

# **Gold Digger**

Written by

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## **Episode Three**

SHOOTING SCRIPT (Issued: 24th August 2018)  
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**Part One: 'Her Best Friend'**1 **EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAWN 11**

1

Bare feet. Sunk in to dewy grass. They must be cold but they don't shift. Come up, past a silk robe, to find MARSHA. Hair in a net, no make-up. Looking through us, as we hear -

MARSHA (O.S.)

Saying sorry is the easiest thing  
in the world.

Now see what she's looking at - the stretch of garden in front of her. All overly manicured borders, luxe swing seat, cupid spewing water in the fountain. But there's no joy at seeing her dominion, instead it's a battle. For composure.

MARSHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Even easier than saying I love you.

She turns. Heads in, fast, as if to outrun her feelings. Her hand flails for the handle of the bi-fold door, fingers grip -

2 **INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - EN-SUITE - DAWN 11**

2

That same grip. So tight there's a shake to her hand as: eyeliner's lacquered on. The armour of Marsha's make-up coming into place. Hair fought into shape. Until she's ready. The last thing to be fixed on - an artificial megawatt smile -

MARSHA (O.S.)

But they're just words. Selfish  
ones at that.

3 **INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - DAY 11**

3

The smile. For the benefit of - TED. Ferrying her over fruit salad, their nutribulleted smoothies, giving her a kiss for good measure. It does something to Marsha. On this particular day. Not in a good way, but of course she doesn't let on -

MARSHA (O.S.)

Do I want to be forgiven?

In slopes CALI, clothes hanging off her. The sight of Ted and her Mum is a gut punch. She goes to the behemoth fridge for a high-end water. It's in line with the rest of the stylings. Showy. Marble surfaces, gargantuan light fittings, gold taps. Marsha goes to stand, to reach for her daughter, to commune with her, but Cali just keeps on walking. Out.

MARSHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Obviously.

4           **INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY 11**

4

Marsha sifts through today's post - private banking notices, marks of her high-end life, a simple white envelope. Hand-delivered. She recognises the writing. Her breath catches.

MARSHA (O.S.)

Should I be?

She rips the envelope open, pulls out a card. A sketch of a single lily, underneath reads 'With Sympathy'. Marsha stares at it a moment, then inside - 'Thinking of you today. Julia.'

Emotion fills Marsha, threatens to overwhelm her. *Julia remembered*. She doesn't hear Ted approaching until - his arms are about her waist. On instinct, she quickly hides the card.

MARSHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Well - that's up to you.

CUT TO: TITLES

5           **EXT. DAY HOUSE - DAY 11**

5

Marsha stands on the threshold, building up the courage to knock. Then she does - fast, before she can regret it. Footsteps from inside, Marsha exhales, composes herself. As if she's fine. The door opens: JULIA, wearing an apron, hair flyaway. Julia's surprise shows itself, then - irritation.

MARSHA

Thank you. For the card.

Julia just nods. A moment passes.

JULIA

It's what people do.

Marsha waits for Julia to invite her in. She doesn't. So -

MARSHA

Would it be totally out of the question to come in?

Julia just looks at her - the audacity, but what can she do?

6           **INT. DAY HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - DAY 11**

6

Marsha steps in to see Julia bustling around the kitchen, everything done at a breakneck pace - to quicker get rid of Marsha. Julia talks without turning around to face her.

JULIA

I suppose you want coffee as well.  
I don't have long.

Marsha takes in the uncooked lamb shoulder by the Aga. The brown paper bags of organic veg, the bottles of red wine.

MARSHA

Guests coming round? Or a guest...Is it the famous Benjamin?

She doesn't see Julia stiffen as she fetches down a cafetiere. Marsha wants this distraction so runs with it.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

There's so much I want to know about him -

Julia roughly dumps the coffee packet down so it spills, spins on her heel to face Marsha, a flash of anger there.

JULIA

You don't get to ask about Benjamin.

Marsha doesn't look away from Julia. Just gives a sad nod.

MARSHA

No, no I guess I don't.

She clicks over to the glass doors, looks out. An awkward quiet settles, broken only by the slow scream of the kettle. Julia, being Julia, feels regret. Focuses on making the coffee. Once done, there's nothing left to busy herself with.

JULIA

How's Cali doing?

Marsha turns back around. Wanting the proffered connection.

MARSHA

It's not her favourite day.

JULIA

I can imagine.

MARSHA

(overly brightly)  
But we'll do our thing. I keep hoping one year we'll be able to skip the graveyard part and get straight to the boozy lunch. But she remains staunchly religious.

(wryly)  
I think it's to spite me.

A flicker of amusement from Julia. Marsha snatches on it -

MARSHA (CONT'D)

You wouldn't come with us, would you?

(off Julia's surprise)  
(MORE)

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Absurd idea, ignore me. It's just - sometimes, being only the two of us - it's a bit...claustrophobic. In the nicest possible way.

JULIA

I assumed...

(difficult for her to say)

I assumed Ted would be going with you.

MARSHA

It's not a day for him. He doesn't even know it's ten years.

JULIA

You haven't told him?

MARSHA

We don't have that sort of relationship.

JULIA

(can't help herself)

What, a grown up one?

A laugh bubbles out of Marsha.

MARSHA

Ouch.

Julia's annoyed she let herself rise to the bait.

JULIA

I thought I was rather restrained.

MARSHA

Perhaps best if we steer clear of all things Ted-related.

JULIA

I didn't bring him up.

MARSHA

You did actually.

Feeling the tension rise, Marsha backpedals.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Either way. I don't want to fight.

(exhales it)

Not today.

Julia swallows whatever she was going to say. Turns from Marsha, plunges the coffee with as much control as she can. Which isn't much - it plunges too fast, detaches - spews coffee. Marsha looks at the granular mess. At her ex-friend.

7      EXT. DAY HOUSE - TERRACE - DAY 11

7

The coffee cups, apart. Untouched. We're behind them, behind the women at patio table. They face front, not each other.

MARSHA

Would you judge me if I had a cigarette?

JULIA

I imagine it would be impossible to stop you.

Marsha just inclines her head. Of course it would be. Fumbles in her Hermès handbag, digs out her cigarettes, her Cartier lighter. Sparks up, snatches at the inhale. Needing it.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Clayton was a good man.

A low laugh from Marsha - and with it, we find their faces.

MARSHA

No he wasn't, he was a bastard, but - he was my bastard.

Julia gives a nod. Fair enough.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

It's so absurd, the way we eulogise the dead. Everyone has to be fucking angelic the minute they're in the ground...I want you to promise right here right now you'd only tell the truth about me. The full...ferocious truth.

JULIA

I think I can manage that.

Marsha gives her a wry smile. Julia almost returns it, then catches herself at the last.

MARSHA

What *is* true about Clayton, and requires no plumping up, is he was a good father...A better father than I was a mother. Am.

JULIA

Don't be ridiculous.

MARSHA

It's not my skillset - whereas you -

She twists to face Julia, ashing onto the floor as she does. Julia can't help fetching an empty plant pot as ashtray.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

You're like some cut-out template  
of the perfect mum. You're warm,  
kind, you listen.

JULIA

I'm sure my own children would  
dispute that.

MARSHA

And we both know Cali's always  
preferred you. She was round here  
whenever she could be.

JULIA

For Leo. Not me.

MARSHA

(softly shakes her head)  
You never could take a compliment.

Julia doesn't know what to do with that. A moment's quiet.  
Then Marsha gestures out to the garden with her Vogue.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Seems forever ago, doesn't it?..The  
pair of them playing Robin Hood,  
with those crappy plastic bows and  
arrows.

JULIA

Leo insisting I plait his hair so  
he could be Maid Marian.

MARSHA

He did make a lovely Maid Marian.

JULIA

I had to cut those plaits out in  
the end, they lasted so long...The  
fuss when I did.

MARSHA

I feel like the last twenty years  
could best be characterized as one  
long battle with Cali about her  
hair.

A moment between them. The past coming flooding back.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

I've missed this.

And Marsha knows instantly she's overstepped. It's like Julia  
remembers herself. She sets her coffee cup down. Hard.

JULIA

You're something else, you really are.

MARSHA

I didn't mean to -

JULIA

- You can never just take something for what it is, everything always has to be *more*...It's a coffee. Because it's a shitty day for you. And that is all.

MARSHA

I know, I'm not expecting -

JULIA

- Do you know that you've never actually said sorry to me...In a whole year...As if what you did...  
(anger rising)  
As if it doesn't merit an apology.

Marsha doesn't respond, for once thinking it through first.

MARSHA

Saying sorry is the easiest thing in the world.

Now we know where we are, back with Marsha's opening words.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Even easier than saying I love you.  
But they're just words. Selfish ones at that.  
(takes a slug of coffee)  
Do I want to be forgiven?

She uses both hands to gesture at herself, her presence here.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Obviously...Should I be?  
(eyes to Julia)  
Well - that's up to you.

Julia's thrown by the honesty. Has no reply for a moment. So goes for her fallback option - keeping busy. Collects up the coffee cups onto the tray, without looking at Marsha -

JULIA

He was my husband.

Marsha nods. Knows. But more important to her -

MARSHA

And you were my best friend...

Marsha feels her eyes fill. Julia can't cope with it, heads back into the kitchen clattering the coffee cups as she goes.

Alone now, Marsha roughly wipes her eyes, curses herself, grinds fag into ground, not ashtray. Twists, but Julia's out of sight. When she turns back - coming from the side of the house is - BENJAMIN. Carrying an overnight duffle bag.

