

# RALPH & KATIE

Episode 6

Written by

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## SHOOTING SCRIPT



9<sup>th</sup> February 2022

**TITLE CARD:** *"Peace on Earth... Almost."*

1 **EXT. LAKE DISTRICT HILLS. DAY 19. 15:00.**

The opening chords of MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYBODY by SLADE kicks in over a wide view of cold, snowy hills.

THE SONG CONTINUES, full fat, over a **CHRISTMASSY MONTAGE:**

2 **INT. LAKES & CAKES BAKERY. DAY 19. 15:05 - MONTAGE.**

KATIE and EMMA are closing up the festively decorated bakery.

A cheerful KATIE turns up the cafe radio. EMMA grabs a wooden spoon and mimes along to Slade. Her Santa hat falls off with the force of her headbanging. KATIE laughs.

3 **EXT. RALPH AND KATIE'S HOUSE. DAY 19. 15:15 - MONTAGE.**

RALPH and DANNY are affixing a Christmas wreath to Ralph and Katie's front door. Lights strung up in the window. Cosy. By contrast, Brian's house is more muted.

4 **INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 19. 15:20 - MONTAGE.**

LOUISE is kneeling by her twinkly Christmas tree, tenderly sticking a 'Ralph' label to a wrapped present.

She gets to her feet, turning her attention to a tangle of fairy lights.

5 **EXT. RALPH AND KATIE'S HOUSE. NIGHT 19. 16:30 - MONTAGE.**

Home now, KATIE steps outside, carrying a small wrapped Christmas cake and a card addressed to Brian.

She crosses over to his front door, knocks, then puts the cake and card down on his doorstep and heads back inside. We stay on Ralph and Katie's cosy house, all lit up.

Over this:

## **RALPH & KATIE**

6 **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 19. 17:38.**

The music fades away as RALPH and KATIE settle into the evening. Their Christmas tree is twinkling.

KATIE rests her head on RALPH's shoulder. Peaceful silence. Lovely.

(CONTINUED)

The doorbell rings. They look at each other - fuck's sake.

7

**EXT. RALPH AND KATIE'S FRONT DOOR. NIGHT 19. 17:39.**

KATIE finds a christmassy CLARE on the doorstep. She is wearing an elf hat complete with bell, holding a clipboard.

KATIE  
(slightly weary)  
Hi Mum.

CLARE  
Hello darling! I just dropped off the last of my Christmas cards. Thought I'd swing by and confirm you're still okay to do the bread sauce. Because that time your dad tried to make it... well, it was like glue -

KATIE  
I'm on it.

CLARE ticks something off her list, as RALPH appears, investigating the noise.

CLARE  
Oh hello Ralph.

RALPH  
(deadpan)  
I like your hat.

CLARE  
Thank you! And I thought, Ralph, since this is your first Christmas with the family you might like to do the pigs in blankets. The crowd pleaser. Only, I've already bought the pigs and the blankets so it's just squishing them in together really...

KATIE  
We will sort it. Thanks, Mum.

CLARE gets the message that it is time to leave.

CLARE  
Great, I'll be off then. I'm just so excited for us all to be together on the big day!

She leaves, hat jingling away. KATIE closes the door.

8      **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 19. 17.40.**

RALPH and KATIE come back in. RALPH looks confused.

RALPH

What's she on about? We're not going there for Christmas.

KATIE

Yes we are. It's all arranged.

RALPH

But I told my mum we'd go to hers for Christmas.

(beat. Shit...)

It's all arranged.

Oh dear.

9      **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S KITCHEN. NIGHT 19. 17.58.**

DANNY and EMMA have been drafted in to help solve the problem - and avert a row. They all sit at the table with teas.

EMMA

Okay, so you said you'd go to Katie's parents.

RALPH

We didn't.

EMMA

And you were going to speak to your mum?

RALPH

I never said that.

DANNY

So there's been a miscommunication. The main thing is, what do you want to do now?

KATIE

We should go to my mum and dad. They've had a tough time. They need me.

EMMA

That's a good point.

RALPH

We can't leave my mum all alone.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Also a good point. But couldn't Louise go with you? To Katie's parents?

RALPH

She won't do that.

DANNY

He's right. She insists on being at home at Christmas. I mentioned Lapland might be nice for a change and she looked at me like I'd shat in Santa's Grotto.

KATIE looks deflated. RALPH softens, reaches for her hand.

RALPH

It's okay. We'll go to your parents. I'll talk to my mum.

KATIE squeezes his hand.

DANNY

You two. I wish I could bottle you!

