

Lavender Audition Pack

Smörgåsbord 20th October



Introduction

Hi everyone! I'm Ella, a second year English student at Catz, and I'm really excited to be staging an extract of my play *Lavender* at Smörgåsbord this term. I'll be directing the show, and I can't wait to see you bring these characters to life! As Smörgåsbord is very chill this is a low commitment show, it can just be something fun to get involved with in Week 2! I'm aiming that we will have a read through and some brief

character chats in Freshers week and then 3-4 short rehearsals between then and the show, just so we can all get a proper feel of what the show is like when it's on its feet.

About the show

In the full length play, *Lavender* flips between two timelines; in the 1980s, Beth and Bryan Davies are newly married, living in London, and living their lives as mid-twenties in the 80s did, often out with close friends Derek White and Pete Taylor. In the present day, Abigail Roberts is grieving the loss of Beth, her grandmother. She's never known her grandfather, as Bryan died tragically young of pneumonia when Beth was newly pregnant. Instead, she had Pete and Derek, her grandmother's oldest friends. In the wake of her loss, she takes comfort in her grandmother's scrapbooks, looking back on Beth's life. However, she soon realises that the relationships between Beth, Bryan, Derek and Pete were not she's been told, throwing her and her family into disarray as they discover what really happened in the 1980s, and how Bryan really died. It's a story about how far people will go to protect the people they love, and what happens when that ultimately hurts someone else. In the extract I've selected, we're focused on Beth, Bryan and Derek, and the initial rearranging of their relationships.

[Link to full extract!](#)

Characters

- ★ **Beth Davies** - Beth is quick, easy to smile, and above all, a kind person. She's an English teacher in her mid-twenties, newly married and working at the same school as Bryan. She, Bryan and Derek all grew up in the same village, before she and Bryan went to university and Derek went to pilot school. Beth and Derek dated briefly in school, ended by Derek. She and Bryan have been together since university.
- ★ **Bryan Davies** - Bryan is suave, mildly dry and sarcastic, and well-spoken. He's a Maths teacher, known for his expansive suit collection. Beth has been his best friend his whole life, and he loves her dearly. He's more into the bars and clubs scene than Beth is, but they'll still go together and have fun, and if Beth wants to leave early his first priority is getting her home safe.

- ★ **Derek White** - Derek is quiet, mild-mannered, and occasionally awkward, his speech sometimes unintentionally falling into bad puns. He broke up with Beth when they were 16 because he found it too difficult to put his feelings into words, so it was easier to not say anything. Since then he's matured a lot and does his best to say what he means, even if he still finds it tricky. He's a pilot for British Airways, having spent his childhood in the village itching to get out and see the world.
- ★ **Abigail Roberts** - In this extract, Abigail is moving into university, shortly after the death of her grandmother. While she's struggling with grief, as she was incredibly close with her grandmother, she's excited to get started at university.
- ★ **Tim Roberts** - Abigail's Dad, in this extract, the quintessential father attempting to find the most efficient method of moving his daughter into university. For this performance, the role will be doubled with the role of **Elliot West**, to ensure everyone has more than one scene onstage.
- ★ **Lilly Roberts** - Abigail's Mum, slightly nervous about leaving her daughter to her own devices at university. She had Abigail very young, so they've always been close. For this performance, the role will be doubled with the role of **Callie Parker**, to ensure everyone has more than one scene onstage.
- ★ **Elliot West** - a future friend who Abigail meets at the first (of many) awkward freshers events
- ★ **Callie Parker** - another future friend who Abigail meets at a freshers event - outgoing, determined to have a conversation other than what course/ where from/ which accom

How to audition

Record a selftape of your preferred extract and send it to me (egj31@cam.ac.uk) with your name, pronouns, college, and which character you'd like to be considered for. I've included extracts for Beth, Bryan, Derek and Abigail, so if you'd like to audition for Tim/ Elliot or Lilly/ Callie, please read whatever extract you'd like and let me know which role you'd like to be considered for. There are multiple extracts for each character, pick whichever you'd like! On each extract, I've put the role in bold if I think the extract serves it particularly well. The deadline for auditions will be **1st October, 23:59**. If you have any questions, or need an extension for selftapes, please email me! So excited to see all your takes on the characters! :)

Extracts

Extract 1 - Beth/ Derek

Derek: So where are you based now?

