

Pre-Show Information

Sting



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Directed by **Nancy Medina**

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Introduction:

This document contains detailed information about the show in order to describe what you should expect when attending.

This includes information about the content guidance, plot, the space, lighting and sound, audience participation, and further access information.

All of the information in this document was correct at the time of publishing. More information will be available closer to the time of performance.

Please note that by discussing the content of the show, **the below information will contain key plot points and descriptions of what happens in the performance.**

If you would like to receive elements of this information **but avoid these spoilers, please do not read the section at the end of this document entitled ‘Show Synopsis’.**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Box Office team:

E-mail: boxoffice@youngvic.org

Phone number: 020 7922 2922

Show Information:

Running Time: Approx 1 hour 50 mins without interval.

Content Guidance:

This production contains themes and scenes that some may find upsetting including domestic violence, sexual assault, a miscarriage, alcohol and drug use, strong language, physical violence and emotional abuse.

- Abusive/coercive relationships and violence against women
- Blood onstage and discussion of a miscarriage
- Sexual content, including discussions around sexual assault
- Depiction of a seizure onstage
- Strong language
- Toxic masculinity and homophobia
- Alcohol and drug use

Production warnings:

- Loud music
- Strobe lights
- Haze
- Blood
- Fire on stage

The Auditorium

This show will take place in The Maria Theatre, our middle-sized performance space.

Seating is unreserved. Seats are arranged in a traverse configuration, meaning the audience are seated on two opposite sides of the performance area.

Access to the Maria is via the external entrance on the ground outside The Cut Bar. Our ushers are on hand to help you; they wear they wear black t-shirts which say “Usher” on the back.

Please arrive at the Young Vic with your ticket ready on your phone. You could also print your ticket in advance of your visit, or you can collect your ticket from our Box Office.

[Please click here to see a sensory map of the building.](#)

Facilities:

There are toilets located on the ground and first floor at the Young Vic, via The Cut Bar. We have ladies and gents toilets on the ground floor and gender-neutral toilets on the first floor, as well as accessible/baby changing toilets. Sanitary bins are available in all facilities.

Building Accessibility:

All indoor spaces are accessible with lifts & ramps.

Assistance Dogs:

Assistance dogs are welcome at the Young Vic. If you are planning a visit, please let us know in advance which performance you will be attending by calling our Box Office on **020 7922 2922** or e-mailing boxoffice@youngvic.org.

Please note your assistance dog will need to accompany you into the auditorium.

Access for All:

For full information about our access measures, please visit our Access for all page, on our website here:

www.youngvic.org/visit-us/access-for-all

If you would like any further clarification or have any questions, please do get in touch with our Box Office team.

Email: boxoffice@youngvic.org

Phone number: **020 7922 2922**

See you soon!

Welcome Team

Show Synopsis:

Production Warnings

Content Guidance

There is no interval in this production

Scene One (1 min)

Strong haze

This scene is set in a night club. There will be **flashing and strobe lighting and loud dance music**. Someone is dancing.

Scene Two (10 mins)

Mention in passing of seizure and infant death

Depiction of a miscarriage onstage

Two people in an Archive talking.

Ash is new and Lily already works in the Archive. They chat about her starting the role.

They are cataloguing accusations of witchcraft from the late 1600s to early 1700s involving death of livestock, sexual activity, seizures and death of infants, all of which is mentioned in this scene.

Ash has love bites on her neck that she tries to cover

Ash has pain in her lower abdomen which increases throughout the second half of this scene. **Blood is seeping through her shorts and they realise she is having a miscarriage**.

They shower it off and change her clothes.

Ash's boyfriend Dom arrives to take her home

Scene Three (5 mins)

Discussion of grief and bereavement

Reference to bleeding from miscarriage

Back at Ash's flat

Dom gives Ash a pet rabbit. This is a puppet in the show

They **discuss the miscarriage** and their feelings around it and potentially trying for a baby

Scene Four (5 mins)

Audio of news reportage of Sarah Everard police investigation.

Reference to sexual assault and pornography.

Sudden screaming.

Discussion of police investigation – reference to serial killer, being burned alive, being hanged, being drowned.

Reference to state executions.

Reference to the attack of a nine-year-old boy by a dog.

A few days later Lily is in the Archive and Ash arrives covered in ash

Lily **fires the staple gun** she is holding at Ash in surprise and they both scream

They discuss a police investigation Lily has been asked to help with regarding the death of three women. **They say what has happened to each woman; burned alive, hanged, drowned.**

Scene Five (7 mins)

Discussion of growing up in a cult.

