

And Out The Other

Mo 8, deaf
Maria Mo's mother
Joseph Mo's father

The stage is dark all apart from a spotlight which shines on a boy; he has a shaved head, and is dressed in his pyjamas. This is Mo, he is deaf, and greets the audience with little waves as they enter. Once the audience are all seated, Mo will act out the putting on his headphones. He points under the audience's seats, he encourages them to put their headphones on as well and may even help someone put them on.

Mo It cancels the sound.

Mo puts on his own set of headphones.

Can you hear me? You shouldn't!

Mo takes off his headphones.

I don't need them. It's so you can hear what I hear. Have fun!

*The play works one of two ways, the audience can either choose to have the headphones off and watch the play as it is, or wear their noise-cancelling headphones and experience it as Mo. All SFX like the television are all played with sound. The actors too speak the dialogue below in black font, and in **red font** it is sign language. Everything in sign language has been pre-recorded by the actors, what they see in sign is spoken to them in the headphones, so they can understand like Mo does.*

The lights begin to reveal the background, it is a lounge, a sofa faces the audience with a coffee table in front, an armchair sits SL facing inwards. At the back of the room is a small kitchen with a counter, a door upstage left goes out to the rest of the house. There is a television downstage right, it is on. Joseph, 36 and Maria, 39 are sat on the sofa and Mo goes to sit down on the armchair. They are all fixated on the television, the light of the tv shines onto their faces. The television has a second screen, and it faces the audience, so both the characters and the audience can watch the same show. 'Finding Dory' has just started playing.

Maria I haven't seen this yet, **have you seen this before Mo?**
Mo **No not yet, I'm excited.**
Joseph **I bet you are.**
Maria How's the chips doing Joe?
Joseph Yeah just checked them before putting the film on, another 5 minutes I reckon.
Maria It was supposed to be ready for the film though.
Joseph It's not my fault Mo wanted to watch it straight away.
Maria Joseph, just let him enjoy it. **You doing okay sweetie?**
Mo **Yes mum. Where are my slippers?**
Maria **Where did you put them last?**
Mo **I can't remember.**
Maria Joe where's his slippers.
Joseph How should I know?
Maria You were watching him earlier.
Joseph **What did you do with your slippers?**
Mo **I can't remember.**
Joseph But you were just wearing them. **Did you leave them in the bathroom?**
Mo Yes! Let me check. **Can you pause the film?**
Maria **Yes.** Oh god Joseph we didn't even switch the subtitles on, poor kid.

Mo runs out of the room through the upstage right door.

Joseph Oh whoops. Actually I might as well check the food whilst it's paused.
Maria Need any help love?

Mo comes running back in with his slippers on.

Mo I found them!
Joseph Nah I'll be all right.

Joseph high fives Mo on the way to the kitchen. Joseph in the background prepares dinner; Mo sits next to his mum.

Maria Ah! You found them, **Mo, you found them!**
Mo **They were in the bathroom.**
Maria You silly billy.

Maria tickles Mo, he laughs.

Mo No! No more!
Maria We might need to do another trim (*Inspecting his hair*). **After the film I'm going to trim your hair again.**
Mo No! **Why?**
Maria **Because I don't want you to have headlice.**
Mo **I won't get headlice.**
Maria **You will if you have long messy hair like mummy's. And I don't want you to give me headlice!**

Mo laughs.

And you need to make sure you wash your hair every day.
Mo **But I won't get headlice, mum.**
Maria Of course you will.
Mo **Tobie says I can't get headlice because they won't like me.**
Maria What do you mean...? (*Realising she didn't sign*) **What do you mean?**
Mo **Because I'm deaf, I'm different. The kids don't like me and neither will the headlice.**
Maria (*Welling up*) **No. Look at me, you are special Mo, you are beautiful, funny and strong. Don't let those kids put you down.**
Mo But-
Maria -But nothing! I've said this to you before, being deaf isn't a bad thing, it's a super power. And you just have to learn how to use it.
Mo (*Smiling*) **A superpower? Like Iron Man?**
Maria **Better than Iron Man. He's a bit mean, you, are kind and courageous.**
Mo **Can I have a suit like Iron Man?**
Maria **Do you know how much that would cost?**
Mo **A million!**
Maria **A million is right.**

Joseph brings out the plates and places them on the coffee table. Maria brings out the lap trays and places them down. They all take their plates with the cutlery and eat their dinner; Mo squirts ketchup on his chips.

