

# **IN MY SKIN**

PILOT  
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Written by

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C/o Expectation Entertainment

A FRENCH WOMAN'S SULTRY VOICE narrates over the below action. The sound of waves crashing in the distance, the occasional seagull caw. Almost like an art house French film... *Almost*.

FRENCH WOMAN (V.O.)  
A seagull flew in and landed  
Gold shimmer on her wings

\* A seagull watches through open balcony doors as a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, who will we come to know as POPPY, sleeps on white sheets, sunlight kissing her face.

FRENCH WOMAN (V.O.)  
Bird in me, roaming freely  
My head weary

\* POPPY'S sipping coffee - froth on the end of her nose. She realises and laughs maniacally.

FRENCH WOMAN (V.O.)  
My eyes teary  
*This is love*

\* POPPY jumps on the bed, jubilantly swinging a pillow in a pillow fight, but when the camera pans around - it's the seagull stood there. As if it's the bird she's whacking...

FRENCH WOMAN (V.O.)  
Like a candle in a dark room  
Like a blow heater in a shed

\* POPPY'S lying on the bed, the sheets fluttering above her as she laughs. Just a seagull wing edging in to shot.

FRENCH WOMAN (V.O) (CONT'D)  
But then Seagull flies away  
Even though you pray

\* The sun disappears, the saturation of the shot becoming cold and grey. The bed now empty.

FRENCH WOMAN (V.O.)  
Gone for every day  
*This is love*

\* A spilt cup of coffee on the table, a single feather lying in the pooled liquid.

CUT TO:

2

**INT. LLANFYR HIGH SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY**

2

On the threshold of the staff room, MS MORGAN doesn't know what to say. She's been collared by BETHAN (16), making her read a poem she's written.

BETHAN  
... Should I enter it?

MS MORGAN  
It's a bit... So is she in love  
with a seagull?

BETHAN  
Well it's a metaphor. *Obviously.*

MS MORGAN  
(Ignoring the sass)  
Right... Have you been in love  
before?

BETHAN shrugs. MS MORGAN is her no-nonsense English and Drama teacher. The kind of teacher who can have a laugh with the kids, but she's not a push over. She's cool, they like her.

MS MORGAN (CONT'D)  
Just be honest. Give us something  
real, a bit of grit.  
(Beat)  
Right, I've got a bowl of soup in  
there forming a skin...

MS MORGAN heads back inside, leaving BETHAN dejected. She heads over to where her best friend, TRAVIS (16), is pinning a petition on the school noticeboard --

TRAVIS  
What did she say?

BETHAN  
She loved it.

CUT TO:

3

**EXT. PARK - EVENING**

3

BETHAN and TRAVIS are hanging out with the third member of their gang - LYDIA (16). School uniforms on, sitting on their coats in a circle on the grass. These aren't the cool kids, they're just the nothing kids. Shit food from the corner shop, passing a bottle of Martini Rosso around. Music playing out from an iPhone positioned in a plastic cup to amplify the speaker. TRAVIS has his shoes off, bare feet on the grass --

TRAVIS

See this is what I'm talking about, grounding. You gotta have your barefeet on the grass right, and then the negative charges in your body can just run in to the earth.

LYDIA

I'm not signing your petition.

TRAVIS

What, why?

LYDIA

Because it's made up shit.

TRAVIS

It's not. Scientists have done studies. We're making ourselves sick with these rubber soles -- (gesturing to his trainers)  
Separating us from the earth.

LYDIA

Yeah, put your snaggle toes away and get out my ears.

BETHAN

I signed it. But you owe me 'cos Mrs Blocker caught me with my phone out. She was like -

BETHAN does a pretty bang on impersonation of their butch, Valley's, P.E. teacher.

BETHAN (CONT'D)

"Bethan Gwyndaf, is that phone more interesting than me? Because if it is - by all means - GET OUT..."

TRAVIS

That actually sounds just like her.

LYDIA

(She's not as good)  
"GET OUUUUT!"

BETHAN

She's mad. And then she was trying to get me swinging round the box vault. I was like babe, I'm not Janette Manrara...

The only thing belying the sass coming out of BETHAN'S mouth is the sleeves pulled down nervously over her hands.

LYDIA

Priest said she takes steroids.  
Which I believe 'cos she's fucking  
ripped.

BETHAN

She's a brick shit house. Seen when  
she wears that Puma drawstring bag?  
Looks like a fly on an elephant's  
back...

TRAVIS squeals with laughter just as he takes a slug of Martini Rosso, blowing it out of his nose. TRAVIS is pure goodness, and just a little effeminate. He wants to take care of everyone - the girls, the world. He's only ever worrying or giggling.

TRAVIS

Ah you're a dick!

BETHAN

Ugh wipe your Rosso-snot.

A moment of them all laughing, TRAVIS wiping at his nose, until LYDIA pierces BETHAN --

LYDIA

Aren't you and her the same size  
though?