RALPH gives him a look.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I don't mean like... physically, you know, I mean - you're so lovely together. Couple goals.

EMMA

What about you?

DANNY

Eh?

EMMA

Who are you spending Christmas with?

DANNY

My nan.

EMMA

What about Tom?

DANNY

I guess he'll be with his folks.

EMMA

(puzzled)

Have you not asked him?

A touch of discomfort from DANNY here. EMMA doesn't push it but she clocks his mood.

(CONTINUED)

DANNY

It's just what you do, isn't it...  
(to RALPH)  
So when are you going to talk to  
Louise?

On RALPH. A man with a big mission.

HARD CUT TO:

10

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 19. 18:25.**

LOUISE has let RALPH in. He follows her into the living room, where the tangle of fairy lights is now even more tangled.

LOUISE

You must've read my mind. These  
blooming things. Every year! I  
thought they'd look nice round the  
window.

LOUISE has knelt down. RALPH does the same.

RALPH

Here.

He gestures to the lights and LOUISE gives him one end. They begin to work together to untangle them. A practised team.

LOUISE

It's good you popped round. I've  
been wanting to go over the plans  
for Christmas.

RALPH

(uneasy)

Right.

LOUISE

Is Katie still okay to sort the  
mince pies? I thought I'd come over  
and get them tomorrow.

RALPH

Mum -

LOUISE

And then I'll do a final shop so if  
there's anything you want me to--

The lights suddenly turn off. LOUISE frowns.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

Oh how's that happened?

She gets up and goes to the plug to investigate.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH

Mum? Can I - [talk to you?]

LOUISE

D'you remember that Christmas we had the power cut? All that time I spent peeling spuds, only for the oven to turn off halfway through. No hot water, no telly. Just you and me wrapped in blankets playing cards and eating beans.

RALPH

Cold beans.

LOUISE stops what she's doing and looks affectionately at him. A glimmer of emotion that catches RALPH off guard.

LOUISE

You know, Ralph, I think that was the best Christmas dinner I ever had. Just you and me. And of course it will be lovely to have Katie over this year. The three of us. My new family.

(catches herself)

Blimey, I could come over all sentimental if I had a heart. I'm just really looking forward to it.

Beat. No way can RALPH tell her now that they're not coming.

RALPH

Yeah. Us too.

LOUISE

Anyway. Was there something you wanted? Or were you just here to rescue your mother?

RALPH

Just saying hello.

LOUISE smiles at him, warm. Heads toward the kitchen.

LOUISE

I'll get the kettle on. Unless you fancy cold beans?

RALPH manages a smile. But as LOUISE exits, his shoulders slump. Mission failed.

11

**INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 19. 21:54.**

RALPH and KATIE lie side by side in bed.

(CONTINUED)

RALPH

I'm sorry. I couldn't tell her.

KATIE strokes his arm, comforting.

KATIE

It's okay.

RALPH

I don't want to let Mum down.

KATIE

You won't. We'll tell her together.  
Tomorrow.

A beat.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Parents are weird.

RALPH nods in agreement.

RALPH

Christmas is weird.

They kiss goodnight. RALPH switches the light off. Darkness.

12

**INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S BEDROOM. DAY 20. 08:43.**

A beautiful wintery morning. RALPH and KATIE are asleep in bed, snuggled up. Peaceful and contented.

Then, the sound of singing bleeds in from outside. Approaching, increasing in volume. Irritatingly enthusiastic.

CAROL SINGERS (O.S)

Ding Dong Merrily on High!  
In heaven the bells are ringing!  
Ding Dong Merrily....

And now the doorbell is ringing too. RALPH stirs, looks to KATIE, who peeks out at him from under the covers.

More doorbell. More singing. And perhaps the sound of LOUISE, calling Ralph's name. RALPH sits up, looks pleadingly at KATIE but she snuggles back down - she will not be getting involved. RALPH gets out of bed.

13

**EXT. RALPH AND KATIE'S FRONT DOOR. DAY 20. 08:44.**

RALPH, in his PJs, opens the door to find cheery LOUISE standing in front of a small, festively dressed group of CAROL SINGERS. She shakes a charity tin at RALPH.

(CONTINUED)

LOUISE

Come on, lazy bones! We need you to shake a tin at the town square. Get yourself dressed.

RALPH blinks, still not quite awake. The cheerful singers still singing....

CAROL SINGERS

Glooooooriiiiii-

RALPH promptly closes the door.

14 **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S HALLWAY. DAY 20. 08:45 (CONTINUOUS).**

RALPH turns to KATIE, who has come down in her pyjamas.

