DARK HORSE

Social Story

Opening up shop

It is the 1990s, and it is the opening day of a new video store!

First, Rob opens up the shop, puts on a VHS of Queen and dances along to a Freddy Mercury video, as he sweeps the floor.

Juliet arrives and laughs at Rob's dancing. Eve arrives. She says 'it's never going to happen' to Rob, which let's us know that Rob secretly loves Juliet but Eve doesn't think he stands a chance.

Juliet puts on a 'meet the team' day, and video projection introduces the other characters and their role in the video store, as they all arrive in person and start their work tasks.

We learn some of the different relationships between the characters, for example, that Juliet and Leo have a love/hate relationship, and that Ed and Eve are together.

Celebration Dance

Their video store is officially open. All nine characters do a joyful & energetic dance to celebrate!

No Customers!

A customers enter the shop, and we hear her voice. She is asking about different love films that she would like to rent from the video store. The staff check the shelves full of VHS tapes, but can't see any love films anywhere! The customer decides to leave and go to a different video store.

Juliet, as the boss, gets very angry with Leo, because it was his job to order the films into the shop, and it will take weeks for more films to arrive!

The other characters try to offer solutions. Eve hates romance and just suggests people rent horror or action films instead, whilst Clayton suggests he can bring customers back by doing a sexy dance (because he used to be a stripper!)

Rob brings in a camera and suggests that they can re-make the romance films themselves & Juliet loves this idea.

Heart-Throb or Hard No?

The stage turns into a game show called 'HEART-THROB OR HARD NO!' With game show host played by Ed.

Famous 90s romcom stars like Hugh Grant & Julia Roberts will come up on screen, and the video store staff will try to find audience members who could be a good match to play these parts in their film re-makes.

They will bring volunteers from the audience onto the stage and will put them in front of the camera and project them live onto a screen to compare them with the famous actors.

After 3 attempts to find new actors for the films Juliet will interrupt the game. She will explain that *they,* the learning-disabled staff of the video store, will play the actors, and she challenges the others and the audience by asking "Why not?!"

Romeo and Juliet

The staff suggest the 'best' romance films they could make, for example *Pretty Woman* or *When Harry Met Sally*. Eve suggests *Romeo and Juliet,* and Juliet wants to play *Juliet* (obviously).

Rob and Leo both want to play Romeo, (the love triangle between these 3 is clear!) but Eve points out that Rob is the camera man. Juliet seems disgusted at the idea of Leo playing her lover, & Rob is disappointed.

The video store then transforms into a film set, with staff setting up lighting, camera & music, and Eve calling 'ACTION!'

Leo and Juliet perform their version of the famous Baz Luhrmann Romeo & Juliet death scene. Once Eve calls 'CUT' there seems to be a magnetic pull still drawing them together, and Eve has to remind them the recording has ended!

The team then brainstorm other films they could do a re-make of.

Titanic

Next the gang moves on to doing a re-make of Titanic. Rose and Leo are playing the leads, and get behind the camera and in front of the green screen. We see them projected as if on the Titanic and in the ocean.

Meanwhile Juliet sings along to a Karaoke version of Celine Dione's *'my heart will go on'*. She invites the audience to join in!

The scene is interrupted suddenly by John who has a huge sheet over his body and comes in screaming! He gives everybody a shock, but he is just being the Iceberg from the Titanic!

Liz and Rob then realize that they've all been wasting their time with this re-make. They already have 3 copies of Titanic because it's under the 'Disaster Film' category!

Mini Fish Tank

Leo and Juliet find themselves alone in the store, as they tidy up after the filming.

Their chemistry makes it hard for them to stay away from each other. They make each other laugh, and they start to slowly embrace as though they are going to kiss.

Just at that moment, Ed and Rob enter. Rob walks in and slams down the CD player to interrupt them.

This startles Leo and Juliet and they awkwardly move to opposite sides of the stage pretending to do jobs.

Ed teases them and Juliet insists nothing was going on between them. Juliet and Rob leave the store, and Leo seems upset. Ed consoles him.

Ed and Leo discuss Ed working out and getting strong so he can be Mr Darcy for his girlfriend Eve.

Mrs Clayton!

Clayton is finishing up some tasks in the store and Liz is watching him.

She suddenly realizes she finds Clayton hot and attractive!

