

# DOOMSDAY

## SCENE 1. THE TIME: THE PRESENT

*Lights come up to reveal six characters staring into an open white light ,  
mesmerised. These six characters are COMPASSION, INSECURITY,  
DESTRUCTION, GUILT, CONFIDENCE and REASON. A sound collage of film clips  
can be heard in the background. Action starts when lighting states have changed.*

REASON: Number 1322.

*pause*

REASON: Well?

*pause*

CONFIDENCE: Informative.

GUILT: Immoral.

DESTRUCTION: Appalling.

INSECURITY: Hard-hitting.

COMPASSION: Positive.

REASON: *(into a dictation machine if possible)* Film number one thousand three hundred and twenty-two. Congratulations - another mixed-bag of reactions. Once again we have achieved our goal, fulfilled the criterion that we presented ourselves with and I would like to thank you all for your hard work. We look forward to film number 1323 to see what cerebral challenges we are faced with this time. Once again - well done.

Lights fade on a happy group, pleased with their achievements.

**SCENE 2. THE SAME.**

Lights snap up to them staring into the white light. We hear clips from 'Superman2', the screams of his name after he has been affected by Kryptonite. The sound finishes and the lights fade leaving an affected atmosphere.

REASON: (hesitantly) That was film number 1323. Well?

*Pause*

REASON: Please - try and collect your thoughts. We must evaluate. I know that it's difficult but please try...

CONFIDENCE: Devastating...

DESTRUCTION: True to my heart...

COMPASSION: Crippling...

GUILT: Mordant.

INSECURITY: Savage.

They all look at REASON.

REASON: I can be 'reason' no more. I agree - it was absolutely crippling.

GUILT: So what does that mean?

DESTRUCTION: It only means one thing.

INSECURITY: Tell us.

*Tense pause.*

REASON: Before you, that is Guilt and Insecurity, were both created we made a pact that if ever we were unanimous in agreement about anything then we could no longer exist. What is the point of existing if we know 100%? That day has now arrived so...

CONFIDENCE: Surely we don't have to keep to that?

DESTRUCTION: Of course we do. It's the law.

*CONFIDENCE looks at REASON.*

REASON: Technically we should keep it because we did make a pact. But we did make that pact without the inclusion of Insecurity and Guilt. The main question now is whether the pact is still valid. Can anyone remember when Insecurity and Guilt joined the picture?

COMPASSION: I think it was 'Apocalypse Now', wasn't it?

DESTRUCTION: That's right. That's when . . .

*REASON, COMPASSION and CONFIDENCE give him an evil stare.*

DESTRUCTION: *(sarcastically)* That's when we felt that we were doing everything we could for the world. Helping people in their struggles, joining CND, fighting AIDS with our bare hands...

GUILT: Oh my God! It's my fault that we are all feeling this way. If we had only never seen that film. *(She starts weeping)*

COMPASSION: Hey - don't cry. I'm pleased that we did see it. You have helped

make many important decisions. You have you know!. You've got nothing to be ashamed of.

INSECURITY: We're drifting.

DESTRUCTION: What?

INSECURITY: We're drifting from the subject...sorry...

REASON: Once again the quietest amongst us speak the truth. We must stay on the path...

GUILT: Well, what aren't we talking about?

CONFIDENCE : Should we still exist due to the fact that, for once, we have all agreed on something? I don't see what's so bad about agreement...

DESTRUCTION: No...sorry...I just can't agree with that...

COMPASSION: Why are you so set on destruction? On the destruction of us all?

DESTRUCTION: Why don't you just shut the fuck up, huh? Your problem is that you are too goddamn nice for your own good. Sometimes it helps to be negative...

CONFIDENCE: But only to put things into perspective.

*An air of tension is apparent between CONFIDENCE and DESTRUCTION.*

GUILT: *(hesitantly)* If we've felt these 'things' before then are we guilty?

COMPASSION: Guilty of what?

GUILT: Sometimes, when I've watched a film that makes a big impact, I just "feel" for the situation. That's how I was created. Like in 'Philadelphia'. I felt sorry for him. I

thought, 'Why isn't that me dying from AIDS? It should be. He's got his whole life ahead of him. All we ever do is sit on our bums and watch films'.

CONFIDENCE: So? We could be doing a lot less with our lives. And in case none of you have realised yet, watching films has made us more of a person.

*The rest are silenced by this remark*

CONFIDENCE: We've seen such a wide range of culture. We've seen Black films, White films, Green with Blue Spot films. It's made us better. Okay, a lot of films revolve around propaganda but that's the way the cookie crumbles. We've seen the whole world in celluloid.

DESTRUCTION: Bloody hell! Listen to Cecil B deMille here...

COMPASSION: I can see where you're coming from. What you are saying is that what Guilt felt about 'Philadelphia' was not a bad thing . . .

