

A small stage. One cold-white light on the centre, where a broom stands. The broom has a black jacket and NHS badge. At the very back of the stage, a backdrop is hung between two coat stands, with the cloth baring the words "Tory Land of Glory."

A JUNIOR DOCTOR CLOWN enters. Sweeps. Looks around. Then kicks over the broom, and flees from the stage.

CLOWN: Screw you Jeremy Hunt!

The JUNIOR DOCTOR CLOWN exits.

THERESA MAY enters. She spots the broom.

MAY: Oh, Jeremy, Jeremy. What have they done to you? Who knew doctors – even junior ones – had so much – Oh, Hunty, you flatter me. Come, come.

MAY smiles coyly, and caresses the jacket. The broom is carefully raised to its 'feet', jacket brushed, and gently led away to leave the stage. MAY turns to give speech to the audience, as if at a podium. She clears her throat.

MAY: I follow in the footsteps of a great, modern prime minister. Under David Cameron's leadership, the government stabilized the economy, reduced the budget deficit, and helped more people into work than ever before. But David's true legacy is not about the economy, but about social justice. If you're just about managing I want to address you directly. I know you're working around the clock, I know you're doing your best, and I know that sometimes, life can be a struggle. The government I lead will be driven not by the interests of a privileged few, but by yours. That means fighting against the burning injustice that if you are born poor, you will die on average nine years earlier than others. If you're black, you're treated more harshly by the criminal justice system than if you are white.

The GHOST OF TORY PAST [henceforth 'GOTP'] floats above the backdrop, flapping a bin-bag cape. He makes a howling sound. Pause.

MAY pauses, but does not look.

MAY: If you are a woman,

GOTP enters the stage, sneakily if not for the bin-bag-cape, and howls again. MAY pauses again, but does not look behind her.

MAY: You will earn less than a man.

GOTP howls, louder. MAY looks around but cannot see the source. She continues.

MAY: If you suffer from mental health problems,

GOTP has brought a step ladder on stage. With a loud slam, he places it on the stage. MAY startles at the sound, looks over her shoulder. GOTP freezes. She doesn't see him.

MAY: There's not enough help to hand.

GOTP howls again, now stood on the step ladder. MAY doesn't look. She takes a deep breath in.

MAY: If you're young,

GOTP shuffles the step ladder forward and closer to MAY. He howls. MAY looks the wrong way.

MAY: you'll find it harder than ever before to own your own home.

GOTP howls, very loud and drawn out. MAY finally spots him. She makes a sound of victory. Then confusion.

MAY: Are you on a ladder?

GOTP: No! I'm levitating, for I am the ghost of Tory past!

Silence. GOTP howls again.

MAY: If you're the ghost of Tory past, then where's the ghost of Tory future?

GOTP: He's not here, we can't afford a third person.

BOTH: Austerity.

MAY: That makes sense. So, you come with a message for me?

GOTP: A warning!

MAY: A warning! Oh, I don't like that.

GOTP: I am the Ghost of Tory Past and I bring you a Warning, about Brexit – Brexit means Brexit, not soft Brexit, not flaccid Brexit, but hard, hard, super, missionary, hard, straight down, Brexit. Not a night at the club, doing shots, see a pretty, sexy Brexit, say hi, we're drinking tequila, would you like to come back to mine for some unprotected Brexit?

MAY: Are we doing that or not? I didn't follow.

GOTP: NO! We are not doing that.

MAY: Oh, ok so only a hard, hard, missionary, Brexit, after marriage.

GOTP: No, not after marriage, during marriage.

MAY: Yes, you're right, after would mean a divorce or necrophilia or both, and let's not.

GOTP: I don't believe in divorce anyway. Or abortion...

MAY: Brexit - we need a Brexit!

MAY moves into the audience's space to get an audience member.

MAY: No, not you. No, no. Oh, you'll do!

They return to the stage together.

MAY: How does one marry a concept?

GOTP: On one knee. You need to get engaged first.

MAY: Oh, ok.

