes, I'll tell him straight away.

No. He'll be pleased. I know he will.

Thanks.

[They go out]

Scene Five The Garage

[Iain is under a car. Loud music. Kelli comes in, and tries to shout to him, but he can't hear her.]

Kelli: Lecko?

[Switches off music]

Lecko?

Iain: Pass the mole wrench will you?

Kelli: Which?

Iain: On the trolley. Looks like a mole.

[Kelli picks something up, tries to see it as a mole, and passes it to him]

Cheers.

Kelli: What're you doing?

Iain: Re-alignment. Tracking.

Kelli: Oh, brilliant.

Can you come out?

Iain: Sure.

[He comes out. He's too greasy to kiss her properly, so they have an awkward kiss. He gets a rag]

What you out of school for?

Kelli: To see you.

Iain: Bad girl.

Kelli: Just romantic.

Iain: Step in then, Madam.

[He opens the door of the car he was working on, and lets her in]

Comfortable, ain't it? Reclines right back. Do you want to see?

Kelli: Not now, Lecko.

Where's Brodie?

Iain: Auction. Going once, going twice. Gone.

Kelli: Lecko, do you love me?

Iain: Yeah.

Kelli: Tell me.

Iain: Love you.

Kelli: Properly.

Iain: I love you.

Back now?

Kelli: Lecko.

I've got something to tell you.

Iain: Oh no. Your dad's found out about us doing it on the canal boat. Is he going to come round here and blow me away? "You're breaking the law son, you've got to go. You should have kept your hands off my precious daughter..."

[He plays that out]

Kelli: No, shh, Lecko. I'm pregnant.

Iain: That ain't funny Kelli.

Kelli: I'm serious.

Iain: Don't joke about that, girl. I'm supposed to be working. I thought you came round here for some fun. That ain't funny.

Kelli: Lecko, I mean it. I've been to the clinic. Five weeks pregnant. We're having a baby.

Iain: Stop that now, Kelli.

Kelli: I thought you'd be pleased.

Iain: What you on about? This is... how do you know it's mine?

Kelli: Of course it is.

Iain: You can't prove it.

Kelli: Lecko. You just said...

Iain: I'm not listening to this. You stupid little bitch. What were you playing at? You'll have to sort something out.

I don't need this crap. How could you?

Kelli: Don't be like that.

Iain: How do you expect me to be? You'll have to sort something out right. That is so stupid. Just get it sorted!

Kelli: You're scaring me.

Iain: I'm what?

Kelli: Look you're just shocked, Lecko. You need to get used to it.

Iain: I need to...just leave me alone will you. Get out.

[Pause]

Kelli: OK. OK, I'll go. Give you some time.

I'll see you tonight at the duck pond.

Iain: No way, Kelli. Out.

Listen, don't try to say anything about me to anyone, right. I mean it. Forget it.

[Kelli goes]

Scene Six The Garage Office

Brodie: Yeah, bit of a poser, that, Lecko.

Iain: That's what I mean. I'd go for it if it wasn't for - I don't know, what would I look like with one of those?

Brodie: You're right. They're for old men, Lecko. Cramp your style, man. You want to keep looking sharp, you just aren't going to with one of those little bastards.

Iain: Yeah, you're right.

Brodie: So what's the problem, get rid of it.

Iain: It ain't as simple as that Brodie. She gave it to me, didn't she? Sentimental value and that.

Brodie: She wouldn't know. Say it was an accident.

Iain: Eh?

Brodie: Be a few quid that would.

Iain: Would it?

Brodie: 1972 Mini? Yeah. Course it would. Collector's item. One careful owner, your Nan's had it all along, hasn't she ?

Iain: Yeah.

Brodie: A few hundred quid, definitely, maybe a grand.

Iain: I could do with that.

Brodie: You what?

Iain: You know.

Brodie: Oh Kelli being in the club, you mean. Yeah.

Iain: I'll sell the car then, definite. I won't tell my Nan though, she wanted me to have it.

[Phone goes. Brodie answers it]

Brodie: Brodie's Quicker Fitter, you want it fitted quick, you'll not find a quicker fitter, Brodie the quicker fitter speaking can I help you?

Kelli? Oh yes, yes...er...no. Sorry. You just missed him. Yeah, I'll tell him. Tara. Er...Kelli? Say hello to Becky will you, tell her I'll see her at the speedway. Tara.

That was Kelli.

Iain: Yes.

[Pause]

How did she sound?

Brodie: You couldn't tell from her voice that she's...you know...

Iain: I mean did she sound OK.

Brodie: Over-revving a bit.

Iain: Over-revving ?

Brodie: Yes, like maybe she's got too much coming through the carb.

Iain: Right.

Brodie: Not a big problem, though.

I thought you'd dumped her, anyway.

Iain: I never dumped her. I ain't like that. I just haven't got sorted, that's all.

Brodie: What you going to do, then?

Iain: I don't know Brode.

Can I be honest with you?

Brodie: I suppose.

Iain: The thing is I just said stuff to get rid of her. I never meant what I said.

Brodie: What did you say?

Iain: Told her to forget it.

I should be there for her, shouldn't I?

Brodie: I don't know.

Iain: I was only going out with her, wasn't I? I like her, but... It's just if she's going to have this kid. What do you think?

Brodie: It's tricky, isn't it?

Iain: I reckon I should at least talk to her.

Brodie: That's all women do, man. Talk.

[Pause]

That's what she said.

Iain: You what.

Brodie: On the phone. She said to tell you to forget it.

Iain: She said that?

Brodie: Yes.

Iain: Did she?

[Pause]

It ain't my fault, is it ? I mean, I never forced her to do it or anything. What she expect?

Brodie: Exactly. She should have been careful.

Iain: Exactly. Can you see me as a Dad?

Brodie: No.

Iain: I'd be a good Dad.

Brodie: Yes, of course you would, very good. I can see you as a Dad. You and little Lecko. Lecko II.

Iain: But not now.

Brodie: No. Not yet.

Iain: We'd have nowhere to live, I don't earn enough. I couldn't look after them properly.

Brodie: What's a kid going to cost to run, Lecko? I heard it costs £20,000 to bring up a kid. You could get a Series 2 BMW for that, mate. A good one.

Iain: Not to mention her, getting at me all the time.

Brodie: I thought you liked her.

Iain: To go out with, Brodie, not to live with.

