

"TRIVIAL PURSUIT"

Written by

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Wearing his backpack, LEONARD arrives into work. He steals a glance over towards Shelley's desk.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It was as true for Leonard as it is for the rest of us, that we can plan and calculate as much as we like, but romance never enters our lives on terms of our own choosing.

SHELLEY is behind her computer with RHONA looking over her shoulder and MARK BAXTER perched on the side of her desk.

As Leonard hangs up his jacket, he's distracted by something he finds on his desk - a large sweet in a very distinctive wrapper.

Perplexed, he eyes the sweet before looking around the office floor, wondering where it came from.

With a shrug, Leonard takes off the wrapper and puts the sweet in his mouth.

MARK BAXTER (O.S.)

Lenny!

Startled, Leonard sees Mark Baxter gesturing for him to join them at Shelley's desk. With his mouth full he gives a thumbs up.

Leonard ducks down behind his desk partition, spits the sweet back into its wrapper, and drops it into his wastepaper basket.

CUT TO:

Leonard arrives at Shelley's desk.

SHELLEY

Hey, Leonard.

He can just about make eye-contact.

LEONARD

Hi.

MARK BAXTER

Rhona's sending me away again.

Pleased, he shrugs - *what can you do?*

MARK BAXTER  
(aside to Leonard/joking)  
But I'm getting the feeling they  
don't trust me with the company  
credit card.

RHONA  
(under her breath)  
Not after Bologna.

Mark Baxter is momentarily stung but quickly recovers.

MARK BAXTER  
The Children's Educational Book  
Awards. Helsinki. Again. Speaking  
of which, I was wondering, could  
you take a stab at my acceptance  
speech? I worry mine are starting  
to feel repetitive.

Shelley gives Leonard a subtle look - *can you believe this guy?*

LEONARD  
Sure, I'll send you something this  
afternoon.

Rhona's mobile rings. She rejects the call.

SHELLEY  
Any dietary requirements for your  
flight?

MARK BAXTER  
I don't want to eat anything that  
flies. That just feels like bad  
luck.  
(to Leonard)  
Can chicken fly?

LEONARD  
Yes.

Rhona's mobile rings again. She rejects the call again.

Shelley continues with the booking but, once again, Rhona's phone rings. With an embarrassed smile, she shakes her head in disbelief.

RHONA  
Oh my goodness he's persistent. I'm  
going to have to take this.

MARK BAXTER  
Mustn't keep the poor man waiting.

Rhona answers the phone and all the warmth drains from her face. She speaks quietly but Mark, Leonard and Shelley can still hear.

RHONA  
(quiet/chilling/slow)  
Don't speak. If you do, it will be  
with your last breath. You are an  
absolute pox. Call me again, Marco.  
I dare you, call me again. Call.  
Me. Again. Pox.

Hanging up, Rhona happily returns her attention to the computer as if nothing happened.

For a beat, Mark Baxter, Leonard and Shelley all look a little traumatised by the exchange.

Rhona looks from Shelley's computer screen to Mark.

RHONA  
(cheerful)  
Aisle or window?

OPENING TITLES

2 EXT. PARLEY VIEW - NIGHT

2

Another starry evening over Parley View.

3 INT. LIVING ROOM, GAMING AREA - NIGHT

3

At the gaming area, Leonard and HUNGRY PAUL set up a game of Backgammon over a cup of tea and some biscuits.

HUNGRY PAUL  
What's her name?

LEONARD  
Shelley. She's an administrative  
assistant.  
(afterthought)  
Oh, and the fire warden.

Hungry Paul nods, taking this all in.

HUNGRY PAUL  
The old fire drill romance, eh?

LEONARD  
I don't think that's a thing.

HUNGRY PAUL  
Tell me this much, have there been  
any fires at work?

LEONARD  
Not recently.

HUNGRY PAUL  
I like the sound of her. Just what  
you need, a failed office romance.

LEONARD  
Who mentioned romance?  
(afterthought)  
And why 'failed'?

