

1

EXT. THE HIMALAYAS. DAY X

1

WIND AND SNOW LASH ACROSS THE PEAKS OF THE HIMALAYAS.
CAPTION: 'TWO YEARS AGO'

CUT TO:

2

INT. A HUT IN THE HIMALAYAS. DAY X

2

AN ANNOYED SHERPA LISTENS TO CUCKOO'S VOICE ON A RADIO - THE LINE HAS LOTS OF CRACKLE.

CUCKOO (O.S.)

I'm totally fine! OK, maybe I
shouldn't have climbed this
terrifying, windy rock face! But I
saw the baby goat - and I just had
to save that little critter's life.

SHERPA

That *is* mountain goat! They *live* on
mountains. In freezing snow. You
not saving life. You just chasing
him.

CUCKOO (O.S.)

Oh my god, look! More goats! Four
of 'em! Just sitting on the
mountain - like... they *live* here!

SHERPA

Yes! Mountain Goat! I tell you many
times!

CUCKOO (O.S.)

Wow! They have awesome balance! I
don't think I could keep my grip on
such a steep...

THE SOUND OF A GREAT GUST COMES OVER THE TRANSISTOR. THEN A SCREAM AS CUCKOO IS CARRIED AWAY ON THE WIND...

CUT TO:

3

INT. A HUT IN THE HIMALAYAS. DAY V

3

A FEW WEEKS LATER. TWO SHERPAS SIT WITH KEN AND RACHEL ROUND A PRIMITIVE STOVE. ONE SHERPA SPEAKS IN HIS LANGUAGE, THE OTHER TRANSLATES.

SHERPA 2

Young man dress like. Er... it special phrase. In your language - 'Western man who think he look Nepalese but actually just look like penis.'

RACHEL

(HOPEFULLY LOOKS AT KEN)
Phew, so it's not Cuckoo.

KEN LOOKS PAINED - IT OBVIOUSLY IS.

KEN

Any other details?

SHERPA 1 STARTS TALKING. AGAIN SHERPA 2 TRANSLATES...

SHERPA 2

He remember one final thing. Young man have - how you say - 'interesting packed lunch'. On the outside, hard like leather of the yak, on the inside soft and fluffy like yoni of Great Goddess.

SHERPA 1 STARES AT KEN AND RACHEL, EYES FILLED WITH WONDER...

SHERPA 1

Naka 'Jac-cket Po-ta-to'.

KEN AND RACHEL LOOK AT EACH OTHER IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

TITLE CARD: 'CUCKOO'

CUT TO:

4

EXT. MOTORWAY. NIGHT 1 (0400 TUESDAY)

4

NIGHT. A FULL MOON. FAST MOTORWAY TRAFFIC.

DALE, AN ATHLETIC TWENTY-ONE YEAR OLD, WITH THREE MONTHS WORTH OF BEARD, JOGS UP THE HARD SHOULDER IN JOGGING SWEATS AND RUCKSACK.

*

*

CUT TO:

4A

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, GARAGE. DAY 2 (0500 WEDNESDAY)

4A

MORNING IS BREAKING THROUGH THE SLAT WINDOWS OF THE GARAGE, CASTING LIGHT ON A DUSTY, OLD POTATO VAN. A TARPAULIN'S BEEN THROWN OVER IT. IT'S BEEN UNUSED FOR TWO YEARS.

CUT TO:

5

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, RACHEL'S BEDROOM. DAY 2 (0800 WEDNESDAY) 5

MORNING. RACHEL TRACES A FINGER THROUGH HER WARDROBE: A FEW BRIGHT, COLOURFUL CLOTHES FROM HER TIME WITH CUCKOO...

...THEN GREY MUTED WORK CLOTHES. LOTS OF THEM. RACHEL FINDS A GREY SUIT, TAKES IT OUT.

THEN NOTICES HER HALF OF THE WEDDING COCONUT (FROM SERIES 1, EPISODE 6) ON HER BEDSIDE TABLE. SHE HOLDS IT, LOOKS SAD.

CUT TO:

6

EXT. MOTORWAY. DAY 2 (0815 WEDNESDAY)

6

DALE IS RUNNING UP THE HARD SHOULDER. HE TAKES A MOTORWAY TURNOFF TO LICHFIELD, RUNS UP IT TO A ROUNDABOUT FULL OF TRAFFIC, GOING FAST.

DALE RUNS STRAIGHT ACROSS THE LANES OF ROUNDABOUT TRAFFIC, PERILOUSLY, BUT SURVIVES...

CUT TO:

7

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, HALLWAY/KITCHEN. DAY 2 (0830 WEDNESDAY) 7

RACHEL COMES DOWNSTAIRS. LORNA AND KEN WATCH AS DYLAN OPENS A LETTER.

LORNA

Get it open right now! I have a good feeling about this, Ken!

KEN

Do you?

DYLAN READS IT. HIS FACE FALLS...

DYLAN

Oh bollocks, I didn't get any of my choices.

KEN

(*FURIOUS*)

I disown you.

LORNA

He tried his best. Anyway, with looks like that - Dylly doesn't need good grades.

BUT DYLAN IS LAUGHING AT THEM...

DYLAN

Nah, I was shitting you, idiots! I got in! To do Media Studies at Keele and Bournemouth University!

HE BRANDISHES THE LETTER TRIUMPHANTLY.

LORNA

Wow! Dylly!

KEN

You little shit!

KEN GIVES DYLAN A HUG.

KEN (CONT'D)

(*VICTORIOUS*)

Keele and Bournemouth - I'll take that. I'll bloody take that! Well done, son! Well done!

