

There is a small rug and Mic in stand DOWNSTAGE, CENTER.

LIGHTS FADE to BLACK as FIRE ANNOUNCEMENT PLAYS

PLAY "Walk Around in Your Mind" by Vashti Bunyan, Song fades into "Little Voice"

(IN BLACKNESS)

LITTLE VOICE

It's starting, are you sure this is  
how you want to do this?

LITTLE VOICE (CONT'D)

It's not too late. You can just  
tell them as yourself...

LITTLE VOICE (CONT'D)

Don't you think it's a bit...  
*contrived* to distill your trauma  
into an external fictional  
character? A little pretentious  
even?

LITTLE VOICE (CONT'D)

(SIGH) Well, I suppose... it is the  
Fringe...

PLAY "Under My Skin" by Frank Sinatra as LIGHTS fade UP on  
stool and microphone

BACKSTAGE MIC

AL DAWES

All right HACKNEY, are you ready  
for your headlining act tonight??  
Let's welcome back to the Comedy  
Nest, after being away for *far* too  
long, the reason you came out  
tonight at all... the reason you  
hired that Baby-sitter even though  
she's fitter than you and you know  
your partner fancies her, so every  
time you bring her into your home,  
you are tempting fate...

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)  
 but you hired her anyway, because  
 you *had* to see your favourite  
 comedian of all time tonight in  
 this dingy comedy club that smells  
 of piss...YES, that smell IS PISS--  
 let's make some absurdly loud,  
 clappy noises for the one, the  
 ONLY... AL DAWES!

AL takes centre stage

AL DAWES (CONT'D)  
 Hello! That was me on the Mic! The  
 great, AL Dawes! Me: AL DAWES, star  
 of stage and screen, AMAZON PRIME  
 special, DAWES: THE REVENGE  
 streaming now...

AL DAWES (CONT'D)  
 And that's right, I have not  
 performed in a while. I actually  
 took a bit a time off, for love.  
 Yes, that's right me, your  
 disgusting, perpetually single  
 difficult, grubby little pal AL  
 Dawes fell in love and was living  
 in domestic bliss there for moment  
 but then THE BITCH LEFT ...ha,  
 C'mon! I am of course joking... I  
 would never actually call a woman a  
 "bitch"...outside of the bedroom!  
 Seriously though, the *cunt* broke my  
 heart and this show is about that.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)  
 This is a "work in progress" show.  
 But you know that, you bought  
 tickets for this, or perhaps they  
 were bought for you, WHAT A GIFT...  
 but regardless this is a work in  
 progress comedy hour which means  
 that tonight you will be seeing all  
 new material. This is literally  
 night one...the start of my new  
 hour, and I am going to try to make  
 my heart break funny. This is the  
 most personal show I've ever done,  
 Watch your broad-back, Hannah  
 Gadsby! And I don't exactly what  
 I'm going to say, I'm flying  
 without a net tonight. I care less  
 about you than my future audiences.  
 (MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

You're my first time, my starter wife, you're the man at the petrol station I yell at on my way to see my family for Christmas, which is to say I don't mind treating you badly.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And that may all sound very insulting, (*and it's meant to be, I'm negging you*) but months from now when this show is perfect, there's a whole arc and every punch line is refined and perfectly smithed like a Faberge egg, side note: did you know that the Faberge egg was invited by a man named "Faberge" and it is spelled f-a-b-e-r-g-e?" Anyway, when every joke is refined like a Faberge egg, and I'm getting all the stars from all the Guardian and proudly pissing off the Daily Telegraph and I've been for comedy award, AGAIN and I get a call from my manager Sue, (who is the *most annoying, albeit most subservient* woman I've ever met) and Sue says, "AL- THEY WANT YOU ON TASKMASTER, ARE YOU UP FOR THE TASKMASTER" I will think back to this night. Because the truth is... like a first love, I will never forget you and in some, quite literal way, I will always be recreating this night with you lot.

AL opens a beer and takes a big swig

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And YES, I will be drinking. Good job, you've clocked that, I AM cool again.