Brodie: No, you're right. Don't blame yourself, man. You're better off staying like you are.

Iain: It's her own fault, isn't it? How was I to know?

Brodie: No-one to blame but herself. You're doing the right thing. Just leave it. I tell you, once they get their claws into you, man. Cars, Lecko. Stick to them. Less trouble, man.

Re-cap section

[The action is interrupted for a short re-cap on the 'evidence' so far. Perhaps exploration of how Kelli got pregnant, or perhaps just reinforcing preliminary observations. Group discussion, or discussion in small groups feeding back. At the end of the section, the classroom can be set up, so that the next scene can start at the middle]

Scene Seven Mr Taylor's Classroom

[Mr Taylor is taking a history lesson]

Mr Taylor: So in many ways, there are similarities between the past and the present -

[Becky arrives]

Becky: Sorry I'm late Mr Taylor.

Mr Taylor: It's nearly the end of the lesson, Rebecca.

Becky: Shall I not bother, then?

Mr Taylor: Come on. Sit down.

Where've you been?

Becky: Researching for my project, Sir.

Mr Taylor: Right. Good. The library?

Becky: The duck pond, Sir.

[The class laughs]

I'm doing the history of ducks.

Mr Taylor: Are you? I very much look forward to reading that.

Right, well, perhaps I should just go over the terms of the assessment project again, in case anyone is not quite clear. One aspect of pre-war Britain. Your choice, take it from the list of topics if you're stuck. [Looking at Becky] Check with me if you are not sure that your topic is right. You can simply write an account, or you can be a little more imaginative, and that is what I would recommend, to all of you. Show the examiners that you have really thought about it. You can include a range of media; do you understand what I mean by that ?

Pupil: Articles and that, Sir.

Mr Taylor: That's it. Tapes, photographs, recorded interviews, even videos. Remember, it's 20% of your overall mark, so let's pull our fingers out, shall we? On time please. Come and see me if you... Kelli?

[No reply]

Kelli?

[She rushes out, dropping a piece of paper. Mr Taylor picks it up and reads it.
He looks at the class. Bell. They start going]

Come and see me anyone who needs to ask about their project. Rebecca, can I
have a quiet word with you...

[He follows Becky out]

Scene Eight Kelli's Room

[Kelli is thoroughly immersed in her project. She is recording an interview in rôle.]

Kelli: 'I was a sensible girl. My father would not believe I was with child. Not Winifred, never.

I was sensible, so I did the sensible thing, and that was it. He said to me, "there is no place on the Lord's earth for this child". I went away for a while - a 'rest cure for my nerves', and I was back, and all was calm. But to say that is to say nothing of the sickening reek of disinfectant in the dark room, or the sweat of fear running down my neck onto the pillow. Nor afterwards, of the twisting I felt in my stomach every time I saw a baby in the park, or the jolting nightmares that still come. I have never had to be so strong. Not before, not since. Never.

None of which is regret. To suffer all this is nothing. But to be calm and sensible is on the face, in the heart is a cold deep pain.....'

Mum: [Downstairs] Kelli. Becky's here.

Kelli: OK Mum, get her to come up will you?

[She switches off the tape. Becky arrives]

Becky: Haven't you told her?

Kelli: Told her what?

Becky: Kelli!

Kelli: Oh. No.

Becky: What you doing?

Kelli: Project. I've been working on the interviews I did at St Georges

Becky: You've been interviewing a load of crinklies?

Kelli: It's been brilliant, Becky. You wouldn't understand.

Becky: You're telling me. What's them lot got to do with history?

Kelli: They've had amazing lives some of them. I'm making up tapes, as if it was me. Like diaries.

Becky: They didn't have cassettes in them days.

Kelli: No, it's like an imaginary thing. Everything the ladies at the home told me, but put like it's just happening. Living history. That's what Mr Taylor wants, isn't it?

Becky: Of course, what he wants he gets from Kelli, doesn't he?

He said anything to you yet?

Kelli: What about?

Becky: I told you, he had his 'quiet word' with me.

Kelli: God Becky, I'll kill you.

Becky: I never told him anything. I said you was upset because you'd been dumped by your boyfriend.

Kelli: You didn't have to say that.

Becky: What you mean?

Kelli: You could have said we'd split up.

Becky: What's it matter, as long as he knows you're single. Available.

Kelli: Becky.

Becky: Joking.

Kelli: What else did he say?

Becky: I told you. He just said why are they picking on you and calling you slag and that in notes. And I said it's just that some people think you are, but you're good at history aren't you, and he agreed with me and that was it.

Kelli: What have you come here for anyway? I've got loads to do.

Becky: Oh yes, look, I've brought you some stuff. Look, book.

[She gets out a book]

Kelli: Baby names? I haven't got time.

Becky: If we're going to have a baby, we've got to have a good name. It's important.

Kelli: I'm busy.

Becky: Donna. It's Italian. "A contraction of Madonna. The lady of the house."

Magazine.

[She produces a Mother and Baby magazine]

Kelli: What's that for?

Becky: Kelli it's sweet. Look. That's you.

[She shows her the cover with a picture of a pregnant woman]

Kelli: Becks.

Becky: Can I have a look at your belly?

Kelli: No you can't.

Becky: Let's see what it'll look like. That's what your boobs will go like. Out here.

Your belly button pops out, you know. Kelli's belly. Kelli's belly.

[She mimes her stomach growing until it bursts]

Kelli: Get lost, Becky.

Becky: There's loads of stuff in here. Washing the baby's bottom, look. Oh God, it's so cute. I'm going to wash it every day.

Kelli: Her.

Becky: I've got this as well.

[She produces a babygrow]

Kelli: Put it away.

Becky: I didn't get pink or blue, because we don't know what it is yet, do we?

Kelli: Becky, I'm busy. I've got to get this finished by Friday. You should be doing yours too.

Becky: I'll copy yours.

Kelli: You can't.

Becky: I'm just excited, that's all.

[She flicks through the magazine, reacting to some bits in it]

I'm going to be an auntie, sort of. We'll be able to dress the baby up all smart, do its hair, everything. Look it can wear one of these hats. Have you been back to the clinic?

[No reply]

They said they'd make an appointment, didn't they? Kelli?

Kelli: There's a letter.

[She gets out a letter, without taking her concentration from her work]

Becky: You haven't opened it.

[She opens the letter]

God, Kelli, you were supposed to go along on Monday. You missed it.