Lily and Ash are having a “welcome to the new job” drink

They chat about how Ash met Dom

Towards the end of this scene they decide to go clubbing

There is loud music, flashing and strobing lights. Heavy bass. Smoke/Haze.

Lily and Ash dance.

Scene Six (5 mins)

Aggression

Reference to abortion

Depiction of coercive and controlling behaviour

Homophobia / homophobic language

Sexual aggression

Back at the flat

Dom is in his pyjamas and Ash returns home from her night out with Lily

They discuss the night out

Dom is asking a lot of questions about Lily, her sexuality, Ash's new job. **He is getting angry** with the situation. He asks if the baby was his and they discuss that. They start to be a bit argumentative and Dom locks the door.

It passes quickly and they are laughing and making up.

Whilst kissing, **Dom bites Ash's neck and it draws blood.**

Scene Seven (11 mins)

Audio – news report of crime scene?

Discussion of sexting

Discussion of torture methods and sleep deprivation

Reference to photos of victims

Sudden screaming/shouting

Depiction of controlling/coercive behaviour

Partial nudity

Smoke and haze

Depiction of partial suffocation

Lily is in the archive

The radio is on and you can hear news report about bodies of women being found. There are radio **static** noises between reports.

There is a **discussion about seizures and epilepsy**

They discuss the night out and more about the cases of the women they are helping to investigate

There are photos of the women, but Ash doesn't want to see, and so Lily leaves them in a folder untouched.

Dom surprises Ash at work with flowers

He's a big presence in Ash's new workplace, asking lots of questions and pushing the boundaries

He wants to have sex, but Ash doesn't. After some back and forth he takes her to the shower and you see their silhouettes. Smoke and haze used in shower scene. **The kissing and breathing turns into choking and spluttering** and the **screen turns red with**. Ash says she can't breathe and after asking her to not come to work tomorrow Dom releases his grip. Dom changes into his uniform for work. We realise he's a police officer. He sees the photos of the dead women and takes it.

Scene Eight (4 mins)

Audio of news reportage of police officers under investigation for taking photos of two murdered women
Depiction of coercive/controlling behaviour – taking of phone

Threats of violence

Swearing/bad language

Reference to death (Dom's friend's girlfriend dying)

Lily is at the archive and the **radio is on**. They are discussing the photos of the women and Lily realises that they are her photos that have been taken

Lily rings Ash and Dom answers. He says Ash isn't coming to work

Ash and Dom in the flat have an exchange about Ash and Lily texting

The rabbit bites Dom and is threatening, he **forces Ash to use her thumb to unlock her phone**. He says he will break her thumb if she doesn't do it

He reads through her messages

He asks Ash if she wants to go swimming in the ponds. Ash says no because last time he was stung by a bee and Dom says that he has packed Epipens.

Dom grabs her arm as Ash tries to leave

Scene Nine (4 mins)

Echoing sound effects

Lily goes to the police station and Ash is the police constable

They discuss the women's deaths she has been investigating but Lily's findings don't seem to interest the police constable that much

Lily then mentions about Ash being missing. She brings up some concerns she has about Ash being trapped in her flat. **Reference to Ash having tape over her mouth or being gagged.**

Scene Ten (3 mins)

Passing reference to drowning (Ash talking about Dom's proposal at the ponds)

Lily is in the pub watching the news on her phone

Ash arrives with her pet rabbit which she puts on the table

Lily asks about whether Ash has been trapped in the flat and why she hasn't answered any of her texts

Ash says that Dom has booked a holiday for them and Lily, after asking lots of questions, says she doesn't think the holiday is a good idea.

Scene Eleven (1 min)

Ash and Dom start in flat. They have a moment scene which is animalistic and sexual.

It appears to get violent.

Low lighting makes it hard to make out what is happening

Scene Twelve (9 mins)

Reference to asphyxia/drowning

Bodily harm (Ash has bruises on her wrist)

Ash hits Lily across the arm

Swearing/bad language.

