

The Girl on the Train at Sharnbrook Mill Theatre

Audition Material

Kamal Abdic

Gender: Male

Playing age: Any

Accent: British, but perhaps with a slight accent (to be decided).

Appearance: Kamal is of Bosnian heritage, and is incorrectly referred to as 'Asian'-looking in the play, so dark features would be useful. Any body type.

Content: Kamal will be required to kiss Megan.

Character Description

Kamal is Megan's therapist, and has been helping her to work through her troubled past and find her sense of self. He has a short, but impactful romantic relationship with Megan, which he ends after regretting the unethical infringement. He is reserved and professional, but portrays a fatherly kindness and calm. Rachel visits him to investigate him, after seeing him on the terrace of Megan's house, posing as a therapy client, where she divulges more than she intends.

Audition Material

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Rachel has booked in for a therapy session with Kamal, to find out more about Megan.

In this piece, we're looking for your portrayal of a therapist who is calm and professional. At this point in the play, he doesn't know that Rachel is looking for information on Megan.

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Rachel is back in Kamal's office, but now they're having a conversation instead of a therapy session.

In this piece, we're looking for your portrayal of Kamal when he's not conducting a therapy session. Here he is under pressure, but still remains calm.

Scene Five

KAMAL START

(KAMAL ABDIC *in his therapist's chair.*
RACHEL *drinking from her 'water' bottle.*)

RACHEL. It's like my memories get sucked into a black hole. And then, even the bits that remain are so fragmented, it's like... Have you ever bought a jigsaw puzzle from a jumble sale? Bits missing and bits from other puzzles finding their way in.

KAMAL. So, you're saying the problem is not just what you have forgotten; what you remember is also unreliable.

RACHEL. I get these... I don't know, flashes of memory, but it's like, like I've tried to fit the wrong pieces into the puzzle. Tried to force bits in just to complete the picture.

KAMAL. So why now? Why have you waited until now to address this?

RACHEL. Do you ever get to know your clients personally?

KAMAL. Sometimes our subconscious likes to cherry-pick the memories we like, or we repress the ones we don't. Is there a part of you that wants to forget?

RACHEL. No. Well. Maybe sometimes...

KAMAL. Go on.

RACHEL. I suppose I'm always worried I've done something embarrassing or...even worse.

KAMAL. You must have a very low opinion of yourself.

RACHEL. Why?

KAMAL. You have periods of memory loss, and you assume that the blank spaces are filled with you doing something embarrassing, or "worse." Why not something kind or funny or intelligent?

Are you capable of kindness? Humour? Intelligence?

RACHEL. Yes.

KAMAL. So, where are those puzzle pieces?

KAMAL STOP

(RACHEL struggling to hold it together.)

RACHEL. I try my hardest to remember. But my memory tells me one thing and then evidence tells me something else. There was one time, when I was married:

TV hook (TOM appears, aside.)

I got so enraged with my husband... *Blatant*

(RACHEL swings for TOM with a golf club, again and again, TOM ducking each time.)

TOM. Don't do this again, Rach. This isn't you! Rachel!

RACHEL. Fuuuuuuck!

(RACHEL swings again, wildly, violently. She smacks a hole in the wall.)

TOM. You have to control this! Before you really hurt someone.

(Beat. TOM holds her.)

I'll look after you. We're in this together. *TOM EXIT TOM about*

(RACHEL turns back to KAMAL.)

Back in Chair RACHEL. I don't remember doing it, but I put a massive dent in the wall. It's there for all to see, what I'd done. But that's not who I am. I know it's not.

KAMAL. Violence clouds the memory. And then you have to reconstruct it. Only, now the memory becomes susceptible to other influences.

RACHEL. Your voice. It's very gentle.

Is that your real voice or just for this?

(Beat.)

Scene Three

KAMAL START

(Later that Friday. Kamal Abdic's office.)

RACHEL. Did you tell the police you and Megan were having an affair?

KAMAL. We weren't having an affair.

RACHEL. She had just admitted to Scott she was seeing someone. Right before she went missing on Saturday night.

KAMAL. (Ruefully.) It wasn't me.

RACHEL. I saw you kissing her, remember?

KAMAL. It wasn't how it looked.

RACHEL. Then how was it?

(Pause.)

KAMAL. Megan liked having someone she could talk to. About her art. About herself. Her husband, he didn't understand. I filled that space in her life. Perhaps we both confused it for something else.

RACHEL. So, were you having an affair?

KAMAL. She said she wanted to make things work with her husband.

I went to hers that Friday morning to tell her that I found it too difficult to see her. I kissed her goodbye... And then I kissed her again. That's what you must have seen.

Later, she turned up at mine. She said she wanted to finish what she had begun telling me in therapy. I thought I owed it to her.

RACHEL. What did she want to talk about?

KAMAL. Why can't you just leave her in peace?

RACHEL. There are things about Megan that only you know. If the other man in her life wasn't you, then who was it?

KAMAL. It's not relevant.

RACHEL. Everything's relevant.

They're saying she killed a baby. Did you know that?

KAMAL. ...

RACHEL. If you know something, you have to say. Otherwise, Megan will be one of those names, hers will be one of those stories that dies away, with no ending.

Who are you protecting?

KAMAL. I'm protecting Megan.

RACHEL. It's too late for that!

Who was he?

KAMAL STOP

(MEGAN appears.)

MEGAN. The first man I ever loved. After my brother died, I ran away from home. Got into some trouble. I was arrested, for *(Stops herself.)*...

KAMAL. For?

MEGAN. Soliciting. I was fifteen. Then I met him. Craig McKenzie. He saved me. For a while, at least.

KAMAL. But he's no longer around?

MEGAN. I moved in with him when I was sixteen, into that old cottage in Holkham. Just Craig and me. Cheap cider and music.

We used to have little fires on the beach. Craig would wrap me up in blankets and we'd watch the sea.

KAMAL. So what happened?

MEGAN. I got pregnant.