

NUMINA STAGE

Who fits right in with her world. The decision has been made. (To OGHMA and ULLR) Proceed.

OGHMA and ULLR enter the scene as Y SOPHIA is still stuck into colouring in.

TIW: Good! Good. They are so disappointed in you. You are a failure.

BRIGID: (To Y SOPHIA) You feel betrayed, you don't understand why they should stop you from doing things you love.

TIW: (To BRIGID) What are you doing?! (To Y SOPHIA) You trust they are doing the right thing and do what they ask.

LILITH: You are strong! You can make them proud by working hard.

BRIGID: You hate this!

TIW: Lights.

LILITH: Well that was fun. (To TIW) You have a real skill, do you know that? There are very few in our line of work who can actually pull off being a complete twat. But you do it effortlessly. It's a marvel to behold. I am actually welling up here.

TIW is livid. TYCHE laughs.

TIW: (To BRIGID) What in the seven hells was that?

BRIGID: What?

TIW: What do you mean 'what'?! Disobeying me, going against my orders.

REAL WORLD STAGE

L***The following is delivered slowly with pauses so the two sides do not talk over each other***

OGHMA: What are you doing? We told you to do your homework.

ULLR: As you can't stop yourself from wasting time, you've given us no choice. You will work here every evening until we believe you have caught up on a lot of wasted time. You need to work, work, work!

OGHMA: This is for your benefit, darling. There is no future for you in playing games, making frankly awful art and telling stories to teddies. Except for a short and painful life living under bridges. Hard work will pay off. Science and maths will pay off. Messing about with crap like this will not.

ULLR: You'll thank us for it one day. You'll see. Now, get on with your homework.

ULLR and OGHMA exit. Y SOPHIA stares ahead then slumps on the desk.

LIGHTS down.

BRIGID: I have a different way of looking at things. You see things one way, I see them differently. We have the chance to...

TIW: SHUT UP!

BRIGID: ... to support the development of a...

TIW: SILENCE!!

BRIGID: And you're charging in making changes that I think are fundamentally wrong and...

TIW: That's it. You're done. *(Heads to his terminal)*

BRIGID: And someone needs to stand up and say that it's wrong and so that's what I'm doing. I don't think there's anything wrong with that.

LILITH: *(To TIW)* Come on. Don't do anything stupid *(considers this)*... more stupid.

TIW presses a few things on the screen rapidly.

TIW: Well you're not going to do it again. *(Presses button)*.

SOUND: Emergency eviction activated. Red, you have 10 seconds to exit the control room before erasure processes commence.

BRIGID is startled and rushes for the exit to the wings, passing **ULLR** and **OGHMA** as they come back into the Control Room.

SOUND: Red is evicted.

There is a pause as everyone takes in what just happened. Then **VÖR** rushes in.

VÖR: What just happened. Why is Brigid...? What's going on?!

LILITH: I believe it's called being a complete twat. He's very good at it.

TIW: She disobeyed me.

VÖR: You can't evict someone for that!

TIW: I can and I did. We might actually get something done now.

VÖR: *(On screen)* You idiot - you have no idea what you've just done. I am revoking all of your delegated authorities. All requests must now go through me and through... *(indicates screen)* them.

TIW stares at **VÖR** and then grins in triumph as the **LIGHTS** go down.

REAL WORLD STAGE

LIGHTS up real world - the red and blue lights shift to red only as the decision is made.

VÖR: *(As a judge)* A decision has been made. The plaintiff's request for **ERIS** to be removed and erased has been dismissed. **ERIS** was acting within her nature. The team continues unchanged. **TIW**'s repeated behaviour is recognised and his right to request removals is revoked for two years, or one year if the team management refresher course is taken.

LIGHTS down.

NUMINA STAGE

LIGHTS up very dimly on the NUMINA stage

The whole team are there, in their places but looking ragged and irritable. **VÖR** watches on. **ULLR** makes his way around with the checklist.

VÖR: Go on.

TIW: Fine. What is your problem?

ERIS: Finally he asks!

TIW: What's that supposed to mean?

ERIS: You are a fucking awful leader.

TIW: I got us right to the end - we were *that* close to success! And you... you...

ERIS: Success?!

TIW: Yes. How? Through leadership, common sense, stability, patience. Ignoring you.

ERIS: For fuck's sake. OK, go on, define success for me. What have we been aiming for all this time? It would be good to know.

TIW: Being successful, achieving and being recognised for that. Getting what you want. Fitting in. Stability.

ERIS: Seriously? And what about her *(indicates WHITE who is watching on quietly)*.

TIW: She just needs stability. It is very simple, but you refuse to see it because you didn't come up with the plan.

ERIS: Sophia's miserable. We're miserable. She hasn't done anything genuinely exciting in forever. When did you last see her enjoying herself?

TIW: That has nothing to do with it. We are here to make her successful. Why can't you accept that?

ULLR: She'll have fun when she's earned enough and can afford to take time off.

ERIS: Exactly! It's always the future, isn't it? It's never now. Before we know it, she'll be 90 and checking out zumba lessons for the first time.

VÖR: *(Stubborn silence and then...)* How will you resolve this?

ERIS: Are you all with him?

There are various murmurs that show that they are.

Are you sure?

TIW: Not much of a choice is it? Stick with sensible, effective Plan A, or smash everything apart just to see what happens.

ERIS: *(To the group)* You know it's not working, right? You do know that. I know you see that.

Silence, then...

OGHMA: We need to see the plan through.

ULLR: *(Vicious)* You've got nothing! You've done nothing. You're nothing!

ERIS: *(Pause, then with quiet determination)* I will stop you. I will show you how wrong you are. And I will free her.

More silence. ERIS stares at TYCHE and LILITH who both consider joining ERIS for a moment and then look away.

ERIS: Dammit, at least I'm trying.

She walks out. TYCHE follows after without anyone noticing.

TIW: *(Calling after her)* You still have to do what I say!

VÖR: You need her. *(As TIW stares back at her...)* You do.

TIW: Why? What use has she ever been?

VÖR: That's something that you need to figure out by yourself. Now, it's been a while, let's get back into it. Places everyone.

TIW: Let's pull the plan back in line. We need to deal with the press, get control of the IT systems back from... *(Shouting)* Eris! Get back in here! And we need her to put out some statements saying she was hacked by Rust.

ULLR: No, we can't do that, they did everything legally.

TIW: She can sort things out in court later. For now, she just needs to stop people ordering. We can guide her through this. Ready?

OGHMA: Here we go. Let's see what we've got. Lights 10%.

NUMINA STAGE

ULLR: Let's see where we are. Light and sound to 25%

ULLR: Looks like a bar.

TIW: Not ideal. Let's get her out of here and back to the office. Action!

OGHMA: Lights and sound to full.

REAL WORLD STAGE

LIGHTS up, very dimly, a single spotlight...

...on SOPHIA who is standing motionless, head bowed.

SOUND: Quiet bar music and chattering effects come up.