CAROL SINGERS (O.S)

(CONT'D, muffled)

- iiiii-aaaa...

RALPH

(weary)

My mum needs me to get dressed.

KATIE

We'll talk to her later. About Christmas.

RALPH

(nods)

Yep.

HARD CUT TO:

15 **EXT. TOWN SQUARE. DAY 20. 10:05.**

RALPH, now in warm coat and scarf, stands with LOUISE.

The CAROL SINGERS assembled nearby. A small crowd is gathering to watch them. RALPH holds a charity tin.

LOUISE

Lovely isn't it? Christmas Eve.

(fond)

It was always your favourite. The shopping, the carols, the carrots for the reindeer...

RALPH

(deadpan)

It's nice for a lie in.

(CONTINUED)

LOUISE  
(oblivious)  
I was thinking, do you and Katie want to stop over tonight? Then we can do presents first thing. I've got chocolate croissants.

RALPH tries to hide his unease.

RALPH  
Come back to ours after this. We'll talk about it.

LOUISE looks at him, puzzled.

LOUISE  
Oh, okay.  
(to the SINGERS)  
Right then, ladies and gentlemen.  
Shall we get going?

She moves to the CAROL SINGERS and they start to sing ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY.

RALPH joins DANNY at the end of the tenors. DANNY is wearing antlers and a Christmas jumper.

DANNY  
How did she take the news about Christmas Day?

RALPH  
She doesn't know. Not the right time.

DANNY  
Well don't hang about - bandits at 3 o'clock.

RALPH looks over to where - horror of horror - STEVE has joined the small crowd. He stands with a bag of Christmas shopping, listening to the singers, tapping his foot.

RALPH breaks ranks and heads for STEVE.

STEVE  
Alright, Ralph? Lovely morning for it.

RALPH thrusts the collecting tin toward STEVE.

RALPH  
I need you to shake this. Over there.

He points to somewhere well away from LOUISE.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE  
(confused)  
Right. Well, I've not done all my shopping yet -

RALPH  
It's for charity.

STEVE has no choice but to obey and heads for the shoppers away from LOUISE. RALPH, relieved, heads back towards the singers.

We go close to DANNY who has got caught up in the sweetness of it all. He closes his eyes, enjoying the music. On opening his eyes again, he spots TOM - taking a photo on his phone and smiling in a 'Gotcha' kind of way. DANNY is embarrassed - bit early for TOM to be seeing him like this. But he smiles.

16 **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S KITCHEN. DAY 20. 10:35.**

KATIE, in dressing gown, yawns as she stirs a mug of tea. She notices something out of the window and heads out.

17 **EXT. RALPH AND KATIE'S BACK GARDEN. DAY 20. 10:35 (CONT).**

KATIE has spotted BRIAN in his garden, filling his bird feeder up.

KATIE  
Morning Brian.

BRIAN  
Morning.

He gestures to his feeder.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Can't let our feathered friends go hungry this time of year.

KATIE  
Excited for Christmas?

BRIAN  
I'm going to my sister's. She slathers everything in goose fat.

KATIE makes a face.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
She doesn't seem to understand I'm half a buttered crumpet away from a lifetime on Statins.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Where will you two be spending tomorrow?

KATIE

Good question. My mum wants us there...

BRIAN takes in KATIE'S expression, joins the dots.

BRIAN

Oh. And Ralph's mum...

KATIE

Wants us there.

BRIAN

That's Christmas for you I'm afraid. A magical time of year where we celebrate the birth of our saviour with a family argument and an extra dollop of emotional blackmail.

KATIE looks bemused. BRIAN smiles at her, sympathetic.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You know where I am, in case of emergencies.

And this is genuine. KATIE smiles. He begins to head in.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Thanks for the Christmas cake, by the way. I'm allergic to marzipan but I will make the best of it.

He's gone.

Ralph and Katie's doorbell rings. KATIE sighs - what now?

18 **OMITTED**

19 **EXT. TOWN SQUARE. DAY 20. 10:45.**

It is a singing break. We see some SINGERS relaxing as RALPH is over with STEVE, trying to keep him out of LOUISE's way. LOUISE chats to other SINGERS. Coffees on the go.

TOM joins DANNY and hands him a coffee.

TOM

Yuletide cappuccino? I like the antlers, by the way.

DANNY

Thanks. I got a bit carried away.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

I mean it. You look like a hot Rudolph.

DANNY

(laughs)

Cheers.

TOM

If this is what you're like in the build up, I can't wait to see you on the day itself.

DANNY

I think I've peaked to be honest. It'll be quieter tomorrow. Nan will be cooking. And she likes us to watch Strictly together.

