

HAPPY ENDINGS

A Three-Act Play

by

Gemma O’Niell

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HAPPY ENDINGS

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Cast

(In Order of Appearance)

GEMMA

MELISSA

MAN 1

MAN 2

GEMMA'S MUM

TEACHING AGENT

GIOVANNI/'DAN'

MAN 3

STEVE

GEMMA'S BROTHER

PAVLOS

SANDRA

Characters That Double Up

Gemma/Sandra

Melissa/Agent/Gemma's Mum

Pavlos/ Man 1/Gemma's Brother

Giovanni/Dan/Man 3

Steve/Man 2

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Acts and Scenes

Act 1

- Scene 1: Melissa's apartment (*a confrontation*)
- Scene 2: Massage Journey Studio (*the interview*)
- Scene 3: Massage Journey Studio (*some interesting clients*)
- Scene 4: Massage Journey Studio/Teaching Agency (*Gemma looks for teaching work*)
- Scene 5: Paddy McDees (*Gemma meets Giovanni*)
- Scene 6: Massage Journey Studio (*Giovanni brings a table*)
- Scene 7: Massage Journey Studio (*Steve reminisces about Thailand*)

Act 2

- Scene 1:
- Scene x:

Act 3

- Scene 1:
- Scene x:

HAPPY ENDINGS

Production Notes

Costume and Set Notes

Set Notes

All sets are minimalist, generally using props and lighting only.

First Set: *Melissa's Apartment*

Second Set: *Massage Journey Studio*

Third Set: *Paddy McDees*

Costumes

CHARACTER: Costumes.

HAPPY ENDINGS
Additional Notes

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ACT I

Scene 1

SETTING: *Melissa's apartment. Staging is simple. A coffee table, maybe a chair or two. Melissa's mobile phone is on the coffee table.*

AT RISE: ACDC's 'Have a Drink on Me' starts playing.

GEMMA and MELISSA storm onto stage. Gemma is wearing a hula skirt.

Gemma looks around until she spots Melissa's phone.

GEMMA
There!

Gemma grabs the phone and throws it off stage, away from Melissa.

MELISSA
You fucking mad cunt! You threw my phone off a three story building! You fucked my phone!

GEMMA
You KNEW! You set this up! You made me look like an idiot! How could you do this to me?

MELISSA
It was a joke Gemma! I was going to delete it! I didn't mean anything –

GEMMA
What were you fucking thinking?

Lights fade.

MELISSA exits

Scene 2

SETTING: Massage Journey Studio. Again, set is minimalist. A table with an appointment book and pen, a notepad, a phone and two chairs. A massage table is centre stage. GEMMA sits at the table looking down at the appointment book but remains still.

Stage remains dark.

MELISSA

(offstage)

Umm...Hello! I have 5 months experience with crystal healing. I was working in a massage shop but that closed. There were some...legal issues...

I'm unemployed now...obviously.

Umm... I heard about your place through one of my clients.

If you have any vacancies please let me know...I'm available full time from this Wednesday.

Yeah...Thanks!

Oh, and my name's Melissa.

Did I say that already?

We hear a message tone.

MELISSA enters and sits opposite Gemma.

AT RISE: We can hear music of whale song, running water and singing bowls.

Gemma writes something on the notepad before looking up.

GEMMA

Ok, you can rent out the room. You just need to give me \$30 per massage. What happened to your shop?

MELISSA

Um...The police got information one of the girls was...tugging with her rubbing... then this undercover cop caught her in the act.

GEMMA

Right. So pulling out a police badge instead of his weapon.

Pause

GEMMA

You know that is what a lot of girls do to make a bit of extra money.

MELISSA

...I heard they're checking every shop that is listed.

GEMMA

I wouldn't worry. That rumour does the rounds a lot. Have you had any proper training?

MELISSA

(aside)

Nope.

(to Gemma)

I've trained a bit, here and there. Weekend courses. Does my boyfriend count?

GEMMA

Maybe... don't worry too much. I started much the same way myself!

We have nice clients here. It's mainly men. Surprisingly, they're much less work than women.

Women are very serious about their massage. As a rule I try not to book them in here. Men are happy if you give it a go and have a bit of a chat.

MELISSA

I know when I get massaged, I want the full experience, not some dodgy massage parlour!

GEMMA

(laughs)

Is that what we are?

Lights fade.

GEMMA exits

Scene 3

SETTING: *Massage Journey Studio.*

AT RISE: MELISSA sits at the table folding towels.

GEMMA enters.

