

SCREENPLAY FOR 50 KISSES COMPETITION
LONDON SCREENWRITERS' FESTIVAL 2012

"SCREEN TEST"

A drama,

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Unseen hands lower a polished BLACK COFFIN into a grave; its flat lid is adorned with WHITE ROSES and ASPARAGUS FERNS. Rain-drops bounce and glisten on the glossy black surface.

In the nondescript corner of the nondescript graveyard a few rain-lashed mourners huddle under umbrellas. Standing by the grave: EDITH (70s), supported by BRIAN (50s) and SARAH (40s).

Sarah helps Edith to throw a single WHITE ROSE into the open grave. Impatiently, Brian checks his watch. He looks around.

INT. ARTIST STUDIO - NIGHT

The large, messy open-plan studio of a hard working, prolific painter. Stacked canvases abound. Paint stains, streaks of vibrant colour, adorn walls, floor and the minimal furniture.

In one corner, an old comfortable leather armchair is set facing an older movie screen. By the side of the chair, a small, closed prayer book lays on a small occasional table.

A copy of Warhol's "Kiss" hangs prominently on one wall. A distance from the screen, an old 16mm home movie projector sits atop a make shift stand of a tall plant-stand and books.

The door to the studio opens. Brian enters carrying a number of flattened cardboard packing boxes. Sarah follows him in. Brian huffs and puffs; he sets the boxes down. ...Memories.

Sarah looks around. She looks at Brian, expectantly:

SARAH

You didn't have to come... What was it with you and Dad, anyway?

Brian ignores her; Sarah shrugs. He walks to the armchair and sits. He looks intently at the blank screen as Sarah makes up a box and collects items from the studio to fill it...

INT. ARTIST STUDIO - NIGHT (LATER)

Two packed boxes, alongside a couple of tied black bags, sit by the studio door. The studio looks a little less cluttered.

Brian's gaze has not left the screen; he is deep in thought. Sarah lifts a box from a shelf. She opens the lid and pulls out a photograph. The image puzzles her; she reads the back:

SARAH

February 14, 1964. ...Isn't this?

She walks over to Brian with the box in one hand, the photo in the other. She holds the photo out to him. Brian throws a cursory glance at the picture then looks up at Sarah:

BRIAN

Dad.

SARAH

But...

BRIAN

Yes... and Andy Warhol.

She lowers her hand holding the box, revealing inside, a 16mm film reel: SCREEN TEST 2/14/64. Brian reaches out, grabs the reel from the box. He turns it in his hand, contemplating it.

INT. ARTIST STUDIO - NIGHT (A LITTLE LATER)

The reel is on the projector. Brian threads the film. Sarah stands, mesmerised. He flicks a switch; the projector rolls. He retakes his seat. ON SCREEN, in black and white silence, two mouths lock in a deep, slow, passionate French kiss.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. THE FACTORY, NEW YORK (FEBRUARY 14, 1964) - NIGHT

The faces of two men kissing: one is blond, the other dark. A mounted camera films a Warhol screen test: ANDY WARHOL (35) in a LOVING embrace with good-looking, dark-haired DAD (29).

RETURN TO:

INT. ARTIST STUDIO - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The tape-end flaps on the spinning reel. Sarah stands, mouth open. Brian nods; he understands, now. His arm drops over the chair side and knocks the prayer book off... A pressed WHITE ROSE and ASPARAGUS FERN fall to the paint-stained floor.

INT. ARTIST STUDIO - NIGHT (LATER)

Sarah stands, tearful. Brian throws a lit match into a metal waste bin. A vicious flame erupts as the 16mm film-stock catches alight. Brian places an arm, gently, around Sarah.

BRIAN

We can't tell Mum... She never knew. ...It was a different world.

The pressed ROSE and FERN fall slowly into the film's flames.

FADE OUT.