



BEE ALL, END ALL

BY

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Extract

A SMITH SCRIPT

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### Cast:

6 male actors (age immaterial):

ONE – catatonic  
TWO – meek, conciliatory, accommodating  
THREE & FOUR } both gentle, peaceful, self-contained  
FIVE – self-confident, haughty, not overly bright  
SIX – bitter, aggressive, fearful

1 female actor (young):

LILI – sharp, sexy, taunting

### Setting:

Somewhere between a gentleman's club and a waiting-room  
*If possible, the playing area should be hexagonal*

Exit backstage centre (to the Queen)  
*If possible, the backstage exit should be through a hexagonal arch lit by golden bulbs which flash whenever the buzzer sounds*

Exit stage left (to the 'comfort room')

Entrance stage right (to the hive)

Armchairs and sofa (on which SIX lies)

Two and table (at which THREE & FOUR play chess)

The column downstage centre (on which the crown or ceremonial hat is placed)

### Costume:

The male cast should be dressed in black with yellow accessories, for example, scarf / handkerchief / tie / cravat

LILI should be dressed skimpily in black and yellow

Badges, sashes or tabards with each character's number clearly visible:  
'1' / '2' / '3' / '4' / '5' / '6'

*Props:*

SIX's cellphone

THREE & FOUR's chess-set

The crown (or ceremonial hat)

## BEE ALL, END ALL

*Lights up.*

*ONE stands motionless staring out at the audience. TWO sits lost in thought. THREE and FOUR are sitting at a table playing chess. SIX is lying across a sofa, playing games on his cellphone.*

*LILI enters carrying a crown (or ceremonial hat).*

*ONE, TWO and SIX watch LILI closely while, with a degree of ceremony, she places the crown on top of the column.*

*ONE now stares, and remains staring, fixedly at the crown on the column.*

SIX:                   *(anxiety)* Well, Lili?

LILI:                   *(about to exit)* Well what?

SIX:                   How is she today?

LILI:                   *(shrugs)* We'll see.

*A loud buzzer sounds and lights flash.*

*LILI exits. TWO and SIX watch her go.*

*Pause and then they resume their occupations. THREE moves a piece. FOUR moves a piece. SIX presses keys on his cellphone.*

*Pause and then FIVE enters. He is confident, strutting, plainly expecting to be noticed. No one looks up. FIVE clears his throat loudly to attract attention but this has no effect. He taps his foot.*

TWO:                   *(waking from his reverie)* Oh, hello.

FIVE:                   *(importantly)* I have arrived.

TWO:                   *(pleasantly)* Yes. So you have.

FIVE:                   I am expected.

TWO:                   Yes. That's right. We've been expecting you. Well, not you exactly. But someone.

FIVE:                   And you are?

TWO:                   I'm 'Two'.

FIVE:                   'Two'?

TWO: Yes. (*explanatory*) I'm a waiter. We're all waiters.

FIVE: A waiter? I see. Well, now that I'm here, perhaps you would be good enough to show me where I should go next.

TWO: Oh, you needn't go anywhere. Not yet.

FIVE: I may not have made myself clear. I am expected.

TWO: Yes, that's right. There are always six of us, you see. I'm not sure why but that's the way it is. Six waiters. Which means that when one of us – well – when one of us ... Then another one comes here to take his place.

FIVE: I'd like to speak to whoever's in charge.

SIX: (*looking up and addressing FIVE*) You're a cocksure bugger, aren't you?

FIVE: I beg your pardon?

SIX: You don't have a clue, do you? Not a bloody clue.

FIVE: Look here. I have been 'summoned'. Selected. Specially chosen. And now that I've arrived, I need to know where to go next.

SIX: (*unpleasantly*) You listen to me, sunshine. You're a waiter like the rest of us. Don't worry. When the time comes, you'll be going somewhere all right. But, for the present, you'll be waiting here with us. Let's see how you stick it, shall we?

*A sound is heard from off stage. Everyone stops what they're doing to listen.*

*The sound begins as a slow pulse or heartbeat, accelerates to a crescendo of frenzied beating, and then – at the climax – there is a sudden, sickening snap or crack.*

*After which, there is silence.*

FIVE: What in God's name was that?

SIX: (*contemptuous*) As I said. Not a bloody clue.

*SIX returns to his cellphone.*

TWO: (*courteous*) Perhaps you'd like me to introduce you to your fellow waiters? This is 'One'.

*ONE makes no response.*

I'm afraid 'One' doesn't say much. Nothing at all in fact. He's been here longer than the rest of us. And waiting – well – waiting isn't easy. It takes its toll. It wouldn't surprise me if 'One' ...

FIVE: If 'One' what?

TWO: If everything gets too much for him and he decides to make use of the comfort room.

*FIVE looks puzzled but, before he can ask another question, TWO has continued the introductions.*

This is 'Three' and this is 'Four'.

*THREE and FOUR look up from their game of chess and smile briefly.*

FIVE: Hello, there. I'm ...

TWO: *(interrupting)* You're 'Five'.

FIVE: I'm ... ?

TWO: 'Five'.

FIVE: 'Five'?

TWO: Yes. That's what you'll be when Lili comes back.

FIVE: *(studying the chess-board)* I can see a move.

*THREE and FOUR don't look up.*

Obvious really. *(about a move a piece)* Black Queen to –

*THREE and FOUR both grasp his arm to prevent him touching the piece.*