

E8 by Marika Mckennell

Story Synopsis

This is a story synopsis for E8. It is intended as a guide for anyone who would like to familiarise themselves with the story of the performance before their visit to the theatre.

Please note: this document contains a description of the full plot of E8

ABOUT THE PLAY

The story takes place over the course over the course of one hour – there are no scene changes.

The story takes place in a classroom in an “Alternative Provision School” in London. This is a school for young people who have been excluded from mainstream education. There are nine pupils and four teachers in the school.

In the play, there are four characters:



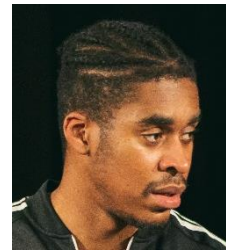
BAILEY
Age 16, Pupil



RYAN
Age 15, Pupil



POLLY
Age 36, Teacher



MO
Age 25, Teacher

ABOUT THE STORY

It's the end of the school day. POLLY, the headteacher, is packing her things into boxes. POLLY notices BAILEY has a burn on her arm, but BAILEY won't say where it is from.

RYAN enters the room. He doesn't speak much. BAILEY and RYAN have an argument – MO makes them apologise to each other.

BAILEY asks POLLY if she can use the laptop to check something, but the charger is missing. POLLY tries to check on her phone but cannot log-on. BAILEY, RYAN and POLLY look for the charger. BAILEY is getting anxious.

POLLY finds a jumper with a burnt sleeve in a drawer. She realises it is BAILEY's jumper, and that is how she got the burn on her arm. BAILEY refuses to snitch to her teachers, and shouts at POLLY when she is questioned. POLLY leaves the room.

MO encourages BAILEY to write a statement about who did it. She avoids his questions and starts looking for the charger again, explaining to MO that she is waiting to hear about a referral to social services as she is not happy living at her aunt's house.

RYAN asks MO for money to buy something from the shop. RYAN and BAILEY leave. POLLY returns and she and MO talk about Tinder. Something has happened between them in the past. POLLY changes the subject – she is sad about leaving the school and the team. She regrets not being able to do more to help BAILEY – she knows that other pupils bully her. MO says he thinks POLLY is not

tough enough on them. He grew up in their neighbourhood and knows what struggles they go through – but thinks they need more tough love and discipline.

BAILEY and RYAN return from the shop with ice creams. POLLY asks RYAN about his family. RYAN reveals his brother Tank was stabbed to death. POLLY is shocked. POLLY and MO leave the classroom.

BAILEY asks RYAN to play music on his phone and makes up a rap. She complains to RYAN that they don't do proper lessons. Both talk about how much teachers must get paid – comparing it to how much could be made from selling drugs. BAILEY reveals her aunt's baby recently died after being born prematurely, and how her aunt encouraged her to fight some girls on their estate. BAILEY boasts about beating them up. RYAN tells her about a fight was in, but BAILEY doesn't believe him. They continue to search for the charger. BAILEY tells RYAN about her referral. RYAN reveals he has been in care in the past. They hear the noise of other school children outside, and think there might be a fight. They leave the classroom.

POLLY and MO return to the classroom. They have some gin instead of tea and chat. BAILEY and RYAN come back in – RYAN has cut himself. POLLY offers him first aid – it's nothing serious. BAILEY asks POLLY about the charger – she's getting agitated. POLLY goes to look in the office. RYAN offers BAILEY a place to sleep at his house but she refuses. RYAN reveals he has a video on his phone of BAILEY's fight – she was lying about winning it. BAILEY demands that he delete the video but everyone at school has already seen it. MO observes this conversation but doesn't intervene.

RYAN gets a notification on his phone – it's an intimate picture of BAILEY that has been posted on a public sharing app. People have already commented on it. POLLY returns to the room – she and MO see the picture and question BAILEY about who took it. BAILEY reveals someone had stolen her phone – she is very upset and agitated and accuses POLLY and MO of not taking her seriously when she reported it stolen to them. She climbs on top of the cupboard. POLLY and MO try to persuade her to come down, but BAILEY refuses. POLLY suddenly says she has found the charger and BAILEY makes her swear she isn't lying. She comes down from the cupboard and goes out for a smoke with RYAN.

MO asks POLLY to out with him for a drink. She says yes but then changes her mind. POLLY confronts MO about his behaviour, which she considers unprofessional. MO is angry that she hasn't spoken to him before now, and leaves the classroom.

BAILEY returns, she demands to know where the charger is. POLLY stalls and tries to make her see how angry on her behalf about the injustices that BAILEY faces in her life. BAILEY accuses her of lying about knowing where the charger is, and attacks physically attacks her. She pins POLLY against the cupboard. After some struggle, POLLY fights her off, cutting her ear. BAILEY falls to the ground and finds the charger behind the cupboard.

BAILEY and POLLY sit at the desk and plug in the laptop. POLLY checks her email and reads that BAILEY'S referral has been unsuccessful. BAILEY is upset and angry that social services have called her aunt – she is worried about her aunt's reaction. She asks POLLY if she can stay with her. POLLY hesitates. BAILEY doesn't wait for an answer – she runs from the classroom. POLLY is left alone.

THE END