

A Stone's Throw

Written by Maire Campbell



Cast List

Young Jack

Jack

Granda

Dad

Mum

JC (the Youth Worker)

3/4 Friends

Rioters/Youth Club Members/Friends/Dancers/ Police/ Prison Guards

The number of cast members is flexible (5 to 25 persons)

18 cast members performed the original production and this number worked very well.

The cast chop and change assuming different characters e.g. Young Jack also became a rioter and Youth Club member.

The cast remain on stage at all times. When they are not involved in a scene, they remain in a strong neutral freeze.

Director's Notes

The element of dance does not require the cast to be 'good' at dancing. It is timed movements that theatrically present scenes and emotions to the audience.

There are no props except for a scarf to denote Granda. Use of mime is employed for example, when throwing a stone. Slow motion can also be used for great effect.

There is a suggested sound track and sound effects however, the play can also be performed successfully without these elements.

Running Time - 25-30 minutes

Scene 1 Opening Sequence

Cast line up, upstage, taking strong, aggressive poses.

Freeze.

Young Jack sits in centre playing with his toy ambulance.

Young Jack: Nee naw, nee naw, nee naw.

Music Plays - "I Predict a Riot" by Kaiser Chiefs

Cast move in slow motion, Lifting Young Jack into the air as they come forward. As music comes to chorus they start to riot in real time, then fade back up stage.

Freeze.

Young Jack returns to centre stage with toy ambulance.

Fade Out

Scene 2 Young Jack and Granda

Granda: Peekaboo! Alright Jack, your tea's near ready.

Jack: That's me, Jack. I lived with my Granda a lot, but my Mum, she wasn't there, always at the pub like, she was hateful. My dad was in the clinker, jail.

My Granda was my hero, aye.

Scene 3 Jack grows up, looked after by a caring Granda

Music plays- "The Reason" by Hoobastank

The movement to this song begins with Young Jack being chased playfully by Granda. (Granda wears a scarf to denote his character).

Granda goes on all fours and Young Jack jumps on his back. Both fall to the floor and laugh.

Granda teaches him some boxing moves.

Young Jack lies down and Granda places a blanket on top of him, then moves to close the door. Jack lies down beside Young Jack and slips the blanket over himself. Young Jack then melts back into the cast.

Granda bangs on the bedroom door, Jack a teenager now. Granda spars/boxes with Jack.

Granda teaches him to drive.

Jack has a cross phone call with his Mum.

Granda comforts him.

Music fades down

Scene 4 Party

Music plays- "Silence" by Delerium FT. Sarah McLachlan (Tiesto mix)

Friend 1: Jack we hear your man's got a party going, want to go?

Friend 2: Yeah come on. It's going to be a riot!

Jack: Aye, sounds good, let's go!

Cast come forward like they are dancing at a disco. The music changes to....

Music plays- "Tik Tok" by Kesha

Cast: Yea! (etc)

Dance sequence - Cast dance, every now and then a person steps forward to do a 'dance move'.

Jack's friends enter. Music fades down.

Friend 1: I heard there is some craic up in the street.

Friend 2: Yeah rioting and stuff. Let's go.

Jack: Aw no, I told my Granda, I wouldn't get into bother. I don't want to be getting into stuff like that

Friends: Aw wise up, right well, we are going to go anyway. Loser! Come on Jack!

Music rises then Fades Out

Jack is left on stage, he has a think to himself and gives in

Cast assemble into pre-riot positions.

Cast divide in two groups and face each other. Tension is high.

Jack: Why not?

Jack runs off

Cast come alive and into rioting

Rioter: Go on do something!!

Scene 5- Riot Scene

Music plays – “I Predict a Riot” by Kaiser Chiefs

Two groups start to riot.

Music lowers. Cast Freeze.

Jack comes through the middle and comes down stage

Jack: This was my life, I was never bothered, we hated the other side and they hated us!

Music rises. Rioting continues.

Music fades. Cast freeze.

Granda enters (He is in Jack's head)

Granda: Remember what I said, fighting is only for the boxing ring.

Jack: Yeah yeah yeah.

Granda: Don't let me down like your dad did.

Jack: My dad was a joke

Jack's Dad and Mum enter

Dad: *(to Jack)* You're a waste of space, get me another can.

Mum: I told you not to drink in the house

Dad: Shut up woman.

Mum and Dad have an argument. Young Jack comes into the Centre between them followed by Jack.

Jack: Ahhh stop it!

It wasn't just the drink; my dad did drugs as well... that was until the police came.

Police come and take the dad away, the rioting continues.

Jack and Mum have argument on the phone with each other.

Jack: Mum I need money for this trip; I don't want to ask Granda again

Mum: Awk sure that's what he's good for

Jack: Mum, mum? Look is there anything for tea? I'm hungry.

Mum: Sort yourself out. Look I'm busy, I'm away.

Jack: Mum! Mum!

The cast remain in the riot freeze. Symbolizing the trouble in his heart and head....and streets.