Heavy haze and lighting representing the fire

Dom carries the candle, lit across the space

Ash is at the archive with a candle lit on her desk

She blows out the candle and puts on the main light as Lily arrives

They talk more about the case and Ash's phone rings a few times but she silences it

Lily says she's worried about Ash and Ash asks if she is trying to break up her relationship

Lily leaves and Ash is upset. Her rabbit is lit up Ash **lights it on fire. Ash moves a chair and lights a paper on fire with the candle. The candle then is dropped onto the chair and a small fire burn in the middle of the space.**

Ash takes photographs of bruises on her body; there are brief flashes to mimic flashes from camera phone. **The fire burns out on the chair, then whole archive is catching fire and filling with smoke.**

Smoke/haze

Strong smell of smoke

The lights flicker before blackout

Scene Thirteen (3 mins)

Reference to arson

Heavy haze throughout scene

Outside the archive and there is smoke and ash everywhere

Ash and rubble fall from the ceiling centre stage

Dom arrives with the police and Lily realises he is a police officer

They worry that Ash is inside but the building has been checked and she isn't there

Scene Fourteen (1 min)

An interrogation room. Ash, Lily and Dom are all asking and answering questions about the fire

Blackout

Scene Fifteen (2 mins)

Reference to execution

Ash says she's really scared

Ash is at Lilys house ringing the doorbell

Ash is asking Lily for help but with everything going on Lily says she has to leave and doesn't engage with her

Scene Sixteen (6 mins)

Controlling behaviour

Ash in the kitchen with her rabbit. A bee comes in

Dom arrives and they have a conversation about being careful of the bee. Dom says **he's allergic** and **kills it against the wall**

They talk about the fire at the archive. Dom says that Ash might be guilty but he reassures her that he can fix things by creating a false alibi and hiding the candle evidence that has been collected

Lily leaves a voice note for Ash and whilst she is out of the room Dom opens the phone and listens to it. She is apologising for not acting when Ash asked for help but says she is happy to help now. Dom deletes the voice note, locks the phone in a drawer.

Scene Seventeen (6 mins)

Screaming/shouting

Ash charging towards Dom when he comes in.

Heavy echo over some of the dialogue

Violence –

Dom pokes Ash in the head with his finger, with force

A few days later Ash and Dom are in their flat

Dom tells her that he is up for a promotion
Their conversation covers a few topics and Ash is
mistrustful but going along with things. She asks for
her phone and he gives it to her.
He says he'll know if she messages anyone.
Ash sends a message and then deletes it.

Scene Eighteen (2 mins)

Reference to ritualistic murders

Lily is at the police station and Ash is the police constable
again

After some back and forth, Lily shares the photos Ash took
of her bruises.

Reference to bodily harm and domestic abuse.

The radio reports about attacks

The officer prints off the photos and keeps Lily's phone as
evidence. Lily asks if she knows Dom, but she says
she doesn't

Scene Nineteen (4 mins)

Violence and bodily harm

Back at the flat, Dom asks Ash if she messaged anyone.

**He punches her in the face, and she falls to the floor. She
gets up but is breathing heavily.**

He apologises and they make up. He proposes. Ash asks him
to do it again on the beach on their holiday

He leaves and locks the door from the outside. **Ash is in a lot
of physical pain. She screams.** tries to get her phone
but can't. She tries to leave but can't. She sees bees outside
and opens the window.

Loud noises of bees and bright light as they swarm into the
flat, but don't sting her.

Scene Twenty (7 mins)

Depiction of a seizure

Reference to the drowning and violent death of a horse
Swearing

In the nightclub. **There is very loud music, flashing lights and haze**

Lily enters and they talk about how she has left Dom. **Lily mentions Ash having a bruise on her face. Ash says she jumped out of the window.**

They go out to the smoking area to talk

Ash has a seizure.

Dom appears in mirage moment, and they talk about how they met. **Reference to Ash being locked in a cupboard by her previous partner. Ash says she imagines Dom killing her all the time.**

She puts his thumb in her mouth and **bites drawing blood.**
They discuss domestic abuse.

Ash wakes from her seizure. Lily has called for help but Ash wants to go to the police station. She wants to go and collect her rabbit from Dom's flat before going to police with Lily.

Scene Twenty-One (4 mins)

Ash climbs back through the window and collects her rabbit

She hears the bees swarm

Dom falls through the door struggling for breath. His face is swollen, and he tries to speak having a reaction to bees.

Ash does nothing for a long time

We watch as **Dom in anaphylaxis**. Ash exits, insinuating she is leaving him to die. Ash returns and uses the EpiPen on him just in time. Dom accuses her of attempted murder and then locks Ash in the flat.

Scene Twenty-Two(7 mins)

Lily is outside the police station and leaves Ash a voice note saying shes here and is waiting for Ash to give her statement.

Dom enters from police station with blood on his collar. He updates her on the women case and says he doesn't know where Ash is. He says he has got a promotion and is now an inspector of the police unit.

The faint noise of sirens.

Blackout