SO, seeing as you are my first I ask this of you: Laugh at what is funny and for what is not funny, don't ...no matter how much I pout ...and you know what a pouty pouty baby I am.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Most all of you know me of course, Ha, I see you Mark, wearing the t-shirt from my last tour, thank God you've changed your tshirt. I recognize a lot of you, but in case you live under a rock or grew up in a Nell type situation, a bit about me: I am disgusting. Proudly vile. In fact, HAH, the last time I was here ...it was a couple days after New Years and I was absolutely fucked, just had ruined myself. I mean you all know Christmas, there are all the sweets and the dinner and the endless cocaine, so much cocaine, we all really should less cocaine on Christmas... and my bowels were done with me. I was doing a set here, and there's a little toilet backstage. It's there, but no one really uses it, it's very loud and its more there as a gesture, or an idea, there may as well be an oil painting of the toilet there intead.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And I was about to go on and I felt my insides ...tangle? SO I shit in the loo and absolutely destroyed it. It was as if a fat child had belly flopped into a small pool...of shit. And when I went to clean myself, I looked all around me, no loo roll. None. The emcee was starting to introduce me and I panicked, so pulled off my top and wiped myself with it. That is what you are dealing with tonight, a man so disgusting that he wiped himself clean with his own t-shirt even though he really liked that t-shirt, even though it was one of his favourite t-shirts he still took it off and wiped his shitty arse with it because he hates himself that much.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

The worst part is that it's a lie. Yes, the last time I was here was after new years, and YES, I did destroy the toilet, but the lie is.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

There WAS loo roll, and I DID use it but, I was so fucked that I somehow got shit on my own t-shirt.

And I did not throw it away, I just wore my shitty t-shirt on stage knowing that people would assume, I'd just eaten a messy kebab. At least that's what I told the woman I slept with after the show that night. In fact, she tried to "taste the sauce" at one point...NO no, I'm joking, she didn't do that.... I did wank to the idea of that, but she did not taste the shit on my shirt, grow up!

AL takes a drink

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

This show isn't actually about shit, sort of, it is about love and loss. My heart was quite recently smashed into teeny tiny smelly bits. Like the head of a whip weilding Nazi in an airplane propeller, I am just parts and I apologise for the spray getting all over you tonight.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

In this show, unlike past shows I'll be expressing some deep pain I've felt recently... realising that I will indeed, die alone, rich, but alone. It's a show about trust, who to trust with your heart, what types of guys are going to inevitable fuck your girlfriend, when to stop believing someone when they say they love you and how it has been recently proven that I am, in fact: UNLOVABLE.

Before we dive into the FUN of that, I would like to tell you about my past shows, and remind you of how funny I am in case this night goes tits up and also because I am fascinated by myself.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

My First solo show was called The Al Dawes Farewell Tour. I thought it was hilarious to call a first show, a "farewell tour." Though, it was quite confusing for the audience turns out-- as it was my first show, no one knew who I was and no one seemed to know that calling it a "Farewell show" was a joke...I even had a reviewer say, "I'd never heard of Dawes prior to this half-baked hour, and frankly wished I never had, though I appreciate the opportunity to say goodbye to a "comic" who's funniest joke involved comparing his orgasm noise to that of a dying pig." two stars"

I liked the show though, lots of jokes about Uni; it was about my life as a 18 year old --- that's right, I was 18 and that reviewer still thought it was my farewell show, which tells you I have always looked like shit.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

My second was "Al Dawes: Son of a Creature Man" And it was about my home town of kent and my father being an exterminator, but mostly it was a bunch of puns and fart jokes.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And then I went to Gaulier clown school and my next few shows were a bit absurd. There was *AL INTERROBANG COMMA AL QUESTION MARK*, in which I wore all white with a jumper that had, " Self Esteem" printed on it and at the end of the show, I'd bring up a random fit woman up from the audience and I'd have her smear chocolate sauce all over me.

And then in 2017, I did a show called, *AL Dawes: Sit Down.*

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

That show went quite well, It was about how I didn't had sex for a year and dating as someone who doesn't like showering in general, and it was received well, and I was even nominated for the big COMEDY AWARD, yes...THAT ONE--

Ha, and, I infamously made the brilliant decision to get a tattoo that read "Comedy Award Winner" the day I got the nomination. I did that in fact, because the BBC was doing a segment on the nominees and I thought it would be "hilarious" to get a tattoo naming me as the winner because I was worried that people watching me at home would see my interview and say to themselves--- that man's not funny-- he's a sweaty son of an exterminator.

And of, course, I did not win, I lost the award to a very lovely woman who did a show about suicide, I know...hilarious....