That's classic LYDIA, she's laughing with you one minute, and the next she's jelly-fished you. But her damage is so close to the surface, TRAVIS and BETHAN just take it. They know LYDIA needs them.

They watch as a group of POPULAR GIRLS from school pass, nodding their recognition. Amongst them is POPPY from Sc 1. She's being trailed by a GEEK GIRL, DEBBIE CHAPMAN, who clearly doesn't fit in with the crowd. BETHAN'S eyes linger for just a second too long on POPPY. BETHAN likes POPPY.

BETHAN

What's Poppy doing with Debbie  
Chapman?

LYDIA

Poppy's a cunt. Debbie was in the newspaper or something and now Poppy wants to be her friend. It's so transparent.

TRAVIS

Debbie Chapman had sex with a  
frozen sausage.

BETHAN

I thought she was taking Chemistry  
A Level two years early?

LYDIA

So, she can still fuck a sausage.

TRAVIS

Everyone says she did. And it  
snapped inside her.

LYDIA

Ugh spare me.

Beat. LYDIA produces some pills. TRAVIS nervous.

TRAVIS

... What's in it?

LYDIA

(Sarcastic posh voice)  
Well alprazolam is a form of  
benozodiazepine - what d'you want a  
fucking ingredients list?

LYDIA slams one back with a slug of Martini --

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Come on...

BETHAN and TRAVIS both take a pill, locking eyes, wordlessly  
saying "we doing this?"

BETHAN

See you on the other side...

They knock them back. LYDIA skips the track, Never Be The  
Same - Camila Cabello, blares out. She shouts at the sky --

LYDIA

Yaaaaaaaaas!

GO TO: Fast cuts of the next couple of hours: the three of  
them jumping up and down, slugging Martini, giggling.

GO TO: TRAVIS and BETHAN both moon-eyed now, completely  
wasted as they try to calm LYDIA down, she's crying and  
freaking out. They're all being melodramatic, but also kind  
of loving it.

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
I should just fucking kill myself,  
my mother wouldn't care.

TRAVIS  
Babe, stop - you're scaring me.

BETHAN  
Just have some water OK?

LYDIA  
Why - you don't care about me...

A wave of nausea hits LYDIA and she pukes.

TRAVIS  
What we gonna do? We're gonna have  
to take her to hospital.

BETHAN  
Lydia come on - have some water.

LYDIA  
Fuck off!

She pukes again, BETHAN and TRAVIS holding her up.

GO TO: Calm now. They're all lying on the patchy damp grass,  
bodies and hands entwined as they look up at the stars.

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
I just like it when it's just the  
three of us...

BETHAN  
Yeah.  
(Beat)  
You know in the summer - my parents  
have got a house in Italy. We  
should go.

TRAVIS  
Imagine? That would be amazing.

GO TO: TRAVIS and BETHAN hug goodbye, LYDIA already pin-  
balling off down the road --

BETHAN  
Will you get her home?

TRAVIS  
Yeah. Text us when you're in.

BETHAN watches TRAVIS trail off after LYDIA calling to her, "Slow ya batty down".... When the coast is clear, BETHAN stands a little straighter, a little sharper. She pulls the Xanax pill from her pocket and slings it in a hedge. She didn't take it. But she did a bloody good impersonation of it.

CUT TO:

4

EXT/INT. BETHAN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

4

BETHAN creeps home. She opens the front door of this bog standard semi-detached house. Respectable looking enough from the outside. But inside we see the hallway has no carpet, just brown council tiles on the floor. There's a TV light flickering from the lounge. BETHAN closes the front door as gently as possible and creeps upstairs.

CUT TO:

5

INT. BETHAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

5

Her haven. Pink and orange walls, Posters, bead curtains. BETHAN makes her way to her bed in the dark, crashing in to a chest-of-drawers. She waits with baited breath to hear if anyone has heard her... No, all clear.

She collapses back on to the bed in her clothes. She pulls her phone out and takes a selfie holding up some breath spray. She texts it to her WhatsApp group with TRAVIS and LYDIA. "Uh so my mother just asked to smell my breath... Go ahead babe, I'm minty fresh!" - loads of laughing emojis. And then another message, "love you bitches x" - she passes out.

GO TO LATER: BETHAN wakes with a start. Something's not right... We become aware of a sound outside, a voice singing. Icy fear grips her stomach. BETHAN scrambles to look out of her window and sees her MUM, KATRINA, down on the road. Barefoot and wearing a thin nightie. She's frantically scrubbing the car, sloshing foamy water all over it. The doors flung open, the radio blaring Queen - Bohemian Rhapsody as TRINA gleefully sings along.

KATRINA

*I see a little silhouetto of a man,  
Scaramouche, Scaramouche, will you  
do the Fandango?*

A car swerves to avoid her, beeping the horn.

CUT TO:

6

INT. BETHAN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

6

BETHAN, shitting herself, knocks on her parents bedroom door.

BETHAN  
Dad... Dad.

DILWYN (O.O.V)  
(Grunting, pissed off)  
What you doing?