Kelli: So?

Becky: You're mad, you know.

[Back to name book]

Perhaps it should be Mavis. Old french for thrush.

I thought we could go shopping later on.

Kelli: Becky you aren't listening. I've got work to do. I'll see you at school tomorrow.

Becky: Why don't you come out? Up the duck pond. Out to the club. You still can, you're not too fat yet.

Kelli: I'm not interested right. I'm going to do some more interviews. Go with Brodie.

Becky: I was only seeing him so you could be with Lecko.

Kelli: Don't say that name.

Becky: Still hasn't said anything then?

[Pause]

Right, I'll go then. You can get on with your important work.

Kelli: See you.

Becky: See you. I'll leave this stuff.

Kelli: Thanks very much.

Becky: What about Thelma? It's in the family.

Kelli: Bye, Becky.

Scene Nine Mr Taylor's Classroom

[Mr Taylor is marking books. Kelli knocks and comes in]

Mr Taylor: Kelli. How are you? I missed you last week.

Kelli: Yes, sorry, Sir. I wasn't feeling well. Time of the month.

Mr Taylor: Yes, well, not to worry. Are you feeling OK now?

Kelli: Brilliant. I've brought you all my stuff. See what you think of it so far.

[She gets out all her project work]

Mr Taylor: Goodness. This is all for your assessment project?

Kelli: It's been fantastic. You see I've based it all round the lives of these women I met, up at St Georges - the old people's home. I talked to them about their memories.

This one, she lived in a boat, on the canal. The "cut" she calls it.

Mr Taylor: Of course, the cut, yes.

Kelli: Her name is Mrs Crossley. Edna. She lived on the cut from when she was born, right up to after the war. Not just a holiday boat, a working barge, it was. Her, and her husband, and five children altogether, living in the little cabin, this big. [She demonstrates] I've got a whole interview with her, and I've done this sort of diary, in her own words.

[She looks through the papers for a good bit to read out.]

Listen to this bit, it's about having her last child. She'd had nine children altogether, but four of them died, all of them on the boat.

'Wherever the boat was moored when the time came, Jack' - that's her husband - 'would go up and find someone - a woman that knew about giving birth, and they would see to me. Jack would leave me in the cabin, and pace the towpath.

With our Paul I was terrible ill, and they brought a doctor. Jack was close to the end of his tether, hearing me screaming. But the doctor would not let him in to me. No place for a man, he says. I was ill for months after, never left the boat. The doctor had taken the knife to me badly, and the scars took months to heal. Jack said he had better control his urges after that, because he never wanted to hear me in such pain again. For eight years he kept away from me, if you know what I mean. It was the only way we knew to stop having children.'

Mr Taylor: Dear me.

Kelli: It's good isn't it? I've written this bit contrasting it with now.

Mr Taylor: You must have been working on this full-time.

Kelli: Yes I have. I got really into it.

Mr Taylor: Well I hope you haven't let it interfere with other things, Kelli.

Kelli: Don't you like it?

Mr Taylor: It's excellent, of course.

[Pause]

It is just....

You never solve problems by ignoring them, Kelli. Expecting them to go away. Even small insignificant problems, they stay around, whether you face them or not, and they get worse and worse. Do you understand?

Kelli: No.

Mr Taylor: When I was a little older than you, my girlfriend went through something not unlike you are going through, Kelli. I remember very much how it felt. She made an extremely difficult decision, and needed support. Everyone needs support.

[Pause]

Kelli: Did you get married?

Mr Taylor: This wasn't my wife, no. This was someone...this was earlier. I just wanted -

Kelli: Is that all, Sir?

Mr Taylor: No, well. If you have anything you want to talk through with someone, you know you can come to me, don't you? Not only history.

Kelli: Shall I enter the tapes then, as well, when I've finished them?

Mr Taylor: Yes, definitely, put it all in, and you should get top marks for this, I'm sure, Kelli. Well done.

Kelli: See you, Sir.

[She goes]

Possible Participation Section

The action is stopped for the group to examine the evidence of the project in detail. This is a loose-leaf folder, consisting of written-up interviews in short sections, pictures, etc. The group can be given a page each, or in small groups to study and report on.

Key Questions.

Why is Kelli doing this particular project - what does it tell us about her thoughts and feelings?

What are the differences and similarities between these women and women today, their experiences, and attitudes to childbirth and motherhood?

[It might make sense for Mr Taylor to be present in role to comment on the project, and to give a little more information about his own experiences, and feelings about Kelli]

Scene Ten The Garage

[Brodie and Becky are in a car]

Brodie: This clutch is a bit stiff.

Becky: Is it?

[Pause]

When you said would I go for a ride I thought, 'Yeah'. This was all you mean't. Three times round the car park and parked up, fiddling with your pedals.

Brodie: It's really sticking.

Becky: Wouldn't you like to do something?

Brodie: Like what?

Becky: I don't know. Find a quiet spot by the duck pond.

Brodie: I don't know, really.

Becky: Why not? Don't you fancy me?

Brodie: Course I do. I just don't know what to do.

Becky: I'll show you.

Brodie: I mean. I don't want to rush things.

Becky: Rush things? You've spent three months talking to me about car engines.

Brodie: Don't you like talking?

Becky: Course I do. And necking. And foreplay. And doing it.

Brodie: Lecko will be here in minute.

Becky: What did you ask him for?

Brodie: I didn't. He said he was coming here with Anne-Marie.

Becky: Anne-Marie?

Brodie: You know, the girl with the long boots.

Becky: I know who she is. He's going with her?

Brodie: She's OK.

Becky: She's a slag. But how could he anyway, with Kelli having his baby.

Brodie: Oh yes, that.

Becky: I'd kill him if it were up to me. Ann bloody Marie.

Brodie: I thought it was all over with him and Kelli.

Becky: Don't be soft, that's just what they are saying. She loves him. That's why she's dead upset.

Brodie: She told him to forget it.

Becky: She loves him.

Brodie: He told her to forget it.

Becky: That's cos he's a bloke.

Brodie: You've lost me.

Becky: She makes out like she doesn't care, but she's all broken up inside, and that's his fault. She had all these dreams, Brodie. Happy Families. Getting away from her Mum and Dad and their atmosphere. Her and Lecko and the baby, sailing off into the sunset. I'd cut his bloody thing off if I had the chance.

Brodie: Right

Becky: So how about it, anyway?