Beth: London.

Derek: Ah, a fellow Londoner.

Beth: Really?

Derek: Well, we're based out of Heathrow, so most of us live fairly close by.

Beth: Right, of course.

Derek: Are you staying long?

Beth: Just this evening. I'm on the early train back for work tomorrow.

Derek: A flying visit, so to speak. Sorry, that was terrible.

Beth: *(weakly laughing)* It's okay.

Derek: Are you coming home for Christmas?

Beth: Yep. The annual Davies-Evans Christmas bash in which Bryan and I field questions about how long we'll stay in the city, when are we going to buy a house, and when we're having kids.

Derek: Sounds lovely.

Beth: Well, it's good for our mothers. We only give them once a year to get it all out of their systems.

Derek: How do you navigate Easter and birthdays?

Beth: Ruthless conversation. Any time anything related to the idea of babies or family planning comes up one of us dives in with our latest 'God, listen to what this student said to me!' story.

Derek: And that works?

Beth: Of course. Teenagers are unbelievable. Scamps.

Derek: Said with affection, she who loves her job.

Beth: Of course!

Extract 2 - Beth/ Bryan

Beth: Hello? Barbican Theatre, please. Hi Patty! No, didn't expect it to be you, that's all. I was just wondering if I could give you a message for Pete? Thank you. Just tell him that Bryan's a bit under the weather and I'm about to go out with a friend so I'm just wondering if he'd mind looking in on Bryan when he's done for the evening? Just as we're on his way home. Thank you. Yes, well...even teachers need a night out on occasion! Oh, just a friend from school visiting the city. Yep. You too. Thank you so much!

Hangs up the phone.

God, you'd think it was 1950 with the way she was talking to me. "Don't you think you should be staying home to look after your husband?" Cheek of it.

Bryan: Mhm, you should've mentioned that you're sleeping with the friend you're going out with tonight, and not me, that would've really set her off.

Beth: Well, next time I'll just phone her and ask her for the man my husband is—

Bryan: Alright! You're feisty tonight.

Beth: Okay, well, I should probably go. Don't want to keep my concubine waiting.

Bryan: Have a great night.

Beth: Are you really sure you don't need anything?

Bryan: Positively. Have a wonderful time, darling.

Beth: Thanks, darling.

Beth exits.

Extract 3 - Bryan

As this extract has three people, please only read if you are reading for Bryan!

Bryan enters - clearly at least tipsy - doesn't immediately register Derek, slings his arm round Beth's shoulders, kissing her on the temple.

Bryan: Darling! You were right, this place is *wonderful*! I've been talking to the most fascinating men, rather a smorgasbord if you will—

Beth: That's lovely darling—

Bryan: There was one particularly charming fellow named Sam whom I think I might—

Beth: Bryan, do you want to say hi to Derek!

Bryan: Derek! That handsome devil, he's always been rather taken with you - where's Derek?

Beth: He's— how much have you had to drink?

Bryan: Darling, it is our summer holidays, I am LETTING LOOOOOOSE!!

Beth: Keep your voice down!

Bryan: Oh look, here's Derek! Derek, how are you, always lovely to see you!

Derek: You too Bryan.

Bryan: Any good travel highlights recently? Any feisty winds?

Derek: I just flew back from Australia actually—

Bryan: Mhmm, yes he is quite gorgeous when he talks about flying, isn't he Beth? In this light I can see the appeal you—

Beth: Do you think it's possibly time for us to leave now Bryan?!