DESTRUCTION: 'Philadelphia'. I had to go to a tennis racket specialist after that film to get my heart strings re-tightened...

COMPASSION: Thanks, Confidence! I'm trying to help a distressed friend here. We all know that you don't have feelings. (*Gathers herself again and says to GUILT*) You've not done something wrong by feeling bad, it's just that Destruction doesn't know his arse from his elbow...

DESTRUCTION: Yeah...well at least I don't suck elbows like you do...

*They are all about to indulge in a major argument when...*

REASON: Can I just remind you about what we are meant to be discussing?

INSECURITY: I was just about to say something like that.

REASON: Let me summarise. Our hero has died and you're not doing anything about it. Maybe you're too shocked and I fully understand that but we must come to some decision, and very soon. It is Thursday night. By Twelve O' clock we must know. We cannot overstep this time boundary because, as we all know, the new film schedule starts then. So, can our life go on? Yes or No?

*They all think on this*

INSECURITY: I really am very upset by his death. I wish that there was something that I could do.

DESTRUCTION: *(under his breath)* Go to the sequel?

REASON: Destruction, to be honest, snide remarks like that are not welcome here. You can dismiss the death of your hero if you like but in the end it will only catch up on you. The rest of us are supportive so why can't you be for a change? What should we do?

INSECURITY: *(naively inquisitive)* What do you feel about it, Reason?

REASON: Come on, Destruction. We're waiting.

INSECURITY: Reason?

*Nothing*

INSECURITY: *(as if she were deaf)* Reason?

*They all look at REASON*

ALL: REASON?!?

*As DESTRUCTION looks away smiling, the rest look at REASON as the lights fade to Blackout*

### SCENE 3

*The six characters make loud ticking sounds and their hands represent the hands of a clock. They move in a clockwise motion as they say their lines. They are addressing the audience but the audience plays the part of an interviewer. They keep ticking as each character speaks.*

CONFIDENCE: I've tried as much as I can to persuade them all to see that we don't need to kill ourselves. *(Pause)* Yes, I know that we made the pact but the fact that we have agreed on something should be a cause for celebration, not a reason to kill ourselves. I know that others disagree with me, Destruction(!), but he always seems to have the final word in everything. For once I feel that the rest of us should stand firm, sort of similar to the climax of 'Scum' when everyone retaliates against the fascist wardens. Destruction is our Fascist Warden. That would be good. *(Pause)* Christ, what am I saying? Of course not! *(Pause)* No.

DESTRUCTION: I think that the answer would be unanimous if frigging Confidence stopped poking his nose in. Insecurity and Guilt have no say in what we do anyway. They're always so miserable and, more importantly, they weren't there when we made the pact. *(Pause)* Should we go ahead without them? Quite frankly, yes. We made a pact and that pact has been . . . finalised. We *must* go ahead with it. I mean, what else do we do? How many more films are there that we can watch? I'm getting a bit fed up of doing the same thing over and over again. But the one person I admire has gone. Ah, sod it. He's dead. Dead and buried. Who gives a shit! *(Pause)* Yes. And Now.

GUILT: In a way I feel responsible for his death. It may sound stupid but if I hadn't gone and seen the original film and encouraged other people to go and see it then the second film probably wouldn't have been made. I know that may seem illogical to you but to me it seems to be the only answer. *(Pause)* Should we kill ourselves? I'm unsure. I couldn't go on if I made the wrong decision. *(Pause)* You want an answer now? *(Pause. Thinks. Then, uncertainly:)* Yes.

INSECURITY: I am very close to Guilt so I sort of go along with whatever she said (I didn't hear it to be honest!) *(Uncertainly)* We were created by the others feeling bad and that doesn't make me feel particularly good. I fluctuate. Somedays I feel alright, almost as if I don't really exist. Other times, more often than not, I do feel that I exist and I seem to be a butt for others to kick. I don't know . . . um . . . I'm not sure.  
*(Pause)* I do feel very, very sorry for him. *(Upset)* That's all that I would like to say at this moment. *(Pause)* Yes please. *(Pause)* I suppose.

COMPASSION: I've watched this family grow up together. I am tempted to say that it would make no real difference to me but that would be lying. Yes - I would like it if we could stay together. We've all been through many different things, some good, some bad, but most importantly they were all equally important. But I feel for Insecurity and Guilt, especially if we do decide to go ahead with it. They are so young and... and... innocent. I don't want them to suffer for something that they had no choice in. If it is suffering. I don't know. I just wish that we hadn't seen that blasted film. It's upset the others and that upsets me. *(Pause)* Pass.