MAY kneels.

MAY: What next? Wait, can I ask or should they? What gender is Brexit, is this a lesbian situation?

GOTP: No, Brexit is non-binary

MAY: Even worse. Now what?

GOTP: Say "Brexit"

MAY: Brexit

GOTP: "Will you marry me?"

MAY: Will you – ah, should I wine and dine and woo Brexit first?

GOTP: No. No wine and dine and woo, Brexit is a slut, she knows what she's doing. Hurry up, don't get cold feet.

MAY: Brexit, will you marry me?

GOTP: *(aside)* yes!

MAY: Oh wonderful! You've made me the happiest Conservative.

GOTP: You're not married yet, turn around.

The GHOST OF TORY PAST hums a speedy rendition of Richard Wagner's "Bridal Chorus".

GOTP: Ok, Theresa Mary May, do you take Brexit – British Exit of the European Union, to be your lawfully wedded concept?

MAY: I do.

GOTP: Brexit, do you take Theresa Mary May to be your lawfully wedded concept leader?

The audience member does not get the chance to object.

MAY: You will?

GOTP: Right, now that I've made you do that -

MAY: Wait, made me? Hold on, you look a lot like the MP of North East Somerset? Jacob Reese Mogg?

GOTP: I need to go! The nanny of my eight children is outside and she can't find a parking space, dreadful, dreadful. Fear me! If you mess this up, I might be in charge! Long live god, king, and country.

MAY: Ugh, backbenchers.

MAY graciously allows 'Brexit' the audience member to return to their seat. She then resumes her speech.

MAY: As I was saying. We are living through an important moment in our country's history. Following the referendum we face a time of great national change. And I know because we're Great Britain, we will rise to the challenge. As we leave the European Union, we will forge a bold, new positive role for ourselves in the world. And we will make Britain a country that works not for a privileged few, but for every one of us.

TWO PINTS GARAGE [henceforth 'TPG'] bursts in, loud. He has a full pint in each hand.

TPG: Taking back our country, getting back our sovereignty, controlling our borders. Theresa May! Theresa May! I invented Brexit.

MAY: Well-well, Two-Pints Garage! I married Brexit so that makes you my father-in-law, oh god. In any case, as I've made clear before, you're irrelevant now. I'm the one who will deliver a successful Brexit for the people.

TPG: Any Romanians here? Romanians are the worst.

MAY: (aside) They voted remain. (to TPG) Nonetheless, as I've made clear, I'm giving a speech, addressing the public.

TPG: Yes because you copied me! And since I'm the secret to your success, I've come to tell you something.

TPG passes a drink to MAY. She takes it automatically.

TPG: Do not, Theresa May, do not be a coward.

TPG lunges towards MAY and results in having an arm around her shoulder. He shakes her at times, giving her a side-hug, and gestures with his remaining pint.

TPG: Don't be scared of the threats of a hard border between Northern Ireland and the republic. Don't pay a £40 billion divorce bill, though I know you want to – Theresa the Appeaser.

TPG spills some of his drink on MAY and turns away from her, dominating the stage. MAY tries to reclaim the space, but is subverted effortlessly.

TPG: Ensure no regulatory alignment with the European Union on fishing quotas. Do not keep us in the single market. Do not participate in some kind of public humiliation whereby you'll have to negotiate on their terms. No transition phase. Remember, no deal is better than a bad deal. If Brexit needs to be fought all over again there will be riots in the streets.

Finally, manic TPG comes to a standstill, MAY positioned behind him, with his arms raised victoriously in the air. The last of his drink lands entirely on MAY.

TPG: See the job through! Make Brexit mean Brexit.

.....

MAY sighs, then turns and notices the broom.

MAY: Oh, Jeremy! I didn't notice you there.

MAY turns her hair between her fingers. She gives a glance up at the Broom through her eyelashes.

MAY: Me? Oh, nothing, thinking out loud. *(beat, laughter)* Oh, you're too kind. *(Affected)* Oh! Jeremy! *(beat)* I suppose -

MAY caresses the jacket, then holds the sleeves as if hands. MAY puppets the Broom.