BENJAMIN

Oh hi, sorry, I thought I heard  
Julia.

MARSHA

You did, she's -

Nods behind to kitchen. Benjamin swings his bag to the floor.

BENJAMIN

I'm Benjamin -

He extends his hand to Marsha. She doesn't take it. Just looks at it, then her eyes drift from his toe to top.

MARSHA

Yes I imagine you are...I'm...  
(decides against her name)  
A friend of Julia's. I've heard a  
lot about you.

BENJAMIN

Should I be worried?

MARSHA

Hardly.

BENJAMIN

(grins)  
I like you already.

Marsha pushes herself up to standing - and offers him a cheek to kiss instead of the handshake. He duly obliges -

JULIA (O.S.)

You're early.

Benjamin steps back, sees Julia coming out - doing her level best to smile. Benjamin lights up on seeing her.

BENJAMIN

I couldn't wait.

MARSHA

Yes, she's quite a draw isn't she.

JULIA

Shall I do the introductions -  
Benjamin, this is Marsha.

And the name visibly lands with Benjamin.

BENJAMIN

*The Marsha?*

JULIA

(with bite)

The one and only.

Marsha feels tiny.

8           **EXT. DAY HOUSE - DAY 11**

8

Back where she started, Marsha pauses by the front door. Firmly shut now in her face. Her defiant cheer falters.

9           **EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE / INT. MARSHA'S CAR - DAY 11**

9

Face fixed back into determined happiness, Marsha pulls up outside her electronic security gate. Behind is the Modernist dream that is her house - coming from it: Cali, hands about a bunch of handpicked wildflowers. It throws Marsha, she jabs at her fob, the gates open, she drives fast in -

10           **EXT. MARSHA'S CAR / EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - DAY 11, CONT.**

10

Her car pulls up, Marsha out of it in moments.

MARSHA

You weren't going without me.

Cali gives a shrug. Marsha just looks at her - and the rest.

CALI

Didn't think you'd...

MARSHA

What. Remember? Come? What, Cali?

CALI

(mumbled to the floor)

'Course you'd remember.

MARSHA

So why aren't you waiting for me?

Cali shifts uncomfortably. Marsha feels bad, retreats.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Well look, I'm here now - so let me just run in, ditch my heels - which I can already hear you telling me are totally inappropriate for the churchyard...

CALI  
(a tiny smile)  
I wouldn't say *totally*  
inappropriate.

MARSHA  
But you would say inappropriate -

Ted emerges from the front door to fetch the newspaper from the external basket. 'The Telegraph'. Of the pair of them -

TED  
You two are looking very  
conspiratorial. What am I missing?

Cali's hostile front immediately goes back up.

CALI  
Nothing. You're missing nothing.

And Cali goes to trudge off down the drive.

MARSHA  
Cali.

But Cali doesn't turn, just a backward wave of hand.

CALI  
I want to be on my own.

It cuts Marsha to her core. Rejection. Calling after -

MARSHA  
Okay, well, later? Usual place?

Nothing from Cali. Ted shakes his head at her back.

TED  
She's in a sunny mood.

Marsha wants to snap his arm off. Just about swallows it.

TED (CONT'D)  
Where've you been, darling?

A moment. Marsha weighing up what to say. Then -

MARSHA  
(smoothly lies)  
Car needed a valet.

Ted looks at the car. Not looking shiny or buffed. Before he can ask any more - Marsha's climbing back behind the wheel.

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
I better shoot...Lunch meet.

TED  
Don't I get a kiss?

She blows him one through window, reverses. Ted left watching the space where she was. Shaking his head free of his doubts.

11 **INT. EXETER RESTAURANT - DAY 11** 11

Marsha's sat alone at the best table in the house. Waiting. Not in a patient way. Every person that enters, she jerks her head up in anticipation it will be Cali. It never is. Unable to cope with it any more, she summarily gestures a BRYLCREEMED WAITER over -

12 **INT. EXETER RESTAURANT - DAY 11, LATER** 12

A glass of champagne is set down in front of her. Marsha flashes a smile of thanks to the waiter. But once he's gone, it vanishes. She goes to lift the glass in a cheers - but the empty seat opposite her is too depressing. She doesn't drink.

Fast makes a decision - grabs handbag, pulls out wallet to settle the cheque. Inside her bag catch a glimpse of Julia's card. As over, 'Homelands' by Nitin Sawhney begins to play -

13 **EXT. AERIAL VIEW DEVON - DAY 11** 13

On the song plays, louder as...The slab of grey that is the A30 dissects the green countryside, and cutting up another car - comes Marsha's -

14 **INT. MARSHA'S CAR - DAY 11, CONT.** 14

Louder still, the song plays as Marsha grips the wheel. Not caring for her speeding, not caring for anything, just trying to blot out her grief with the blaring song -

14A **EXT. MARSHA'S CAR - DAY 11** 14A

On the song roars as - we're tight to the Aston, front wheel pulling in, stopping. Out steps, Marsha, heels all we see. She steps from the car - slams the door shut - cutting the music out -

15 OMITTED 15

15A **INT. PHARMA COMPANY - CORRIDOR - DAY 11** 15A

As Marsha enters her workplace, her front comes up - she looks the picture of control.

We follow her as she strides into the open-plan office, passing ETHAN (22) - her nervy assistant, and heads for her door. Plaque reading 'Marsha Okello: Managing Director'. Ethan panics, lurches up from his desk to follow her in -

16

**INT. PHARMA COMPANY - MARSHA'S OFFICE - DAY 11, CONT.**

16

The kind of office that actually has a red lips sofa in it. Loud and utterly at odds with the wider surroundings. Marsha heads straight for her desk. Ethan clears his throat -

ETHAN

We thought...weren't you taking a  
personal day?

She flashes him a megawatt smile as if all's fine.

MARSHA

Change of plan.

And then Marsha looks back down at her work - clear she's not wanting further conversation. Ethan backs out of the room. The minute she hears the door close, her front drops. Desperately trying to keep her mind occupied, Marsha snatches up some legal clearances, heads over to the filing cabinet. On top of it, a framed photo that has her pause:

Twenty-odd years ago. The Day garden, at night. Sat around the patio table are Marsha and Julia, laughing at each other.

Marsha hurriedly twists her head away, shoves the papers in and cabinet shut. Leans hard against cabinet, shuts her eyes -

17 **INT. MARSHA'S CAR / EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 11** 17

Darkness. Marsha sat inside her car, engine off, so no lights. She's gazing intently at something. At first we don't know what, until we follow her eyeline to -

Her own house. Watching - the master bedroom, light on. As Marsha watches, the light is switched off. And Marsha exhales. Can return home now.

17A **INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - NIGHT 11** 17A

Marsha pads in barefoot, her heels in her hand, stealth her objective here. She doesn't turn any lights on, but sees, through the glass doors: illuminated in the swingseat - Cali.

18 **EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 11** 18

Marsha approaches tentatively, wanting so much to get this right. Cali's lying back against swingseat, eyes shut, pushing herself off with her feet. As Marsha gets close, goes to climb onto the space beside her - Cali's eyes snap open. A moment where she just looks at her mother. And then -

Cali dismounts, the swingseat left gently rocking. Empty. It stings Marsha. Cali starts walking back to the house. Marsha can't keep it in any longer.

MARSHA

I am allowed to miss him too.

Cali pauses, her back to Marsha, so Marsha can't see what this does to her. Then - just keeps walking, faster.

Alone, Marsha draws her arms tight about herself. Nowhere to run from her grief and hollowness now. Marsha breathes in the night air, her breath catches, threatens to become a sob.

She crouches, animal-like, until she's folded into herself on the glistening grass. Digging her palms into her face as she weeps. For all that she's lost. Clayton. Cali. Julia.

19 **INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - EN-SUITE - NIGHT 11**

19

The armour of her make-up now stripped off. Until it's just her naked face. Staring back at her. Eyes bloodshot. Marsha can't be with herself any longer, squeezes her eyes shut -

20 **INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING 12**

20

Marsha's eyes all we see. They open. She looks about, light filtering in. The relief of a new day. Takes in Ted snuffle-snoring. Affection fills her, she shimmies over the Egyptian cotton, kisses him awake. He gives a sleepy grin, all the more so as - her hand slips under the sheets, feels for him.

TED

What's this in -

She presses her fingers to his lips to silence him, slips her index finger inside his mouth - he hungrily responds - then she's climbing on him. Needing the release of sex.

21 **INT. MARSHA'S CAR - DAY 12**

21

A calm to Marsha's face now. Taking the country lanes with her customary pace.

22 **EXT. COUNTRY LANES / EXT. MARSHA'S CAR - DAY 12, CONT.**

22

The car turns the last familiar wind towards the Day house. Coming from it - Benjamin. Not the way we usually see him, no charm on show. Furious. Stomping along, swiping with an arm at a clump of bramble. Marsha's car slows, window down.

MARSHA

Julia in?

BENJAMIN

(can't help himself)

Her kids have demanded a private audience.

Marsha turns this over. Knows it can't be a good thing.

MARSHA

So you're making yourself scarce.

He keeps walking. Marsha drives alongside him slowly.

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
Hop in. I'll give you a lift.

BENJAMIN  
I'd rather walk. Thank you.

MARSHA  
(nods to herself, then -)  
I preferred it when you liked me.

Benjamin turns to actually face Marsha now as he walks.

BENJAMIN  
Yes well you conveniently forgot to  
mention who you actually were.