DYLAN

Now, you see what a dick you were, Dad - telling me to work harder.

RACHEL

We'll miss you when you go to Uni, Dylan.

LORNA

Champagne, I think. Who cares if
it's before work!

THEY ALL HEAD OFF TO THE KITCHEN. RACHEL LEAVES THE ROOM LAST, GRINS AT HER DAD.

KEN SMILES BACK, THEN, LEFT ON HIS OWN, DOES A VICTORY DANCE.

KEN

Get it in!

CUT TO:

8

INT. KEN'S WORKPLACE, OPEN PLAN OFFICE. DAY 2 (1030 WEDS)

8

RACHEL IS WORKING AWAY AT A DESK IN THE OPEN PLAN OFFICE.

BEN, A NERVOUS LOOKING MAN OF 26, WAVES TO RACHEL. SHE WAVES BACK. BEN WALKS THROUGH TO KEN'S OFFICE...

CUT TO:

9

INT. KEN'S WORKPLACE, KEN'S OFFICE. DAY 2 (1030 WEDNESDAY)

9

BEN ENTERS. KEN HAS HIS FEET UP ON THE DESK, AND IS WHISTLING *
HAPPILY. *

KEN

Ben! Hello!

BEN

You seem cheerful.

KEN

Dylan actually got into university.
Says something about the state of
the country, but otherwise great
news. Now, what can I do for you?
Apart from get us a new centre
forward before the City game on
Saturday!

*

BEN BURSTS INTO LAUGHTER - KEN IS THE FUNNIEST. KEN LAUGHS
TOO. THE NEXT FEW LINES BETWEEN BURSTS OF HILARITY.

BEN

We need one! God, we need one!

KEN

I might just do it myself.

BEN

Ha! You'd be an improvement!

KEN

Big man up front!

BEN

Bit of weight to throw around!

KEN

(DOESN'T LIKE THIS)

OK. We'll leave it there. (BEAT)
What's up, my boy?

BEN CLOSES THE DOOR OF KEN'S OFFICE SO NO-ONE CAN HEAR.

BEN

(BREATHLESS WITH NERVES)

Well. OK, Ken. Ken...

KEN

What is it? Hurry up.

BEN

Rachel and I have been seeing each
other just shy of a year now...

KEN
(*EARS PERKING UP*)
Yeeeees...

BEN
And - as tradition dictates - I thought it right to seek your permission to ask Rachel to co-habit with me.

KEN
Co-habit...

BEN
Yes. My plan is to get in on a set of new builds out by Pipe Hill. I reckon with Rachel's temp income we could push to a three bed semi with adequate garden area. I've put together a folder of possible mortgages. Take a squizz.

HE PUTS THE FOOLSCAP FOLDER ON KEN'S DESK.

KEN
Colour coded. A very complete job, Ben.

BEN
I'm asking her tonight.

KEN
(*FOLKSY, FATHERLY*)
Good luck! And Ben - my old Grandaddy used to say "when you're out a wooing, never bring folders". Aim for romance. Chocolates. Flowers. A black polo-neck.

BEN
Done, done and done!

HE GRINS AND GOES TO THE DOOR.

BEN (CONT'D)
Ken, I know Rachel has had some unpredictable influences in life. But I SWEAR she won't have any from me.

KEN NODS...GREAT!

CUT TO:

10

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, KITCHEN. NIGHT 2 (2030 WEDNESDAY)

10

KEN AND LORNA ARE LOADING THE DISHWASHER.

LORNA

Rachel's in no state to make big decisions yet. (SIGHS) It's like she's been a different person since Cuckoo went missing.

KEN

You stay out of it. Ben's solid, dependable - just what Rachel needs.

LORNA

He's pretty bloody boring, Ken!
(CHUCKLES) If it's not football, it's law or local history!

KEN

Three of *my* major interests.

LORNA

(BABY VOICE)

Except you make them fascinating.

KEN

(BABY VOICE)

Aw! No, I don't. I just don't talk about them and listen to you instead.

THEY GIGGLE.

KEN (CONT'D)

Oh, and do not tell Rachel he's asking.

LORNA

Like I would. (OFF KEN'S LOOK) Ken, don't look at me like that. I am not going to tell. I promise.

CUT TO:

*
*
*
*
*

*

*
*
*
*

11

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, KEN & LORNA'S BEDROOM. N2 (2215 WEDS)

11

KEN AND LORNA ARE GETTING READY FOR BED.

LORNA

Rachel moving out. Dylan off to University. In a year, it'll be just us two.

KEN

The empty nest. I cannot wait. Finally some peace and quiet! *

LORNA

Actually, I did want to talk to you. There's something we always said we'd do. (SEXY) A promise you made me before we got married. *

KEN

(FLIRTY)

Oh yeah? What did I promise?

LORNA

To get a vasectomy.

KEN SMILE DISAPPEARS.

KEN

What?

LORNA

Back in 92, when you had long hair, you said it was unfair women had to take responsibility for birth-control, while men did nothing. You said that when it was your time, you'd embrace the snip. Such a caring, thoughtful thing to say!

KEN

Oh yes. What a caring, thoughtful boy I was. In my twenties.

LORNA

It's a simple operation. Come on - it's not like we're going to have any more kids.

KEN

(THINKING)

Maybe there's a gesture you could make in return.

LORNA STOPS BEING NICE AND FLIRTY.

LORNA

Is this that disgusting fantasy you mentioned last May?

KEN

Yes, it is.

LORNA

Deal.

KEN SMILES, LOOKS DOWN AT HIS BALLS, SMUGLY.