TOM

I could get on board with that. I love a bit of ballroom.

DANNY

Right.

TOM

That's me inviting myself to yours by the way.

DANNY

Oh... um, really? It's not... We don't really do anything-- We're really dull. And my nan'll probably nod off.

TOM

Fine with me.

DANNY

It's just - maybe it's a bit early for meeting the family.

TOM

Is it?

DANNY

Isn't it?

TOM

Oh. Okay.

A beat. And now DANNY is kicking himself.

DANNY

(babbling)

No, I didn't mean it like that. It's just *Christmas*, you know?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DANNY (CONT'D)

Turkey and that - I mean, who even likes turkey?! It's all a big pressure. But maybe we could -

TOM

(putting on brave face)

No. You're probably right. Too soon. I'll see you on the other side, then. Happy Christmas.

TOM heads away. DANNY closes his eyes - why the fuck did he do that?

We move to where RALPH is keeping STEVE talking - and as far away from LOUISE as possible.

STEVE

I've got Clare an egg poacher. The Egg Poacher Supreme. The sales guy said they're a huge hit with the ladies.

RALPH

Does she like eggs?

STEVE's thrown - but now clocks LOUISE heading over.

STEVE

Err... I'll just say hello to your mum.

RALPH

She's busy.

Too late. LOUISE is right by them.

LOUISE

Thank you for volunteering, Steve.

STEVE

Ralph didn't give me much choice.

LOUISE

All ready for the big day?

STEVE

You know Clare. Has to be perfect. Especially this year. With our guests of honour, eh Ralph?

RALPH

(desperate, looks to sky)

Is that snow? I think that's snow.

LOUISE

Who are they then?

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

What?

LOUISE

Who are your guests of honour?

STEVE looks puzzled. RALPH is trapped.

STEVE

Well... Ralph here... and Katie.

On RALPH - oh shit.

**TITLE CARD:** *"The oven gloves are off."*

20

**INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S KITCHEN. DAY 20. 11:32.**

The kitchen is covered in icing sugar and bags of baking ingredients, courtesy of CLARE who has come to make the customary Christmas gingerbread house. KATIE (now dressed) is trying to stick a gingerbread roof on to a wonky structure, barely standing up.

CLARE

Ooh, not like that. Maybe if you use another jelly sweet.

The front door goes and RALPH, LOUISE and STEVE enter.

STEVE

What's happened in here?

CLARE

Nothing more Christmassy than our gingerbread house! Hi Louise.

LOUISE

Hello.

KATIE looks from RALPH to STEVE to LOUISE. Realises. Oh no. CLARE clocks the atmosphere.

CLARE

Everything alright?

LOUISE

Well it's funny you should ask that, Clare, because it appears there's been a bit of a mixup.

CLARE

Mixup?

STEVE

With tomorrow. Louise thought the kids were going to her.

(CONTINUED)

CLARE

But it's all arranged. They're coming to us for Christmas Day.

LOUISE

That's just it you see because I didn't have a note in my calendar about that. Bit strange, wouldn't you say?

RALPH

Mum -

CLARE

You're right, so very strange... The thing is I've already preordered the turkey. It's a corn-fed Norfolk bronze. Organic.

LOUISE

How lovely. Ralph doesn't usually eat turkey, but I'm sure he'll make do. We always have goose.

RALPH

Mum -

CLARE

Well goose can be a bit... fatty, can't it? I assure you I've thought of everything. I've been planning this for months.

STEVE

And you did have 'em at Easter -

LOUISE

So we're not counting your Summer barbecue then...

CLARE

You were invited.

LOUISE

Or your little shindig on Bonfire Night?

CLARE

Well now you're just splitting hairs -

KATIE

Mum!

The oven timer rings out. LOUISE moves toward it, instinctively. But CLARE is already ahead of her.

(CONTINUED)

CLARE

I've got it.

She heads for the oven, flustered. We stay on awkward STEVE and LOUISE.

STEVE

Christmas, eh? Who'd have it?

LOUISE

You and Clare apparently.

There's a crashing sound.

CLARE

Ow!

CLARE is clutching her hand, having dropped the tray of biscuits. STEVE motions toward her, but CLARE wards him away.

CLARE (CONT'D)

I'm fine. Everything's fine.

Beat. The gingerbread house slowly collapses in on itself.

20A

**INT. LAKES & CAKES BAKERY. DAY 20. 11:45.**

EMMA is in the closed bakery - enjoying the fact it's her bakery now. She might be rearranging stuff on the walls, or holding a colour chart up to the paintwork. A knock at the door and DANNY enters.