MARSHA  
You're right. I should have led  
with - hi, I'm the one who betrayed  
your lover and stole her husband,  
super to meet you, let's do brunch.

Benjamin's never met anyone like her. Just shakes his head.  
Keeps on. Marsha swings the car ahead of him so it blocks his  
way. Then leans over and opens the passenger door -

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
Just get in.

Benjamin looks back, to the Day house, and whatever's  
happening there - has him - defiantly climb into the car -

23

**INT. MARSHA'S CAR - DAY 12, CONT.**

23

Benjamin's barely inside, before Marsha's heavy on the gas.

MARSHA  
Where to?

BENJAMIN  
(at a brief loss, then -)  
The village I suppose.

He snaps his belt in. As he does so, he spies her cigarettes,  
grabs one out, looks for a lighter. Marsha smiles at him.

MARSHA  
I have one rule in life.  
(of the cigarette)  
Never in the Aston.

Benjamin frustratedly taps the cigarette against arm rest.  
Marsha looks at him with barely veiled curiosity.

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
I imagine they aren't desperately  
pleased about your...union.

BENJAMIN  
It's nobody's business but ours.

MARSHA

You're quite right. In theory. But in reality relationships can only stay private for so long before every fucker and his dog has an opinion. And those dogs in particular - they're tenacious ones.

BENJAMIN

Are you calling Julia's kids dogs?

MARSHA

I've known them since they were yay high. I'm very fond of them but once they turn...All I'd say is - watch your back. They're exceptionally protective of their mother.

BENJAMIN

With good reason to be in your case.

Marsha has no retort for that. Benjamin twists his body around, so it's angled at Marsha, looks at her. And then -

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

Tell me how it happens then.

Marsha just raises an eyebrow. Feels she knows where it's leading. Won't give him the satisfaction of asking.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

The whole 'stealing your best friend's husband' thing.

MARSHA

Sadly for you, we're nearly there and it's a long story.

BENJAMIN

York Notes'll do me fine.

MARSHA

(a half-smile)

I'm enjoying your hostility by the way. It's very...

She toys with the word. Then -

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Naked.

Benjamin doesn't laugh, heckles up. Marsha isn't quick to offer up the story, eyes to the road as -

24

**EXT. VILLAGE - MAIN SQUARE - DAY 12, CONT.**

24

Her car pulls into the village. Marsha spins into a no parking zone by the pub. Cuts the engine. Gets out. Takes her handbag and cigarettes with her. Benjamin emerges a second later. Marsha pulls out lighter, uses it to gesture him to -

25

**EXT. VILLAGE - AWNING / SHELTER - DAY 12, CONT.**

25

A more secluded part of the village. Under its cover, Marsha lights first her cigarette. And then Benjamin's. They smoke.

MARSHA

Fine. Headlines. I was married. We moved here for his work. He died.

BENJAMIN

How?

(catches himself)

Sorry, none of my business.

Marsha waves it away as if she doesn't care.

MARSHA

Long time ago. And I'm immune to emotion.

Benjamin just gives her a look. Doesn't believe this.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

We'd rowed, a white wine row - about nothing...He'd gone out to the garden with more wine, a cigar...I stayed in. Furious. Started watching, and you'll hopefully be too young to remember this, 'Cadfael'.

She looks at him for confirmation. He nods, doesn't.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

It got to the first ad break, then the next, and I thought - stubborn bastard. So I got up, walked outside and...

Marsha smiles at Benjamin as if all this is nothing, but as she drags at her cigarette, her hand gives her away.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

He was on the grass. Face down. Heart attack...Could never get them to tell me how long it would've taken. Which is a giveaway.

BENJAMIN

How do you mean?

MARSHA

If I'd gone out sooner, he'd have survived. Man was built like an ox.

BENJAMIN

Unhelpful. To think that way.

MARSHA

We think how we think.

(fast moves it off)

After that it was just me and Cali. I never had anyone else. Then - she went to uni. That first night, when it was just me, I lost my shit.

BENJAMIN

I thought you said you didn't do emotion.

MARSHA

For one so handsome, you're surprisingly quick.

A flicker of a smile on Benjamin's face. He nods her on.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

We'd been meant to have dinner, the three of us. But I'd rung Julia, cancelled. Couldn't face it. Ted didn't get the message. Came round. Saw me. Held me, then -  
(shrugs)  
Kissed me.

As far as Marsha's concerned the story's done. She doesn't want to talk any more, smoke any more. Drops her unfinished fag to the ground. Stubs it with heel. He just looks at her.

BENJAMIN

And that's that is it?

MARSHA

(matter-of-fact)

Once you've crossed that line, you've crossed it. The really terrifying thing is...how easy it is to do.

This seems to connect with Benjamin. He twists away from her gaze, afraid to be seen in that moment. Known.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

In my defence that marriage was not a good one. Whatever they might say about it now. It was...cold. And neither of them deserve that.

BENJAMIN

But they were together for thirty-five years.

MARSHA

And I've known them most of those.

BENJAMIN

(contemplates this, then-)  
What were they like, as a couple?

Marsha grins.

MARSHA

Good to see even the young aren't immune to jealousy.

BENJAMIN

Jealous of who? Ted? Please.

Marsha doesn't stop grinning. Ignores his denial.

MARSHA

Look, I get it, believe me.  
Especially with the timing.

BENJAMIN

The timing?

MARSHA

The divorce coming through right as she introduces you onto the scene.

She sees his face fall. He clearly didn't know.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

Which you didn't know about.

BENJAMIN

(quickly lies)  
'Course I did. I just...don't think the two things are related.

MARSHA

Let's hope not, for all our sakes.

He wants out of this conversation now. Stubs out his fag. Bends, picks his stub and Marsha's stub up, puts them both in the bin. Marsha just smiles at his 'good behaviour'.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

If I were you I'd go back bearing gifts...

BENJAMIN

Why are you being...  
(chooses his word)  
Helpful?

MARSHA

(simply)

She deserves to be happy.

Benjamin nods. Yes. But also -

BENJAMIN

And if she's happy - you're off the hook.

Marsha doesn't deny it.

MARSHA

Lilies are her favourite.

BENJAMIN

(a moment, then -)

I was turfed out before I could get my wallet so...

Marsha reaches into her handbag, hands him a crisp fifty.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

Thanks.

As she does, their fingers touch. She's the first to withdraw.

MARSHA

Better not linger. People will talk...

It's as if Benjamin suddenly realises how it might look. Is out of there in seconds. Marsha watches him go, intrigued.

26

**INT. PHARMA COMPANY - MARSHA'S OFFICE - DAY 12**

26

Marsha works through a mass of R&D brochures with ease and dare she admit it - enjoyment. Stopping every now and then to inhale caffeine. Her desktop screen comes alive with - a FaceTime call. So in the zone was Marsha, that the sound jolts her. She looks up - incoming call - 'Edward'. Answers.

ONSCREEN: Ted in the kitchen back at hers.

MARSHA

Yes?

TED (O.S.)

Is it a crime to want to see your face?

MARSHA

You're not allowed to be distracting, Edward, I've got too much to do.

TED (O.S.)  
 Will you be back for dinner?  
 (off her nod)  
 What do you fancy?..Besides me.

Marsha gives an eyeroll down to her work, but with affection.

MARSHA  
 I'll have whatever's put on my  
 plate. Ask Cali, she's the fussy  
 one.

TED (O.S.)  
 I was hoping...

Marsha looks at him - clear this was the purpose of his call. He tries to go as delicately as he can. Which isn't very.

TED (CONT'D)  
 I'd love it if it was just the two  
 of us. For...for a change.

MARSHA  
 (an edge coming in)  
 What's Cali meant to do? Microwave  
 meal for one in her room?

TED (O.S.)  
 No I'm not suggesting that, I just-

Her phone starts ringing. Marsha sees it's - 'Julia Home'. It throws her. Excites her. She looks back at Ted on screen and - lies without pause or guilt -

MARSHA  
 One of my suppliers is trying to  
 get through on the other line -

And before Ted can even reply, Marsha hangs up so his face disappears from her desktop. She jabs answer on her mobile.

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
 Hello.

When Julia's voice comes through, it sounds odd. Strained.

JULIA (O.S.)  
 It's me. Julia.

MARSHA  
 (flooded with warmth)  
 I know.

There's a pause on the line, Marsha rushes to fill it.

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
 Thank you, for yesterday.

JULIA (O.S.)

(harsh)

Would you sleep with him?

MARSHA

With who?

JULIA (O.S.)

Benjamin.

It completely throws Marsha. Were they spotted in the car?

MARSHA

Why do you ask that?

JULIA (O.S.)

Would you or wouldn't you?

MARSHA

No. No I wouldn't actually. Not just because of you -

A snort of a laugh comes down the line. Marsha ignores it.

MARSHA (CONT'D)

He's just not a type I go for...

JULIA (O.S.)

But you can see why I would? Why other women would?

MARSHA

Of course. He's very charming -

The line goes dead. Marsha just looks at it. Doesn't know what to do. After a moment, she rings back but it rings out. And then - a text comes through from 'Julia':

'We are not friends'. Gutting Marsha.

Marsha kicks off her 6-inch heels with so much violence they hit the wall. Ricochet back at her. She hears noises off, pads forward. A vantage point through to her kitchen, where:

Ted's beaming with happiness at his guest - Leo. Rushing to the fridge to retrieve him - a stubbie beer. Cali stands on the fringes of this, ignored. Trying to act like she's not.

LEO

Stubbies, are you serious?

