

THE FIFTH STEP VISUAL GUIDE



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The Fifth Step is a brand new play by David Ireland, directed by Finn den Hertog featuring Jack Lowden and Sean Gilder.

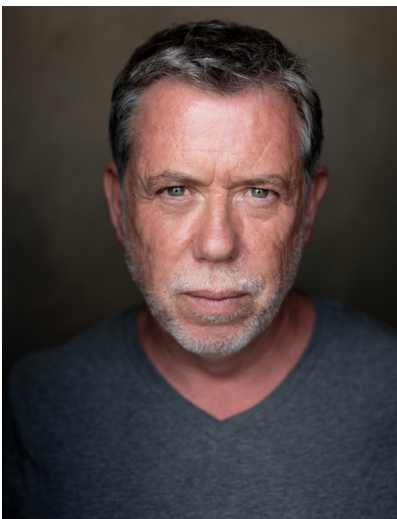
The show follows thirty-something Luka and the older James and their journey through sobriety. The show follows Luka's struggles coming to terms with his past and the abuse he suffered at the hands of his father and his battle with himself to change his path with the help of his sponsor James.

The show is set on a large revolving platform which evolves as the show progresses. There are points where the music can be very loud and the action onstage can be very intense.

CAST



Jack Lowden - Jack plays thirty something Luka, who is new to Alcoholics Anonymous and looking for a sponsor. Luka wants to change his life and escape the pain of his past but soon discovers that will not be as easy as he thinks.



Sean Gilder - Sean plays James is an older man and experienced sponsor, he feels he is the best person to guide Luka through the twelve steps.

This show is recommended for ages 16+ as it contains very strong language, descriptions of extreme violence, challenging comments on religion and sexual themes. Please also note some scenes use flickering lights.

SCENE BREAKDOWN



SCENE 1

Luka and James sit together alone at the end of an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting. James explains how AA works and what the role of an AA Sponsor is. They talk about a range of topics including addiction, faith and spirituality; there are references to domestic abuse and challenging attitudes to homosexuality. At the end of the scene, Luka asks James to be his sponsor and James agrees.



SCENE 2

Luka is alone at a table in a cafe. He is crying, feeling very upset and vulnerable. James enters and tries to calm him down. During this scene, Luka tries to harm himself with cutlery, but does not succeed. James calms down Luka and Luka admits he is lonely.

James and Luka talk about sex and relationships and how Luka should focus on his recovery. Luka agrees to focus his energy on something other than relationships, he decides to lift weights at the gym. This scene contains female objectification and references to porn and masturbation.



As the set turns to the next scene we see Luka lifting weights in a gym. Suddenly a giant bunny rabbit appears behind Luka. The scene ends in a blackout.



SCENE 3

James sits on a park bench eating an ice-cream. Luka stands by him and is ecstatic! Luka tells James that he has stopped masturbating and that he had a dream where James was dressed as a bunny rabbit.

In the dream, Luka also encountered Jesus. Luka then describes meeting the actor Willem Dafoe at the Gym – Luka explains to James that he believes it wasn't Willem Dafoe but in fact it was Jesus. Luka believes he has had a spiritual awakening.

At the end of this scene Luka dances freely as the set turns to the next scene.



SCENE 4

James sits in a cafe in a bunny rabbit costume talking about rap music. James does not realise that he is in a rabbit costume. Luka explains to James that he is imagining him dressed as a bunny rabbit which makes James angry. Luka apologises and removes James' bunny costume; James is now dressed in normal clothes.

James and Luka discuss being sensitive and talk about how they both had abusive fathers. There are descriptions of violent domestic abuse and strong language.



James and Luka continue their conversation about religion as Luka has become a Christian. Luka explains how his new found faith is helping him and James is frustrated by this. James explains the oppressive side of Christianity and gives examples of child abuse, paedophilia, slavery and the Holocaust.

Luka is disappointed that James isn't supporting him and goes to leave, James apologises and admits that he is actually upset with Luka. James tells Luka that he heard a rumour that Luka was at a pub and drinking alcohol.



Luka confesses that he was on a date with a woman, even though he said he wasn't going to date anyone. James discovers that the woman Luka is dating is married. James convinces Luka that dating a married woman isn't Christian and pressures Luka to end the relationship which Luka agrees to do.

James leaves Luka alone in the café. Luka kicks a wall in frustration and discovers that he can remove the walls of the set. Luka begins taking down the walls and the set rotates again.



SCENE 5

Luka and James are meeting to do Luka's fifth step in the twelve step AA programme. As part of the fifth step Luka must say who he holds resentments against.

Luka reveals that he resents James for undermining his religious experience and making him end the relationship with the married woman.



Luka confronts James about a rumour that James slept with a woman called Maggie who James used to sponsor. James admits that he slept with Maggie. Luka expresses concern that this was exploitative as Maggie is known to be a vulnerable woman who has experienced abuse and eating disorders.



As Luka is about to leave, James confronts Luka about his growing suspicion that Luka is sleeping with his wife Anne behind his back. Luka strongly denies this but James does not believe him. At the end of this scene, as the set turns James runs on a treadmill and then has a heart attack and collapses.



SCENE 6

Luka visits James in hospital and tells James that he has a job interview. James confesses and apologises for sleeping with Maggie and promises to make amends to her and to his wife. Luka tells James that he has stopped going to AA and Church and tells him that he has a big secret that he is frightened to tell anyone.



Luka says the secret is so big he has had suicidal thoughts. James encourages Luka to share the secret and Luka reveals that he slept with a man. They discuss whether Luka could be gay. Luka describes meeting the man and what a profound experience it was, they realise that this man is James' son. We learn James' son has been too afraid to tell James that he is gay because he was worried about James' reaction.



James gets very angry and assaults Luka and rants hatefully revealing his homophobia and endorses the abuse Luka's father inflicted on him as a child and while his mother was pregnant. This brings on another heart attack. Luka rejects James and ends their Sponsor relationship but while he is doing this James dies. Lots of paper cups fall from above.

The lights go out and the play ends.