BETHAN  
It's mum - she's out in the road.

DILWYN (O.O.V)  
... Leave the mad bitch out there.

CUT TO:

7

EXT. BETHAN'S HOUSE - ROAD - NIGHT

7

KATRINA is euphoric as she scrubs the car, her nightie sodden. *"Bismillah! No, we will not let you go (let him go!)"* etc. BETHAN frightened, a coat flung over her pyjamas.

BETHAN  
Mum. Mum come in the house...  
(Trying to take KATRINA'S hand, she's shaken off)  
Mum shh - the neighbours...

Curtains twitch at a nearby house, BETHAN is mortified. She tries to pull KATRINA in to the house --

BETHAN (CONT'D)  
Mum you're freezing, come in and have a cuppa tea --

KATRINA yanks herself free, locking eyes with BETHAN --

KATRINA  
*Beelzebub has a devil put aside for me, for me, for me...*

It's sinister. KATRINA'S mood suddenly changes, she drops the sponge, turns on her heel, and stalks off down the road.

BETHAN  
Fucking hell... Mum!

CUT TO:

8

**EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - NIGHT**

8

KATRINA is striding along with purpose. BETHAN pale with fear as she trails after her. KATRINA (40) - is a working class grafter with a heart of gold, she'd give her last penny away, take care of anyone. And right now she's in the midst of a breakdown.

KATRINA

I gotta see your uncle Dai - he knows what it's about.

BETHAN

(Taking off her coat)  
Please will you put this on?

KATRINA

Your father's brother, Dai. He knows.

(Suddenly screaming)  
*Bismillah! No, we will not let you go!*

A MAN opens a bedroom window and shouts out --

MAN

Shut your flapping dap gob!

KATRINA

Sorry love. Come and join us, why don't you?

BETHAN

(Hissing at JULIE)  
Shhh you're waking people up.

MAN

D'you wanna deliver my pies?

KATRINA

Yeah love I'll deliver your pies, easy peasy, that's no bother.

MAN

TWAT!

BETHAN grabs her mum's arms, pleading with her.

BETHAN

Please mum, please will you come with me?

KATRINA

Why d'you look scared? Don't be  
scared baby, I'm the strongest  
woman in the world.

Beat. BETHAN seizes the moment of calm and leads TRINA off by the hand. We see a road sign, one side pointing towards Llanfyr High School, the other towards The Mari Huws Psychiatric Hospital...

CUT TO:

9 **INT. THE MARI HUWS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - RECEPTION - NIGHT** 9

We cut to the starkly lit reception of a mental hospital. BETHAN bundles her mum through the doors --

BETHAN

Just sit down for a minute, rest  
your legs.

BETHAN tries to keep her dignity as she politely approaches the RECEPTIONIST --

BETHAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me, sorry to bother you. Is  
there a doctor on duty? My mum's  
not very well.

TRINA has made a beeline for the leaflets, flinging one after the other over her shoulder, "rubbish, rubbish, lies".

RECEPTIONIST

Hang on, I'll need a senior nurse.

The RECEPTIONIST opens a door to a side office --

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Jack...

Out comes NURSE JACKIE DIGBY, surveying the scene before her.

NURSE DIGBY

Hiya love, I'm Nurse Digby. Who's  
this, mum is it?

BETHAN

Yeah my mum. She's been here  
before, she's got bi-polar --

NURSE DIGBY

OK. You on yer own?

BETHAN nods. TRINA grabs her from behind, swaying with her

KATRINA  
Come and dance baby.

BETHAN  
Mum, hang on a minute...

NURSE DIGBY  
What's your name love?

KATRINA  
Trina Gwyndaf, Queen of the fucking  
world.

NURSE DIGBY plucks up a phone, calm and in charge --

NURSE DIGBY  
Just keep her there.  
(Into phone)  
Crisis team please...

CUT TO:

10

INT. BETHAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

10

BETHAN is rooting through a drawer, leafing through piles of last notice bills and junk-mail. She lands on what she was looking for, a takeaway menu with an old scrawled message from her mum on the back of it: *"I've gone up nana's. There's stuff in the freezer. Love you, Mum x"*

GO TO: BETHAN scrawls in a notepad, practicing copying the "Mum" over and over.

CUT TO:

11

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

11

We open on BETHAN yawning - the only indicator of the night she's had. She's in English class with LYDIA and TRAVIS, huddled around a table waiting for MS MORGAN to arrive. POPPY, DEBBIE CHAPMAN and some popular girls sat near by.

LYDIA  
I'm in so much shit. My mother  
phoned the school.

BETHAN  
Fuck.

TRAVIS

Did she report us as well?

LYDIA

Oh yeah, save your own skin...

TRAVIS

Not like that, you know what I mean.

LYDIA

No - just me.

BETHAN

How'd she even know?

LYDIA

She's been counting them apparently. It's like - get a life.

BETHAN

Yeah, tell me. I got up this morning to this...