Marsha grabs her heels, puts them back on - enters the fray -

28

**INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - EVENING 12, CONT. 28**

Leo holds court, Ted opening him his stubby, Cali leans against the counter, as if casual. As if the boys talk involves her. It fills Marsha with a painful rush of love for her daughter. She goes to pull a strand of hair out of Cali's face. Mortified in front of Leo, Cali brushes her off. Sees how this hurts her Mum. Wants to make reparations. Too late.

LEO

Just because you're sober, Dad,  
doesn't mean you can inflict these  
on the rest of us.

Ted smiles, chinks a Ginger Ale with his son.

MARSHA

To what do we owe the pleasure?

Leo just shrugs, doesn't need to give her a reason. Ted gives Marsha a kiss on the cheek as a greeting, then turns back to check on his vegan casserole, hand roll his dumplings.

TED

Are you hungry, there's plenty.

LEO

You know me, can always eat.

TED

Cali would you -

CALI

- I'll lay another place.

Marsha watches Cali as she walks past Leo. He ever so slightly pinches her arm. Cali looks up, a flash of heat. He grins. Marsha's thrown by it. It has the next come bluntly -

MARSHA

Does your mum know you're eating  
here?

LEO

(a flash of anger)  
She - is otherwise engaged.

Ted stops mid-dumpling roll, twists around. Flourey.

TED

Is that man-child over?

Leo gives a wave of the hand, doesn't want to talk about it with Marsha here. Hops up on a stool at the counter, swivels.

LEO

Can I crash here tonight?

Ted nods - of course, which irks Marsha - not even consulted. Now Ted rolls the dumplings hard. Getting his own ire out.

TED

You shouldn't be made to feel  
uncomfortable in your own home.  
I've got a mind to call her -

MARSHA

- And say what, exactly?

TED

That she should think about the  
company she keeps.

MARSHA

Benjamin's alright.

Ted stops rolling. Just looks at her.

TED

How would you know?

And in that moment Marsha knows she's caught out. Instead of running from it, she decides to brazen it out.

MARSHA

Because we met.

TED

You met.

MARSHA

That's what I said.

She walks past Ted, to the fridge, sees how tense this is all making Cali. Gives her a tiny reassuring smile. Cali needed it. Marsha gets out a bottle of Chablis, pours a glass.

TED

And where was this?

MARSHA

Julia's.

Ted can't compute it. Leo jumps back off his stool.

LEO

Enough with the Benjamin chat. It's  
grim enough he's in my house with  
my Mum...

Ted sees his son needs him. Fast acts as if all's okay.

TED

You're quite right. We've far  
better things to discuss...like...

Ted trails off. Eyes drifting back to - Marsha.

LEO

Do not say Brexit, Dad. I beg you.  
Do not say that word.

Ted smiles at his son but the minute Leo looks away, Marsha sees the smile disappear. Knows they're not done with this.

29

**EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 12**

29

Marsha's sat on a lounger, wrapped up in a cashmere throw, smoking out to the night sky. Mood low. She hears the door open behind, doesn't turn, wants to be alone. Leo walks over to her. Pulls out the dregs of his baccy pouch.

LEO

Can I bum a light?

Marsha doesn't turn to him. Doesn't hand her lighter over.

MARSHA

You know your mother hates you  
smoking.

LEO

Wow.

And now Marsha turns to him. A challenge in her voice -

MARSHA

Yes?

LEO

It's just...You and your hypocrisy.

She holds his gaze. Even manages a smile. And then turns. Hears him walk off, in. Still she doesn't turn back around. Pulls the throw closer, nuzzles into it, wanting to disappear-

30

**INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN / DINING ROOM - NIGHT 30  
12**

Stillness. Quiet at the table. Neither Marsha nor Ted have the energy to pretend everything's okay. As soon as Marsha sets her dessert spoon down, Leo pushes back in his chair.

LEO

Not that this hasn't been  
scintillating, but I'm going to the  
pub before closing. Cali?

Cali instinctively looks to Marsha for permission.

CALI

Mum, is that...

MARSHA  
(nods, touched)  
You go on. Have fun.

Which Cali appreciates. Detente between these two. The moment broken by Leo grabbing keys as if he owns the place.

LEO  
Don't you crazy cats wait up.

And they go. A silence settles. One Marsha's nervous of. So fills by clearing up. Ted doesn't join, just watches.

MARSHA  
I wonder if they're a good  
influence on each other.

TED  
(defensive)  
You mean Leo. Is Leo a good  
influence on Cali.

Marsha's sigh tells us they've had this conversation before. She sets the glass back down that she was tidying away.

MARSHA  
I'm tired. I'll do this in the  
morning.

Ted leans back in his chair. As if he's relaxed.

TED  
I'm fascinated to know how you  
ended up with my wife,  
(fast corrects himself)  
Ex-wife and her new lover back at  
our house.

MARSHA  
Her house.

Riling Ted all the more. He just looks at her.

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
It was just a coffee. Hardly  
newsworthy.

TED  
The fact you concealed it says  
otherwise.

MARSHA  
I didn't conceal it -

TED  
- You just didn't say. Right.

For a focus for her irritation, Marsha sweeps up all Leo's empty stubbies and dumps them loudly in the recycling.

TED (CONT'D)  
You're meant to rinse them. First.

MARSHA  
(swivels around to him)  
Has it occurred to you why I might  
not have told you?

TED  
Enlighten me.

MARSHA  
Ever since you found out about  
Benjamin you've been...I wish I  
could find another word for it -  
but I can't. You've been jealous.

TED  
(inflamed)  
Don't be ridiculous -

MARSHA  
- You can't stand the fact she's  
with someone else.

TED  
I'm the one who left her.

MARSHA  
I know. I was there.

TED  
I'm trying to stop her humiliating  
herself. That's all.  
She's...it's...laughable. Everyone  
thinks so.

MARSHA  
I don't.

He stares at her. Then speaks to her as if she's stupid.

TED  
He is a child.

MARSHA  
Who gives a fuck what he is? He  
makes her feel good, which I for  
one am thrilled about because it  
means there's just a *chance* we  
might be friends again.

Ted shakes his head, laughs. Not a happy laugh.

TED

This just gets better. Now you want  
to be friends with my ex.

This infuriates Marsha. Done, she starts walking out.

TED (CONT'D)

Do not walk out in the middle of a  
conversation.

(as she keeps walking)  
Marsha. I am talking to you.

On she goes. He watches her. She's nearly out of the room.

TED (CONT'D)

Marsha.

But she doesn't stop. Ted lurches forward, runs to her -  
grabs her by the wrist to twist her around. It shocks her.

Neither speak a moment. Marsha just directs her gaze down -  
to where his hand is around her wrist. Ted removes his hand.  
Clenches his jaw, steps past her, leans his forehead on the  
wall. She just looks at him, her insecurities flooding out.

MARSHA

If I didn't know better, I'd  
think...I'd think you wanted her  
back.

Without warning, Ted slams his forehead against the wall - so  
hard the plaster cracks and a primal grunt comes from him.  
Dazed, he turns to her - blood already pouring from his nose -

Marsha's horrified. Does she know him at all?

SNAP TO BLACK:

Out of the darkness, a caption appears:

Part Two: 'Her'

31

INT. DAY HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - DAY 11

31

Julia. Her face all we can see. Staring straight at us. A  
hard expression in her eyes. As ever, we hear her words -

JULIA (O.S.)  
I don't trust anyone.

And now we reveal what she's looking at: the moment out on  
the terrace. Benjamin and Marsha's meeting. His hand extended  
to her, smiling down at her. Marsha's eyes drinking him in.

JULIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I used to. But once you let doubt  
in...

Julia watches as: Marsha stands, turns her cheek to his - Benjamin eagerly steps in close. Lips brush her skin.

JULIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
It gets everywhere.

Benjamin pulls back, but not far. Faces inches from each other. Body language seemingly in full flirt mode.

JULIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Destroys everything.

Then Julia's moving, fast, heading for the terrace -

32 **EXT. DAY HOUSE - TERRACE - DAY 11, CONT.**

32

Julia steps out, smile fixed. No sign of her inner fire.

JULIA (O.S.)  
Until there's no safe place left...

In Julia's mind, Benjamin springs back from Marsha. Guiltily.

33 **INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 11**

33

The two entwined in bed, until - Julia twists away, disengaging from his embrace. She reaches for bedside lamp. Darkness. Just the sound of their breathing. We can just make out Benjamin snuggling himself into Julia's back. Shutting his eyes. But Julia's remain open. Thoughts racing.

34 **INT. DAY HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN / STUDY - MORNING 12**

34

In a soft oversized jumper and slacks, Julia's distractedly sorting through papers, her mind full. Benjamin visible behind in the kitchen, making tea. Not quite knowing where everything is, but not wanting to let on to Julia.

In the rainy window's reflection, Benjamin pads into view behind Julia, sets her tea down on a coaster, then nods to the grey day outside (it's actually now stopped raining).

BENJAMIN

Does this mean we don't have to leave the house all day? Because if so...

(mischievous)

I've an idea of how to kill the time...

Julia feels her doubts melt away, a smile reaching her lips. As she turns into him, a Range Rover swings into the drive: PATRICK at the wheel, DELLA beside him, wearing sunglasses despite the rain. It throws Julia. What are they doing here?

35      **INT / EXT. DAY HOUSE - MORNING 12**

35

Julia opens the front door, Benjamin beside her just in his socks. Patrick and Della walk into the porch.

JULIA

This is a surprise. A nice one, of course.