KEN

And thus, my hairy friends, your fate is sealed.

CUT TO:

12

EXT. LICHFIELD HIGH STREET. DAY 3 (0945 THURSDAY)

12

THE NEXT DAY, RACHEL WALKS DOWN THE ROAD WITH LORNA.

RACHEL

Dad was in a funny mood this morning.

*
*LORNA

Yes, he's bricking it about his vasectomy. (REALISES SHE'S GIVEN THE GAME AWAY) Which, by the way, you're not meant to know about.

*
*
*
*RACHEL

Think I was happier not knowing.

*
*LORNA

We thought, now you and Dylan are moving out we... Shit.

*
*RACHEL

(CONFUSED)

What? I'm not moving out.

*
*LORNA

Yeah, wasn't supposed to say that one either. Never mind - here goes. Ben's planning on asking you to move in with him!

*
*
*RACHEL

(TAKES IN NEWS)

Right. (BEAT) Well, yeah, it makes sense. (OFF LORNA'S EXPRESSION) I mean - who am I kidding? I was married to someone incredible, unique. But that happy part of my life is over now. So why not?

LORNA THINKS THAT'S A SILLY THING TO SAY.

SUDDENLY, THEY HEAR A SCREAM NEAR THEM ON THE ROAD. A GUY HAS BEEN CLIPPED BY A CAR ON THE ROAD. IT'S DALE.

DALE

Aargh! Wow! Ow!

*
*

LORNA AND RACHEL RUN UP TO HIM.

RACHEL

Are you OK?

*
*

DALE

Woah! They really hurt when they hit you, huh! (SHOUTING AFTER THE SPEEDING CAR) Hey sir, did you know that you hit me?! Sir, you hit me with your mobile vehicle!

HIS GAZE FOLLOWS THE CAR OFF INTO THE DISTANCE.

DALE (CONT'D)

(BAFFLED)

I don't think he's going to stop.

RACHEL

Are you OK?

DALE

(GRINNING)

Oh, I'm good! Just processing the pain. Yep. Think I'm on top of it now.

RACHEL

You're not from here, are you?

DALE LOOKS AT RACHEL. HUGE FIREWORKS. AN INSTANT MUTUAL ATTRACTION.

DALE

I'm from a valley hidden high in the peaks of Uttarakhand province, India. The winters are fierce and stormy, but come summer, the whole place teems with Brahmakamal. The white lotus, flower of the mountains. It's neat. OK - see ya!

LORNA

Sure you don't want us to call someone?

DALE

No, no! It's not the end of the world, right? Not till tomorrow night!

DALE LAUGHS CHARMINGLY. LORNA AND RACHEL CHUCKLE TOO. DALE JOGS AWAY. LORNA TURNS TO RACHEL, SQUEALS AND DOES A LITTLE DANCE.

LORNA

CHEMISTRY or what?!

RACHEL

Mum, do you KNOW what you look like?

BUT HER EYES FOLLOW DALE...

CUT TO:

13

EXT. STREET. DAY 3 (0948 THURSDAY)

13

DALE STOPS, THINKS, TAKES OUT A PHOTO FROM HIS WALLET...

AN INTERNET PRINT OUT. THE LICHFIELD GAZETTE. A PHOTO OF THE WHOLE THOMPSON FAMILY INCLUDING CUCKOO. ALL GRINNING IN FRONT OF CUCKOO'S POTATO VAN. THE HEADLINE READS "HOT POTATOES OF THE LUNCHING KIND".

HE TURNS...BUT LORNA'S CAR IS ALREADY DISAPPEARING.

CUT TO:

14

INT. KEN'S CAR. DAY 3 (0950 THURSDAY)

14

KEN IS DRIVING DYLAN TO SCHOOL. DYLAN SITS IN THE BACK. KEN IS LISTENING TO THE SMITHS, REALLY INTO IT. DYLAN REACHES FORWARD, AND TURNS THE MUSIC OFF.

DYLAN

So when are you buying me a car for getting into University?

KEN

This isn't an American film, Dylan.
I'm *never* going to buy you a car.
If I had the money to buy you a car, I would buy **ME** a car.

DYLAN

You are SO UNGRATEFUL. How do you even sleep at night? Jesus.

THEY HAVE REACHED THE SCHOOL GATES. DYLAN OPENS THE DOOR.

KEN

No, don't get out here! It's dangerous. Dylan!

DYLAN IGNORES HIM, GETS OUT.

DYLAN

Shuuush! I don't want any of my mates to know you're my Dad.

DYLAN SHOOS KEN OFF RUDELY WITH HIS HANDS, THEN WALKS INTO SCHOOL, WALKING WITH AN ARROGANT PIMP ROLL.

KEN GETS OUT OF THE CAR, STANDS BY IT, STANDS AND WAVES.

KEN

Goodbye son! Have a nice day, my boy! That's my son! Dylan Thompson!
(TO HIMSELF) Little prick.

CUT TO:

15

INT. LORNA'S CAR. DAY 3 (1600 THURSDAY)

15

LORNA AND RACHEL ARE ALMOST HOME...

RACHEL

Mum, it was hours ago, can we drop it now?

LORNA

No, we can't. You should have got his number, you loser!

RACHEL

What was I gonna do? Run after him?

LORNA

Rachel, you'll keep your dignity and die a spinster.

RACHEL

Mum! I'm with Ben.

LORNA

Yeeeah, I like Ben, I honestly do. But there was something about you and that lad. A mum knows.

RACHEL

I'll probably never meet him again anyway. And if I do... Well, then it's destiny. And I'm definitely allowed to do horrible things to him.