Just as MS MORGAN enters, BETHAN shows them a note, "I wanna see you when I get in from work... Mum" TRAVIS rubs at his temples, the stress of it --

TRAVIS

Jesus - I knew something like this would happen.

BETHAN rolls her eyes, calming his anxiety, whispering --

BETHAN

Oh babe it'll be fine.

MS MORGAN

Right, bit of hush please. First things first - a gentle reminder you need your poems in by 12 tomorrow.

STAN PRIEST, the school bully, has his feet up on the desk. He's half a foot taller than everyone else and finds himself hilarious --

PRIEST

I don't wanna be in the anthology, Miss.

MS MORGAN

Well that's good, Priest - 'cos I highly doubt you will be.

The class all laugh, "ha - burn" etc.

MS MORGAN (CONT'D)

It's compulsory you all turn one in, so no excuses. If you say your dog ate it, you best be bringing me your dog's stool sample to prove it.

BETHAN

Yeah but Miss, if one of us wins - do we actually get paid? Or is this slave labour?

MS MORGAN

Your poem gets printed in the anthology. That's your payment: fame and the respect of your peers.

BETHAN

... Yeah I'd rather the money thanks.

MS MORGAN smirks at her. BETHAN is cheeky but not naughty - the teachers like her.

MS MORGAN

Enough lip, Gwyndaf. Jane Eyre.  
Page 45...

GO TO: It's the end of class, all the other KIDS are filing out but BETHAN hangs back.

MS MORGAN (CONT'D)

Yeah - why you dangling like the drip who never dropped?

BETHAN isn't so cocky now.

BETHAN

Can I show you this? I wrote something else after we spoke.

BETHAN hands over her poem. Without the other kids there, we see she really wants this.

MS MORGAN

Thought you said it was slave labour?

BETHAN

Well. I'm a wit aren't I...

BETHAN watches her intently as MS MORGAN skim reads the poem

MS MORGAN  
 "No jobs, no prospects..."

We jump cut to see the poem playing out...

CUT TO:

12

EXT. WELSH LANDSCAPES - DAY

12

A gritty black and white video plays a la Ken Loach or the like. A deep, booming Welsh man's voice narrates, akin to Richard Burton --

WELSH MAN (V.O.)  
 In this green land of ours  
 Mind your manners  
 Or your Mam'll mind your knackers

\* A snot-nosed kid kicks a ball against a wall - *thud, thud, thud.*

WELSH MAN (V.O)  
 Black soot smeared face  
 Back broken with labour

\* A "closed" sign hangs on a chain in front of a mine, swinging ominously in the breeze.

WELSH MAN (V.O) (CONT'D)  
 But still he can't afford a pint  
 'Leccy off  
 No light.

\* A strong, soot covered hand ties a thick rope in a knot.

JUMP CUT TO:

13

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

13

We sharply cut back to the classroom - MS MORGAN has stopped reading --

BETHAN  
 ... Did you read it all?

MS MORGAN  
 No.

MS MORGAN is frustrated as she hands the poem back.

BETHAN  
 Oh. Is it OK?

MS MORGAN  
It's not about "OK", Bethan. I know  
said grit but I meant *your* grit.  
Speak from the heart... That's all  
I want. That's art.

CUT TO:

14

**INT. GIRLS CHANGING ROOM - DAY / INT. CARAVAN - DAY**

14

Loud and boisterous as the GIRLS are changing in to their P.E Kits. BETHAN is sat on the wooden benches, scrawling in her notepad. LYDIA'S sarcy as usual --

LYDIA  
Hurry up. What you doing, writing  
your diary?

BETHAN  
Uh, no. I haven't done the biology  
homework.

The bell sounds. The GIRLS all start filing in to the hall.

LYDIA  
I'm not waiting for you.

BETHAN  
Fine, I'll be in now.

As they clear away, BETHAN turns back to her notepad. Quietly reading aloud to herself, Kate Tempest style now --

BETHAN (CONT'D)  
You run, I run, we all run.  
Blind, deaf, dumb --

Her phone rings, "Nana calling". BETHAN lights up.

BETHAN (CONT'D)  
Hiya nan.

We cut between BETHAN and her NANA as needed. NANA sat in a caravan playing poker. She's a no-nonsense, punch you as fast as she'll hug you, Welsh matriarch.

NANA  
Where's my girl?

BETHAN  
I'm yer...

The way they always start their conversations.

NANA

Good. Well. I'm down the caravan.  
 Lost three rounds of bingo. And now  
 I've just had a tikka pasty that  
 tastes like arsehole's, so that's  
 £1.50 down the hoop.

BETHAN

(Beat)

Nan...

NANA

(Sensing something's  
 wrong)

What's the matter?

BETHAN

... She's back in.

NANA

... Ah fucking toot-my-shoot.  
 (Beat)

Well what have they said?

BETHAN

I dunno yet, I'm going up the  
 hospital after school --

There's a movement. POPPY has slipped back in, grabbing a hairband from her bag. Fuck - what has she heard?