DANNY

I know you're closed but I need a coffee and somewhere to hide.

EMMA

Why? What's going on?

DANNY

(evasive)

It's Christmas. Christmas is what's going on.

She's not having it.

EMMA

Danny.

DANNY sighs.

DANNY

I've managed to ruin things with Tom.

Out on EMMA, taking this in.

20B INT. LAKES & CAKES BAKERY. DAY 20. 11:50.

DANNY and EMMA are sitting opposite each other - a coffee apiece.

DANNY

I just didn't expect him to ask me directly about Christmas Day.

EMMA

That must have come as a surprise. What with it being Christmas Eve and everything.

DANNY

I panicked. Okay?

EMMA

I thought you liked him?

DANNY

I do. And that's why I want it to be just us for now. Getting to know each other. Without any of the other... stuff.

EMMA makes a face like this isn't a good enough reason.

EMMA

Is it such a disaster that he wants to spend time with you?

DANNY

No. But I think it's a bit soon for him to be coming round my Nan's and her getting the photo albums out.

EMMA

That's what you're scared of is it? That she'll show him baby photos of you in the bath.

DANNY doesn't look at her.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Or is it that you think the more he learns about you the less he'll like you?

They both know she's nailed it. EMMA softens.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You know me, I'll always tell you the truth. And I think -

DANNY

But you're a hopeless romantic.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Less of the hopeless, thank you!  
Fine, I'm a romantic but I'm a  
businesswoman now.  
(gesturing to the cafe)  
I know a good thing when I see it.

DANNY still looks troubled.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Trust me. I'm sure the more Tom  
sees of you, the more he will like  
you.

DANNY is looking at his hands. EMMA feels for him.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You're lovely.

A beat.

DANNY

You're being kind.

EMMA can tell he's not convinced. She doesn't push it.

EMMA

Do you want to stick around for a  
bit? Help me Emma-fy this place?

DANNY

I should be going. Thanks for the  
coffee.

DANNY gets up and heads out. EMMA watches him go.

21

**INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM. DAY 20. 12:05.**

RALPH, KATIE, LOUISE, CLARE and STEVE sit with untouched mugs  
of tea. CLARE has a bag of frozen peas on her hand.

For much of the scene, we are on RALPH and KATIE, as they  
watch all this unfold.

Awkward silence. Finally...

LOUISE

Look, I'm sure we can come to an  
arrangement about tomorrow.

CLARE

(readjusting her peas)  
Perhaps.

(CONTINUED)

LOUISE

We could join forces. How about you all come round to my place? The more the merrier.

STEVE is fine with this. He slaps his knees.

STEVE

Job done. That hand won't be much good for cooking, eh? And goose'll be a nice change.

CLARE

Fatty goose. Lovely.

STEVE

And I'm still doing my famous bread sauce.

CLARE shudders.

LOUISE

Right then. That's settled.

CLARE

(frosty, to STEVE)

I thought you liked my turkey.

LOUISE

Shall we say 12 o'clock?

CLARE nods, slightly begrudging but becoming businesslike.

CLARE

Steve, pass me the clipboard...

As CLARE witters on, KATIE gets up and drifts towards the kitchen. RALPH follows her. We go with them.

CLARE (O.S) (CONT'D)

(to LOUISE)

Now, what are your thoughts on the hors d'oeuvres? I'm a vol-au-vent traditionalist myself...

22

**INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S KITCHEN. DAY 20. 12:07 (CONTINUOUS).**

RALPH follows KATIE into the messy kitchen. They look at each other, defeated.

KATIE

So that's decided.

RALPH

Yeah.

(beat, deadpan)

Happy Christmas.

23 **EXT. LAKE DISTRICT SCENERY. DAY 21. CHRISTMAS MORNING.**

A number of shots: the lakes in the snow, festive folk in the town square, houses all merry and bright.

24 **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 11:45.**

Christmas Day. Music on. Bucks fizz on the go. RALPH, KATIE, DANNY and EMMA finishing Secret Santa. EMMA's modelling an apron labelled 'The Boss'.

EMMA

I love it!

KATIE

You're the boss now!

EMMA

I know, my own baking empire. I feel like Mary Berry.

She gestures to the apron.

EMMA (CONT'D)

This is perfect. Tom got me an apron too, but it's a bit cheeky to wear in front of the customers.

As RALPH opens up his gift bag...

KATIE

It's a shame Tom couldn't make it.

EMMA looks at DANNY, who looks away. RALPH holds up a Manchester United rubber duck. DANNY's relieved to change the subject.

