

Don't Wait Up Film: Poem

A black screen.

In an ideal world
With guaranteed safety
What would you do?

A beautiful autumn tree sways in the breeze

I'd go see cool places
I'd walk around by myself
I'd go to parties
I'd ride public transport

A large concrete building replaces the tree

But we don't live in an ideal world
We live here

A black screen
Nothing
Isolation
To others, independence.
Lives made of conscious decisions
Black screen.

A phone screen, at dusk, as someone shares their live location with a friend
A dark street. Headlights come towards us. Or are they going away?
The headlights fade away.

A pink light shines out from beyond a door and through windows, a streetlight is seen
in the distance.
We look from the outside, inside
The door is far away surrounded by dark black
Outside here, we are unsafe

Our femininity, blatant, conscious
An outfit
Empowered
An outfit
In danger

Out here, we make conscious decisions.

Glitter falls across the screen. It's party time.

Now in here, we're having a good time, right?
We are inside now. Someone pours a shot into a shot glass
Angel shot?

People dance in the background with bright club lights making silhouettes of the crowd.

In here we roam in packs like wolves
We aren't hunting. We are protecting.
Take a friend.
The shot poured is taken off the bar.
But did you keep an eye on your drink?

A red wall.
Danger.
Conscious decisions.
Have you ever spoken to women, fem-presenting people, people who could be targets of abuse,
About the danger they have felt
During the day
With friends
While drunk
While sober

A hand appears.
She's having a cigarette.
The wall behind fades to pink, an adjustment of hue.
A short relief.
It's a moment of peace.
Imagine
Outside of these club doors
She didn't need to take a friend
She takes drags from her cig, she is peaceful.

But moments are rare
Yellow and black stripes painted on a wall overlay a person walking through the park.
Why can't we wander peacefully
The yellow and black stripes, the danger, is gone.
In our own world. Taking the shortcut home?
The same person walks down a long road, no one is around.

Cut to black
Stars appear in the sky
It's nighttime
A foggy street fades into view. Fairy lights sit sparkling.
People walk past. People drive by.
Losing hours during winter as the days tick shorter.
Imagine a world.
Our world. Where the conscious decisions flash through your brain, every second of every movement.
We are not scared of the dark.
We are not even scared of what's in the dark.
We know, in every conscious decision, there is no circumstance where we can be scared enough. Ready enough.

Whiteness. Brightness. The screen is white.
It is daytime.
A box appears, pink surrounds it.
We are safe.

Right?

In the box, surrounded by pink, a person sits on a park bench. They play on their phone.
People walk past.
It often a misconception that those who are most likely to be targets of abuse should keep their guards up at certain times
At night, on their own.

During the day, we are told to keep our guards down.
But have you spoken to us?
Have you asked?

Because if you stop. Observe.
Two men sit on a pub bench in the distance. They are chatting, having a drink.
A woman walks up behind them. Around them.
And into their sight.

They noticed her.

However we move in this world. In this reality.
We make conscious decisions.

Do we bike?
Taxi.
Walk.
Bus?

There's a tale of caution staining everything.

Every conscious decision.

A hand, palm and fingers spread
The thumb folds to the palm and fingers follow forming a fist.

Another hand.
Hi Angel.

Another hand.
Hi colleague, who walked me to my car in the dark last night.

Another hand.
Hi best friend, who listened to me vent after being harassed on that bus journey.

Another hand.

Hi to the bartender who called me a cab when that date wasn't going so well.

Another hand.

Hi to the contact who I share my location with.

Another hand.

Hi to the guy who was hollering and whistling down the road, from your car and laughing.

Three friends link their arms and walk down the street towards a setting sun beyond some trees.

In an ideal world

With guaranteed safety

A pink screen

What would you do?