NANA

Strewth. Well I can't get back  
 today, I got no wheels. Peg Leg  
 Roger brought me down on the  
 moped...

CUT TO:

15

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GYM - DAY

15

A few moments later, BETHAN slips in late, trailing awkwardly behind POPPY. BETHAN uncomfortable looking in a grey gym skirt and polo shirt as her trainers squeak. MRS BLOCKER - a woman akin to Mrs Trunchball, with a voice very like the impression BETHAN did up top - rounds on her.

MRS MORGAN

Bethan Gwyndaf. Answer me this. If  
 you can't be bothered to get in yer  
 on time - why should I? Really?  
 Give me one good reason?

BETHAN  
'Cos you're the one getting paid?

The KIDS all laugh, "gutted Miss" etc. BETHAN thrilled but she plays it cool.

MRS BLOCKER  
Enough. You lot of trophy-for-turning-up, waste of oxygen, rats in the sewer. If any of you had as much get-up-and-go as I've got in my little finger, this country might have lower rates of heart disease. And yet...

MRS BLOCKER turns to grab a dangling rope for a demonstration, revealing a drawstring bag that does indeed look like a fly on an elephant's back. TRAVIS nudges BETHAN, both of them suppressing a laugh.

MRS BLOCKER (CONT'D)  
Something funny, Travis Beams?  
Because heart disease is no joke,  
my boy...

TRAVIS  
No miss. Just thought I saw a fly.

MRS BLOCKER  
What's funny about a fly? Check  
your smiles at the door please.

GO TO: A little later. BETHAN is trying to yank herself up the rope, but has no upper arm strength whatsoever. The rope swinging, her pudgy bare legs flying as she tries to wrap them around the rope. Everyone watching.

MRS BLOCKER (CONT'D)  
You've got a grip like wet spaghetti, girl!

BETHAN finally wraps her legs around the rope and clings on for dear life. Painfully aware that POPPY is witnessing it --

BETHAN  
Argh, it's ripping my skin off.

MRS BLOCKER  
Snowflakes, the lot of you --

Just then, MRS BLOCKER notices a spot of red blood blossoming out on the seat of BETHAN'S skirt --

MRS BLOCKER (CONT'D)  
Right, down you get.

BETHAN  
Hang on, I can't, I'm gonna fall.

MRS BLOCKER  
Go on now, who's next?

MRS BLOCKER is trying to save her blushes but too late. LYDIA has seen the blood and is trying to cover her laugh --

LYDIA  
Oh my god babe.

PRIEST points at the stain --

PRIEST  
Ahhhhh gutted! Aunty Flo's in town.

BETHAN cranes her neck and spots the stain - mortified. MRS BLOCKER is hushed to her --

MRS BLOCKER  
You can get changed.

BETHAN'S face burns as she throws a furtive glance at POPPY. She makes the long, squeaky-shoed walk to the changing room, trying to hold her hands over the stain.

CUT TO:

16

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY

16

After school, BETHAN, LYDIA and TRAVIS all walk home together along the high street. BETHAN still mortified.

TRAVIS  
No one's gonna remember tomorrow.

BETHAN  
Priest's been calling me Jam Rag  
Knickers all day.

LYDIA  
What were you thinking? That's P.E  
101 - always a fresh tampon.

BETHAN  
Yeah thanks for making sure  
everyone noticed, by the way.

TRAVIS senses a row brewing, he deflects it, as his way.

TRAVIS  
D'you reckon Ms Morgan has a  
vibrator?

BETHAN  
Yeah for sure. I bet she's worn it  
down to a nub.

LYDIA  
I don't wanna go home... My  
mother's gonna bore my tits off  
with a drugs lecture.

TRAVIS  
What tits?

LYDIA  
What would you know about tits?

Ouch. TRAVIS' face burns - he isn't out yet.

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
Can I come to yours?

TRAVIS  
Can't, I'm at my dad's tonight.

LYDIA  
Cool, thanks for nothing. Beth -  
hook me up, just for an hour.

BETHAN  
I wish - I've been summoned to my  
mother's study when I get in.

The lie trips easily off the tongue. LYDIA joke-dramatically  
shouts at the sky --

LYDIA  
FUUUUCK IT! Let's just run away...

BETHAN  
(Checking a text on her  
phone)  
Yeah gladly. But until then - my  
mother wants "rosemary"... dick  
head. Message you in a bit.

LYDIA  
I'll probably be dead.

TRAVIS  
Love you.

LYDIA and TRAVIS plod off. We hold on BETHAN as she hovers outside the Green Grocer's, inspecting the display of veg, waiting for them to clear...

BETHAN glances over, the pair of them are stopped at the corner chatting. LYDIA spots her and yells --

LYDIA  
What you doing?

BETHAN  
Buying veg. What you doing,  
prostituting yourself?

LYDIA  
Whatever.

BETHAN waves and walks in to the shop.