Bryan: Leave? God no, as I was trying to tell you, I've got a good feeling about Sam. I was actually coming out to ask if you would be okay getting a taxi home alone, darling...let me find you the cash—

Extract 4 - Bryan/ Beth

A living room. Bryan is stretched out on a sofa, reading a book. Beth enters, brushing her dress.

Bryan: Well, don't you look gorgeous.

Beth: It's not too much, is it?

Bryan: God, no. You pull it off.

Beth: I just don't want to–

Bryan: Darling, I don't think you can give Derek the wrong message through a dress.

Beth: I suppose he is only a man.

Bryan: Yes, we are a terrible species.

Beth: Yeah.

Bryan: Everything alright?

Beth: I– Yeah, no, it's...

Bryan: Darling?

Beth: I've just been struggling a bit recently. It's just felt like a lot, all the sneaking around.

Bryan nods thoughtfully, considering his response.

Bryan: I will never not be endlessly grateful to you for what you sacrifice by helping me in the way that you do.

Beth: I know. I know. I'll be okay once I see Derek.

Bryan: Where's he taking you?

Beth: Fancy Italian place.

Bryan: As long as he's paying.

Beth: Honey, I'm a teacher and he's a pilot, obviously he's paying.

Bryan: And he's got the immense privilege of taking you out, so...

Extract 5 - Derek/ Beth

Bryan kisses her on the cheek, winking at her as he returns to the bar, leaving Derek and Beth alone.

Derek: So, your husband and my friend will be enjoying each other's company this evening.

Beth: Yes...I'm sorry, we–

Derek: You don't– I don't need an explanation. I...I understand.

Beth: You do?

Derek: Sam has had plenty of girlfriends. He's a pilot as well. There's no need for anyone at work to...know the ins and outs of his private life. Sorry, that was poorly phrased.

Beth: No...thank you.

Derek: Did you– I mean, you've been married for...since you both graduated.

Beth: Just had our first anniversary.

Derek: Yeah. Did you– I mean, when you first got married where you...aware–

Beth: Bryan– He's my best friend. For as long as we've been friends there's always been very little that we haven't shared with each other.

Derek: I see.

Beth: Yeah.

Beat.

Derek: Does he do this a lot?

Beth: What– the–

Derek: The bars. The men.

Beth: It depends. Definitely more during our holidays. Not as much during term time.

Derek: And he's not–

Beth: What are you insinuating?

Derek: No, god no, not in that way! Beth, no, I'm sorry, I meant– he's not scared?

Beth: He thinks he's invincible.

Derek: But you...don't?

Beth: I think there are enough cases that he can't dismiss it as fear-mongering anymore.

Derek: Yeah. I was trying to tell Sam the same thing.

Beth: Not listening?

Derek: Won't hear it.

Beth: That's hard. I'm sorry.

Derek: Don't be. You have to live with it.

Extract 6 - Abigail

Callie: Hi!

Abigail: Hi!

Callie: I'm Callie. What's your name?

Abigail: I'm Abigail.

Callie: You seemed a bit lost by yourself.

Abigail: Thanks...I got here late and unpacking took ages and now everyone seems to already know each other.

Callie: Don't worry, it's all an illusion. The same girl has asked me my name and what course I'm doing three times.

Abigail: Classy.

Callie: I thought so. Especially after the fourth time she impressed on me that she's doing Law, of course.

Abigail: Yikes.

Callie: God, you don't also do Law, do you?

Abigail: No, you're all good. English. What about you?

Callie: Music. Well, we can huddle here in an arts and humanities circle. It'll send out good vibes to everyone trying to escape the medics and maths students and they'll wander over to us.

Abigail: Sounds good to me.

Callie: Listen, I'm slightly bored of the whole 'Where are you from', 'How was moving in' spiel, can I ask you what could be considered slightly weird questions?

Abigail: Absolutely! I love weird questions.

Callie: This is wonderful. Okay, first question, if you had to be a magical creature, what would you be?

Abigail: Unicorn.

Callie: Had a phase when you were ten and never let it go?

Abigail: I have the unicorn bedding to prove it.