Brodie: I think it just needs oiling.

[Iain arrives, on his own]

Iain: All right Brodie?

Becky. How you doing?

Becky: You know. Slowly.

On your own?

Iain: Eh?

Becky: No Anne-Marie.

Iain: No.

Well, maybe she's coming later. I'll sit in the back then shall I?

Becky: I don't believe you. Martini man.

Iain: What's that supposed to mean?

Becky: Anytime, anyplace, anywhere.

Iain: You got something to say?

Becky: Nothing to you.

[She starts to leave]

Brodie: Are you off, then?

Becky: Yeah.

Brodie: See you.

Becky: Yeah. Without your friend the bastard, OK.

[She goes]

Iain: Nice mate you've got.

Brodie: She wants to cut your thing off.

Iain: She ain't getting anywhere near my thing. Not even in her dreams.

What was she on about anyway?

Brodie: Just Kelli.

Iain: Yeah?

Brodie: You wouldn't be interested, would you? I told her that. I said it was all over. If Kelli's cracking up, and still loves you, that's her problem. I said don't you whinge on to me about it, because I know that Lecko ain't bothered, right, man?

Iain: Too right I'm not.

Brodie: I said that. I said you'll get nowhere. He's told her it's all over, and if she regrets that it's her lookout. You'll get nothing out of him.

Iain: Good on you, Brode.

Brodie: I'm off up the pub in minute. Just got to free up the clutch on this, OK ?

Iain: Yeah right. I'll see you there. Just something to do first. Business.

[He goes out]

Scene Eleven Kelli's Room

[Kelli is still working at her project, recording another section]

Kelli: 'I was in a dark room which stank of blood and stale dirty air. It wasn't as you might think of a hospital, it was a big dingy house. The nurses wore grey, and when the baby came there was no joy in it. Everyone knew that I was not to keep her, of course. I was to give her up for adoption, because I was unmarried. I never saw her after the morning she was born.

The moment I most remember was when the nurse cut the cord. The baby had been born, and she was covered in blood. They wrapped her in a blanket. Not a sheet or a towel, but a rough blanket, and the one nurse showed me her face. She never said anything, she just cut the cord. Big scissors which cut the line that attached her to me. I wished it were a thick rope they could not cut, or a metal chain, to break the scissors. I dreamed afterwards of pulling and pulling on this cord and dragging her back to me.

'Dry your tears and forget'. That was the nurse's advice. But you don't forget. When I hear them now, talking about 'unwanted' babies being adopted, it makes me want to scream. There isn't hardly a day when I don't want her. Never has been. I can still see - '

[There is the noise of a stone hitting the window. It is Iain outside. She stops recording]

What the hell are you doing?

Iain: I was passing.

Kelli: Go away. There's no point.

Iain: Can I come up?

[Pause]

Kelli!

Kelli: Shut up, will you?

Iain: Kelli!

Kelli: Go through the entry, I'll let you through the back.

[She lets him in]

What are you doing here?

Iain: Come to see you.

[Pause]

Don't I get a hello.

Kelli: I haven't seen you for three months.

Iain: Big hello then.

Kelli: You've got a nerve.

Iain: I've got loads of things, girl.

Kelli: Don't, Lecko.

Iain: Want me to show some of what I've got?

Kelli: Get off will you. God, you deaf me out for all this time, and now you come in here expecting to do what you want with me.

Iain: No. I come to see my baby.

It doesn't show.

Kelli: Good.

Iain: You look skinnier if anything. Have you been starving yourself or something?

Your tits are bigger.

Kelli: Smooth-talker.

Iain: Have you missed me?

Kelli: I hate you. Do you think you can just come back here and act like nothing's happened.

Iain: Yeah.

Kelli: I hate you.

Iain: Do you? Say it like you mean it then.

Kelli: What you come here for?

Iain: I'm sorry.

Kelli: Are you?

Iain: I've thought about it, right. I want to be here for you. Be his Dad.

Kelli: Her Dad.

Iain: OK. Be Dad. Be here. Do stuff.

Kelli: You think I'll believe you?

Iain: You can't be mad at me for long, can you? Please be my friend.

Kelli: Stop it. Stop it.

Mum: [Shouting up] Kelli! Kelli! Tea's ready.

Kelli: I'm not hungry Mum.

Iain: You love me really.

Kelli: Shut up, will you.

Mum: You've got to have something, you're working too hard.

Kelli: I'll come down in a bit.

Mum: You're doing too much.

[Pause]

Iain: Well?

Kelli: You'll have to change.

Iain: What's wrong with this?

Kelli: I mean it. If you are really serious.

Iain: I am.

Kelli: You'll have to change.

Mum: Kelli, are you listening?

Kelli: She's coming up. Get under there.

[Iain hides under something. Kelli's Mum comes in and fusses around]

Mum: You can't just lock yourself away up here for the rest of your life. What are you doing?

Kelli: Just my project.

Mum: Still the history project?
[Pause]

Kelli: Mum, I'm fine.

Mum: You're my little baby, Kelli. The only one that hasn't flown the nest. I worry about you.

Kelli: I'll be down in a minute.

Mum: Finish the bit you're doing. Come down for 'Pets Win Prizes'.

Kelli: OK.
[Mum goes. Iain comes out]
You'd better go. She'll be back in a minute.

Iain: 'Pets Win Prizes'?

Kelli: Lecko?

Iain: What?

Kelli: Thanks for coming back.

Iain: No problem.
You ain't told them?

Kelli: I can't.

Iain: You've got to Kelli. You can't hide it under big jumpers when it's born.

Kelli: You don't know my parents. He'll take it out on her. Things will get even worse between them. I can't do that to her.

Iain: You know best.
See you later, mother.

Kelli: Dad.
[He goes. She starts back on her work]

Mum: Kelli?

Kelli?

Kelli: What is it?

Mum: Can I come in?

Kelli: What?

[Mum comes in]

Mum: Who was that?

Kelli: Who was what?

Mum: In here, just now. I saw him, going out of the back.

Kelli: Oh him.

Mum: Yes?

Kelli: Friend.

His name's Lecko. Iain.

Mum: Two friends?

Kelli: His name's Iain Leckman. People call him Lecko.

Mum: Iain. I see.

I didn't see him coming in.

[Pause]

Kelli: He was helping with my project.

Mum: Was he?

Is he nice?

Kelli: What?