But I did tour all over with the show-- and then we taped the Netflix special-- which I am proud of but have never been able to watch because the red jumper I wore with the white cuffs haunts my dreams I don't know what I was thinking, it is proof though that I keep people at arms length -- because if had anyone who was close to me they would have said-- AL -- you have pre-mature graying hair-- that jumper makes you look like a pedo- Father Christmas.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And then I met Joanna and I fell in love --- I took a bit of time off, I'd been on the road really or working constantly since I was 20, so I wanted to live my life a bit.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And I did and it was bliss, we built a marvelous little life together and then she broke my heart --- GOOD NIGHT. Ha, what if I ended it there?

AL takes a sip of beer

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

No, no no, you are stuck with me a bit longer I'm afraid.

LIGHTS GO TO RED

LITTLE VOICE

Do you think they know why you're playing this character? Is this art or are you hiding?

LIGHTS GO BACK TO WHITE

AL DAWES

Let's talk about Joanna. Yes, I am saying her actual name seeing as our relationship was quite public and she's a performer herself. Bit younger than I am, not as far ahead in her career, though certainly further ahead now given the "AL DAWES effect" of it all. Not that she's grateful for that or that I'm bitter or suspect that she was using me or that everything she ever said ever to me was a lie ...NO, no no.

LIGHTS GO RED

LITTLE VOICE

Is that what he used to say to you? He'd accuse you of using him towards the end, *didn't he?* No, it was worse than that...

LIGHTS GO BACK TO WHITE

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I fell in love with Joanna, almost immediately.

We met at a comedy night she ran.

(MORE)



AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I thought she was so lovely and funny. She wore black tights, I've always had a thing for black tights on women, they smooth everything out in such a perfect way. There's an innocence to them and a mystery... There's no joke here, I just like tights.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And I like women, NO: I love women, I absolutely adore women, I really do. They smell better, they look nicer, they're softer, BUT they also hold the power, don't they? They take care of us, but they can also destroy us.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I knew from the moment I met Joanna that she'd destroy me.

From the beginning she had me in the palm of her hand and I would have done anything to be with her.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And I don't just mean cum on her, I wanted to cum *with* her. Poetry.

I knew from the beginning that other men also wanted to be with her. Mostly because she would say so, in fact before the show that first night, I overheard her talking with her friend about older male comedians.

She was complaining that it had happened a few times where a more experienced comedian had complemented her and offered to help her with her career, but then it turned out that they just wanted to fuck her. Which, fair enough that's horrific-- but she complained about this so much, how men were always coming on to her that it actually started sounding like a brag.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I would LOVE that attention, of course I would, the power to feel sexy, aw.

But she found it annoying. It'd be as if someone who was homeless, was begging for change complained about making too much money because it made them feel more homeless!

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Anyway the night we met, me being an "older male comedian" and all, I knew that I needed to initiate *my* seduction a different way. SO, I did a little something I like to call the self-neg....

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, take note.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Now, we are all quite familiar with the traditional neg, from Neil Straus' book, *The Game*, as popularized by that tall man who dressed like a peacock or whatever the fuck....

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Anyway, with a traditional neg, you appeal to a woman's innate insecurity, lightly insultting them, thus leaving them emotionally vulnerable, making it easier for you to move in and reward them with your affection.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I don't need to tell you that's bollacks, so I offer you the *Self-Neg*: where in you make your intentions known and then insult the shit out of yourself, thus appealing to a woman's instincts to take care of you.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

So I did just that. I messaged her after the show that night, and I told her that I wanted to get a drink with her so I could stare at her a bit longer, even though, I'm a disgusting pig who doesn't even deserve to breathe the same air as her and she agreed to a drink! Now what does that say about her???

LITTLE VOICE

What *does* that say about you?

AL DAWES

Took us awhile to start dating officially, she was apprehensive at first, but then I wore her down.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I'm remember the exact moment, we turned from friends to something more. One night over a few glasses... of vodka, I told her that I thought she was funnier than me. And you know what? She kissed me. And that was it. Validation, the great aphrodisiac.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

She told me later, that she kissed me then because she had dated other comedians before and they were always so competitive with her and I had made her feel "seen."