LORNA LAUGHS CONSPIRATORIALLY, TURNS INTO THE DRIVEWAY.

LORNA

Lichfield's not such a big place. I'm sure you'll run into him sometime.

BUMP. LORNA HAS HIT SOMEONE. OH SHIT!

CUT TO:

16

EXT. THOMPSON HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS. DAY 3 (1601)

16

LORNA AND RACHEL GET OUT. DALE'S BODY IS UNCONSCIOUS ON THE DRIVEWAY.

LORNA AND RACHEL LOOK AT EACH OTHER - SHIT.

LORNA

Maybe it *is* destiny.

CUT TO:

17

INT. GP SURGERY, WAITING ROOM. DAY 3 (1605 THURSDAY)

17

KEN WAITS. STEVE COMES IN, WEARING HIS DOCTOR'S WHITE COAT. HE STANDS IN FRONT OF KEN, BEAMING.

STEVE

(LOUDLY)

Ken.

KEN

(WITH HORROR)

Steve?

STEVE

I knew you'd be worried - I had myself transferred for the day, so I could handle your unmanning personally.

KEN

Unnecessary.

STEVE

Don't mention it. I'm not letting my best pal's testes get anything but the premier service. Follow me.

KEN FOLLOWS STEVE, THROUGH TO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE.

CUT TO:

18

INT. GP SURGERY, CONSULTING ROOM. DAY 3 (1608 THURSDAY)

18

STEVE IS WITH KEN. STEVE IS WASHING HIS HANDS.

KENLorna said you're back in the
family home.*
*STEVEYes, I've moved back in with
Connie. And her lover. We're being
grown ups about it. I'm fine with
Pepe and Connie sharing the master
bedroom. I mean - people have sex.
Get over it. And if it's gonna
happen anyway - better it's in my
bed, right Ken?*
*

KEN LOOKS BACK AT STEVE - WHAT A WEIRD THING TO SAY.

STEVE (CONT'D)OK, preliminaries before surgery.
If you could... (clicking sound)STEVE SIGNALS FOR KEN TO DROP HIS TROUSERS AND PANTS. KEN
DOES. STEVE STARES AT KEN'S NETHER REGIONS, FASCINATED.STEVE (CONT'D)

Hmmmmmmmm.

KEN

Please sound less excited.

STEVEYou always wonder when you'll see
your best mate's cock and balls.
Usually at public urinals - but
I've noted Ken you don't use them
much. You've got a bladder like a
ruddy bison.STEVE KNEELS DOWN TO GET A BETTER VIEW. SUDDENLY THE SOUND OF
HAIR-CLIPPERS. KEN LOOKS DOWN, TO SEE STEVE BRANDISHING A
PAIR.KEN

And this is...

STEVEWhat, Ken? I prefer to work in a
hair-free environment.KENPrefer? You mean it's not
compulsory.

STEVE

Well, I suppose technically you get a choice...

KEN

Then switch them off, you tiny nitwit.

STEVE SWITCHES THE CLIPPERS OFF.

STEVE

Shame. Massive shame. Your loss.

STEVE GOES TO PREPARE ANAESTHETIC. A LOOK OF CONCERN PASSES OVER KEN'S FACE, A PANG OF DOUBT...

STEVE (CONT'D)

Well, I'm very positive. It's got a really nice shape to it, Ken. Nice proportions. I will enjoy operating upon it.

*

STEVE HAS FINISHED PREPARING SOME ANAESTHETIC IN A SYRINGE. HE APPROACHES KEN BUT KEN STANDS AND PULLS HIS TROUSERS UP.

KEN

Sorry, Steve. I've changed my mind.

STEVE

What? Why? I won't mess it up. It won't be like the last times.

KEN

What? Last times? Yeah, I'm definitely leaving.

*

*

KEN LEAVES...

*

STEVE

(CALLS AFTER HIM)

No, Ken! Come back, I love you! No, I don't love you! What?!

*

*

*

*

CUT TO:

19

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, HALLWAY. NIGHT 3 (1856 THURSDAY)

19

KEN ENTERS, COVERT. LORNA APPEARS AT THE DOORWAY, SURPRISING HIM.

KEN
(*VERY GUILTY*)
Hey love!

LORNA
Back early. How did it go?

KEN LAUGHS ALONG, TRYING TO SUMMON UP THE COURAGE TO TELL HER. DYLAN APPEARS.

DYLAN
I bet he chickened out of it, right
Dad?

KEN
Lorna! Why does Dylan know about
this?

LORNA
It just came out!

DYLAN
(*SCRUTINISING KEN*)
So you went through with it? Or
were you a chicken?

KEN
(*NERVOUSLY COVERING*)
Yes. Why wouldn't I go through with
it?

DYLAN
So now you're a eunuch.
Embarrassing.

DYLAN MOVES OFF, CACKLING.

LORNA
My brave soldier.

KEN SMILES BRAVELY - AND A BIT GUILTY. THEN SPOTS SOMETHING IN THE LIVING ROOM: DALE.

KEN
Who is that? *

CUT TO:

20

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS. NIGHT 3 (1858)20

A FEW SECONDS LATER. KEN LOOKS AT DALE UNCONSCIOUS ON THE COUCH, RACHEL SITS WATCHING OVER HIM, IN SILENT VIGIL.

KEN

You ran him over, then didn't take him to hospital?

LORNA

He was coming to see Rachel! (OFF KEN'S BAFFLEMENT) Oh relax, Ken. He's still breathing. It's probably just concussion.

KEN

You knocked him unconscious! He could sue us!