DANNY

That's from me.

RALPH

Cheers Danny.

EMMA

(teasing)

Football themed bathing accessories. The ultimate festive gift.

EMMA drains her glass.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Right, let's leave these lovebirds to it. Merry Christmas!

RALPH/KATIE/DANNY

Merry Christmas!

(CONTINUED)

And EMMA and DANNY head out.

25 **EXT. RALPH AND KATIE'S HOUSE. DAY 21. 11:47. (CONT)**

EMMA and DANNY exit the house, shrugging on coats as they go.

EMMA

It's not too late to sort things out, you know. You just need to explain.

DANNY

If I ring him now, he'll think it's just because I'm lonely at Christmas.

EMMA

But you are lonely at Christmas.

DANNY looks at her - not helpful.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Honestly, if you carry on like this you're going to end up like Brian. Talk to Tom.

But DANNY isn't having it.

DANNY

I've got to go. Nan'll be on the Baileys by now.

He pecks EMMA on the cheek.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Happy Christmas mate.

He heads off. Concerned EMMA watches him go.

26 **OMITTED**

27 **INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. DAY 21. 11:48.**

CLARE and STEVE have just arrived. They stand awkwardly with LOUISE. STEVE has a large tupperware, CLARE's hand is wrapped in a bandage. Awkward beat.

LOUISE

You brought your turkey, then?

CLARE

Just in case.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

(trying too hard)

I insisted. Clare makes the best turkey on the planet. I could eat this stuff all day. You know, I'm blessed. Truly, truly blessed...

CLARE signals he should really stop talking.

LOUISE

(reaching for a bottle)

Wine?

CLARE

Yes please.

LOUISE pours a large glass.

CLARE (CONT'D)

(strained)

Are Ralph and Katie on their way?

LOUISE

I'm sure they'll be here any minute.

27A **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 11:49.**

RALPH and KATIE finish clearing up the wrapping paper. They stand, take a breath. A brief moment of peace. But then...

RALPH

(weary)

We need to get ready.

KATIE nods. They head upstairs.

28 **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 11:50.**

RALPH and KATIE look at their Christmas outfits, laid out on the bed. Smart shirt for RALPH, posh dress for KATIE.

They look at each other.

29 **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 11:55.**

The room is empty. A long silence. Then the sound of footsteps coming down the stairs.

KATIE enters the living room, not in her posh dress but a Christmas onesie. She flops on to the sofa.

RALPH enters, also in a onesie. He grins at KATIE and collapses down next to her.

(CONTINUED)

A beat. Finally, silence. No one ringing the doorbell. Bliss.

We stay with them. We might as well be on the sofa with them. RALPH puts his arm around KATIE, and she leans her head on his shoulder.

This is all they wanted.

RALPH  
Best Christmas ever.

**TITLE CARD:** *"Here's to interfering families!"*

30

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 12:30.**

The table is groaning with Clare's turkey and various trimmings. And the goose as the centrepiece.

STEVE proudly places his bread sauce down on the table. The liquid is a strange colour. CLARE looks at it, unsure.

CLARE  
It smells a bit... cheesy.

STEVE  
That'll be the roquefort.

LOUISE enters, carrying a jug of gravy. STEVE takes in the table.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Blimey.

LOUISE  
I hope everyone's hungry.

As LOUISE puts the gravy down, all three of their phones ping one by one. They look at their devices, puzzled.

Katie has sent through a Christmas selfie of her and Ralph, and a message saying 'HAPPY CHRISTMAS!'

STEVE  
They're not coming?

LOUISE zooms in on the smiling faces and Christmas onesies. She smiles, but it hurts too.

CLARE looks at her.

CLARE  
Doing things their own way...  
S'pose we did rather bulldoze them.

They all take this in. A long beat. The two empty chairs at the table. STEVE tries his best...

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

More food for us, I suppose.

LOUISE looks at it all. The table, the trimmings, the Christmas she'd hoped for. Then holds out a cracker.

LOUISE

Come on Steve. We've got a lot of these to get through.

They're going to make the best of this. But they miss them.

31 **EXT. LAKES & CAKES BAKERY. DAY 21. 14:45.**

Our quiet bakery street. The afternoon settling in. But in the bakery, a light is on...

32 **INT. LAKES & CAKES BAKERY. DAY 21. 14:45.**

And here we find EMMA, baking in her new apron, Christmas tunes on the radio, her phone at her ear.

EMMA

It's me. Do you think you could get away for a bit? I could do with a break from my folks...

She smiles, and as we leave her talking...