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Which of course, I liked. *Sure Love, you to be seen, I'll see ya.*

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

We were inseparable after that. I wanted her around me all the time and had a bit of Panel Show money and I wasn;t working, so we would spend our days drinking with friends and our evenings with any one I could get to come over at 2am for charades. Famous acquaintances as well, I mean I wanted to impress her of course, and she was impressed. It was heaven. I knew that I was offering her something she couldn't get anywhere else.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

The AL DAWES EXPERIENCE: hard to compete with that!

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

A few months into us dating she was offered a job and I realised I loved her and we were having such a great time, I begged her not to take it, it was just a writing assistant job and which was going to take it anyway, and then a day before she was to start, I invited her spontaneous holiday, just said "let's go to France tomorrow." And friends, of course she came with me to Paris, because she is a young American woman and, FACT: a last minute trip to Paris is a young American Woman's Kryptonite.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Also a young American Woman's Kryptonite: Animal shapes in cappuccino foam, hand carved tarot cards, Aperol Spritzes, accents, literally *any* accent and Jason Schwartzman.

AL takes a drink.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Here's a sharp turn... I've always been shit at sex... with another person. I'm brilliant at wanking, truly one of the greats. I don't even have tape over the camera on my laptop, I actually have one of those clip on, wide camera lens so those Russian Hackers can learn a thing or two.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

But yeah, I'm absolute rubbish at sex. You see, I know I'm a genius, but I still can't stand my husk sometimes, so it's difficult for me to be present during sex as myself. I usually can only get off with a partner, if imagining them fucking someone else.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

In fact, the first time Joanna and I had sex, I told her after that I had imagined that I'd walked in on her having group sex with her entire High School football team, and this is American football so aggressively heterosexual...

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And the moment I told her, I regretted it: felt like I had gotten too comfortable.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Bit of Al Dawes sexual history: When I was 12 I discovered masturbation. I fashioned a little masturbator out of a cardboard loo roll and I stuffed it with tissue and I squeezed lotion into it. And I would that loo roll masturbator, everyday after school, YES, the same one. And I thought I was brilliant until one day, when I came home from school, ready to put my thing in my thing, I walked in the house to my mother sitting at the kitchen table, my little cardboard masturbator sitting on the table in front of her. And when she asked me what it was, I panicked and I said it was "a little home for a mouse"

And I thought I had gotten away with that until she started referring to my penis as "my little mouse" and for years, whenever she'd come across a bit of tissue, she'd call it "the mouse's droppings."

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

So, YES, I have some sexual issues.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

SO when I told Joanna about my football fantasy I immediately regretted it assuming she would use it against me, but she didn't. She was actually quite kind about it and it made me fall in love with her even more.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

She was okay with the fact that I needed to pretend to someone else during sex and then we started our role playing adventure! Pew pew pew!

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

There were classics: the old boss and secretary. "Sarah, I need you to stay late to spread open your *files*"

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

The Law firm fantasy, Sarah I need you to stay late to work on the case so I can get a better look at your files

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And of course the laptop fantasy, "Sarah, you are a Macbook and I'm afraid I need to corrupt your files...."

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

All file based, scenarios.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Things were quite blissful.

Joanna and I were able to talk about comedy and life in a way I had never been to able to do before.

I'd call myself a feminist, sure, but I'd never had much interest in chatting with women about comedy. I think it's because I wanted to protect it for myself, or maybe it's more sinister than that. Actually yes, comedy is my own little magic trick isn't it so I don't very much want to discuss it with the very people I'm trying to... impress.

But Joanna is smart and funny and I was able to see her as a peer.

But then, even though I'm a fucking genius and I'm loaded, I started to feel annoyed by the other people in her life.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

It seemed like she need constant attention...and not just attention. Attention from men, from men other than me, and not just other men, other comedians, well, aspiring comedians. She does more collaborative comedy than I do, more...*how do I say this politely*, Improv. Yes, Improv. Every time I see an Improv show it reminds me of that Louis Theroux episode about the swingers in Reno? And if you remember in that doc, Louis is at this swingers party and there's a moment later we see in the background in the garden, people who aren't having sex...who are there at the sex party, near all the sex, and they are conducting themselves like they are about to have sex, but they're not, they're just eating tiny tiny sausages and drinking punch in the garden.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And of course with Improv comes lots of people and Joanna was on several Improv teams and they would come over to her flat and they would practice and that was fine, but then it became apparent that they were several men on these teams with Joanna who were just waiting, eating their tiny, tiny sausages...