Maria Play it then.

Joseph sighs and puts his food down he then reaches for the remote, he presses play.

 The subtitles Joe.
Joseph Oh yep.

Joseph reaches for the remote again and puts the subtitles on. They all eat their dinner watching the film. As do the audience.

A long while passes. Once the family have finished their dinner Joseph takes the food in, he lets the film play. The following conversation may be improvised by the actors, but they should be shouting at one another. Mo, is completely unaware throughout.

Joseph Maria I need to speak with you about the car, tonight ideally.
Maria Joe, not now I'm watching Dory.
Joseph Look, Maria this is serious.
Maria I know its serious Joseph, but do we have to talk about this now?
Joseph I want to know what to do with this car for tomorrow? We can't just let someone else get it.
Maria Well not now.
Joseph Oh don't give me that.
Maria Give you what?
Joseph The cold shoulder it's so childish.
Maria What? *(Maria stands up, she goes over to Joseph)* What are you talking about?
Joseph The car Maria, that's what I'm talking about.
Maria Why did you call me childish?
Joseph Because you're ignoring me, I'm trying to have a serious conversation.
Maria We're in the middle of a film Joseph, I'm spending some time with my son before he goes to bed.
Joseph Yes we can do that every night, but we need to make a decision about this car now.
Maria Take it, see if I care!
Joseph Maria that's not having a conversation.
Maria I don't want to have this conversation.
Joseph But, Maria, what are you saying? We need to have this conver-
Maria -No we don't. You should try spending a bit more time with your son than worry about stuff like this all the time.
Joseph Oh stop that, I have to work! I get in from work and I cook the dinners.
Maria You don't bloody cook you just use the oven!
Joseph That's not the point. You finish your work earlier than me; you have plenty of time to sort out the dinners.
Maria I have to work from home, it's different. It's not like I'm constantly free to do whatever I like!
Joseph You're tied down.
Maria Yes I am tied down.
Joseph Oh shut up Maria.
Maria I've had enough of you.

Maria goes and sits back down with Mo and watches the film

Joseph For fuck sake. Maria, Maria I'm sorry. But I need an answer, should I call up Paul tomorrow and get the car or not?
Maria Yes, fine.
Joseph Is that a real yes?
Maria Yes it's a real yes.
Joseph Right thank you. That's all I wanted, just a fucking straight answer.

Joseph leaves the room. Maria and Mo continue to watch the film; Mo may point at characters and smile.

Joseph suddenly comes back in with his coat on. He approaches the coffee table picks up his keys, kisses Mo on the head and heads for the door.

Maria Where the hell are you going?
Joseph The pub.
Maria No you're not.
Joseph Yes I am, I think it's best if I just get out of the house for a bit.

Maria I tell you to spend more time with your son and you go out.
Joseph It's only for a bit, look its fine, just enjoy the film okay?
Maria No! No not okay. (*Maria gets up again*) I am sick of this, every time we fight you run away to the pub.
Joseph It stops the arguments though.
Maria Don't be an idiot
Joseph Don't call me an idiot Maria.
Maria Well that's what you are! You're neglecting our son.
Joseph Of fuck off.
Maria Don't swear in front of him!
Joseph Oh it's not like he can fucking understand it anyway!

Maria shocked by this, slaps him. Joseph turns red and slams Maria against the wall.

Don't you dare, do that again.
Maria Get off my Joe get off!
Joseph Don't do that!
Maria Get the fuck off me! Get the fuck off.

Joseph lets go of Maria and heads out.

You cunt! Don't fucking come back until you've grown up!

Joseph doesn't leave yet.

Joseph (*Off*) Oh really nice. Tell me off for swearing in front of our son and you're the one who calls me a cunt. Who says I'll come back tonight anyway, I'll probably be staying out.
Maria Then don't expect me and Mo to be here when you get back.

Joseph comes back into the room.

Joseph What did you say?
Maria You heard. We might go to my mums.
Joseph Oh fuck off don't say shit like that.
Maria You're the one who's just leaving us now!
Joseph Look enough! This is what I wanted to avoid. I'm going.
Maria Oh fuck you then, just go.

Joseph leaves and slams the front door (off). Maria does not join Mo straight away, she may cry or just regain her breath, she's hurt but quickly recovers. She wipes the tears from her eyes and goes back to sit next to Mo. Who is completely unaware of what has just happened. They watch the rest of the film. Lights fade.

-End-