LORNA

He's not going to sue us - look at his nice face! (WHISPER) I think he was here because he likes Rachel.

DYLAN APPEARS.

DYLAN

Hey! Let's biro the word "Twat" on his forehead.

KEN

Not helpful, Dylan. (TO LORNA) But Rachel's going out with Ben!

LORNA

For the moment.

BEAT. KEN STARES AT LORNA - OPPONENTS. THE DOORBELL.

CUT TO:

21

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, HALLWAY/FRONT DOOR. NIGHT 3 (1900)

21

RACHEL ANSWERS. BEN STANDS, TRYING TO LOOK COOL IN HIS BLACK POLO NECK, WITH FLOWERS AND CHOCOLATES - GUYLIAN.

RACHEL

Ben. Is it seven already?

BEN

On the dot. For you! (HANDS OVER FLOWERS) Oh, and here's chocolates. They're Guylian - French I believe.

RACHEL

I think they're Belgian.

BEN

Oh god. I'm so embarrassed. I'm sorry. I'll get rid of them.

RACHEL

No. Belgian's good.

BEN

(SUAVE)

Of course. Well, shall we go?

RACHEL

Oh, tonight's not so good. Mum knocked someone over in the drive.

BEN

Maybe we could take a stroll then?

RACHEL

Sure. Ten minutes. (BEAT) Actually, it's cold. Let's just sit in your car.

CUT TO:

22

INT/EXT. BEN'S CAR/THOMPSON HOUSE, DRIVEWAY. NIGHT 3 (1903) 22

BEN AND RACHEL PARKED IN THE CAR. THE LEAST ROMANTIC ATMOSPHERE EVER.

BEN

Rach, it's been two years since Cuckoo went. Maybe sometimes you just have to live for today. I mean, not actually today - the flats won't be built until next April - but, you know...live for the soon.

*

RACHEL

Ben, I don't know.

BEN

Darling, the maths works out *really* well. Cohabit with me. (COAXING) Co-habit-with me.

HE DOES A LITTLE WALK UP HER ARM, TRYING TO BE ENDEARING.

BEN (CONT'D)

(CUTEY BABY VOICE)

Never been a better time to invest in property.

RACHEL

I'll think about it.

*

LORNA HAS COME OUT ON THE DRIVE.

LORNA

Rachel, he's waking up!!

RACHEL

(TO BEN)

I'll call you.

SHE GETS OUT TO GO INTO THE HOUSE. BEN LOOKS CRESTFALLEN.

CUT TO:

23

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 3 (1904)

23

LORNA AND KEN WATCH OVER DALE AS HE WAKES.

LORNA

Quick!

DALE*(WAKING GROGGY)*

Where am I? Who are you?

LORNA

I'm Lorna. I drove over you.

KEN

Maybe keep quiet about that.

RACHEL BURSTS INTO THE HUDDLE AROUND DALE.

RACHEL

I'm Rachel. Hi!

DALE*(GAZING AT RACHEL)*It's you. You were watching over me
- like an angel.RACHEL

You're fairly easy to watch.

LORNAWell, why don't we two old bobs
leave you two to relax and get to
know each other?!

SHE BUSTLES KEN OUT THE ROOM.

KEN

I don't approve of this.

LORNA

Shut up and get out the room!

DALE

Sir, stop! I need to say something.

KEN AND LORNA TURN.

DALE (CONT'D)OK, I came here today looking for
someone who I've been waiting to
meet my whole life.LORNA

Awwww!

RACHEL

(IT'S OBVIOUSLY HER)

Go on.

DALE SUDDENLY FALLS TO THE GROUND, GRASPS KEN BY THE KNEES.

KEN

(CONFUSED)

Hi.

DALE

(TEARY EYED)

Sir, you are my father.

KEN

No, I'm not.

LORNA

(AGHAST)

Ken?!

DALE

It's you, sir! Twenty-one years ago, when you were thirteen, your family went on a vacation to an ashram deep in the Indian jungle. There, you encountered my thirty eight year old mother. You were drawn to each other like hot-blooded tigers and consummated your passion in a tent next to the mountain. I am the fruit of that love-making. Behold, father, it is I, your son!

*

HE BOWS BEFORE KEN. LORNA LOOKS AT KEN, ANGRILY.

LORNA

Ken! I did not know any of this.

KEN

Lorna, twenty one years ago, we got our first flat. I think you'd have noticed, if between decorating I'd dressed up as a thirteen year old boy and sneaked off to India.

LORNA

Well argued, Ken. (TO DALE) Sorry love, you got the wrong guy.

DALE

(TO KEN)

No. You're Cuckoo Thompson, formerly Dale Ashbrick, my father.

EVERYBODY LOOKS AT HIM IN SHOCK.

KEN

Fuck me.

RACHEL

You're...Cuckoo's son?

CUT TO:

24

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, KITCHEN. NIGHT 3 (1925)

24

DALE SITS LOOKING AT THE PHOTOGRAPH HE WAS HOLDING EARLIER.
 KEN, LORNA AND RACHEL SIT AROUND.

DALE

So *this* one is Dad, not you, Ken?
 Oh, he looks so wise.

RACHEL

He was.

KEN

Yaaaaah. (OFF RACHEL'S LOOK, EVEN
 MORE REALLY SINCERE) He was! Really
 wise.

LORNA

Aw. Cuckoo would have loved to have
 met you, right Rach?

DALE

(CHUCKLES SADLY) I leave the
 Ashram, travel halfway across the
 world to find my Dad, and it turns
 out he's dead. (BEAT, GRINS) Oh
 well - as Vashradi says - Gotta
 keep smiling!