She gives Patrick a hug. He's in a visibly tense mood.

PATRICK

Mum.

Julia has a barely there embrace with Della.

JULIA

Everything okay darling?

DELLA

(mumbled)

Yeah, fine. Yep.

The kids don't acknowledge Benjamin. He still makes an effort-

BENJAMIN

Hi Della...Patrick. You alright?

Della pulls out her phone to avoid looking at Benjamin, but Patrick doesn't even try for a facade. Just ignores him.

PATRICK

We need to speak to you.

JULIA

(trying for lightness)

Sounds ominous.

PATRICK

In private.

Julia looks between her children and Benjamin. No one says anything, no one makes it okay for him. To Benjamin -

JULIA

Do you mind?

Benjamin definitely does, but he shrugs, smiles.

BENJAMIN

I'll, I'll go for a walk...Call me if you need anything.

JULIA

Thanks. I'm sure everything's...

A look of open hostility between the two men, then Benjamin grabs some wellies from the porch, puts them on, and heads off into the grey day. Della finding the whole thing excruciating. At the end of the driveway, Benjamin turns, waves at Julia. She manages a tiny wave back.

PATRICK (O.S.)

It's Benjamin...

36

INT. DAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 12

36

Julia scrutinises her kids, the way Patrick swallows the rest of his sentence, smoothes out his trousers. The way Della goes to sit, doesn't, hovers instead - all the while looking to Patrick like - go on. Into the awkwardness -

LEO (O.S)

Who died?

She looks up, takes in: Leo, bed hair, slopping a cup of tea as he goes. As he sets it down, Julia slips a coaster under.

PATRICK

Have you *just* woken up?

LEO

Define *just*.

DELLA

Patrick can *we*...

LEO

What's with the visit?

Leo sprawls himself over the sofa. Julia shifts up to give him even more room, which annoys Patrick. Her self-sacrifice.

PATRICK

We...well, Della and I were out and we happened to...Believe me, we didn't *want* to see anything.

DELLA

Just show her already.

Patrick pulls out his phone. Doesn't hand it over a second.

PATRICK

I'm *really* sorry, Mum.

Frustrated, Julia just takes the phone from Patrick. Sees an image: Benjamin with the older woman in the candlelit bistro. Putting on her coat. Their intimacy.

Julia can't speak for the shock of it. Just stares at photo.

LEO  
Er hello, I am here.

Neither sibling explain so Leo leans over, invading his mum's personal space, eyeballs the photo. Blows out his cheeks.

LEO (CONT'D)  
Shit me, I was right...

Patrick stares at his brother, incredulous.

PATRICK DELLA  
Is that seriously what you're This is about Mum, not you,  
going with? dickhead.

Julia's gaze darts from the phone to her youngest.

JULIA  
Right about what?

LEO  
About him. About Benjamin. That  
he's...up to no good. Sorry, Mum.

She looks at Leo. Can't bear that he's right. That she's been made a fool of. Thrusts the phone back on Patrick. Stands -

PATRICK  
You don't deserve this, Mum, you  
know that right? Some con artist  
going around targeting old women.

Julia stiffens. Della rushes to her defence, upset for her.

DELLA  
She's not old. What *is* wrong with  
you?

LEO

PATRICK  
No I don't mean old old, anyway,  
point is - he's out dating other  
women, of the same age as Mum, for  
some kind of...nefarious ends. I  
can only imagine financial seeing  
as -

(a look to Della, then -)  
He's due to be evicted. We have  
proof, if you don't believe us.

Della shakes her head at Patrick - nice one. Julia's stunned by it all. It's too much in the moment, she walks out -

37      **INT. DAY HOUSE - HALLWAY / STAIRS - DAY 12, CONT.**      37

Julia steps out here, walks as if an automaton - to the banister. Sags down onto the bottom step. Takes a moment, trying to compute everything. Shuts her eyes. Hoping for peace. Instead her face clouds over, taken back -

38      **INT. DAY HOUSE - HALLWAY / STAIRS - NIGHT - FLASH BACK 1**      38

Caption: Twenty-Four Years Ago

Julia's trembling hand clutches the banister. Looking down to - Ted - lurching out of the front door.

Relief floods her. He's gone. She stands still a moment. Then - hurries down, to dresser - finds address book. 'Marsha'. Set to call when - she catches sight of herself in mirror. Lip thick with dried blood. Eyes drained of life.

Shame fills her. She can't do it. Closes address book. Sits on bottom step. Just stares ahead of her, bleakly -

39      **INT. DAY HOUSE - HALLWAY / STAIRS - DAY 12**      39

The same bleak expression, all that's changed is the intervening years. Julia's face as it is now. She feels her eyes fill, the breath start to leave her chest - but then -

PATRICK (O.S.)

Mum?

It has her forcibly pull herself together. She stands. Checks herself in the hallway mirror for any signs of upset. And heads back towards the living room as her children spill out.

DELLA

Sorry that was so...inelegantly done. And that's an understatement.

PATRICK

(to Della)

You'd have done a better job would you?..Mum are you - are you okay?

She sees they really need her to be. Nods. And then -

JULIA

I am okay.

Della sees through the stoicism. Can't handle it, looks away.

PATRICK

What are you going to do?

LEO

Break up with him, obviously.

Julia doesn't concur. Doesn't respond. The kids steamroll on.

LEO (CONT'D)  
Do it when he gets back, Mum.

PATRICK  
I think I should speak to him.

DELLA  
You can't break up with someone on  
someone else's behalf. Unless  
you're twelve. And even then.

PATRICK  
I just don't want Mum to feel she's  
on her own if that's okay with you.  
(to Julia)  
We'll stay, check you're alright.

LEO  
(defensive)  
I can look after Mum.

The words burst from Julia.

JULIA  
Enough, all of you.

The three of them fall quiet. Chastened.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Thank you for, for telling me...But  
now I...I want to be by myself.

They all nod in unconscious unison. As if young kids again.

40

**INT. DAY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING - DAY 12**

40

Julia stands by the window, looking out as: Patrick's Range Rover pulls away, Della and him visibly squabbling inside. Leo on foot, walking off to the village, already sparking up. And then - they're gone. The driveway empty.

41

**INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY 12**

41

Julia steps in here. Stares at the bed. Where they last lay. Sees on the trunk, all Benjamin's stuff neatly folded. Walks to it: a history tome, clothes, the vintage watch she bought him. She picks it up, laughs bleakly. Drops it. The silence too much, suddenly she's regretting sending her kids away. Julia fast fumbles for her phone, makes a call.

MARSHA (O.S.)  
Hello.

When Julia opens her mouth to speak, the words catch.

JULIA  
It's me. Julia.

MARSHA (O.S.)  
(all warmth)  
I know.

Julia has to fight the urge to cry. Covers the mouthpiece.

MARSHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Thank you, for yesterday.

JULIA  
(a pained blurt)  
Would you sleep with him?

MARSHA (O.S.)  
With who?

JULIA  
Benjamin.

MARSHA (O.S.)  
Why do you ask that?

For half a second, Julia considers confessing. Then -

JULIA  
Would you or wouldn't you?

MARSHA (O.S.)  
No. No I wouldn't actually. Not  
just because of you -

A choke of a laugh comes from Julia.

MARSHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
He's just not a type I go for...

JULIA  
But you can see why I would? Why  
other women would?

MARSHA (O.S.)  
Of course. He's very charming -

She jabs the call off. Ignores it as Marsha calls back. Julia fast types - 'We are not friends'. It costs her a lot. She turns phone off. Then walks to Benjamin's side of the bed. Curls up in it. Squeezes eyes shut, desperate for peace -

All violence, Julia chops at the still wet hedge with shears. Her face set in fury. Not realising - Benjamin's walking into view behind her. Arms about a huge bunch of Calla lilies.

Viewing her with a hint of scepticism (he's come from Marsha and the divorce news).

BENJAMIN (O.S.)  
Coast clear?

A jolt goes through Julia, she twists around - shears first - sees Benjamin there. Holding the flowers. It disarms her.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)  
I thought you might need flowers.

JULIA  
(sharp)  
Why's that?

Her fire unnerves him, but he deliberately keeps it light.

BENJAMIN  
It's a five hour drive from London.  
And I wouldn't say they were  
exactly brimming with warmth  
towards me. Taken together I'm  
thinking...bad news. Hence -

He nods to the lilies. For a moment we don't know what Julia will do. Drive the shears into his chest?

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)  
Just tell me what they said.

Still Julia says nothing. Benjamin takes the shears from her.

JULIA  
Nothing about you, don't worry.

BENJAMIN  
Then why did I have to be banished?

JULIA  
Banished is a little strong.

She now takes the flowers. Benjamin drops the shears down.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
My favourite. How did you know?

BENJAMIN  
(the evasion comes easily)  
Good guess.

Julia half-smiles at him. Inspects the lilies to buy time.

JULIA

The kids just wanted to talk dates for the villa - Patrick had worked himself up thinking we'd be making a love nest of it and he wouldn't get a look in.

His relief is immediate and very much clocked by Julia.

BENJAMIN

You have a villa?

JULIA

Just outside Orvieto.

BENJAMIN

Lucky you. How come you've never mentioned it?

JULIA

I've always found talking about money a bit...garish.

Julia scrutinises Benjamin. Wanting to see how he reacts.

JULIA (CONT'D)

The truth is - I have lots of it, and I've never wanted for it - which in itself is - well, garish.

A hint of excitement visible in Benjamin.