The music - Send in the clowns, by Judy Collins- plays at a subdued volume. She leans into the Broom's jacket, and looks at peace.

MAY: Oh what a dancer, such a smooth talker. I didn't know you were so talented.

MAY is dipped by the Broom, one leg high in the air.

MAY: No, I would never fire or reshuffle you into a different role- so, you can be honest to me.

The jacket's hands slip down to MAY's lower back. MAY is enthusiastic.

MAY: Oh, Hunty. Privatise these lips, impose an unethical contract on me, squeeze my budget -

MAY places the Broom's sleeve on her chest. Gives a squeeze.

MAY: Push me to breaking point! Hunty!

.....

DIM BEE makes the sounds of Big Ben bong.

MAY scrambles off stage.

DIM BEE: *(off)* And the election results are in! And what the exit poll is saying is the Conservatives... are the largest party!

MAY celebrates unflatteringly.

DIM BEE: *(off)* Note, they don't have an overall majority at this stage. 314 for the conservatives, that's down 17. The Conservative majority has decreased and at this rate-

DIM BEE leaves the stage by this point.

DIM BEE: *(off)* Theresa May, will have to resort to a hung parliament. She is expected to resign in the morning.

MAY returns to the stage.

MAY: No, no I'm not. I can make this work.

YE OLDIE QUEENIE WITH HER CORGI [henceforth 'QUEEN'] enters. This startles MAY.

QUEEN: Who's there? Are you a servant?

MAY: Of a sort, yes, but -

QUEEN: Who are you?

MAY: I'm the Prime Minister, I have been and I still am, and I hope I can still be.

QUEEN: Oh, Margaret Thatcher!

MAY: You really see her in me? I'm touched.

QUEEN: Are you not her? Isn't she still -

MAY: No, I'm Theresa May.

QUEEN: Oh. Who was the nice chap, the man before -

MAY: David Cameron

QUEEN: - Nice man
MAY: Not to pigs... can I be prime minister?
QUEEN: Every prime minister must pass a series of tests Stroke the corgi
MAY: Shoot the corgi?
QUEEN: Stroke the corgi
MAY: Oh, I'm glad I didn't just do it. Will it bite? Yes. O-oh.
QUEEN: Yes. Good. The corgi doesn't like you, doesn't approve.
MAY: Did I pass the test?
QUEEN: No. But there are more.

The corgi-plushie barks again.

QUEEN: It's a reoccurring joke. The Second test – Woosh my cape.
MAY: Woosh your cape?
QUEEN: Yes.

MAY does so. It looks fantastic. A Titanic-esk musical rift plays.

QUEEN: The tiebreaker is Would you like to be prime minister?
MAY: Yes.
QUEEN: Alright then.
MAY: Is that it? Pretty sure, last time we met, you asked all sorts of riddles.
QUEEN: Yes. I could have said yes at any moment, this was all a game, just lies.
MAY: Oh.
QUEEN: Tu-rah!
MAY: That was a short scene. Really worth the money we spent on the costume.
QUEEN: Bye-bye, May was good seeing you again, always falling for the same jokes.

....

Extract from concluding chapter

There was a choice involved at the end of the show: whether we returned as performers to the stage to bow, allowing for a cathartic breath and closure to the questions raised—or to simply vanish into the changing rooms and let the audience conclude that they ought to leave—aka to do something. The latter reinforced the plan to remove as many barriers between the messages and the bodily reality of the audience; by opting to drop a traditional congratulatory moment, the show gained another chance to provoke thought, choice, and action from the viewer.

By involving the audience and encouraging them to remain within their bodies—rather than swept by imagination into the narrative of a show ‘over there’ on stage—we keep them rooted in the fact that these injustices are real and relevant and require action.

While none of us knew what the future held, these shows continue to offer a snapshot of opinion in history. While Cameron, May, and Johnson have each inspired a different flavour of indigence, rage, and pain.