REASON: Being the person I am it is my duty to remain impartial in matters like this, but now and again I allow myself some leeway. We have all been affected by our heroes death, even me. I think that we've enjoyed a good life, experienced many exciting and difficult films but most importantly of all we have disagreed. If we had all agreed on the same thing at the very beginning then life would have been very dull indeed. It is good that our disagreements have often provided a healthy debate and I think that this was a beneficial thing for all of us. It is a shame that we have to go because of an agreement but the death of our hero was tragic. I just feel for those who joined the frame late. *(Pause)* You wants an answer now? Well, I'd have to say... *(The Bells chime on the half-hour)* Oh God, I must get back to the others. I'm sorry - *(the lights fade)* I'm sorry, I'm sorry, so sorry.

*Blackout*

#### SCENE 4

*The lights come up slowly to reveal a sombre group, each one contemplating what they should do. There is about to be a trial. REASON stands in the middle and naturally acts as judge. The defence counsel is CONFIDENCE and COMPASSION. Against them are INSECURITY and GUILT, unsurprisingly led by DESTRUCTION.*

REASON: Thank you members of the group and if you could direct your attention towards me then I would be grateful. We've never held a trial before but I think that we've seen enough Gene Hackman movies to get the gist of what we're meant to be doing. I now see this as being the only fair, honourable and sensible way to try and clear this matter up. We all know each others opinions, now lets try and use them and make some decision. There is not long till Twelve. We must hurry.

*They position themselves wherever necessary. Before they are all ready -*

DESTRUCTION: Now Confidence, why do you feel it necessary to -

REASON: *(interrupting)* Destruction Wait! We've got to do this properly so that everyone gets a fair chance.

DESTRUCTION: But you just said that we're in a hurry.

CONFIDENCE: Shut up, Destruction. Let's do this properly.

REASON: I hereby declare that the case of whether we should die or not due to our hero's death now be open. Destruction, would you like to start the questioning?

DESTRUCTION: *(with urgency)* Yes, I would. Confidence, why do you feel it necessary to go against the flow of what other people think, to go against the majority?

CONFIDENCE: Good. A simple question to start off with. We should not kill ourselves because there is so much for us to live for...

DESTRUCTION: Objection, your honour. Blatant bullshit.

*INSECURITY and GUILT all respond in agreement*

REASON: Destruction behave yourself!. Now, come on, please, we're wasting time.

COMPASSION: My Lord, may I ask a question?

REASON: Proceed.

COMPASSION: Confidence, it is clear that you are in favour of us not dying but can you justify your reasoning and perhaps suggest other alternatives?.

CONFIDENCE: At last, something sensible. Yes, I can. I don't think that we need to go. Admittedly we have been greatly affected by our hero's death, every one of us, and it will take some time to get over it, but we can, I just know that we can. Think positive.

INSECURITY: But that's all we've ever done and look where it's got us.

CONFIDENCE: Yes, well, I haven't finished yet. The alternatives to worshipping our hero is that we obtain a new hero, one of human or materialistic qualities, it doesn't really matter, the important thing is that we have something to model ourselves on.

COMPASSION: But you've always said that we should...

CONFIDENCE: ...believe in ourselves? Yes, I know, but I'm obviously in the minority on that point. I just want to live and if that means that I have to succumb to some things that I'm not happy with then that will have to be the case but I'm trying to strike a medium. Let's live on but with another God. I feel that we would survive by ourselves but others obviously don't. There. I've said my piece.

*They think on this.*

GUILT: But we can't. He was . . . us. And now that he isn't us anymore that means that we can't be us. No more. Finito.

DESTRUCTION: *(singing)* This is The End, my only friend, The End.

REASON: Would you please stop diverting the cause of justice. Confidence, thank you for that. It hasn't made things much clearer but it has thrown open another possibility. Your questions to the opposition now please.

CONFIDENCE: Thank you, yes. *(Pause and then with malice)* Why do you feel it necessary to screw up these poor peoples' lives?

DESTRUCTION: I don't know what...

CONFIDENCE: Oh yes you do know what I mean. You know that they're weak so you decide to manipulate that weakness. That's pretty callous, isn't it? I've decided to shepherd them through the valley of darkness. You've obviously pushed them in without a candle. I can justify my reasons for not dying. Let's see if you can justify yours.

COMPASSION: Come on Destruction. You've always got something clever to say for yourself so let's hear it.

*DESTRUCTION just stands there with a smug look on her face*

CONFIDENCE: Come on, get a move on.

INSECURITY: Don't rush her. She's go to think about her answers. We don't want her to make a mistake.

GUILT: *(to INSECURITY)* But she's not going to make a mistake. She knows what the answer is, so do you, we all know what the answer is in our heart of hearts.