BENJAMIN

So I'm dating a millionaire?

JULIA

I hate that word. But. Yes...Are you terribly disgusted?

BENJAMIN

I'll take you however you come.

JULIA

For richer or poorer.

(forcing a laugh)

But preferably richer.

And he shares in a laugh with her. Takes the lilies, sets them down, pulls her in to him for a hug. Over his shoulder, we can see Julia's face. The laugh dies. The smile drops.

The neatly ordered contents of the pantry. Just standing, staring at it - Julia. Needing the courage to ask. She grabs a bottle of red wine from a well-stocked rack. As if casual -

JULIA  
Tell me tales of London.

At the table, Benjamin sits - tipsy, the spoils of a long lunch there.

BENJAMIN  
It's dull without you. That's all you need to know.

JULIA  
(nods as if she buys it)  
Nights out? Dinners? Debauchery?

BENJAMIN  
Nope...  
(with wry charm)  
Just pined for you.

Catching him in the lie gives Julia a twisted satisfaction.

44

**INT. DAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DUSK 12**

44

With the light fading outside, we find Julia curled into Benjamin on the sofa. They've moved on to red wine. Her lips stained with it, cheeks flushed. Her control slipping. He's dozing off, which she can't see as she's leaning against him.

JULIA  
Do you find Della attractive?

Benjamin comes to with a start.

BENJAMIN  
Your daughter Della?

JULIA  
She's closer in age to you than me.

BENJAMIN  
(sensing a trap)  
Yes. She is.

JULIA  
So you *do* find her attractive?

Benjamin shifts up so he's sitting, which has Julia pushed upright. Now sat side-by-side on the sofa. He twists to her.

BENJAMIN  
I didn't say that. Della's...she's a pretty girl, but she's not, she's not the kind I go for.

JULIA  
 (jabs wine glass at him)  
 No, because you prefer the mothers  
 to the daughters, right?

Benjamin takes the glass from her hand. Sets it down.

BENJAMIN  
 I think someone's had enough red.

Julia defiantly leans forward, re-takes the glass. Drinks.

JULIA  
 Not even mother, sorry,  
*grandmother*...Tell me something,  
 Benjamin -  
 (leans into his ear)  
 Am I your first?

He veers back from her. Unamused.

BENJAMIN  
 I don't think of you as a  
*grandmother*, or a mother...I think  
 of you as...You.

Julia wants to believe it so much it hurts. She manages to give him a wine-stained toothy smile -

45

**EXT. DAY HOUSE - GARDEN - DUSK 12**

45

Julia's mouth. Wide open. Filling our view. A primal roar coming from deep within.

Now we see the rest of her. Barefoot, hurling Benjamin's possessions on bonfire. They catch light atop the wet hedge clippings. A can of gasoline there. The flames lick, the heat causes her to stagger back. Into this chaos, comes Benjamin.

BENJAMIN  
 What's going on?

Julia doesn't turn around, just hurls the last - the duffle bag - onto the fire. Benjamin sees now it's his stuff.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)  
 What the...

He takes her by the shoulder, spins her around. She thrashes free angrily.

JULIA  
 I know.  
 (screams it)  
 I know.

Benjamin goes very still. Fear on his face.

BENJAMIN

Know what?

JULIA

About you.

(a moment, then -)

About what you do. Preying on  
women. Sad. Old. Women.

BENJAMIN

What are you talking about?

JULIA

They saw you on Tuesday. Patrick

and Della. Doing your...

(spits it, with distaste)

Thing.

Benjamin tries to interject but Julia's fury is unbridled.

JULIA (CONT'D)

How many of us are there? How do  
you even have the time to be  
leeching off us all at once? In a  
way, it's something to be admired -  
if it wasn't all so, so *pathetic*. A  
grown man, about to be evicted,  
pimping yourself out -

She has to stop to draw breath. Benjamin's lost for words for  
a moment. The crackle and spit of flames engulfing his things  
brings him round. His shock hardens into anger.

BENJAMIN

That's what your children drove all  
this way to tell you...?

(snorts, in disbelief)

And you didn't think to just ask me  
about it?

JULIA

I'm asking you now.

BENJAMIN

No, you're not, you're going  
postal.

(coldly)

That was a work dinner. She was a  
client. I didn't know I needed your  
permission.

JULIA

I don't believe you.

He pulls out his phone, puts on his reading glasses. Jabs to  
get an email, reads it -

BENJAMIN

Benj - take one for the team with  
Lady Shenbrook will you? The  
harridan keeps threatening to yank  
the account -

(pauses, then, reads it)

And we all know you've a way with  
the blue rinse brigade. Cheers Zac.

He removes his glasses. It takes a moment for Julia to  
compute it through the fug of fury and alcohol.

JULIA

He means me. Doesn't he.

Benjamin refuses to make it better for her, on the attack.

BENJAMIN

And yes, I've missed a few bills so  
I've been put on notice with my  
flat -

(full rage now)

But none of that gives you the  
right to burn my stuff like some  
fucking crazy witch.

Julia's face crumples. He turns his back on her, sets to  
trying to salvage things from the fire. The heat too intense.  
For a moment, Julia's frozen - staring at his back.

46

**INT. DAY HOUSE - BOOT ROOM - NIGHT 12**

46

Julia scrabbles under the sink, empties a bucket of old  
cloths, fills it up from the tap. Sees herself in window's  
reflection - smoke-smeared, a madness to her. Just as  
Benjamin described her. She quickly looks away.

47

**EXT. DAY HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 12**

47

Julia hurls the water over the bonfire. It doesn't extinguish  
it. Yes, it dies down but not out. Neither say anything. Then-

BENJAMIN

I'm going to go.

He turns, starts walking off. Julia can only watch him go.

48

**EXT. DAY HOUSE - NIGHT 12**

48

Julia comes hurrying to the front of the house, sees Benjamin  
angrily trying and failing to get a phone signal for a cab.  
He hears her approach, doesn't turn around.

JULIA

You can't keep doing this. Running away when something gets hard.

Benjamin whips around. His ire is unabated, if anything increased by being failed by his phone.

BENJAMIN

Because it's always full disclosure with you, isn't it?

JULIA

And that's supposed to mean...?

He decides not to say it. The divorce. Ted.

BENJAMIN

What just happened, Julia?  
Your...apocalyptic reaction.  
Where's it come from? Who's it about? Because all it says to me is - you don't trust me.

Benjamin turns back away from her, exhaling into the night. Julia shakes her head, opens her mouth to deny it. And then -

JULIA

You're right.

He turns, surprised. That she's admitted it. She is too.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I don't trust anyone.

And now we know where we are, what we're hearing.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I used to. But once you let doubt in...

Julia blows out her cheeks. Directs this to the floor -

JULIA (CONT'D)

It gets everywhere. Destroys everything.

Julia eventually forces herself to look at him.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Until there's no safe place left.

The extent of her damage clear to see. It tugs at Benjamin.

BENJAMIN

I'm not Ted. I haven't done what he did.

She gives a soft nod.

JULIA

What she did.

BENJAMIN

What either of them did.

(frustrated)

You. Your children - you're all angry at the wrong person.

A big thing to take on board. Julia doesn't want to. Nowhere near ready to drop her guard.

JULIA

You haven't exactly been honest though, have you?

BENJAMIN

When would have been the right time to tell you? At the museum? The hotel? When?

JULIA

I would have understood.

He just nods like yeah right.

BENJAMIN

Is it so bad that I wanted to just...forget?..That first day I didn't have to be saddled with debts and worries and, and all that shit. I could just be - me.

This reaches something in Julia. She'd felt the same that day. A quiet settles on the pair of them. The calm after the storm. Benjamin lets one of the pillars take the weight of his body. Julia comes to his side. Not close. Not there yet.

JULIA

How did you get so behind?

He doesn't want to talk about it.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Benjamin.

Eventually he goes to speak, but directs it out to dead air.

BENJAMIN

Ally, she, she asked me to move in. I couldn't imagine a time when it wouldn't be okay...and then it wasn't...

Benjamin trails off. Hates talking about it, but Julia's just looking at him - waiting for the next - no easy outs here.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

I slept on friends sofas, until I  
got a crappy one bed. But I...  
(like pulling teeth)  
Couldn't seem to...to do much.

Julia hates seeing him like this, he hates being seen.

JULIA

What level of debt are we talking?

Benjamin doesn't want to admit it. Tries to joke -

BENJAMIN

Oh just the imminent eviction,  
bailiffs, my phone being cut off...

He trails off. Can't maintain his facade.

JULIA

You don't have any family you can  
ask for help?

Benjamin's bitter laugh says it all.

JULIA (CONT'D)

How much? To get you out of it?  
(off his silence)  
Ten thousand?

Now he looks up at her. With more fire than she was expecting-

BENJAMIN

I'm not taking money from you.

JULIA

Don't be proud, Benjamin.

BENJAMIN

No way, I'm not giving your kids  
any more rope to hang me with.

JULIA

It's none of their business.

The enormity of the offer is too much for Benjamin.

BENJAMIN

I don't want to...relying on  
someone, it...it never ends well.

Julia nods. Knows. Their connection there. The mutual damage.

JULIA

If you get the wrong person.

He looks at her - sees her need - her trust. Very tentatively  
he reaches a hand out for her shoulder, just making contact.

BENJAMIN

I won't hurt you.

JULIA

(a small nod)

I know. I do know. I'm sorry.

He needed to hear that so much. Pulls her into him. Almost desperately. Kisses the top of her head, over and over, trying to keep his composure. Into her hair, murmured -

BENJAMIN

I...I love you.

