

Shakers

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The four characters in Shakers are long-suffering waitresses in the town's trendy cocktail bar. During the play the girls switch from role to role giving the audience insight into the many types the bar attracts. But each girl is given a chance to reveal something of her life outside Shakers. Nicki, aged about 20, has always wanted to act; in her speech she tells the others about her chosen audition piece.

Place: Shakers Cocktail Bar, in any major city.

Time: The 1980s.

NICKI. It is something that I've put together myself. Er . . . I've written all the words down on a bit of paper so you can test me. Yeah. Right. It's called *The Smile*. (Pause.) Right I'll start shall I? (Pause.) I'm a bit nervous, so it might be a bit shit. She'd been in hospital for about four days. She was seventy. She went into hospital for an hysterectomy; the operation had been a great success. I went to see her and she looked great, she even showed me the stitches. She's my gran, by the way. So at work, I was having a laugh and a good time. Then they rang, the hospital, said she'd had a stroke. So I went on the bus to the hospital, I felt sick, travelling all that way on a bus. She was on the sixth floor, I remember that, in a side cubicle in a ward full of old ladies. I walked into the room. My mam and dad were looking out of the window, looking across the parkland of the hospital. And my uncle and auntie were there, looking out of the window; they were crying. My gran was laid in bed; half of her face was blue and deformed, her mouth was all twisted and taut, one eye was closed. She looked

at me, and tried to smile. I remember the crying in the background. She tried to speak, but said nothing. She just laid there. 'Hello gran,' I said. 'Hello. What's all this bloody nonsense about having a stroke? Eh?' And she just smiled at me. She just smiled.