Mum: This Iain, who was helping you. Is he nice?

Kelli: Yes, Mum, he really is.

Mum: Is he special to you, dear?

Kelli: I suppose.

Mum: Well. You could have told me you know. I'm not such an old dragon that I wasn't expecting you to start having boyfriends some time. It's fine.

So what does he do?

Kelli: He's a mechanic. Works in a friend's garage.

Mum: Oh that's good. You can bring him over. He can fix the car. We can meet him properly. Are you alright?

Kelli: Yes.

Mum: I wish you had told me about him. Sneaking him in and out.

Kelli: Mum?

Mum: What?

Kelli: Nothing.

[Pause]

Can I show you something?

Mum: Of course you can.

[She gets the letter from the clinic, and gives it to her]

What's this? It's from the family planning clinic.

Kelli: Yes.

Mum: But this is an appointment.

This letter is dated.... how many weeks?

Kelli: Five months.

Mum: Oh Kelli.

[Pause]

I see. Right. Does your father know?

Kelli: Of course not.

Mum: Right. He mustn't. Right.

Kelli: I'm sorry Mum. It wasn't deliberate.

Mum: This Iain is the father, is he?

Kelli: Mum, sit down will you?

Mum: His ears are pierced, Kelli.

Kelli: Mum.

Mum: Right.

First thing tomorrow morning, we're going straight round to see Dr Borman.

Kelli: No, Mum. I don't want to see her.

Mum: Did he attack you? Take advantage of you?

Kelli: I slept with him.

Mum: Here?

Kelli: No.

Mum: Didn't you use anything?

[No reply]

Did he refuse?

Kelli: I don't know.

Mum: You must know.

Kelli: We didn't talk about it.

Mum: What were you thinking?

Kelli: Mum.

Mum: Oh my poor baby. My poor baby.

Kelli: Mum, I'm not a baby.

Mum: No. Of course. No.

[They hug]

Scene Twelve The Ante-Natal Class

[The style of this scene is more stylised, giving a sense of covering the last four months of Kelli's pregnancy.]

[Music. 'Where will the baby's dimple be?'. Kelli is sitting in the centre, doing a puzzle book. Ian brings her a take-away pizza, puts it beside her. He goes off, and she starts to eat it. He comes back with a box of chocolates, puts it the other side, goes off again. She is eating them both together. She is now visibly pregnant. She is bruised on the face]

Kelli: Pizza. Chocolate. More pizza. Another chocolate.

Iain!

[A number of people walk past her and give her a range of looks. Whispering to each other. We hear odd words]

Whisperers: YOUNG.....YOUNG.....YOUNG.....IGNORANT.....
DELIBERATE..... NOTHING..... SAD..... PATHETIC....

Kelli: [Not looking up from her puzzle book] What is it you're saying? I know what you're thinking.

[People approach her, come up close to her and speak out about her. We hear a range of attitudes and thoughts]

Chatterer 1: Stupid slag.

Chatterer 2: Ignorant cow.

Chatterer 3: Poor thing.

Chatterer 1: Gymslip mums.

Chatterer 2: Teenage mothers.

Chatterer 3: Single parents.

Chatterer 1: They do it for money.

Chatterer 2: They do it for housing.

Chatterer 3: They do it because they don't know any better.

Chatterer 2: Shall we say 'congratulations'?

Chatterer 1: No.

Chatterer 3: No.

Chatterer 2: No.

Chatterer 3: She sleeps around you know.

Chatterer 1: Doesn't know who the father is.

Chatterer 2: Doesn't care.

Chatterer 1: Ignorant slag.

Chatterer 2: Stupid cow.

Chatterer 3: Poor thing.

Chatterer 2: She looks so young.

Chatterer 3: She looks so sad.

Chatterer 1: She looks so fat.

Chatterer 3: Swelled up.

Chatterer 2: Blooming.

Chatterer 1: Blown up.

Chatterer 2: In the family way.

Chatterer 3: But what family?

Chatterer 1: Not a proper family.

Chatterer 3: Don't carry that!

Chatterer 2: Sit down!

Chatterer 1: Rest your back.

Chatterer 2: You're doing too much.

Chatterer 1: Don't eat that!

Chatterer 3: You must not smoke!

Chatterer 1: Put that down!

Chatterer 2: You'll hurt the baby.

Chatterer 3: Don't you care about your baby?

Chatterer 1: Stupid cow.

Chatterer 2: Ignorant slag.

Chatterer 1: Ignorant cow.

Chatterer 2: Stupid slag.

Chatterer 3: Can I feel it kicking?

Chatterer 2: Can I listen to the heartbeat?

Chatterer 1: Let me touch it.

Kelli: Leave us alone!

[The chatterers withdraw. She talks to her bump]

I'm sorry. Poking and prodding. Chattering at us, treating us like meat. They don't think about you in there, listening to all that.

I'm sorry I waddle like a turkey. Stuffed. I'm sorry if sometimes I seem to hate you, for making me like this. I don't mean it.

I'll prove to every one of them that calls me a slag, every one of them that thinks I'm ignorant. I'll be a better mother than anyone. I will love you like no baby was ever loved.

[Three heavily pregnant women arrive]

Mum-to-be 1 Are you here for the ante-natal class?

Kelli: Yes.

Mum-to-be 1: Lovely.

Mum-to-be 2: She's new.

Mum-to-be 1: Yes. Of course.

Mum-to-be 3: Are you new?

Kelli: Yes.

Mum-to-be 1: Is it your first?

Kelli: My first?

Mum-to-be 1: I thought it must be.

Mum-to-be 2: I remember my first. I felt like a pile of mud all through it. Sick as a dog. Toilet every five minutes. Torture it was.

Mum-to-be 1: Really. I sailed through my first. Felt wonderful all through it.

Mum-to-be 3: Alright for some.

Mum-to-be 1: It wasn't until Ben was born that anything really hit me. Then it was a nightmare. He just wanted me the whole time. Screamed all day and all night. I looked like I'd aged twenty years in a week.

Mum-to-be 2: How old is he now?

Mum-to-be 1: He's 4, and Gemma is just 2. They're with the childminder. I hate leaving them, but it means I do have some time for myself.

Mum-to-be 3: Alright for some.

Mum-to-be 1: What kind of birth are you having, love?

Kelli: I don't know. I haven't thought about it. Normal I hope.