See Julia's face. What this does to it. How hard she has to bite down on her lip not to just say it back in the moment.

49

**INT. DAY HOUSE - (LOCATION TBC) - NIGHT 12**

49

The pair make urgent, needy love wherever they first land.

50

**EXT. DAY HOUSE - GARDEN - NIGHT 12**

50

The bonfire still burns.

51

**INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 12**

51

Julia lies in Benjamin's arms in her bed, which they've now made it to. They're both just staring up at the ceiling, at peace with each other, if exhausted.

LEO (O.S.)

Mum?

Their mini bubble intruded on.

52

**INT. DAY HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - NIGHT 12**

52

The kitchen's upside down. Julia's embarrassed at the state of it, pulls her robe tightly about her. Feeling exposed. Leo twists from where he's been delving hands-first into the leftover food on the side, nods to the chaos in here.

LEO

Hats off to you, Ma. You know how to break up in style.

He lifts up a bunch of tired tulips from the garage.

JULIA

(doesn't correct him)

You shouldn't be spending your money on me, but you're very sweet.

She seeks out a small vase. It's now Leo clocks - the Calla lilies. He looks from his flowers to them. Feeling lesser.

LEO  
Patrick showing me up again?

Julia takes a moment. Knows how this will go down.

JULIA  
No, not Patrick. They're...from  
Benjamin.

Which completely throws Leo. He looks about - now clocking - two of everything, two wine glasses, two coffee cups, two places laid and demolished.

LEO  
He's here isn't he?  
(of his wilting tulips)  
So the flowers were...

JULIA  
The flowers are lovely.

He just looks at her like - yeah right.

53

**INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 12**

53

Julia lies as little spoon to Benjamin's big. Off - the sound of the front door slamming. It has her flinch. Footsteps on the gravel (Leo leaving). She shuts her eyes - wanting to block out the day. And eventually - sleep comes. Which brings-

54

**INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASH BACK 1**

54

Caption: Twenty-Four Years Ago

Julia gazes down at: BABY LEO, asleep in his cot. It has the tears she's been fighting choke out. Clamps hand over mouth to not make a sound. After the briefest moment, she pulls it together. Looks down at his little body. A decision made.

She grabs a chair, ribs in agony, climbs on. Drags out the big suitcase from the wardrobe. Begins packing. She's leaving him. Julia darts a guilty glance to Ted's side of the bed -

55

**INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAWN 13**

55

Julia wakes with a start, twists to Ted's side of the bed: there is Benjamin. Relief floods her. *This is now, not then.*

56

**INT. DAY HOUSE - EN-SUITE - MORNING 13**

56

Out of the shower, hair in a turban, Julia inspects her face in the mirror. Ravaged from the booze and the upset. A just-woken Benjamin pads in. Holds out her vibrating phone to her.

BENJAMIN

Your kids. Checking you've got rid of me no doubt.

Julia can't help being defensive. Takes the phone.

JULIA

You can't blame them for being protective.

BENJAMIN

Protective's one thing...zealous is...They spied on me, so they could fill your head with lies...We have to face it - they don't want us to be together.

A tough truth to swallow for Julia.

57

**INT. DAY HOUSE - STUDY - DAY 13**

57

Book lined, a few large cacti for colour, some family photos dotting the wall, but essentially a place of work. Sat in front of the knackered old office phone, Julia and Benjamin. Their cups of tea go undrank. Obviously building up to doing something. Benjamin nods Julia on and she dials a number off by heart. As it connects - we hear but don't see -

PATRICK (O.S.)

(relieved)

Mum. I've been calling. How are you?

JULIA

Better than I was.

PATRICK (O.S.)

I hope it wasn't too...well I'm sure it was, but at least it's done with now and you'll never have to see Benjamin again.

Julia just looks at Benjamin, doesn't correct her son. Doesn't know quite how to say the next. Her silence has -

PATRICK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Mum?

JULIA

(clears throat, then -)  
I don't want to know how you and  
Della came about the information on  
him. It wasn't by chance, that much  
is clear.

PATRICK (O.S.)

(chastened)  
I, we needed to know you were okay.

And now Benjamin speaks.

BENJAMIN

She is.

An audible start on the end of the line.

PATRICK (O.S.)

Mum, what's going on? What's he  
doing there?

BENJAMIN

I wish you'd spoken to me, Patrick.

Down the phone, Patrick splutters with rage and fury.

JULIA

I know you had my best interests at  
heart, so I want us to draw a line  
under this. Alright?

PATRICK (O.S.)

Mum let me speak to you alone.

JULIA

You can say anything you want in  
front of Benjamin.

A desperate laugh heard down the phone. Benjamin gives Julia a sad shake of the head - this is useless. She perseveres.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Honestly I think I underestimated  
just how difficult it would be for  
all of you to see me with another  
man after your father -

PATRICK (O.S.)

(snorts with protest)  
- Believe me, it's not that.

JULIA

(growing curter)  
Let me finish. Then there's the age  
gap.

(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)

Which clearly is impossible for you  
to fathom without assuming  
Benjamin's got some, some ulterior  
motive. He doesn't...So please,  
just try and let me be happy.

There's silence at the end of the line, no assent, no nothing  
and so - Benjamin reaches over and pushes his thumb into the  
receiver. Ending the call. Then he takes Julia's hand.

58

**EXT. WOODLAND PATH - DAY 13**

58

Hands entwined, Julia and Benjamin look like it's them  
against the world as they traverse the Devon landscape.

58A

**INT. DAY HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING 13**

58A

Happily worn out by their walk, Julia's at the Aga checking a  
casserole, a bottle of red wine on the go. She looks to where  
Benjamin's standing, back to us and her, gazing out of the  
doors onto outside. Wine glass in hand. Without turning -

BENJAMIN

How long 'till dinner?

JULIA

About an hour.

Benjamin gives a nod. Good. Drains his wine. Pulls open the  
doors, steps out, gestures her to him -

59

**EXT. DAY HOUSE - POOL - EVENING 13, CONT.**

59

Intrigued, Julia follows Benjamin as he gets to the pool.  
Mischief glinting then - Benjamin starts stripping off.

JULIA

You can't be serious. It's not  
heated.

He just grins, already down to his boxers, yanking off his  
shirt. Waiting for her to join in. She doesn't. He keeps on  
going, until - he's naked. Then turns, dive-bombs into the  
pool. A joyous laugh erupts from Julia.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Admit it, it's freezing isn't it?

He shakes his head. Trying to stop his teeth chattering.

BENJAMIN

Positively balmy. In you come.

She just looks at him, back to the house, then - sod it,  
starts stripping.

We watch the ground as her clothes pile up, until it's just her bare feet we see, running and dive-bombing in the pool. A yelp comes from her, at the cold, at the excitement. Benjamin swims to her, gleeful. Kisses her.

As they set to skinny dipping we leave them to it.

60

**EXT. DAY HOUSE / EXT. JULIA'S VOLVO - DAY 14**

60

Julia stands in the porch, looking on as Benjamin reluctantly loads his brand new duffel bag into the boot of her car. As he closes the boot, the word blurts from Julia -

JULIA

Stay.

BENJAMIN

I don't know if I can wangle another day off.

JULIA

No I mean...stay. Move in with me.

Benjamin's surprise is clear.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Why pay for a flat you can't afford...I've got so much space, an embarrassing amount.

BENJAMIN

No. No, I can't, not out of pity, I can't.

JULIA

What about love? Would love be an acceptable reason?

He just looks at her. Has she just...has she said it back? She gives a small smile, a hint of shyness to it.

BENJAMIN

It's...quick.

Julia gives a slight inclination of her head.

JULIA

In a way...in a way it's not at all. Years I've wasted, not doing what I wanted, not snatching onto good things. You're a good thing.

BENJAMIN

Are you sure about that?

JULIA

Yes. I am.

Benjamin doesn't say anything a moment. And then -

BENJAMIN

What would I do for work?

JULIA

Whatever you've always wanted to.

He allows a tiny smile to creep onto his face.

BENJAMIN

You'll think I'm a square.

JULIA

Nothing wrong with a square.

He's a little shy about it, she nods him on kindly.

BENJAMIN

I'd like to go back to school. Not school school, obviously. A Masters. I know you want to laugh.

JULIA

(laughing)

No I was just picturing you with a satchel and me packing you off with the crusts cut off your sandwiches.

He laughs back.

JULIA (CONT'D)

If you want to do it, you should do it.

BENJAMIN

You have a way of making everything sound so easy.

JULIA

(lightly shrugs)

It can be...So will you, move in?

He thinks about it.

BENJAMIN

I should get back...

Julia's heart's in her mouth.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

I've got a lot of loose ends to tie up if I'm moving in.

And he grins. Julia's whole face lights up.

61 **INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY 14**

61

Giddy, Julia sets to readying the house. Pulls out clothes from the back of her wardrobe. A couple of Ted's old suits. It gives her pause but she won't let herself be thrown off track. Dumps them in bin sacks. Space now for Benjamin's stuff. She goes to the door where an array of designer menswear bags lie. Starts unpacking them into the wardrobe.

62 **INT. DAY HOUSE - EN-SUITE - DAY 14**

62

Julia inspects bathroom cabinet - seeing things with new eyes - her mature skin moisturizers, lubricant, haemorrhoid cream. A moment of vulnerability and then - she minesweeps them out.