GEMMA
Hey girl! Whatcha doin'?

MELISSA
Just waiting for the phone to ring.

GEMMA
It's usually quiet in the morning. It will start ringing a bit later.

MELISSA
I know, I just need the cash.

GEMMA
Tell me about it...

I can't believe Giovanni booked me those birthday flights to Bali! In two months we'll be on some beautiful Balinese beach living like kings for a quarter of the price. I might just move there afterwards.

The phone rings.

GEMMA
Told you! Go on, you answer this one.

Melissa picks up phone.

MELISSA
Hello...Massage Journey. This is Melissa...

MAN 2
(offstage)
Wrong number.

Melissa looks at the receiver for a moment and then hangs it up.

MELISSA
Does that happen a lot?

The phone rings again. Gemma crosses to the table and answers it.

GEMMA
Hello, Massage Jour –

MAN 2
(offstage)
I want massage? It say on website special one
being Hawaiian or something! What that?

GEMMA
It's a full body experience, which uses Hawaiian
stroking techniques. It's very relaxing.

Pause

Hello? Are you still there?

MAN 2
(offstage)
Yes. Good?

GEMMA
It is, it's chilled out. A chance to tune off, take
some time out of your busy life!
Honey, if you've never been to Hawaii this is the
closest you'll get.

MAN 2
(offstage)
Okay. You open today? Do I need to book? Do I
need referral from GP?

GEMMA
Just bring in a hundred bucks and fifty bucks and
you'll be fine.

MAN 2
(offstage)
Okay, sound good. What time you close please?

GEMMA
We're open 10am to 10pm, seven days a week.

Pause

So, are you coming in?

MAN 2
(offstage)
Yes, I come at 2pm?

GEMMA

Sure! See you then. What's your name darlin'?

MAN 2

(offstage)

Nick!

Yeah...

Nah...is Mick.

GEMMA

Okay then, Nick –

MAN 2

(offstage)

No Mick! Mick! Like Mickey Mouse.

GEMMA

(only half listening)

Sure.

Sorry Nick, I have another call so I'll see you then!

MAN 2

(offstage)

Is Mic –

Gemma hangs up. Melissa takes the other call.

MELISSA

Um...hello? Massage Journey.

MAN 1

(offstage)

Hey, is this the Hawaiian massage joint?

MELISSA

Yes... yes it is...

MAN 1

(offstage)

Great. So do you offer any...extras?

Melissa looks at Gemma and mouths the words 'extras'.

GEMMA

(whispering)

Not on the phone! Not on the phone!

MELISSA

We can give you complimentary coconut water?

MAN 1
(offstage)
Pfft! Coconut water...

MELISSA
We also now do a unique crystal healing massage.

MAN 1
(offstage)
Um...

MELISSA
Oh, do you mean add-ons? Like a peppermint foot scrub perhaps?

MAN 1
(offstage)
Ah, no. So you don't... massage...y'know, the bit in the middle?

MELISSA
(trying not to laugh)
Yes, that's right, crystal healing.... Mmm... would you like to make a booking?

MAN 1
(offstage)
Is Chin working today? I heard she is really good at –

MELISSA
She does get a lot of compliments. She starts work when I finish so, how is 3pm?

MAN 1
(offstage)
Yeah, no worries, book me in for Chin.

MELISSA
Certainly. We'll see you then.

Melissa hangs up the phone.

MELISSA
The bit in the middle!

Melissa and Gemma laugh.

Lights fade.

MELISSA exits

Scene 4

SETTING: *Massage Journey Studio.*

AT RISE: GEMMA sits at the table, her laptop open in front of her.

GEMMA'S MUM

(offstage)

Are you getting abused working in that...shop of yours?

GEMMA

I got more abuse from the high school kids back in Ireland.

(aside)

I did miss teaching. And Lilly was starting school so I'd get holidays with her.

The TEACHING AGENT enters. She is carrying a clipboard and a pen that she starts writing on as soon as she enters.

Gemma rises from the table and crosses to her.

TEACHING AGENT

(not looking up)

So, you'd like to take up teaching again? What have you been doing since your break from teaching?

GEMMA

I've been working as a massage therapist. I actually run the business myse –

TEACHING AGENT

(looks up at Gemma)

And you think you can work with children? After being involved with men in...that way?

GEMMA

Yes, of course. I have a daughter, she's just started school this year so I want to get holidays with her.

TEACHING AGENT exits.

GEMMA

(aside)

They never called me back.

Lights fade.