*

*

LORNA

This must be a huge shock.

DALE

(SMILING)

I feel enormous sadness, Lorna -
 but I squeeze it tight inside me
 till it's so small I forget it
 exists. Cool trick I learned at the
 ashram.

*

*

HE WINKS. KEN AND LORNA SHARE A LOOK: DOESN'T SOUND HEALTHY.

*

LORNA

And how have you been living? Do
 you have somewhere to stay?

*

*

DALE

Sure do! I met this really sweet
 little community who sleep on these
 benches behind the station.

*

*

*

KEN

You've been living with tramps?

DALE

Nice people. They've got a lot to say, and boy, can they drink! *

LORNA

Well, love - til you need to head
back to your ashram, you're staying
here.

*

KEN LOOKS AT LORNA, EXTREMELY ALARMED.

DALE

OK, sure. But I'll be out of here
tomorrow midnight.

*

*

LORNA

Nonsense. Stay as long as you like!

*

KEN LOOKS DAGGERS LORNA.

KEN

(PAIN)

Lorna, can I speak to you?

CUT TO:

25

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, HALLWAY. NIGHT 3 (1927)

25

KEN HAS TAKEN LORNA ASIDE.

KENWhy have you offered this complete
stranger free run of our home?LORNA

Because he's family! *

KENHe's the absent son by another
mother of the dead husband of my
daughter. I don't think there's
even a word for that relation.LORNAStep-grandson. (BEAT, FONDLY) Awww,
anyway, he's cute. (BEAT) Big day
isn't it? Cuckoo's son turning up
out of the blue. Your vasectomy. *KEN

Ah yes, about the vasectomy... *

HE'S INTERRUPTED BY DYLAN HEADING THROUGH THE HALLWAY. HE'S
GOING OUT. *LORNADylan, you're not going out. We're all
having dinner to celebrate Dale coming. *DYLAN

Nah, I'm meeting Zoe. *

LORNA

You're staying. *

DYLANWhat? Why? God, when will you stop
being so self-absorbed? *DYLAN LOOKS AT KEN, WHO MAKES IT CLEAR THAT DYLAN IS STAYING.
DYLAN LOOKS FURIOUS. *DYLAN (CONT'D)How do you even know he's Cuckoo's
son? An American accent and a shit-
eating grin and you're like 'Come
in, stay, have dinner.' Well, maybe
this is harsh, but I hope he kills
you both in your beds. *

HE MAKES A 'THERE IT IS' GESTURE AND WALKS OFF. *

KEN

Yeah, it was harsh.

*

*

CUT TO:

26

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, DINING ROOM. NIGHT 3 (2010)

26

THE WHOLE FAMILY ARE EATING DINNER. DYLAN SULKS.

*

LORNA

So your mother is serving a life sentence for drug smuggling?

DALE

Haven't heard from her in two decades. Kind of a bummer, but - like the prophet says I probably brought it on myself in a previous life.

*

*

KEN

Is that what they teach at the ashram?

*

DALE

(WISTFUL)

Oh Ken, it's such a wonderful place. So ordered, peaceful, and there's no crime because any kind of wrongdoing is punished without a shred of mercy.

*

DALE LOOKS AT RACHEL - WHO IS STARING INTO HER FOOD.

DALE (CONT'D)

Hey, this is weird! If you were my Dad's wife, then in a way, you're kind of my Mom.

RACHEL CHOKES A BIT ON HER FOOD.

RACHEL

In a way.

DALE

And Lorna, you're my Grandmother.

LORNA

Yeah. Never, ever call me that.

DYLAN

You can call me Uncle Dylan. In fact, you have to.

*

*

LORNA

Dylan!

DYLAN

Mum, I am welcoming our guest, so fuck off.

DALE

Oh, no. I just realised. We never said grace.

KEN

Don't sweat it, Dale. We're atheists.

LORNA

Ken! He just found out his Dad's gone. If he wants to say grace, let him.

DALE STANDS.

DALE

Good evening. Well, the food is delicious, and Chief Ken has given me permission to lead the community absolution.

DYLAN

Dad, what's he doing?

KEN

No idea, but Chief Ken has a nice ring to it.

DALE

Anyone else want to go first?
(LOOKS AROUND) Then guess it's me. Peace on Vashradi - these are my sins. I have judged my brother man. I have eaten at an oaken table. I have swallowed saliva - sap of my tongue. I have watched cartoons on TV.

LORNA LOOKS AT KEN - WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING?

DALE (CONT'D)

I have glanced at the chest of a lady. I have blinked twice in one go. For that, and my other sins, may Vashradi forgive. Vashradi, forgive. (SHOUTS IN A STRANGE SCREAM) FORGGIIIIIIIVE!

THE WHOLE FAMILY ARE LOOKING AT HIM, THUNDERSTRUCK. *

DYLAN

I take it back. He's Cuckoo's son. *

KEN AND THE FAMILY LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

CUT TO:

27

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, KEN & LORNA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 3 (2130)

27

KEN AND LORNA SIT WITH KEN'S LAPTOP. LORNA HAS FOUND THE WEBSITE FOR DALE'S ASHRAM....

KEN

Trust me, it's a cult.

LORNA

Yes, typical. Anything to do with yoga or spirituality and you're dead against it. It sounds nice - an ashram in the mountains - look. (READS FROM SCREEN) Vashradi Ashram. Invites single and divorced truth-seekers to discover a unique, sensual discipline for mind and body....all right so far... Grand Yoga Master Michael Vashradi will transform your beliefs and your lifestyle 100%. Free yourself from family, friends and worldly goods. No Men Allowed. Yes, granted - this does sound culty...