63 **EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - DAY 14**

63

Bin sacks in hand, Julia uses the lion door knocker. No one answers. For a blissful moment, she considers dumping the sacks and running but then - the door opens. Marsha. Pleasantly surprised to see Julia, but before she can speak -

JULIA

I've come to see Ted.

64 **INT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - DAY 14**

64

Julia waits without ease, refusing to sit, gripping the sacks in this oasis of a kitchen. She hasn't been here for a year. Her gaze takes in: Ted's Nutribullet, a jar full of protein bars, and off in the laundry room - his cycling jerseys and tight shorts drying. The thump of Julia's heart all we hear.

TED (O.S.)

I take it this isn't a social call.

Julia twists around, sees Ted - nose swollen, black eyes faded to a greenish yellow. Instantly, it unnerves her. She looks to Marsha - who seems unharmed. Some relief for Julia.

JULIA

What happened to you?

TED

I fell.

JULIA

(disbelieving)

You fell onto your face?

A look passes between Marsha and Ted. One Julia clocks.

TED

What's in the bags?

She foists them on him. Ted opens a sack - sees his forgotten possessions. It hurts him, although he does his best not to show it. But Marsha sees. Julia sees. He pulls an envelope out, pretends his upset is about this, waves it at Julia.

TED (CONT'D)  
This is from May. *May.*

JULIA  
It's a circular. I think you'll recover.

TED  
Why now? What's the occasion?

Julia doesn't take the opportunity to be honest.

JULIA  
Next time Leo stays the night, I would appreciate it if you'd send a courtesy message so I don't worry.

MARSHA  
I did ask him to -

TED  
- Don't explain to her, she doesn't need an explanation. He's my son... If he tells me he wants to get away from you -

JULIA  
- Get away from me?

TED  
Yes. You and your...boy.

JULIA  
(taken aback)  
Leo wouldn't say that. I don't believe you.

TED  
Of course, because you're the poor injured party, aren't you? Making sure Patrick and Della won't even pick up the fucking phone to me... Well bad luck - your, your poison hasn't worked on Leo.

MARSHA  
Okay, I think we all need to calm -

JULIA  
- These are our children we're talking about. Not some...pawns.

TED  
Leo is on my side.

She laughs in disbelief. Done with this. Goes to leave.

TED (CONT'D)  
If you think it's so laughable,  
then why didn't he tell you about  
me and Marsha?..Because he knew.  
For a whole year. He knew. And he  
never said a word to you.

Julia stops dead. Another betrayal. Somehow keeps walking.

65

**EXT. MARSHA'S HOUSE - DAY 14**

65

Julia shakes her head to herself, trying to stop the upset rising. She hurries to get inside her car, drops her keys. Marsha comes hurrying out. Julia doesn't want to talk.

MARSHA  
Don't be mad at Leo. The whole...  
shitstorm of it, it's on Ted and  
me, not him. Not anyone else.

Julia clammers into the car. Marsha won't give up -

MARSHA (CONT'D)  
You've got something good with  
Benjamin, something...rare. Please  
don't let this get in the way.

But Julia just shuts the door on her. And their friendship.

66

**INT. DAY HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 14**

66

Julia lies in her old marital bed alone. Thoughts of Ted, of Benjamin, flooding her mind. She looks lost. Her phone chirrups, providing a little light in the gloom. She reaches for it. A text from 'Benjamin'. It reads just: 'One more sleep'. And the ghost of a smile appears on Julia's face.

66A

**INT. DAY HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY 15**

66A

Benjamin stands framed by the front door, holdall in hand, suitcase beside him. A local cab pulling off behind. He's beaming back as - Julia rips open the door. He drops holdall - takes her in his arms. Kisses her. Not caring whether the departing cabbie sees. Suddenly everything's okay again.

67

**INT. DAY HOUSE - OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN - NIGHT 15**

67

His cases have only got as far as the doorway here, the pair sit opposite each other, their feet entwined, champagne on the go. Lights are off, candles everywhere. Benjamin's phone has Spotify up, linked to the speakers - playing Steve Reich.

JULIA

When's the rest of your stuff coming?

BENJAMIN

There is no rest.

Julia looks at the meagre luggage, in disbelief.

JULIA

That's everything?

A flash of vulnerability shows in Benjamin's face. He tries to act light, gives a shrug. Julia sees the little boy, and lurches forward, kisses him. The lights blaze on.

Julia twists to see: Leo at the door, in his barman uniform, looking tired from that rare thing - working. It's the first time Julia's seen him since learning of the betrayal. Leo doesn't know how to ask so just kicks Benjamin's suitcase.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Yes, Leo, Benjamin is moving in.

LEO

And you didn't think to consult me?

JULIA

I didn't think I needed to.

LEO

(facetious)

No, no, of course not, it's not like I live here or anything, it's not like this is my family fucking home or anything.

BENJAMIN

Don't speak to your mum like that.

Shock takes away all Leo's words. He looks to Julia to defend him, but - she's taking Benjamin's hand. On his side.

LEO

Wow.

Leo turns to go, then turns back. Spits the next -

LEO (CONT'D)

Wait 'till the others hear about this...It's next level betrayal.

JULIA

(coolly back)

And you'd know all about that,  
wouldn't you?

Unnerving Leo. A gulf opening up between them. He walks out, slams the door. It goes right through Julia. Silence, and then Benjamin takes her hand. Squeezes it. She squeezes back. Gives him a half-hearted wink. To try to say she's okay.

Benjamin knows the truth. Grabs his phone, fiddles with Spotify. 'Love You So Bad' by Ezra Furman blasts out. As the first line kicks in - 'You know I love you so bad' - Julia can't help a soft laugh, shakes her head at Benjamin -

68 **INT. DAY HOUSE - DELLA'S BEDROOM - DAY 16 (MONTAGE)** 68

The song plays on as...Julia fills a box marked 'DELLA'. In go - dusty tennis trophies, home-taped VHS's of 'Ally McBeal' and a Kangol hat. Clearing a space for - Benjamin, who unpacks a new Apple desktop - sets it by academic history texts. As Julia goes to haul Della's stuff out, Benjamin takes the load, kisses her. We go beyond them, to the window, overlooking: the old Volvo, the crisp red and brown of Autumn-

69 **INT. DAY HOUSE - DELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 17 (MONTAGE)** 69

Winter. Everything stripped bare. And instead of the Volvo - a new ice blue Mini Clubman. The song plays on as...Julia sits on a new chaise longue, reading Benjamin's essay. He anxiously watches from desk, his glasses on. Julia's phone rings, 'Patrick' - and on a look from Benjamin - she silences it. Back to work.

When Julia's finished reading, she sets it down. Benjamin twists to her - any good? And she just beams. Proud.

70 **INT. DAY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 17 (MONTAGE)** 70

And on the song plays as...Julia holds the doors open as Benjamin heaves a handmade Christmas garland inside. Dropping pine needles everywhere. She helps him set it on the fireplace - begins threading lights into it. Benjamin bends down to plug it in - the ta da moment of - illumination. He grins, Julia laughs. It's then that she sees -

Leo. In the doorway, holding a box of old decorations - handmade ones they did as kids. He sees their merriment. That there's no place for him. Hurt, he dumps the box - cutting dead the song. Walks off but as Julia's about to follow him -

Benjamin's taking her hand, pointing out their wonky decorations, keeping her inside their love bubble -

71

**EXT. SOUTH WEST COAST PATH CLIFF EDGE - SUNSET 17**

71

Being buffeted by the winds, and wrapped up in dwarfing parkas, Julia and Benjamin walk along the coastal path. It's beautiful. If freezing. Julia keeps looking across at Benjamin who has his chin and mouth buried in his scarf.

JULIA

You're very quiet today.

BENJAMIN

Am I?

Julia raises an eyebrow at him but he gives nothing away. The pair walk on. After a while, they get to a dramatic headland where the cliff drops away. (We might recognise it from the end of episode one).

Julia goes to the edge, inhales the sea air. Liberated by it. All she can see: unending sea, and below - the sheer cliff face, sandy beach at the base of it.

BENJAMIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Don't move.

She twists around, sees Benjamin's stopped further back. Is bent over his backpack, rummaging for something. Eventually pulling out - his camera bag, a shiny new digital SLR inside.

JULIA

You and that camera.

BENJAMIN

(serious)

I want to remember this moment.

JULIA

Sap.

But he doesn't smile. Something clearly *is* troubling him. A ring tone peals out, Julia fumbles in her pocket. Answers -

JULIA (CONT'D)

Yes, speaking...

She half-listens but she's really just looking at Benjamin as he checks back over past photos, deletes some. Frowning.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Thank you for letting me know...

Yes, you too. Bye.

Julia puts the phone away, explaining to him as she does -

JULIA (CONT'D)

You're on the joint accounts.

Finally.

Benjamin stops what he's doing. Just looks at her and then -  
Lifts his camera to his eye. We go down the lens - as - the  
camera fires, freezing Julia in one, another, another photo.  
Looking small, vulnerable, just dead air behind her.

After a moment, Benjamin puts the camera away. Leaves the  
backpack. Walks toward her. So he's standing in front of her,  
behind her - the cliff edge. She sees his eyes are filling.

JULIA (CONT'D)

What is it?

He puts both his hands to her shoulders. A tear falls. Julia  
only now realising how close to the edge she is.

BENJAMIN

I...

Julia tries to move from his grasp. He doesn't let her.

JULIA

You're scaring me.

Then the rest blurts from him.

BENJAMIN

Will you, will you marry me?

And the last thing we see - is Julia's shock.

**END OF EPISODE THREE**