

An almost bare stage. The backdrop is a huge, grainy photograph of a young boy of eighteen, Danny, smiling into the camera.

Joe, *twenty, enters, walks into a dim spotlight.*

Joe It wasn't even late. Ten o'clock or something. There were people around, masses of them. I went into a shop to get some cigarette papers and when I came out I saw this girl give Danny a punch in the chest, and I said hey, and she looked round and her eyes were black, no colour in them, and I thought she's on something. And as I was thinking this, she walked off, didn't run, she just strolled, and I saw Danny crumple as if all his bones had melted. He didn't make a sound, it wasn't dramatic, not like a film, and I thought he was joking, but at the same time I knew he wasn't because there was something weird about the way he just folded up. People walked past him, one guy even stepped over him, most people didn't notice because it didn't look serious. I went to him and knelt down and there was blood on his shirt, a little round mark over his heart. It was nothing, a tiny nick, but as I held him it spread out like a big red chrysanthemum. A guy came over and said what happened I'm a nurse and I said I don't know is he going to be all right? His face went from normal to the colour of paper right in front of my eyes. He went from being alive to being dead in that instant. I couldn't believe it, I'd never seen anyone dead before except our dog Tansy and it's not the same with an animal, but I knew he was dead, I saw the life drain out of him and his head was in my hands and I was shouting fucking hell somebody do something, and the guy who was the nurse gave him mouth-to-mouth which he must have known was a waste of time but I think he did it for me, to say look, I'm doing something, I'm doing the best I can. Then an ambulance came. I don't know who called it. Police all over the place. Sirens, blue lights. People were still going into bars, dodging round police cars, having a quick glance as they walked past, people who were still alive, like he'd been a minute ago. How could he slip from one state to the other in the blink of an eye? I couldn't take it in: life and death so banged up against each other, so close there's not a hair's breadth between them. I thought this is not happening,