Clayton is not very confident, he seems embarrassed and awkward, and rushes off stage.

Liz has a moment in the store alone, day dreaming and fantasizing about being 'Mrs Clayton'.

Juliet's Fantasy

It's Juliet's turn to enter a day dream.

She is starting to fantasize more about Leo, and maybe admit to herself that she really likes him.

Leo enters the store, and again they have a private and intimate moment together. They dance slowly.

We are unsure whether this is really happening or just living in Juliet's mind.

Suddenly Rose bursts into the scene and interrupts them- her and Leo are going to the shop for a snack- it's a normal mundane moment at work and Juliet's fantasy bubble is burst!

John's Garden

We are outside in the garden with John.

Ed is cleaning the windows. John is filling the window boxes with flowers, and Ed helps John to carry some gardening equipment.

John takes a moment to speak to the audience.

It is a calm and spacious moment.

John is sharing some wisdom about love, life, and happiness… & Ronan Keating.

INTERVAL!

Full Monty

Clayton arrives with a package, and Liz is watching on, it is clear she is in a of fantasy trance.

Ed, Rob, Clayton, and Leo all enter and do a 'full monty' dance. Juliet & Eve are watching in the audience.

The focus is now on Clayton, delivery man & ex-stripper! Ed introduces Clayton like it's a nightclub show, and Liz is captivated as Clayton does a very saucy strip tease.

Suddenly Clayton stops- he has become self-conscious and embarrassed.

Liz tell him that she finds him hot, that he should be confidence. She makes him feel desirable, and he triumphantly finishes his dance just for her!

Notting Hill

The film crew are back again, with Rob as a camera man. Using live projection and paparazzi style photography, the women explore a celebrity cat-walk montage, evoking Julia Roberts in Notting Hill.

We enter a fantasy for Leo, who becomes the Hugh Grant character, a normal guy yearning for the 'goddess' untouchable woman, captured in the glamour of fame and status.

He breaks through the projected photography to get near to the celebrity, and rose petals are thrown over the couple.

The filming magic comes to an end, and again we are at an awkward 'real life' magnetic moment between Leo and Juliet.

Eve breaks the tension, and Rob aggressively sweeps up the roses, clearly hurt by the growing attraction between Leo and Juliet.

Love Actually

It's Rob's moment. He has card signs and a black marker pen.

He finds Juliet alone in the store, holds up the signs and Juliet reads them aloud.

He is letting her know he loves her, but knows he is just her friend.

Juliet gives him a kiss on the cheek and says she'll always be his friend.

Leo sees this, and Juliet goes after him.

Rob finds acceptance and closure with his unrequited love.

Pride and Prejudice

Eve is frustrated.

She is cynical about love and has not enjoyed everyone being obsessed with these rom coms. She points out some of the reasons they're stupid, cheesy, and unrealistic.

The video store transforms into her favourite novel: Pride & Prejudice. Ed embodies Mr Darcy, and approaches her in the dawn light.

Ed and Eve have a romantic moment as Lizzy and Mr Darcy. It's clear that Eve must be romantic after all, Pride & Prejudice may be historical fiction, but it is one of the original rom coms!

She admits that even if she doesn't like 'cheesy chick flicks' that love can be nice.

She leads Ed off stage.

Big Fish Tank

We are back in Romeo and Juliet, but the boundaries between the real lives of Leo and Juliet blur and merge with the film.

They enact the 'fish tank scene' in the party of Romeo and Juliet. They are both lost in the moment.

The scene fades to a voice over from Juliet. She declares her love to Leo, using words from famous romantic films.

Leo joins her onstage, and the whole ensemble come together. Projected behind them is a film montage made by learning disabled communities around Kirklees and Goole.

They have made a film about love and romance. Leo & Juliet sit with their heads together as the film builds and comes to an end.

John's Sunset

The love, time and energy John has poured into his garden has paid off and his garden is flourishing with roses.

John comes together with the rest of the video store staff and they deliver their own version of the famous *Love Actually* airport monologue.

A customer enters the shop, asking again for a love film.

The staff all turn to each other and giggle- because of their remakes, there's now lots to choose from!

One final time they set up their positions for a film-set, this time with the focus on Rob as Freddy Mercury!

Don't stop me now plays as the show ends.