

Lights up on John, with a glass of whisky.

John I'm not pissed. I just need something to take the edge off, because I've done my knee in and I can't run. To be honest, I am putting away a bit more than I used to, but I don't know how to do this stone-cold sober. Before it happened, we were a tight little family. We were a unit. It wasn't *Little House on the Prairie*, but we were solid. And now there are cracks appearing everywhere, huge fissures opening up, crevices where there were none before. Joe thinks Dan was our favourite, but he wasn't. He wasn't.

Pause.

It's just . . . Dan carried all our hopes and they died with him. He was the clever one. He was going to be a lawyer, I felt he was going to be a better version of me, the me I'd liked to have been. But that's not to say that we don't love Joe just as much. It's just . . . I'm ashamed of this, I really am, I hate myself, but I feel the future died with Dan. And I know I shouldn't feel it, I know it's wrong. We still have Joe and thank God for that, but I can't help it. Everything's been chipped away from our family and all the fault lines exposed, all the nerves. No one should have to go through this. And now Mary wants us to talk about the girl that did it to us. Why? I want to wipe her off the face of the earth, I don't want to spend a single moment of my life thinking about this woman, I want her not to exist, I don't want to hear her name, as far as I'm concerned she hasn't got a name. What does she mean, we have to talk about her? What good will that do? I'm not interested in people in prison, they've nothing to do with me, they're criminals, they've wrecked people's lives and I refuse to think about them.

Pause.

I don't know where this stuff comes from actually. It doesn't even feel like me talking. I'm saying things I find . . . hateful. Hate-full. Full of hate. That's what I've become. I've become a person I despise. I can feel it like battery acid, corroding me. And I hate that too. I hear this venom coming from my mouth and I think who is this speaking, it's not me, I'm trapped