

50/50

Jo a woman who appears to be in her late 30s in 2024

Danni a woman who appears to be in her in her 40s in 2024

Danni and Jo sit on the floor either side of the stage. An unopened pregnancy testing kit is on the floor between them.

/ marks the points at which the speeches overlap.

2024

(They both look at the testing kit. After a ten second silence:)

Danni: Well, go on then

Jo: I'm scared

Danni: I know.

Jo: I can't do it.

Danni: Why?

Jo: I can't bear it.

Danni: For fuck's sake, just do it **(Pause, Jo still hesitates.)** Go on will you.

(Pause)

Jo: It just changes everything in a second. Once I know I can't - not know. Or change it. It's done, it's decided.

Danni: Well, surely it's better to know what you're dealing with? Knowing is better, isn't it?

Jo: I suppose.

Danni: Come on, we can start to cope when we know.

Jo: I know, you're right but I'm so scared. Life will change completely whatever it says.

Danni: Don't be daft; if it's negative nothing changes. Things are no better but no worse. You can try again.

Jo: (She stands) No definitely not. I'm not going through all this again. Besides...

Danni: Look, I know how hard it's been; if it's just a matter of the money...

Jo: It's not that, well it's partly that, but I just don't know... I just don't know if it's definitely/ what I want.

Danni: What are you saying? You're not sure you definitely want this baby/ after all we've been through?

Jo: It's just a crazy time. It's just the wrong time to even be thinking of doing this. The world's gone mad.

(Pause)

Danni: I don't believe this. It's all we've talked about for years.

Jo: Yes, I know and I do want it.

Danni: Good

Jo: Just for myself, I want a baby. If it was just me I was thinking of and being purely selfish there is nothing I want more than a baby- nothing more.

Danni: Well then...

Jo: But on the other hand, should I be bringing a new life into this overcrowded... chaotic world? Is it the right thing to do? I mean is it actually ethical?

Danni: Ethical? That's a good one. This is a natural instinct we're talking about. It's normal, that's what it is. Every animal on earth, no, no, actually every living thing on this planet is... what? is ...hard wired to reproduce itself. It's why we're still here in the godforsaken 2020s.

Jo: I know that, I do know that.

Danni: What then?

Jo: I don't think that whoever hard wired us in the first place had any idea how successful mankind would be at enduring. I mean we recover from floods, we rebuild after earthquakes, survive tsunamis and... **(she searches for more examples)** find cures for pandemics for God's sake. Basically, we just refuse to die; we live longer and longer and longer and as a result the bloody planet's overrun with us. **(Pause)** Well it's true, isn't it?

(Pause)

Danni: Where did this come from all of a sudden?

Jo: Just something I've been thinking. **(She sits)**

Danni: For long?

Jo: Not really.

Danni: Well thanks for sharing.

(Pause)

Jo: I'm scared

Danni: You said.

(Pause)

Danni: So overall, after all this struggling, where are you then, in relation to being pregnant?

Jo: Well about 50/50.

Danni: (Angrily) What! I don't believe I'm hearing this.

(Pause)

Jo: I'm scared that's all. Scared I will be pregnant, scared I won't be pregnant. Is it the right thing, is it the wrong thing. My life will change completely just by peeing on that stick!

Danni: (quietly) Our lives.

Jo: What?

Danni: Never mind.

(Pause)

Danni: 50/50? Really? 50/50?

Jo: Well, you know: swings and roundabouts, pros and cons, responsibilities and freedom.

Danni: God

(Pause)

Jo: And then, it might be disabled.

Danni: It won't.

Jo: But it might. All kinds of things could go wrong. I might get German Measles. There could be birth complications, cord round the neck, you hear of all these things. Mothers still die, you know. It's not unknown even in modern day Britain.

Danni: It won't be disabled. And you won't die.

(Pause)

Jo: Could you still love it?

Danni: What?

Jo: If it's disabled. Could you still love it?

Danni: It won't be disabled.

Jo: That means no. / Oh my God, you wouldn't want it. **(She jumps up)**