Scene 5

SETTING: An Irish Bar. Just a table centre stage with two chairs facing the audience. GEMMA and GIOVANNI are sitting, drinking.

Two half full glasses of booze are on the table. There are also a couple of empties in front of Giovanni and a whole bunch, turned top down, in front of Gemma.

AT RISE: We can hear a large crowd laughing and talking. Giovanni swirls his drink while Gemma finishes hers.

GIOVANNI
(a little drunk)
So, you are from Ireland?

GEMMA
(VERY drunk)
County Kerry. Killarney to be per...pre...PERcise.

She raises her glass, flips it, and places it amongst the other empties on the table.

GIOVANNI
I am from Naples.

GEMMA
Gotta love a good Italian boy...

GIOVANNI
You are here alone?

GEMMA
Not anymore.

Gemma leans over and kisses Giovanni.

Lights fade.

GIOVANNI exits

Scene 6

SETTING: *Massage Journey Studio. The only addition are some old magazines sitting on the front of the table.*

AT RISE: MELISSA sits at the table, with GEMMA standing beside her. They are both looking at the appointment book.

The phone rings and Melissa answers it.

MELISSA
Hello Massage Journey. Melissa speaking.

GIOVANNI enters carrying a table.

GIOVANNI
Here you go girls!

He sets the table down.

Gemma crosses to greet him.

GEMMA
It's beautiful!

GIOVANNI
Isn't it?

MAN 3
(offstage)
Do you offer any extras love?

MELISSA
(smiles a greeting at Giovanni)
Sure...a cup of warm tea, maybe an old woman's weekly magazine in the waiting room.

MAN 3
(offstage)
Is the crossword filled out?

MELISSA
Y'know I'm not sure.

Melissa starts flipping through some of the magazines. She continues her conversation quietly.

GEMMA
Oh, Giovanni! It's perfect!

GIOVANNI

Just a nice table to put your wax pot on.

It's a good thing you have that shed I can work in.
Only took me three months!

(aside)

Three very special months.

Melissa hangs up the phone, looking at the table.

MELISSA

Thanks Giovanni.

GIOVANNI

My pleasure. You girls stay out of trouble now.

GIOVANNI kisses Gemma and exits

GEMMA

God I love that man. I mean, just look at this. It's
gourgeous.

MELISSA

He really has a talent for it doesn't he?

GEMMA

(absently)

Mmm, he's very good with his hands.

Lights fade.

GEMMA exits

Scene 7

SETTING: *Massage Journey Studio.*

AT RISE: STEVE is sitting on the massage table. MELISSA is getting ready to massage him.

STEVE
Thailand is pretty wild! The things they do are dodgy...as...fuck.

I flew all my mates over and wrote it off as a business expense! Everything's cheap as chips.

MELISSA
Sounds like my kind of place.

STEVE
You'd love it. Hell, I fucking love it!

MELISSA
So you get massages regularly?

STEVE
Yeah.

MELISSA
Would you ever get a happy ending?

STEVE
Ah...no?

Pause.

Okay once! I was in Thailand. But –

MELISSA
Why did you get one?

STEVE
You don't know what its like for a man!
You massage therapists are meant to deal with tension and release, that's your job yeah?

MELISSA
Well... yes, but why not a hooker instead?

STEVE
I'm not doing that. A happy ending in't like a hooker. I can still face my family!

MELISSA
Interesting. Have you ever considered crystal healing?

STEVE
What?

GEMMA enters

MELISSA
Crysta – forget about it!

GEMMA
Phones ringing off the hook today! So how goes it in here?

MELISSA
Just doing a little market research.

Pause.

GEMMA
Well then, let's get back to it. Head down Steve. Just relax okay?

Gemma starts massaging Steve as Melissa watches.

So the first thing you need to know is that a lot of these guys just want to be listened to –

STEVE
What's your thoughts on chest hair, I'm thinking of –

GEMMA
You rub them down with warm coconut oil. You heat it with the oil burner.
You go in hard with your elbows and soft with the under strokes.
That's it really...for Hawaiian at least.

MELISSA
Doesn't sound too hard.

Steve grunts.

GEMMA
It's not! It can be boring but you kind of tune off.

STEVE
Gee, thanks.

MELISSA

How much do you make for Hawaiian?

GEMMA

It's \$90 for regulars, \$120 for new clients.

But remember \$30 of that goes to the rent for the shop.

MELISSA

\$90 cash? That's not too bad at all!

Gemma and Melissa smile at one another.

(CURTAIN)