CONTINUOUS TO:

17

INT. GREEN GROCER'S - DAY

17

There's a big sign up on the door, "NO SCHOOL KIDS ALLOWED", but she enters anyway. Immediately --

GINA  
No school kids.

It's otherwise silent and empty, just an ELDERLY WOMAN, GINA, on the checkout. BETHAN, in her uniform, quips straight away.

BETHAN  
What makes you think I'm a school  
kid?

GINA  
(Direly unimpressed)  
Oh a regular Ken Dodd is it? Out.

From the shop BETHAN can still see TRAVIS and LYDIA out on the corner. She scrabbles to ingratiate herself --

BETHAN  
Sorry. Please can I just get some  
rosemary for my mum? I'll leave my  
bag.

GINA holds her eye contact, sizing her, gazing in to her very soul. Eventually --

GINA  
... Make it quick.

BETHAN  
Thanks.

GINA  
Bag.

BETHAN drops her bag and approaches a display full of herbs - not a fucking clue which one is rosemary. She grabs a pack and moves on along the display --

BETHAN  
Sorry, just a few other bits...

BETHAN can feel GINA watching her every move. Her eyes linger on some weird looking little balls --

GINA  
Lychees.

BETHAN  
Yeah I know.

GINA  
Oh you know do you? Why's your gob catching flies then?

BETHAN  
That's just my face. My mum sent me a list, she wants rosemary and lychees --

GINA  
*You're a liar. Like every other teen turd who comes in 'yer wanting to rob off me.*

BETHAN  
Why you calling me a teen turd for?

GINA half pulls a tennis racket out from behind the counter, revealing it like it's a gun in her waistband --

GINA  
Wanna taste this, turd breath?

BETHAN  
What the hell?!

GINA  
Quit fingering my goods, or I'll be fingering you to the police.

BETHAN

Oh yeah? ... Well why don't you go  
finger yourself!

BETHAN chuck's the stuff and runs out, grabbing her bag --

GINA

Yeah run, 'for I knock you out.

BETHAN

(Shoving two fingers up)  
Suck on them!

CONTINUOUS TO:

18

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY

18

BETHAN eyes quickly dart to the corner, TRAVIS and LYDIA gone. She's exhilarated, shouting back at the shop front

BETHAN

... Ya stupid old bag-head!

She walks on, doubling back through the village.

BETHAN (V.O.)

She's right though. I've been telling lies since I was 8 years old. Jemma Jones came round my house and saw my dad had a wardrobe full of porno mags. She laughed at me and said it was weird and then told everyone at primary school. I said she was lying and it was her dad who had the pornos, and everyone believed me. She was too hysterical, made her seem untrustworthy.

As she trudges along past the pub, there's a voice --

DILWYN (O.O.V)

Oi...

BETHAN turns around and sees her father, DILWYN (40s), cradling a pint at the pub doorway as he flicks a rollie butt to the floor. He was good looking once, but it's been faded by booze, drugs and fighting. To his mates he's charismatic and funny, a lovable rogue. Behind closed doors he's something else.

BETHAN

Yeah?

DILWYN  
Where's your mother?

BETHAN  
Hospital.

DILWYN looks at her, chewing the news over as he slowly pinches at an invisible hair in his nostril and yanks it out.

BETHAN (V.O) (CONT'D)  
I wanna kill him. Every morning he coughs his snot in the sink and I wanna stab him in the back. I'd have to really hack him to get through all the muscle.

DILWYN  
... You shouldn't have done that.

His words knock BETHAN, she hates him. She wants his approval

BETHAN  
Well... She wasn't well.

DILWYN runs his eyes over her. No saying what he'll do next. He fishes a hand in his pocket and pulls out a couple of quid

DILWYN  
Get some chips.

Beat. BETHAN takes the money, "ta", and walks on.

BETHAN (V.O.)  
My dad used to be a Hell's Angel, they were called Satan's Bastards. But he left 'cos he crashed his bike and got his foot caught in the engine. His right foot's only got two toes now. It's sick. He calls my mother "the mad bitch", but he's the maddest bastard I ever met. He just won't go to the doctors. It's different to my mum though, he knows what he's doing.

As the VO plays we follow her along the street. Past the sign for Llanfyr High School and The Mari Huws Psychiatric hospital - in the cold light of day we see how close they are. Opposite. Through some broad iron gates and on towards the hospital.

CUT TO:

19 **INT. THE MARI HUWS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - CORRIDORS - DAY 19**

BETHAN walks down the long, deserted corridor, past locked wards. Now clutching a bottle of Lucozade. Sound of her school shoes echoing. Every sound amplified. It's frightening

CUT TO:

20 **INT. THE MARI HUWS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY 20**

BETHAN rings a bell at the door to the ward.

CUT TO:

21 **INT. THE MARI HUWS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - LOCKERS - DAY 21**

An NS NURSE stands by as BETHAN empties her pockets, money, rucksack, etc in to a locker.

