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# Dispatches from The Fringe - Glory Dazed will leave you reeling

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Glory Dazed  
*Second Shot Productions*

## Glory Dazed

Rating: ★★★★★

In a scene reminiscent of Coronation Street, three people stand inside a pub, looking apprehensively towards the door. But this isn't Corrie, it's *Glory Dazed*, where the tension is that acute, the story that strong, the performances so extraordinary, even the silence seems to burst onto the stage. For *Glory Dazed*, hits you like a runaway train and propels you on a journey as ferocious and terrifying as it is moving.

Ray, an ex-serviceman returned from Afghansatan, hammers on the door of his local pub after closing time, demanding to talk to his ex- wife Carla. The young barmaid, Leanne, lies unconvincingly that Carla's already left, but Ray's not budging. Instructing Carla to hide in the ladies toilets, pub owner, Simon, deices to try calm Ray down. T-shirt covered in blood, Ray storms inside, locks the door behind him and begins prowling about like a caged animal. Exuding unpredictable danger and roughish charm, Ray calls out for Carla, who he wants to run away with him. In what follows secrets are revealed and truths unearthed as drinking games give rise to dangerous confessions.

Developed as part of the Old Vic, New Voices program, writer Cat Jones has crafted a powerful new work. Working with ex-service men serving, or who have served prison sentences, Jones explores the culture that has created these men. In *Glory Dazed*, Jones reveals a culture where masculinity runs rampant and men need to be seen to be men. Normalized, casual violence is worn like a badge of honor because, while women may fear it, the irresistible attraction of the bad boy remains a potent force. Even when the responsible, successful, albeit wimpish Simon kicks back and tells some home truths, the feeling still remains that in this world the real man will always be Ray. The man who will threaten his friends to exercise his authority and his wife in order to keep her. Will push women to the floor and apologies afterwards. Is so overwhelmed by buried emotion he can inflict physical damage and justify it in the name of principle and respect.

Presented by Second Shot Productions and ably directed by Elle While, *Glory Dazed* features a first rate cast performing at the top of their game. Adam Foster as Simon gave a perfectly nuanced performance and his transformation at the end was riveting. Katie West was a revelation and her portrayal of the naive, young barmaid Leanne was delightful and captivating. Chloe Massey struck the perfect chord as the long suffering Carla, shifting effortlessly along Carla's damaged emotional spectrum with conviction. These formed a perfect counterpoint to Samuel Edward-Cook's mesmerizing, gripping and ferociously brilliant Ray, who hit the stage like a force of nature in undoubtedly one of the best performance of the festival. When the awards are rolled out this cast should rightfully be considered for highest honors.

It is estimated that between three and ten percent of the prison population are ex-service men. From this only one conclusion can be drawn: these men are being used up and discarded without any real supports to help them readjust to civilian life. This is a story that needs to be told and an issue that needs to be addressed. But don't go see *Glory Dazed* just because it has something vital to say. Go see it because *Glory Dazed* is hairs standing on the back of your neck, rivetingly good theatre.

*Glory Dazed* plays daily until August 26th at [Underbelly](#) Cowgate. Doors open at 5.00 p.m. Tickets are £11.00



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