CUT TO:

28

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, BATHROOM. NIGHT 3 (2150)

28

RACHEL WALKS IN WEARING HER JAMMIES. DALE IS THERE. HE'S JUST *
FINISHED SHAVING HIS BEARD OFF, WITH A TOWEL ROUND HIS WAIST. *

DALE

Hey! Got to look my best. Big day
tomorrow! *

RACHEL

I need to er... (SHE GESTURES TO
THE TOILET) *

DALE

Obviously. Go for it. *

HE GOES BACK TO SHAVING. *

RACHEL

Dale, we don't tend to use the
bathroom together here. *

DALE

Oh! OK! My bad! Different rules
here! On the Ashram, we always have
to go in pairs in case anyone tries
to escape. Catch you later!

HE STARTS TO WALK OUT OF THE BATHROOM.

BUT RACHEL AND DALE GET STUCK BETWEEN THE BASIN AND THE WALL
FACING EACH OTHER. DALE ACCIDENTALLY STUBS HIS TOE ON THE
DOOR AND DROPS HIS TOWEL.

THE CAMERA STAYS ON RACHEL - WE WATCH HER FACE AS IT SEES
DALE NAKED, A VERY, VERY GUILTY EXPRESSION.

DALE (CONT'D)

Woah! Sorry, Mom!

RACHEL

Please, please don't call me
that... *

CUT TO:

29

OMITTED

29 *

30

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, GARAGE. DAY 4 (1330 FRIDAY)

30 *

KEN TAKES THE TARPAULIN OFF THE POTATO VAN. DALE LOOKS AT IT. *

DALE

So this is the vehicle in my
picture! (READS) "Potatoes of the
Revolution". Can you explain it? It
doesn't make any sense.

KEN

Another time. (BEAT) Dale, what's
the name of that guy who runs your
ashram. Vashradi is it?

DALE

Vashradi, yes! Come on Ken, you've
heard of him!

KEN

Why would I have heard of him?

DALE

(CAN'T BELIEVE KEN IS THIS
STUPID)

Oh. No reason. Except that he's the
son of God!

KEN

Thing is - Lorna and I think that
this ashram of yours *may* be a cult.

DALE

No Chief Ken! Wrong. Way off. It is
so not a cult. Like the first line
of our creed was 'We are not a
cult' - we say it every morning.
Then we eat together and Vashradi
picks his wife for the day, and I
get to work.

KEN

Yeah, this place sounds weird.

DALE

Oh no. If you're good and Vashradi
is smiling, everything is
wonderful. If you're bad, you get
tied to the post - but like for a
couple of days max.

KEN

You know, you probably shouldn't go
back there.

DALE*(PROUD)*

I'm not going back there. I leave
midnight. (LEANS IN, SOTTO) The
Galuwenga are coming to collect me.

KEN

The what?

DALE*(LAUGHS - DUR!)*

The Galuwenga, Ken!

KEN

Remind me.

DALE

The Galuwenga are super-intelligent
Extraterrestrials responsible for
human evolution. They also left us
the pyramids, and ice cream. And
tonight they are gonna take
Vashradi's elected disciples up to
space. The rest of you get zapped
by special kickass alien lasers.

KEN

So, you think tonight, we're all
going to die?

DALE

Yeah, kind of a bummer. You're such
nice people.

KEN

Dale - listen to me. This alien
stuff - you do know - none of it is
true.

DALE

OK, Ken. Sure. Whatever you need to
believe, go for it. Won't have to
wait long till we find out which
one of us is making a huge dumbass
mistake.

DALE SLAPS KEN ON THE BACK, GRINS AND HEADS INDOORS, SINGING
A SONG ABOUT VASHRADI (LYRICS: VASHRADI, VASHRADI). KEN
SHAKES HIS HEAD - HE DID HIS BEST.

CUT TO:

31

EXT. THOMPSON HOUSE, DRIVEWAY. NIGHT 4 (2340 FRIDAY)

31

ALMOST MIDNIGHT. A FULL MOON. THE FAMILY STAND AROUND. DALE
IS WEARING SPECIAL CLOTHES FOR HIS MISSION.

*
*DALE

Twenty minutes before twelve. I'd
just like to say a farewell to each
of you. Chief Ken, you are an
inspiring, noble person.

DALE SHAKES KEN'S HAND.

DALE (CONT'D)

Lorna - you cared for me when I was
ill. A special bond exists between
us.

LORNA SMILES.

DALE (CONT'D)

Dylan - you are an insubordinate
young man. And you should treat
your father with more respect.

HE CUFFS DYLAN - GENTLY BUT FIRMLY - ACROSS THE HEAD.

DYLAN

Steady...

KEN

Listen to him.

DALE

And finally, Rachel. (GAZES INTO
HER EYES) I never knew my Mom. But,
in my dreams, she looks like you.
Beautiful and kind. Soon your body
will be rent by extra-terrestrial
lasers. But our souls will remain
together through Cuckoo.

HE NODS. EVERYBODY EXPECTS DALE TO LEAVE, WALK UP THE DRIVE,
BUT HE DOESN'T. HE CLIMBS NIMBLY UP TO THE ROOF OF THE HOUSE,
HIS RUCKSACK ON HIS BACK.

ONCE THERE, HE TAKES A SIGN OUT OF HIS BAG - "DALE" IN SILVER
LETTERS. HE SITS CROSS LEGGED ON THE ROOF, WAITING...