CUT TO:

22 **INT. THE MARI HUWS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - FAMILY ROOM - DAY 22**

A big glass partition on one side so they're visible to the nurses outside. BETHAN is shown in to where KATRINA sits, calm now, dark rings around her eyes.

BETHAN

Alright, mum?

KATRINA

Hiya love. Thanks for coming in.

BETHAN

Course.

BETHAN kisses her mother. KATRINA looks at her school jumper.

KATRINA

You needs to wash that, you got egg on it or something.

BETHAN

Yeah I will.

Beat. BETHAN sits herself down on a rickety chair, observing her mother. She seems... Fine.

BETHAN (CONT'D)

Nana's gonna come in tomorrow. She been down the caravan.

KATRINA

Ah nice... Nice weather for it.

Beat.

BETHAN

Been alright today?

KATRINA

Not really, no, Beth. I'm sectioned now, that's it.

BETHAN

Yeah.

KATRINA

Locked ward.

BETHAN

Yeah.

KATRINA

(Levelling her with a sad gaze)

... What have you done to me?

Guilt chews at BETHAN'S gut --

BETHAN

I'm sorry, mum.

Beat. KATRINA shrugs like, "It's done now".

BETHAN (CONT'D)

I got you some pop.

BETHAN proffers the Lucozade, KATRINA takes it, looks at it, and hurls it at the wall - BANG! BETHAN jumps out of her skin

KATRINA

You stupid bitch! See what you've done? You've delivered me in to the eye of the storm 'yer. Cameras everywhere --

(Pointing at a clock)  
Watching me. It all gets reported back. These ain't nurses.

BETHAN

They are.

KATRINA

No some of 'um are, not all of 'um.  
You're sucked in.

NURSE DIGBY and an NS NURSE come in at the commotion.

NURSE DIGBY  
Trina, what's the matter? Come'un  
out here --

KATRINA leaps up, grabbing a chair to fend them off, she's  
frightened, lashing out --

KATRINA  
Don't you touch my daughter.

NURSE DIGBY  
Of course not, put the chair down --

KATRINA  
Beth, get behind me.

NURSE DIGBY  
(Calm, talking softly)  
No-one's gonna hurt her. I just  
wanna talk. Gimme the chair and  
we'll --

NURSE DIGBY takes a small step forward, and KATRINA, coiled  
and ready to protect her daughter flings the chair and lunges  
for NURSE DIGBY pushing her back --

KATRINA  
Touch her and I'll kill you.

BETHAN shrinks back against the wall, the sight twisting her  
gut as she watches on. NURSE DIGBY and the NS NURSE act  
quickly to restrain her. They stand either side of KATRINA,  
one hand on the back of her shoulder, the other hand pinning  
her arms to her sides. KATRINA struggles, screaming --

KATRINA (CONT'D)  
HELP ME! SOMEBODY!

NURSE DIGBY talks calmly the whole time as they force her in  
to a seating position on a sofa, NURSES sitting either side

NURSE DIGBY  
You're safe here. We're here to  
help you, you're alright.  
(to BETH)  
Can you step outside please?

BETHAN is pale with fear, trembling as she steps outside. She  
looks on through the window pane at the NURSES pinning her  
mum to the sofa. TRINA crumbles, sobbing.

KATRINA  
Please don't hurt my baby.

CUT TO:

23

INT. THE MARI HUWS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - COMMUNAL LOUNGE 23

A little later, BETHAN sits beside KATRINA on a frayed, sagging sofa. KATRINA now just staring ahead at the TV like a zombie. *The One Show* playing. BETHAN glances around the room. NS NURSES in scrubs, and NS PATIENTS dotted around. Some chatting as they eat their dinner from plastic trays; a PATIENT and a NURSE playing a game of pool; and then BETHAN'S eyes land on a PATIENT stood in front of a book shelf, staring at it as she shuffles incessantly from foot to foot, flinging book after book to the floor.

BETHAN (V.O)

When I was a baby, my dad was in prison. My mum said she took me on the bus and queued in the council all day every day for two weeks, trying to get us a house in Llanfyr - cos it's posh here. Better schools for me. Then when I was 12 I said I wanted to go live with my nana, and my mum said, "You thick or what? I might be crashing the car, but I'm trying to throw you out the window"...

BETHAN reaches for the Lucozade --

BETHAN (CONT'D)  
Want a drop of pop, mum?

TRINA looks at her, like she's just remembering that BETHAN is there.

KATRINA  
I told you I had a baby girl who died. She was prettier than you.

TRINA turns back to the TV. BETHAN just pours the pop in to a plastic beaker and hands it to her mother.

After a beat, a CHINESE MAN in a powder blue tux, who we'll come to know as ALFRED, sits down next to BETHAN. She eyes him awkwardly, he pulls out a photograph of Charlotte Church from his inside pocket and shows it to BETHAN --

ALFRED

Charlotte Church is the voice of an angel. By 2007 she'd sold over ten million records worldwide --

BETHAN awkwardly looks at the photograph.