DESTRUCTION: Your honour, I'm very worried about Compassion do you know that? I've always thought that she'd been on my side (*she starts buttering up COMPASSION, almost seducing her*), there for me, supporting me but I was obviously wrong. That's unfortunate because we've always been pretty close. All I have to say is this: if you are Compassion, and you most certainly are, then I think that you could be doing more. Not for my sake, not even for your sake, but for those that you truly care about . . .

GUILT: (*interrupting*) Destruction . . . ?

DESTRUCTION: (*calmly, to GUILT*) Sssh, I'm talking. (*To COMPASSION*) For those that you truly care about, Insecurity and Guilt, do it for them. They can't survive without you and they can't die without you. So please, please, please, pretty please, with sugar on top, will you join us? Will you join our merry throng? It's so much nicer on this side.

(*During this The Pro-Deaths have crawled up to her, reaching, begging. COMPASSION looks at CONFIDENCE. He looks to the floor. She starts to walk, almost zombified, towards them.*)

CONFIDENCE: Compassion, it's seems that I might be losing but I will not give up. No way. No way, hosay. I'm not going down in the Fifth for anyone. (*Almost desperate*) Come on, you've got to see my point of view as well. Don't listen to her, ignore what she says . . .

DESTRUCTION shouts "*Just shut up*" as CONFIDENCE tries to convince COMPASSION not to listen to her. DESTRUCTION'S screams get louder and louder and eventually drown out CONFIDENCE'S efforts. When he realises that his efforts are fruitless he gives up, annoyed. As soon as he does that the 'screamer' stops.

CONFIDENCE: But what about the pact? We've all forgotten about that. Where does that fit in?

*CONFIDENCE keeps on repeating and emphasising the pact. These statements stop the group in its tracks realising the importance of what's just been said. DESTRUCTION sees what is going on.*

DESTRUCTION: What are you doing? Confidence, just shut up. Fuck the pact, it isn't important anymore. This is war. So, fuck the pact. Fuck the pact.

*Like above, DESTRUCTION repeats 'Fuck the pact' as CONFIDENCE battles with her until he finally loses and retires. There is some silence until, unable to resist the temptation:*

DESTRUCTION: Sorry about that Confidence, old chap. Maybe we should 'pact' this whole thing in...

CONFIDENCE: *(lunging towards her)* Just fuck off, alright?, or I'm gonna fucking kill you...

*They are about to fight, cheered on by the others when -*

REASON: Confidence, stop that this minute. Order in court. I am ashamed of you.

How dare you try and do something like this?

*(DESTRUCTION makes it look like her life was in danger as she brushes herself down, 'obviously perturbed'. INSECURITY and GUILT flock round DESTRUCTION making sure he's okay, etc. COMPASSION just stands and watches. CONFIDENCE is lost.)*

Now get back to where you were and let's try and sort this out properly. *(CONFIDENCE returns sheepishly)* OK?

THE REST: Yes.

*Silence. Then:*

CONFIDENCE: *(uncertainly)* Perhaps you're right. Is this life worth living anymore? I don't know.

*The rest look on, unsure of exactly what CONFIDENCE is doing.*

CONFIDENCE: What was one of the first films that we ever watched?

REASON: Fantazia? No, no...Dumbo...with the big ears...

COMPASSION: Beyond the Valley of the Dolls?

DESTRUCTION: That dirty porno at the age of eight...

CONFIDENCE: Children...I said 'film'! You don't remember huh? I do...vividly. It was 'The Last Temptation of Christ'. And I remember how that moved us. I remember the lesson that it taught us. That was when we realised we needed a leader...we needed someone strong...someone to save us from dangers that we might face...dangers amongst ourselves. And the next film we watched after that? Yes...we all know. Christ was dead but Superman lived. And he was there to save us, to help us...just like I'm trying to do now...

INSECURITY: What are you saying?

*Tense Pause*

CONFIDENCE: You can worship me.

*DESTRUCTION laughs, consequently triggering off the others*

CONFIDENCE: It's the obvious answer. Why can't you see that...?

*DESTRUCTION jeers at him. The rest follow, circling and intimidating CONFIDENCE*

REASON: *(shouting at the top of her voice)* DESTRUCTION! SHUT UP! Will you all just shut up!

*They don't stop. They get faster, faster, faster until:*

CONFIDENCE: *(collapsing)* Alright, alright. Just . . . leave me alone to die.

*CONFIDENCE moves to the feet of REASON. A tableau is formed.*

REASON: BONG - Time has run out - BONG - You've made your decision – BONG -  
There's nothing I can do to change it - BONG – BONG - Any last words? - BONG – BONG -  
BONG - Speak now or forever hold your peace - BONG - BONG - BONG

*They look up as they wait for the last chime of the clock, wondering where it is. The group enquire if this is 'Superman'. Immediately afterwards, the final strike falls we hear a cacophony of death and the lights slowly fade to black.*