Mum-to-be 2: Normal eh? God knows what's normal. You want my advice, take all the drugs they offer you, love. Anything to stop the pain.

Mum-to-be 1: Don't listen to her. Giving birth is a natural process. You're fit and young. You'll love it. It's the best feeling in the world.

Mum-to-be 2: Make sure you write out a full birth plan, won't you.

Kelli: A what?

Mum-to-be 1: And try to get to know all the midwives beforehand.

Mum-to-be 2: If there are things you don't understand, ask.

Mum-to-be 1: Don't take any notice of any of the paediatricians, either.

Kelli: The what?

Mum-to-be 1: The doctors. They know nothing. Don't trust them.

Kelli: Don't trust the doctors?

Mum-to-be 2: Of course you can, that's just her. You're frightening the poor girl.

Mum-to-be 1: The exercises. Come on.

[Through the next section they are all involved in doing ante-natal exercises.
Kelli is looking
bewildered]

Mum-to-be 3: Don't take any notice of them two.

How old are you?

Kelli: Fifteen.

Mum-to-be 3: I thought so. That's how old I was when I had Paulette. My oldest.

Kelli: Were you?

Mum-to-be 3: I know how you feel, believe me. You on your own?

Kelli: Today, yes.

Mum-to-be 3: Listen, I wouldn't kid you about it, it'll be tough. No-one gives you anything. You feel like you're one big problem, start to finish. They're all scared of anyone young. Slap you down. You can't be trusted. Stupid enough to get pregnant, you can't be trusted with anything. Your parents around?

Kelli: Sort of. They don't get on -

Mum-to-be 3: Mine kicked me out. No ceremony, just 'get out and never come back'. What got to them was how it looked. They didn't give a damn about me. Still don't. Got somewhere to live?

Kelli: At home.

Mum-to-be 3: I was on the streets for a while. In a squat. Only got a proper flat last year. Everyone will want you to fail. You're a teenage mum, so you must be a criminal too, a beggar, a junkie, a sponger. All because some dickhead got you pregnant and then ran off.

Kelli: It wasn't like that. I mean, I'm sure it was terrible for you, but it's different for me.

Mum-to-be 3: There's only one way to get pregnant sweetheart.

Kelli: Yes, but we want this baby.

Mum-to-be 3: Planned, was it?

Kelli: Not exactly.

Mum-to-be 3: Don't kid yourself. You got in trouble because everybody says you should have sex, and you think it's what you're supposed to do. You did it to please some selfish bleeder who wouldn't understand responsibility any more than he could spell it.

Kelli: I've got a husband. His name is Iain. We're not married but he bought a buggy for the baby, and it isn't just a crap one from a junk shop, it's new. £200 it cost. He couldn't really afford it.

[Exercising is finished]

Mum-to-be 3: Well, I'm glad for you. Look, I'm sure everything will go well. Whatever happens, don't believe what they say about you. Fight them all. I would tell anybody not to have kids this young, to use contraceptives and all that, but that doesn't mean I regret it. I don't. Because I love her, Paulette.

[She goes]

Mum-to-be 1: How many months is she?

Kelli: I'm seven.

Mum-to-be 2: Seven, you're not very big, are you? God, my feet are lousy.

Mum-to-be 1: Swollen?

Mum-to-be 2: Bloody bursting. See you.

Mum-to-be 1: Tara.

[The mums-to-be have gone]

[Kelli is alone again]

[Music. Baby's heartbeat. We see the last stages of pregnancy, as she is getting heavier. Frustrated. Iain supports her. Looks fed up with doing this.]

[Kelli feels a contraction]

What's happening?

[She screams]

Iain: What is it? Is it coming?

Jesus, Kelli, what is it? What shall I do?

[The pain has passed]

Kelli: Get my things.

Iain: Is that supposed to happen?

Kelli: Bag. Taxi.

Iain: Are you OK?

Scared.

[He gets her bag and takes her off]

[Baby's heartbeat]

Scene Thirteen The Hospital

[Heartbeat]

[Iain and Kelli have arrived. A midwife is taking Kelli in.]

Midwife: [To Iain] Do you want to come into the delivery suite?

Iain: Er....

Kelli: Yes, he does.

[Iain hesitates, as Kelli goes in. A doctor stops him]

Doctor: I don't suppose you'd be much help. I should wait out here. We will let you know if there is any news. She is in safe hands.

[Iain is about to ask something, but the doctor has gone. He paces, and sits]

[The midwife reappears. She is busy]

Iain: Is she alright?

Midwife: Who?

Iain: Kelli. You just took her in.

Midwife: Oh, the little girl? You are?

Iain: Her boyfriend. The father.

Midwife: I see.

She is going to be fine.

Iain: She was screaming.

Midwife: Well that's quite common. It's a painful process.

Iain: How long will it be?

Midwife: I can't answer that for you. Listen, with girls as young as that, normally they manage very well. Young and fit. The birth isn't the problem.

There is a phone at the end of the corridor, if there is anyone who should be here.

Iain: A phone?

Midwife: That way.

[She goes. We hear Kelli scream again. Iain thinks about going in. Goes towards the phone instead.]

Scene Fourteen Kelli's Room

[The room has changed. It is now the room of a fifteen year old young woman and a baby]

[Evie, the baby, is in a moses basket. She is crying.]

Mum: [Downstairs] Evie's crying.

Kelli: I know, Mum. I'm just busy. I'll be there in a minute.

[Mrs Thompson comes in and comforts Evie. Kelli comes in shortly afterwards]

Mum: She was crying.

Kelli: I heard her, Mum. I was in the bathroom.

Mum: You should always try not to leave her crying, Kelli.

Kelli: I know that, Mum. Here.

[She takes Evie from her.]

Mum: Look at her. Little angel. Have you cleaned her properly?

Kelli: Of course I have. Mum, leave her.

Mum: When did you feed her?

Kelli: I dunno. About three.

Mum: I'll get more milk ready.

Kelli: She isn't hungry. I'll do it later.

Mum: I've got to go out later.

Kelli: I'll do it. I said.

Mum: When you going down to the school?

Kelli: Tomorrow morning. I've got to talk to Mrs Edwards. They said I can go back if I want, but I might like to talk about the 'implications'. Evie can go in the nursery though, that's definite.

Mum: She can stay here with me, I said.

Kelli: Mum, she can go to the nursery.

Mum: It isn't even clean there.