BETHAN

Oh right. That's amazing.

(Plucking up her phone)

Sorry, I'm just on a - I gotta send a message on here...

ALFRED nods, sitting back in the chair still very close to BETHAN and turning his attention to the TV, *The One Show* still playing. BETHAN starts whatsapping LYDIA and TRAVIS, "They're taking the piss with this jingle."

TRAVIS - "'One, one, oooooooone'"

LYDIA - "I'd have a threesome with Matt Baker and Alex Jones"

A photo of CHARLOTTE CHURCH slowly creeps in to shot, masking BETHAN'S phone. She looks up to see ALFRED eyeballing her --

ALFRED

Charlotte Church's 2005 album, *Tissues & Issues*, sold over 300,000 copies.

CUT TO:

24

**INT. BETHAN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

24

It's late. BETHAN creeps in holding a soggy bag of chips. The TV light flickering in the lounge. He's in there. At the foot of the stairs a porno calendar of nude women has been pinned to the wall. She wrinkles her nose in disgust, then creeps up

DILWYN (O.O.V)

You happy with yourself?

BETHAN pauses for a second - he's stung her. Then trudges up.

DILWYN (O.O.V) (CONT'D)

The gas is off.

CUT TO:

25

INT. BETHAN'S HOUSE - BETHAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

25

BETHAN sits on her bed in her coat, eating her chips. Her breath visible in front of her. A school issued iPad on her lap. We see she's on the website of a local theatre, scrolling through the listings. She chuck's the iPad aside, pulls her notepad out of her bag and starts writing.

CUT TO:

26

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY

26

On the school playground a few days later, BETHAN, TRAVIS and LYDIA are all sat at a picnic bench, eating their lunch.

BETHAN  
We saw Chicago last night.

TRAVIS  
The musical?

BETHAN  
Yeah at The Playhouse.

TRAVIS  
Ah man, I would have come.

BETHAN  
It blew my mind, the way they sing,  
it's incredible...

Nearby one of the special needs pupils, AMANDA, stands alone shuffling from foot to foot - not lost on BETHAN that it's much like the PATIENT in the hospital. But she keeps talking.

BETHAN (CONT'D)  
My mother got me a souvenir  
brochure. I'll bring it in for you  
to have a look --

PRIEST materializes, sauntering over to AMANDA, mimicking her shuffling. It's cruel. LYDIA and TRAVIS still chatting --

TRAVIS  
Apparently in dance school, you sit  
with your legs crossed and the  
teacher jumps on your thighs - like  
the inside bit - tears all the  
muscles. And that's how they do the  
splits --

BETHAN calls to PRIEST, holding up a pack of crisps --

BETHAN

Priest, d'you want these?

PRIEST beelines for her --

PRIEST

Alright, dykey? Yeah give 'um yer.

(BETHAN offers them)

When'd your tits get so big?

PRIEST starts fisting the crisps in to his gob. BETHAN tries to laugh along, like she's not the butt of the joke...

BETHAN

It's called puberty. When'd your mouth get so big?

PRIEST

Cheeky, 'in you?

And then POPPY approaches. Beautiful POPPY. DEBBIE CHAPMAN trailing behind her like an accessory. All their eyes turn to her. BETHAN blushes ever so slightly --

POPPY

Did you see Ms Morgan's email?

BETHAN

Oh no, not yet. I been eating. I had a pasty...

(V.O)

*Don't tell her you had a pasty!*

LYDIA immediately looks at her phone, searching for it.

POPPY

Have a look. You've been selected for the anthology...

BETHAN

What, I have?

POPPY

Yeah. I just read it. It's brilliant. Seriously. You should be really proud...

TRAVIS

Oh my god, that's amazing.

PRIEST playfully smacks the side of BETHAN'S head --

PRIEST

Con-schmatulations, ya fat bap.

PRIEST saunters off, booting someone's rucksack.

POPPI  
Yeah bye Priest, you're an ape...  
(To BETHAN)  
Maybe come sit with me in English?

POPPI peels off, DEBBIE CHAPMAN shooting BETHAN evils before she follows. LYDIA sniggers --

LYDIA  
Talk about rate yourself...

But BETHAN'S heart pounds nearly through her chest... POPPI wants to sit with her! LYDIA turns to her phone - she has the email up from MS MORGAN, sharing BETHAN'S poem. Lydia reads --

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
"All please join me in congratulating Bethan Gwyndaf, who has been selected for the" blah blah blah... Here...  
"You are a bond  
The glue that binds  
The knot that ties  
Two warring sides  
Oil and water  
These bricks and mortar  
The wrong daughter"

SUDDENLY we cut to a flash image of the Lucozade bottle hitting the wall.

Beat. LYDIA and TRAVIS stare at BETHAN... Then LYDIA pierces the tension by laughing --

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
... What the fuck?

BETHAN shrugs it off, cocky --

BETHAN  
Morgan laps that shit up -  
(Holding out her palm)  
Got her eating out of this.

**THE END.**