

---

## Low Level Panic

Clare McIntyre

---

Scene 5. A bathroom in a shared flat.

*Mary (20s) works in an office. Late one evening, after leaving work on her bicycle, she was brutally sexually assaulted by two young thugs. This has had a traumatic effect on her and she cannot stop thinking over the senseless events of that night. Jo (20s) is Mary's room-mate. She is slightly plump and obsessed with her weight, her looks and her vivid sexual fantasies. As this scene opens the two girls are getting ready to go out to a party and Mary is swigging wine from a bottle. Both girls are dressed in their 'party gear'.*

**JO** (coming in). If you don't come to this party I'll kill you.

**MARY**. It was because I was dressed up.

**JO**. We've been over this before Mary: you weren't dressed up.

**MARY**. I was more dressed up than usual.

**JO**. You were wearing a skirt.

**MARY**. For me I was dressed up.

**JO**. You weren't dressed up at all. You never dress up. And what if you were?

**MARY**. I remember being all dolled up.

**JO**. I can't remember ever seeing you all dolled up.

**MARY**. I am now.

**JO**. Apart from now I don't.

**MARY**. I was wearing those enamel bracelets I've got. I can't remember why . . . but I was looking nice. I know I was. I just felt it. Sometimes you do feel that don't you? Sometimes you just know you're looking okay. It's not like

I was looking like anything in particular. I just felt nice. That's more it. I'd felt nice when I'd been cycling to work: all cool and breezy. I don't remember what I looked like but I remember how I felt.

**JO**. But you weren't dressed up.

**MARY**. I wasn't concentrating.

**JO**. You weren't.

**MARY**. No.

**JO**. You always wore a skirt didn't you?

**MARY**. Had to.

**JO**. You were just dressed ordinary.

**MARY**. They didn't think so.

**JO**. Boys like that don't think, not with their brains that is. They might think a bit with their dicks but not with their brains they don't. Not at all. They don't even know where their brains are.

**MARY**. I'm sure I was looking nice . . . for me, that is.

**JO**. You are nice looking.

**MARY**. I must have been looking sexy but I didn't know it. They must have thought I was looking all dressed up and sexy.

**JO**. What's wrong with looking sexy?

**MARY**. I want to look like I feel.

**JO**. You do. You must do. You just look natural.

**MARY**. Not in a bloody party dress I don't. Not all done up in a party dress. It makes me feel like I did then, all flimsy and open and . . .

**JO**. And women love it.

**MARY**. What?

**JO**. Being sexy.

**MARY**. Do they?

**JO**. 'Course they do.

**MARY**. And what's being sexy?

**JO**. Oh come on.

**MARY**. Feeling like this?