Kelli: Of course it is.

[Doorbell]

Kelli: That'll be Iain. Let him in will you, Mum.

Mum: Of course.

Kelli: You could give him a key.

Mum: No.

[Kelli pulls a face]

Your father wouldn't allow it.

[She lets Iain in]

Iain: Mrs Thompson.

Kelli: Look, Iain, look at her.

Iain: Hello gorgeous.

Mum: Don't disturb her, will you. It's taken us an age to get her settled.

Kelli: Mum.

Iain: I'm saying hello to my daughter.

Mum: Your Dad has got a rough face hasn't he, sweetness?

Kelli: She was holding on to my finger before, Iain. Gripping really tight. Wasn't she Mum?

Mum: She was. Do you want to wash your hands, Iain?

Iain: I'm fine thanks.

Mum: Do you want any tea?

Iain: No ta.

Mum: Well, we'll be having tea in a few minutes.

Iain: Well don't worry about me. I'll stay up here with Eve.

Kelli: Evie.

Mum: We can take her downstairs with us.

Iain: No you're OK. You're looking tired, Mrs Thompson.

Mum: Well, we've been busy, haven't we? What have you been doing, Iain? Anything interesting?

Iain: I've been at work, as you know.

Mum: Yes, of course.

Kelli: Mum, can you show me that baby-walker you was on about. The one you saved.

Mum: What?

Kelli: You said you'd found it in the shed, or something.

Mum: Oh yes. Alright.

[They go downstairs. Iain is left with the baby]

Iain: Your grandma doesn't like me much, does she? Mind you I can't stand her, either. Old cow. "Do you want to wash your hands?" Who's a stupid old cow, then, eh. Stupy, stupy, fat fat cow-cow. Eh. Moo. Moo.

You know something, precious, you are the smallest thing in the world, do you know that? I could squash you just like that.

[He picks her up and holds her very tenderly. Blows on her face. She gurgles. He kisses her head.]

Daddy. Daddy. Me daddy.

[Kelli comes back in]

Kelli: She can't understand you yet, you div.

Iain: How do you know? She might be taking in everything.

Kelli: God help her if she is. This place.

I'm sorry about Mum.

Iain: Evie was just saying that. So you should be. I swear I'll kill her soon.

Kelli: She's trying to help.

Iain: Yeah well she isn't.

Kelli: Come on Iain. She's done loads of stuff, and she's paid for loads, too.

Iain: So she says.

Iain: She has.

Iain: Alright, so I haven't got much money. It's not my fault.

Kelli: I'm not getting at you, I was just saying.

Iain: Yeah well don't.

Kelli: Give me Evie if you're going to shout.

Iain: I'm not.

I just can't stand the way she is. She doesn't trust me, does she?

Kelli: Not yet. She will.

Iain: You think so?

Kelli: At least she's still talking.

Iain: Your Dad still said nothing?

Kelli: He just goes around looking sad. Not even that, disappointed. It was better when he just exploded.

Iain: No it wasn't, girl.

We'll just have to prove ourselves to them, won't we?

[He successfully puts Evie in her basket, and goes over to give Kelli a cuddle. She shrugs him off.]

Kelli: Did you bring any nappies?

Iain: Was I supposed to?

Kelli: I thought you might think about it. I'll go and get some later.

Iain: Do you want me to go?

Kelli: No.

[She goes to the baby and sings to her. 'Grey squirrel, grey squirrel, swish your bushy tail'. Iain goes to her again, watches sweetly for a bit, then puts his arms round her waist. Sits her on his lap]

Iain: What's up with you?

Kelli: Nothing.

Iain: You aren't interested in me any more.

Kelli: I'm tired, that's all.

Iain: You haven't lost all your weight yet, have you? How long does that take?

Kelli: I'm doing my best.

I'm tired, Iain, I told you.

Iain: What do you keep calling me Iain for?

Kelli: It's your name.

Iain: No-one calls me Iain, except your Mum. You're turning into her. that's what's happening.

Kelli: You can't have a child, and still be called Lecko. It's a kid's nickname. You're a Dad.

Iain: You're off your head.

[Pause]

Can we go somewhere tonight.

Kelli: Yeah that would be good. We can push her up to the cut - show her where she came from. We could have a good talk.

Iain: I mean't the two of us.

Kelli: We can't do that.

Iain: Why not? Leave her for a couple of hours with the grannie from hell.

Kelli: No. I don't want to.

Iain: I don't get it. Why not?

Mum: I'm not leaving her here. She's my baby, Iain.

Iain: And mine, and I say let's leave her for a bit. You're going to leave her when you go back to school.

Kelli: With a nursery, not with my Mum.

Iain: It doesn't make any sense. We could just -

Kelli: Forget it. I'm not leaving her on her own here, OK.

Iain: OK.

[Pause]

Kelli: Have you done anything about the flat?

Iain: Yeah. This and that.

Kelli: What do you mean?

Iain: Put out feelers. Asked around.

Kelli: You do want to do it don't you?

Iain: I thought you were too tired?

Kelli: I'm serious Iain. You do want to get a flat?

Iain: Of course. I've just got to sort it. Won't take long. You could move out anyway.

Kelli: Come to your place.

Iain: No, I didn't mean that, I mean't couldn't you get a council place or something?

Kelli: No way. I asked at the social. They let you live on a street for a few weeks first, then if you're lucky it's a hostel. You don't get any benefit either. Ten quid a week for Evie, that's it. That's why I'm glad I'm not on my own.

Iain: You been and checked all that out?

Kelli: I've got to, haven't I?

Iain: Yes, well I'll sort something out.

Kelli: It'll be great, Iain. Proper family. Place of our own.

Iain: Yes, it'll be great, course it will.

[They look at this moment as close as they ever have been]

Scene Fifteen Kelli's Room

[Kelli is rocking Evie in her arms. She is on the verge of sleep. Kelli is noticeably tired, zombie-like. She tries putting her down, but it disturbs her, and she whimpers. She tries sitting with her, but she needs to keep moving or the whimpering starts]

Kelli: Please, Evie. Just a little break. Please.

[We can see that she is right at the end of her tether. She is tense and on the point of shaking the baby]

Please. Please.

[Becky comes in, brightly]

Becky: Hiya. You're still here?

Kelli: I'm not going in today. She's not well.

Becky: She's always sick.

Kelli: No she isn't. She's a baby.