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Just waiting for a moment, for me to do something horrific enough so they could swoop in and save the day and tell her that she deserves better. These are platonic massage type-gents, *and there is no such thing as a platonic massage!*

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

It's fair enough for Joanna to have male friends, I don't have female friends, really, I don't know why it's just worked out that way. But these weren't "just friends," they were men who clearly fancied her.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

There was one night when she was heading off to a Improv "practice," whatever *that* is and I joked that she was "off to meet her boyfriends" and she got quite cross with me and very defensive about her friendships and her not being able to help that there were more men in comedy than women, blah blah blah, she was very self-righteous and I apologized because I had obviously hit a nerve and I didn't want to deal with it.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

The thing is, when I look at her, I think about fucking her so I think it's fair enough to say, that of course other men are going to have the same thought. Joanna, wanted to exist in a world where that isn't true, which is insanity. Just because I think a donut is my mother doesn't mean someone won't look at the same donut and fuck it, right?? That metaphor doesn't quite work there, I know.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Let's see... just because a donut decides it's not tasty, doesn't mean it won't get fucked, Okay, I think I just want a donut.

AL TAKES A DRINK

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Maybe she was trying to play them against me, I don't know.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Then there was the night it happened. I surprised her at her flat. I thought I wouldn't be able to see her that night because I had a charity gig, but it was cancelled last minute, thank fuck, (no offense to Eye-Cancer research), but the gig was cancelled, so I wanted to see my girlfriend. Of course I would, she's my girlfriend.



AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Joanna lives in a flat with a giant front window. And usually when I would go to hers, as I would walk up the steps to her front door, I could see her cooking or reading. I used to beg her close curtains, but she never would.

And that night, as I was walking up her stairs I could see through her window that she was sitting very cosy on a couch with one of these Improv twats, we'll call him Nigel. And I'm walking up the stairs and I can see her and Nigel watching telly laughing and being very familiar with each other. I watched for too long to be honest, I was a bit pissed, bit how I'm feeling right now.

AL TAKES A DRINK

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

But I eventually walked up to the door and let myself in with my key because *I'm* her boyfriend *and I have a key*.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

AND they JUMPED, like they had been caught. They didn't react like two pals just hanging around, they JUMPED.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And Joanna just looked at me. She looked at me like she didn't know me and then she welcomed me very politely, like nothing was happening. Nigel seemed a bit startled as well and then he proceeded to tell me what a big fan he was of mine. So, *naturally* I joked that he was trying to fuck Joanna to get to me. WHICH IS FUNNY. IT IS OBJECTIVELY FUNNY!

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

Didn't land in that room though, I'll tell you that. Though that Nigel prick did get the hint though! He left pretty quick.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And you'd think that Joanna would apologise then... but she didn't. when I pointed out to her that she treated me like a stranger when I walked in, she said it was because they had been smoking weed and she was high and didn't expect me. She said they had been working on their "web series" and that they were watching old spaghetti westerns for inspiration.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

The web series was *Nigel's* idea. Of course.

I pointed out the obvious and told her that he was trying to fuck her. HE WANTS TO FUCK YOU, JOANNA!

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

AND then she just kept defending him. It was as if I didn't exist. I said, I want you treat me like I'm the boyfriend you love! I shouldn't come to girlfriend's and walk in on some prick trying to fuck her! That's fair enough, Joanna!

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

She wouldn't listen. And look I was pissed. I don't make great decisions when I'm pissed...though Wouldn't that be something.

"Bruv I went out last night and got absolutely hammered, I bet I did some really impressive, constructive things. I'll have to call around to see after all the good I did!" No. I yelled.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

She just wouldn't stop defending this asshole and it made me angry and I can get mean when I argue, but she wouldn't admit what was happening so it's hardly my fault that she made me so upset.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

So I said what I was thinking and I told her that she needs the attention of men because she's insecure and that surely lots of these guys are just trying to get to me anyway!

I threw a glass. Not at her, at the wall. I threw it, because she wasn't listening to me. The glass shattered and made a much bigger noise than it should have.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And then she started to cry and so I called her a *manipulative* cunt. Why else would someone start crying when they've been caught except to deflect from their own guilt.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

And then, Joanna asked me to leave.