33 **INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN. DUSK 21. 15:22.**

RALPH and KATIE are blissed out on the sofa. Telly on. Bubbles. A giant pizza box open on the table. Loving this.

But then KATIE hears a noise from the back garden. She gets up, heads to the kitchen. We go with her.

In the kitchen, she hears a voice coming from the garden.

BRIAN (O.S.)

Yeah? Well I don't want to see you either!

KATIE heads out the back door...

34 **OMITTED**

34A **EXT. LAKES & CAKES BAKERY. DUSK 21. 15:24.**

EMMA has locked up the bakery, dials a number on her phone.

She is holding a small cake box with a see-through lid. Inside we glimpse two mince pies with hearts on the top.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (INTO PHONE)

I'm on my way. See you there.

She heads off.

35

**INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S KITCHEN. DUSK 21. 15:25.**

RALPH is in the kitchen now. KATIE enters from the garden, BRIAN following.

RALPH is surprised to see BRIAN in this state. It's like he was half getting ready, a spot of shaving foam. Red eyes.

KATIE

Brian is having a bad day.

RALPH looks at KATIE - gets it. Looks at BRIAN.

RALPH

Would you like a cup of tea?

BRIAN smiles, nods. RALPH goes to the kettle. KATIE motions for BRIAN to sit, then heads to the cupboard for biscuits. She passes RALPH the milk as she goes.

BRIAN sits down, looks around the tidy kitchen. He takes in the shopping list on the whiteboard, the Christmas cards, the cosy domesticity. The framed photo of Ralph and Katie.

BRIAN

Nice place you've got here. Really nice.

RALPH

I know.

BRIAN nods to himself, as if confirming something.

RALPH hands him his tea. BRIAN is sheepish as he takes it.

BRIAN

Thanks. Thank you for having me. I was supposed to be at my sister's by now, but I said her sprouts were unconventional. So I've been banned.

KATIE

Have you eaten?

BRIAN shakes his head.

RALPH

We've got pizza. And beer.

BRIAN is struck by RALPH and KATIE's kindness.

36 OMITTED

36A EXT. TOWN SQUARE. NIGHT 21. 15:45.

The town square is lit up beautifully. Emma's romantic mince pies are nestled under the Christmas tree in their box, like a present. We pull out to find DANNY arriving. He picks up the box of pies and glances around, looking for Emma.

Festively glamorous TOM approaches. It's a bit awkward as he joins DANNY by the tree. Nervous hands in pockets.

DANNY  
You're not Emma.

TOM  
Sorry to disappoint.

TOM makes as if to go.

DANNY  
No, it's great to see you.  
Please...

DANNY gestures hopefully at a bench by the tree.

They both sit. A beat. TOM motions to the box.

TOM  
Emma's doing?

DANNY opens the lid, shows him the mince pies.

DANNY  
I told her I thought I'd messed things up.

TOM  
Full marks for self awareness.

DANNY  
Have I? Have I messed things up?

TOM  
You're lucky I'm a sucker for pie.

DANNY smiles gratefully, offering TOM the box.

DANNY  
I got all in my head, and I didn't know what you'd expect from Christmas and I'm not, you know, I'm not good at the boyfriend stuff

-

(CONTINUED)

TOM  
(bemused)  
The boyfriend stuff?

DANNY  
Cards, presents, parents, gestures.  
I never know what's too much and  
what's not enough. So I tend to  
underplay things... and that comes  
over as indifferent.

TOM  
Cold and hostile even.

DANNY  
Really? Shit. Well, thank goodness  
for Emma and her emotional  
pastries.

TOM  
I thought you'd gone off me.

DANNY  
No! I just... I panicked when I  
thought about you coming to mine.  
Seeing a different side to me. I  
didn't want to put you off. When  
you're so...

He gestures at TOM's general fabulousness.

TOM  
What, confident? You think this all  
comes naturally?

He smiles at DANNY.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Bundle of nerves, darling.

A beat.

TOM (CONT'D)  
We can work it out together. That's  
part of being with someone.

DANNY looks relieved. Hopeful.

DANNY  
(tentative)  
I want to be with you.

TOM  
Me too.

DANNY  
Really?

(CONTINUED)

TOM

Really.

They sit for a beat. TOM holds DANNY's hand.

DANNY

What if I were to call you Tommy?

TOM

Then it would definitely be over.

They kiss. It is Christmassy.

37

**INT. RALPH AND KATIE'S KITCHEN. NIGHT 21. 15:57.**

BRIAN, RALPH and KATIE sit together. The pizza box is on the table, empty. BRIAN has polished off the tea and biscuits too, along with two bottles of beer.