Becky: Oh is that it?

What are you doing?

Kelli: I was trying to get her off to sleep.

Becky: It's morning.

Kelli: Yeah well she didn't sleep in the night, did she.

Becky: Partying were you? Rocking and rolling?

Kelli: Not exactly. Just rocking. Rocking and feeding and more rocking and feeding.

What are you doing here anyway?

Becky: Can't I drop in on my best friend without a reason?

Kelli: At half past eight in the morning, no. Not you.

Becky: I was just wondering if you could come down the dole with me. Sophie said they only do anything if you have a baby with you.

Kelli: Doesn't it have to be yours?

Becky: Eh?

Kelli: It's rubbish anyway. They give you nothing.

Becky: I knew you'd be up. You said last time you had a reason to get up in the morning, now.

Kelli: I have. It isn't to help you get a job.

Becky: I'm not on about that, it's getting some benefit.

Kelli: I'm supposed to look after Evie, re-sit exams that I missed for because I was busy having her, and help sort you out with the mess you made by not bothering with yours. Anything else?

Becky: Where's Lecko?

Kelli: Iain.

Becky: Whatever. I thought he was standing by you.

Kelli: He is taking responsibility, Becky. He can't stay nights.

Becky: Does he come round every day?

Kelli: Not every day. When he can. He's coming today. We're going to look at a flat.

Becky: To live in?

Kelli: No, to eat.

Becky: You moving out?

Kelli: Iain's found somewhere over across the north road. He knows someone.

Becky: Course he does.
What does your Dad think?

Kelli: We don't talk just now.

Becky: Your Mum then.

Kelli: I haven't told her.

Becky: She'll go ballistic.

Kelli: I've hated living in this house for long enough, Becky. I can't put Evie through it. Mum'll be OK. She doesn't understand Iain, that's all.

Becky: You mean she doesn't realise that underneath he's a real caring dad. She thinks he's just a waste of time?

Kelli: Pretty much.

Becky: Yes, well.

Kelli: You'll change your tune when we've got a place together. You'll be begging to come round.

Becky: If.

[Pause]

I hope you're right.

Hey, you can have a flat-warming, can't you?

Kelli: I don't want a flat-warming.

Becky: Just a little one.

Kelli: Becky. No party.

Becky: You've changed, man. You're no fun.

Kelli: I've grown up. You haven't. Fun isn't the main thing any more.

Becky: You're like an old woman, suddenly. Boring.

Kelli: God, Becky, you don't understand a thing, do you? I've got a bleeding baby. I'm not bothered about nail varnish, and horny horoscopes and Ronan frigging Keating OK? Does that make me boring?

Becky: See what I mean? You act like you're better than me all the time. You're not so special. It isn't hard to get pregnant. You carry on like this, you won't have any friends left, you know that?

Kelli: I've got Iain. We've got each other.

Becky: Don't make me puke.

[Evie is starting to cry]

Kelli: He has changed too, you know. A few months ago, he'd never have been planning to get a flat with me and that.

Becky: You think he is now? He's got you conned. He isn't coming back. Or if he does this time, another time he won't. Who got you pregnant, Kelli? You act like it was planned, but all it was was he never used nothing when he did it with you. He couldn't care less about you. He likes the idea of having a kid but that's it. Only when it suits him.

Kelli: If you're right I can do without him. I can do without any of you.

Becky: You might have to. Can't you shut her up.

Kelli: Get out, will you.

Becky: I'm going. I'll find someone who still wants to do things.

Kelli: Who still wants to wag off school, go up the duck pond for a fag and a quick grope? I am doing something, Becky.

Becky: Rocking until you look like death, and changing frigging nappies. Throwing away your life.

[She goes. Kelli calls after her]

Kelli: What life? What was so good before?

[The baby is crying again. Kelli cries too.]

[She talks to Evie.]

Alright Evie, it's alright now. Becky doesn't know what she's saying, that's all. She thought you were going to be a doll, that she can play with when she wants. If she looked into your eyes like I do, she would understand. Needing me. Needing me so much. I'm going to do my best for you, I promise. If that means growing up quickly, leaving Becky behind, starving, leaving Mum and Dad to rot together, living on the street, I'll do it. I swear. I'll do it.

Do you want to dance, Evie? Dance until your Dad comes.

[She puts on a tape, sings along and dances. It is slightly desperate but touching picture. Brodie comes in]

Brodie: You OK?

Kelli: Brodie. How did you get in?

Brodie: I was outside. Becky came out. I caught the door.

Kelli: Oh right.

Brodie: Overheating a bit.

Kelli: Eh?

Brodie: Becky. Overheating.

Kelli: Yes.

Brodie: That the baby?

Kelli: Evie. Yes.

[Brodie looks briefly and non-committally at her]

Brodie: Small.

Kelli: Yes.

Brodie: Looks a bit fragile.

[Pause]

Kelli: Did you want something Brodie?

Brodie: Yes. No. It was just to say that Lecko can't come over today, he says. He's got to go to Manchester for a couple of days. Business. He said to say.

Kelli: Right. Thanks. Is that the whole message?

Brodie: Yes. I'd better go. Try to catch up with Becky. Talk.

Kelli: Good idea.

Brodie: See you then.

[Pause]

I think you'll be a good Mum Kelli.

Kelli: Thanks Brodie.

See you.

Brodie: Yes, see you.

[He goes]

[She goes to Evie, picks her up, and goes to the window]

Kelli: Just us then for now. Just the two of us.

[Music]

Final participation section

The task of the pupils might take a number of forms:

What happened. Close analysis of how things came to the present situation.

What could/should have been different?

What can we learn from this story, to help in the future.

[Perhaps Monica has to write up recommendations based on this case, as a focus for these three questions]

Activities within this process -

Looking at key moments and 'foruming' - how might they have been different?

A case conference

Filling in an assessment form

Discussion.

Alternatively:

A decision needs to be made about Evie's future....

Discussion needs to focus on how Kelli is coping, and will cope.

What support she needs.

What support is possible.

What the group would recommend.

Space in the workshop elements [or in teachers follow-up] needs to be made for exploration of

Contraception information and detail.

Termination and adoption as options and as issues.

Sex education - discussion of who should be doing what.

Media stereotyping and scape-goating by politicians.

Parenting skills - the reality and responsibilities of being a parent.

Historical perspectives [particularly if the activity on the project hasn't been part of the programme]