

NEXT OF KIN
A PLAY
By ANDREW WINFIELD

EXCERPT

Characters

Archie – A patient 60-80

Pauline – A nurse

Rose – A nurse

Sarah – A nurse

All the nurses could be male with the names –
Paul, Rowan and Sam

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A hospital

A bed and a bed table on wheels with a mug, glass and jug of water

Archie is in bed. Slightly propped up with pillows.

He has a mobile phone under his pillow.

Although he doesn't move much he is alert. He has a gruff East London accent.

There is a small nurses table with a lamp on it some distance from the bed. PAULINE is sitting at the table writing up some notes

ARCHIE Nurse? Nurse?

PAULINE Just coming Mr Fox. Be there in a mo.

ARCHIE Alright. Been waiting. Seems I'll have to wait a bit fucking longer then.

Pauline goes to the bed. She busies herself around the bed. Looking at charts, adjusting the bed etc.

PAULINE Now we don't have that kind of language here do we?

ARCHIE Alright. Sorry. Sorry. I don't usually swear.

I come from Dagenham you know. They all swear down there. Dagenham.

But not me.

PAULINE moves away

ARCHIE As a rule.

Usually.

PAUSE – He reaches for his mug.

ARCHIE Nurse? Nurse? Can you pass me my tea?

I can't reach.

I tried.

PAULINE Just a moment.

ARCHIE Right. Ok.

PAUSE – He watches some new nurses arrive on the ward. SARAH & ROSE.

PAULINE Good. You're here. These are the notes I mentioned to you.

PAULINE hands them a file. SARAH leans against the bed. They chat quietly.

ARCHIE What you leaning on the bed like that for?

SARAH I am sorry

ARCHIE Who are you then?

ROSE We're the night staff. We're taking over.

ARCHIE Night staff?

ROSE Yes

ARCHIE What are you doing talking about me quietly for then? Speak up so I can hear. It's about me after all. Or don't you want to tell me?

SILENCE. PAULINE exits. ROSE moves away.

ARCHIE I don't remember you last night.

SARAH I was here. I cut up your chicken

ARCHIE Did you? Cut up my chicken?

SARAH Yes.

ARCHIE Oh right, yes. Yeah. You looked different last night didn't you?

Bit kinky.

SARAH Really?

ARCHIE Well that's what I think. Kinky. A bit kinky.

SARAH I need to check your next of kin

ARCHIE What? Next of kin?

SARAH Yes

ARCHIE Didn't I tell you?

SARAH Your wife?

ARCHIE No, the wife is dead. No kids.

SARAH Ah

ARCHIE My sister.

SARAH Has she visited?

ARCHIE Nah, she hasn't been here.

No, not even once.

Only seen her twice. Once when she got married and once when she got divorced.

There you are then.

PAUSE – The nurses move off and he reaches for his mobile phone from under his pillow and dials a number.

ARCHIE That you?

What?

No, I'm still here.

What?

No, I'm still here.

Where?

In the fucking hospital!

Yeah I thought I was coming out today. But I'm not.

I said I'm not coming out today.

What? No, I'm not.... Turn the fucking TV down I can't hear a fucking word.

No, I'm not coming out today.

I don't fucking know why. They don't tell you anything in here.

No, well, they don't really know.

I dunno. Just wanna go home.

Well I'm not going back in an ambulance. No. They ran over my fucking toes.

The ambulance. Ran over my toes.

Going to get someone to give me a lift.

Well I'm not asking you.

I'm not asking you.