CUT TO:

32

EXT. THOMPSON HOUSE, ROOF. NIGHT 4 (0300 SATURDAY)

32

THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. DALE SITS ON THE ROOF WITH HIS SIGN, WAITING FOR THE ALIENS TO COME AND TAKE HIM.

CUT TO:

33

EXT. THOMPSON HOUSE, ROOF. DAY 5 (0530 SATURDAY)

33

DAWN. DALE SITS, STILL WAITING DISCONSOLATELY. THE ALIENS DIDN'T SHOW...

CUT TO:

34

EXT. THOMPSON HOUSE, DRIVEWAY/ROOF. DAY 5 (0845 SATURDAY)

34

MORNING. KEN WALKS ONTO THE DRIVEWAY - SEES DALE STILL SITTING ON THE ROOF.

KEN

I've made bacon and eggs!

*

CUT TO:

35

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, KITCHEN. DAY 5 (0855 SATURDAY)

35

DALE IS PACING, DIALLING A NUMBER INTO THE HOUSE PHONE,
LOOKING REALLY DISCOMBOBULATED.

BY THE WORKTOP, KEN AND LORNA WATCH DALE TOGETHER.

LORNA*(TO KEN)*

We have to let him stay. What's he
going to do with himself otherwise?

KEN*(RELUCTANTLY)*

Yep, you're right.

THEY MAKE THEIR WAY OVER TO RACHEL - THE NEXT CONVERSATION
ALL SOTTO.

LORNA

Rach, how you feeling about Dale?

RACHEL

What? Why are you asking me?! I
mean - why would I feel any strong
emotion about Dale? You're basing
that on nothing.

LORNA

Your Dad and I were just wondering
if should we ask him to stay?

RACHEL

What? For good?

LORNA

At least till he gets accustomed to
the real world.

RACHEL*(SUDDENLY)*

No!

KEN AND LORNA ARE A LITTLE SURPRISED AT RACHEL'S VEHEMENCE.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

It's too hard for me. Sorry - you
know, Cuckoo's son by another
woman.

LORNA

You didn't even know Cuckoo when he
was thirteen.

*
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
*

RACHEL

How long would he stay for? No,
it's a bad idea. He's twenty-one.
He's not our responsibility.

*
*
*
*

DALE COMES BACK INTO SHOT, LOOKING UTTERLY DUMBOUNDED. *

DALE

Vashradi got arrested. The Ashram's been disbanded - they're saying it *was* a cult. (SLOW LIGHTBULB) I'm guessing maybe that's why the aliens never showed last night!

KEN LAYS A HAND ON HIS SHOULDER, REASSURING. *

KEN

(SOLEMNLY)

No shit.

DALE

The basis for my entire existence has been shattered, everything I ever believed in turns out to be a lie. (BEAT, SADLY) Oh, well, gotta keep smiling!

CUT TO:

*

36

OMITTED

36 *

37

EXT. LICHFIELD TRAIN STATION CAR PARK/KEN'S CAR. DAY 5 (1050)37

THE CAR PARK ACROSS THE ROAD FROM A TRAIN STATION. DALE GIVES GOODBYE HUGS TO KEN, LORNA, RACHEL AND DYLAN.

RACHEL

Where are you going to go?

DALE

Guess I'll walk the world like Dad did. Maybe some day, I'll find an incredibly special person, like he did when he found you.

*

HE NODS, SMILES AT THE FAMILY, JOGS OFF.

CUT TO:

38

INT. KEN'S CAR. DAY 5 (1055 SATURDAY)

38

THE FAMILY GET BACK IN THE CAR.

KEN

Quite touching that, wasn't it?

LORNA

(DABS HER EYES) Really very sweet.

DYLAN

It made me want to puke.

LORNA

Probably best he gets out there in the world. Finds his own way.

KEN

Yeah. He'll be fine.

*

IN THE BACK, RACHEL IS LOOKING DISTINCTLY GUILTY. STOPPED AT SOME TRAFFIC LIGHTS, THEY CATCH SIGHT OF DALE, TRYING TO CROSS THE ROAD. HE CAN'T DO IT. HE'S NERVOUS OF THE CARS. HE TAKES A FEW STEPS OUT, THEN RUSHES BACK WHEN HE SEES A CAR COMING. AW! THE FAMILY WATCH. THEIR HEARTS MELT.

RACHEL

Oh, all right - let's go get him.

KEN GRINS. HE PULLS OVER NEXT TO DALE, SHOUTS OUT THE WINDOW.

DALE

Chief Ken!

KEN

Get in the car, you weirdo!

CUT TO:

39

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, DALE'S ROOM, NIGHT 5 (2145 SATURDAY)

39 *

EVENING, KEN PEEKS IN THROUGH THE DOOR AT DALE ASLEEP. AW.

CUT TO:

40

INT. THOMPSON HOUSE, KEN AND LORNA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 5 (2155) 40

KEN'S IN BED. LORNA'S IN THE ENSUITE, OUT OF SIGHT. *

LORNA (O.S.)Weird, isn't it - just as you've
got the snip - put fatherhood
behind you - you've sort of become
a father again...

KEN LOOKS GUILTY.

KENActually Lorna, I've been meaning
to talk about that...LORNA (O.S.)And I've been meaning to give you
your reward. This is a one off, OK.
Never to be repeated.KENYou know what? I should probably
tell you this first...SHE ROUNDS THE CORNER, WE CAN GUESS FROM THE SILHOUETTE SHE'S
IN SOMETHING SEXY. KEN'S JAW DROPS.KEN (CONT'D)

Let us make love immediately.

LORNA

What was it you wanted to say?

KENNothing to say! Nothing to admit!
Let's go!END OF EPISODE