Three friends break forward and come to Jack

Friend 1: Hey Jack, what's up?

Friend 2: We know what's up.

Friend 3: Is it your mum again?

Jack: She just doesn't care.

Friend 3: Sure C'mon! Let's go join the others in the riot.

Friend 2: Awk C'mon!

Jack: No, I told him I wouldn't.

The friends argue with Jack, they battle it out trying to convince Jack to come and join them and eventually Jack gives in and joins the gang.

Music ("I predict a riot") rises as cast return to rioting.

Jack picks up a stone, he hears his Granda in his head

Granda: Don't do it.

Granda reaches and holds Jack's arm.

Granda: Don't do it Jack. Don't...

A low drone sound effect.

Jack breaks from his Granda's grip and throws the stone and hits one of the rioters.

Cast return to rioting

Scene 6 The rioters join together and turn against the ambulance

The sounds of ambulances and fire engines mix with the music.

Cast face forward. Joined now in union towards a different 'enemy'.

Rioter 1: We hated them'ins!

Rioter 2: We hated yous more!

Rioter 3: But one thing we hated more than each other...

Rioter 4: Police!

Rioter 5: Fire Brigades!

Jack: For some reason, I don't know why...

Rioter 6: ... Ambulances!

Cast shout, cheer and throw stones etc.

The music fades out to the loud sound of an ambulance. Slow motion as a girl places a stone in Jack's hand. Jack thinks, then launches the stone. The sound of the ambulance retreats and the cast cheer.

The siren fades away turning into the sound of a phone beeping in an engaged tone.

Scene 7 Granda on the Floor

The cast melt away to reveal Granda lying on the ground, a phone in his hand.

The engaged tone turns to an 'off the hook' monotone.

Jack runs to his Granda.

Jack: Granda! Granda!

Silence.

Person 1: It was Jack's Granda that was waiting on the ambulance.

Person 2: But it never got to him.

Jack: Because... I stopped that ambulance.

Scene 8 Emotional Movement to Death of Granda

Music plays – “The Reason” by Hoobastank

Fade in Dance

Atmospheric and emotive movement routine. Cast are encouraged to choreograph their own.

(Notes – in original production - Jack is lifted forward by the arms forward. The cast are in pairs, spread over stage. They drop to the ground. They embrace and break free. The idea is that it is about loss, love, holding on, anger and regret. The scene ends with the cast standing in front of Granda and as they kneel down, Jack sees him but can't break through.)

Scene 9 Jack is Arrested

Two Police Officers march to the sound of a low drone.

Police: Jack Campbell, we are arresting you on suspicion on manslaughter...of your own grandfather.

DRONE fades.

Person 1: Jack was taken to a young offenders centre, for two years.

Jack: I deserved more!

Scene 10 Young Offenders Centre

The cast march and form two lines, indicating the rigidity of prison. Jack is brought in by the officers and placed in the line.

Scene 11 Jack Gets Out

Jack: When I got out I had nowhere to go. My Ma didn't want to know, so I thought I'd try my Da.

Scene 12 Jack goes to visit his Dad in Prison

Two prison guards place two chairs down stage.

Jack: Hi Da.

Dad: Hello son.

Jack: Any word on when you're getting out?

Dad: It'll be a long time yet. Listen son, you got any?

Jack: Got what?

Dad: Cash.

Jack: Is that all you wanted me for?

Dad: Like I said you are a waste of space.

Dad gets up and walks away. Prison guard tips Jack off the chair. Jack is angry.

Scene 13 Jack is Angry

Music plays: "Standing In The Way of Control" by Gossip

Fight Sequence – Jack gets into lots of fights using stage combat techniques.

Jack: I was angry! I couldn't get out of it.

Cast come forward pushing Jack down and controlling him.

Jack: I was out of control, like I was floating.

Cast lift Jack above their heads, then throw him out.

Jack: There was no light at the end of the tunnel.

Cast fold arms.

JC steps forward.

Jack: Look if you are looking to fight, I'm done.

JC: Come with me.

Jack: No, I don't think so.

JC: Come on.

JC opens the door...

Scene 14 The Youth Club

The scene changes to a youth club; everyone is enjoying themselves, playing games and having the craic.

Music plays: “One Life” by James Morrison (underscores dialogue)

JC: Lucy this is Jack.

JC: This is Leon.

Introducing everyone.

Everyone is playing games and friendly. Jack steps forward and speaks to audience.

Music lowers.

Jack: That’s big JC. He was our youth leader. He had been in and out of prison, so he knew how to deal with young people like me. That day changed my life. I got to go on these trips with him, we got to go to a concert, it was deadly!

Cast spread out to individual space across the stage. Neutral poses.

Jack: I lost out on an America trip because of my criminal record, but I got to become a volunteer up here. I have become a sort of role model for other young people. Life is good... but, I’ll never get my Granda back, and that’s just something I have to live with....

But I tell you one thing... I’m going to make him proud.

Music (“One Life”) rises

The lights come down on what is the beginning of a bright future of an optimistic Jack.

The End