Merry, contented BRIAN is chatting away - it seems he has been for quite some time.

BRIAN

... so then I said that they were misshapen and different sizes and I could only paint what I saw. And they didn't like that. So that was the end for me and life drawing I'm afraid.

RALPH and KATIE exchange a look - is he ever going to leave?

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I prefer my gardening anyway. What are your plans for your spring display?

RALPH

Have you finished your tea, Brian?

BRIAN picks up on the message, for once. He smiles at RALPH.

BRIAN

(warm)

That's my cue.

He gets up.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

So it appears you got the Christmas you wanted in the end, Katie.

RALPH and KATIE exchange a look, smiling. BRIAN looks around, indicates the beers and pizza.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

And it turns out I did too, thanks to you two.

RALPH and KATIE accept this. Is he going to leave now?

BRIAN (CONT'D)

It's no secret that when you first moved in, well, I didn't know what to expect. But let's just say it wasn't this.

KATIE

We thought you were a bit of a plonker too.

BRIAN

(laughs)

Noted. Now I really should be leaving you to it. I'm sure you've got lots of nice gifts to dig into. Merry Christmas.

He makes to go. KATIE looks around frantically for a Christmas present to give him. She grabs a few more beers and hands them over.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Oh, well that's very generous.

KATIE is looking at RALPH. RALPH spots the gift bags left over from Secret Santa on the side, and hastily pulls out his Man U rubber duck. He offers it to BRIAN.

BRIAN looks at the duck - a little confused, but charmed.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Well I'm not usually one for football, but I do love a statement waterfowl.

RALPH

Merry Christmas, Brian.

BRIAN

I'll think of you, Ralph, every time I perform my ablutions. Thank you.

He gets on his way, leaving a bemused RALPH and KATIE.

38

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 21. 17:08.**

LOUISE, CLARE and STEVE are still at the table. Dinner done, a bottle of wine down, Christmas cracker hats on. The bread sauce is noticeably untouched.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE, still feeling the need to fill the pauses, reads a 'fun fact' from a cracker.

STEVE

Fun fact. Reindeer have four stomachs. They use them for storage, so they bring undigested food back up to be chewed again when needed. Like leftovers.

LOUISE

Anyone for seconds?

They survey their plates.

CLARE

No thank you. The goose was nice, though.

An olive branch. LOUISE smiles at her, warm.

STEVE is gamely reading the joke from the same cracker.

STEVE

Why did Santa have to go to hospital?

LOUISE

Because of his poor elf. That's been in every year.

STEVE

(going to read another)  
Why did the -

CLARE

More wine?

LOUISE

Absolutely yes.

STEVE takes the hint.

As CLARE is about to pour, the living room door bursts open - and in come RALPH and KATIE, still in their onesies.

KATIE

Surprise!

LOUISE, CLARE and STEVE can't quite believe it. They're absolutely thrilled. They jump up and welcome RALPH and KATIE with hugs and ad-libbed greetings. And then, once it's all died down --

RALPH

What's for pudding?

(CONTINUED)

LOUISE is overjoyed. RALPH pulls something from his pocket, hands it to her. It's a tin of baked beans, with a tinsel bow on top.

LOUISE hugs him again, extra tight, blinking back tears.

**MONTAGE** - music plays over:

39 **INT. MERRY MUFFIN BAKERY. NIGHT 21. 17:40 - MONTAGE.**

EMMA pops open a bottle of fizz. We see leftover romantic mince pies on the counter. She smiles around at her bakery.

40 **INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 21. 17:50 - MONTAGE.**

RALPH, KATIE, LOUISE, CLARE and STEVE are playing tipsy charades, shouting incoherently over each other. RALPH and KATIE have their arms round each other on the sofa.

It couldn't feel more lovely.

41 **INT. LAKES & CAKES BAKERY. NIGHT 21. 18:05 - MONTAGE.**

DANNY and TOM are now with EMMA. She's just opened a present from them: a neon sign reading *'My tart will go on'*. She flicks a switch and it lights up. She hugs DANNY and TOM.

42 **EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE/STREET. NIGHT 21. 19:30.**

The end of the night. The street is lit up as RALPH and KATIE start to stroll home. Holding hands, finally alone.

RALPH  
Merry Christmas.

KATIE  
Merry Christmas, darling.

LOUISE and CLARE poke their heads out the front door.

LOUISE  
Ralph! Katie!

CLARE  
What are you doing for New Years?

RALPH and KATIE look at each other. Grip hands.

And they're off, running down the street in their onesies. Out into the twinkling night.

**END OF EPISODE**