For a split second, I felt this immense fear that I had gone too far

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I left her house and I sat at the bottom of her steps for a good hour to cool down.

And then I thought, "Fuck it" I have to apologise because I'd never hear the end of it anyway, so I went back up the steps. Her curtains were closed, so I decided not to let myself in and I knocked on the door.

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

When Joanna answered her face was all red, she'd been crying. I hugged her and told her I couldn't live without her. That I loved her and I wouldn't act that way if I didn't. I told her I was sorry. I promised I would never, ever talk to her that way again, that I loved her so much that if she ever left me, I'd kill myself, I loved her so much.

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

But when I asked her if I could come in and if we talk things out...She wouldn't listen. She asked me to leave and she shut the door.

LITTLE VOICE

But you didn't tell him to leave, did you?

ERIN

He promised. He promised he wouldn't do it again.

LITTLE VOICE

But he did do it again. And worse?

ERIN

Much worse, I could have ended things that night. I knew in my gut that I should, but I didn't

LITTLE VOICE

Why?

ERIN

I believed him. I didn't think it was possible for me to be in a relationship like that.

LITTLE VOICE

An abusive one?

LITTLE VOICE (CONT'D)

Why do you need to play this character? Why are you afraid to tell them what happened?

ERIN

Because this is a show, it isn't therapy.

LITTLE VOICE

No, why?

ERIN

Because it's complicated, we still work together sometimes and I'm OK.

LITTLE VOICE

No, why?

ERIN

Because it's selfish.

LITTLE VOICE

No, why?

ERIN

Because I left, it's over.

LITTLE VOICE

No, Why?

ERIN

Because there were so many times he would yell at me in front of friends or people he worked with or Someone once told me they thought it was foreplay. He would even joke about being cruel to me on stage, he would tell massive audiences he was emotionally abusive and no one ever asked if I was OK, so I thought I deserved what I was getting.

LITTLE VOICE

No, why?

ERIN

Because I'm ashamed. I'm ashamed that I let myself be hurt like this. It's been 4 years since I left and I still worry everyday that what he said about me is true, that I'm worthless that I'm a bad person and if other people find out no one would love me. He would tell he was the only person who'd be willing to love me. I let myself stay in a relationship that stole all of my self worth, I DID THAT SO WHAT DOES THAT SAY ABOUT ME. I proved his point.

And I want to be free of it!

I wanted to be free of the shame of it and be honest about just how bad it was, because if I don't, I feel like I'm protecting what he said about me. Like I'm protecting what he said as truth.

LITTLE VOICE

Towards the end, when you would get scared, you would start recording him with your phone?

ERIN

I got scared he would hurt me physically, so I would show him I was recording with my phone

Recording Plays. Erin starts lighting candles in front of her.

LITTLE VOICE (CONT'D)

What do you want now, Erin?

ERIN

I want an apology. I want to forgive him. I want to stop running through everything that happened in order to make sense of it. I want to stop trying putting myself in his head to try and understand why he did what he did. To, justify what he did.

ERIN (CONT'D)

I want to forgive myself.

AL DAWES

And there you have it. I did those things. I was cruel to someone I loved. And she's not the only woman I've been cruel to, but I want her to be the last. And I've only admitted to a portion of my darkness tonight as a defense, no, not a defense, a disguise. I know, and I've known for a long time that if I admit to some failings on stage, if I admit to things about myself that other people won't, you'll assume that's the worst of it, that's me hiding in plain sight. When all that stuff was happening with Louis CK, when the world discovered that he had been assaulting women and we were all so "shocked." How could this comedian who's been so real with us for so long, who we trusted because he's revealed to us his darkest parts?

(MORE)

AL DAWES (CONT'D)

I wasn't surprised at all. He was hiding in plain sight. And I, I don't want to do that anymore. I don't want to hide behind a celebration of me being a proudly selfish person. I know I can't take back what I did to Joanna or what I've done to anyone else or how I've treated myself as well, but I can tell you I'm sorry for it and I want to change it. I'm going to change it, because I need to. And I know I can't take it back and I can't change anything I've done in the past, but Joanna. I want you to know that the way I treated you, wasn't your fault. You are in no way perfect, but you didn't deserve what I put you through, it wasn't your fault.

LITTLE VOICE

It wasn't your fault.

ERIN

It wasn't my fault.