Hungry Paul considers the alternative with mild concern.

HUNGRY PAUL  
I suppose you could fall madly in  
love and live happily ever after.

Then dismisses the thought.

HUNGRY PAUL  
(more positive)  
Or she rejects you. Every day at  
the office becomes a series of  
awkward moments that eventually  
makes your position untenable,  
forcing you to quit your job.

LEONARD  
How could that possibly be what I  
need?

HUNGRY PAUL  
A new beginning. You said you  
wanted to expand your universe;  
here's your chance. If you like  
her, you should talk to her.

Hungry Paul shrugs.

HUNGRY PAUL  
The most important thing is, don't  
overthink it.

Hungry Paul rolls the dice. Now Leonard's thinking about it.

- A short distance away, Helen & Peter sit on the couch drinking tea. Peter is watching a TV quiz show, Helen works on a jigsaw.

PETER  
Czar Nicholas the First.

TV HOST (O.S.)  
Sorry, can't give you any points  
for that, the answer was Czar  
Nicholas the First.

Pleased with himself, Peter looks to Helen for her approval. She looks up from her jigsaw.

HELEN  
Well done, love.

The front door can be heard opening in the background.

GRACE (O.S.)  
Hello?

HELEN  
In here!

GRACE enters with a wedding missalette in her hand. She's not happy.

LEONARD  
Hey, Grace.

GRACE  
Excuse me, Leonard.  
(to Hungry Paul)  
Do you remember what it was I asked  
you to do?

She holds up the missalette.

HUNGRY PAUL  
In the missalette?

GRACE  
Yes, in the missalette.

HUNGRY PAUL  
You said you wanted every 'Grace'  
and 'Andrew' changed to 'Bride' and  
'Groom'.

GRACE  
So you just found and replaced  
every 'Grace' with 'Bride'?

HUNGRY PAUL  
Was that wrong?

GRACE  
Did it occur to you, in the wedding ceremony, that the word 'Grace' might appear in a context outside of my name?

She searches the missalette pages for an example.

GRACE  
They're everywhere! My personal favourite is in the readings. Here we go.  
(reading)  
"And yea the men did gather, in the hope of being touched by your divine bride".  
Aunt Sarah's reading that one.

Exasperated, Grace tosses the missalette onto the table. Leonard picks it up, trying to restore peace.

LEONARD  
I can fix this. We've got these amazing printers at work that do the stapling and everything.

GRACE  
(relieved/grateful)  
Really? Thanks, Leonard. That would be great.

Helen with an empty side-plate.

HELEN  
You don't mind if I steal a few biscuits, do you?

Helen slides a few from the boys' plate onto hers.

PETER (O.S.)  
The Pharaoh's Daughter!

Leonard cranes his neck to look over to Peter who gets up to leave the room.

TV HOST (O.S.)  
The Pharaoh's Daughter.

LEONARD  
Impressive. Peter really knows his Nineteenth Century Russia.

HUNGRY PAUL  
 (pointedly)  
 A little *too* impressive.

GRACE  
 (conspiratorial)  
 Why does he only ever watch the  
 reruns with Mum?

HUNGRY PAUL  
 I think he records them and learns  
 them off when we're out.

Grace nods, supporting his suspicion.

HELEN  
 Why on Earth would he do that?

PETER (O.S.)  
 (from the hall, so Helen  
 can hear)  
 The Cherry Orchard!

TV HOST (O.S.)  
 The Cherry Orchard.

HUNGRY PAUL  
 To impress you.

HELEN  
 Don't be ridiculous.

GRACE  
 It's sweet!

Helen holds up a hand - she has heard enough - and returns to the couch with the biscuits, leaving Leonard, Hungry Paul and Grace alone.

GRACE  
 I hope Andrew will still be making  
 that kind of effort when we're  
 forty years married.

3A      **INT. LEONARD'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY**

3A

The alarm clock sounds and Leonard's eyes open wide. He stares at the ceiling with big thoughts already on his mind.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

By the following morning, Hungry Paul's suggestion for Leonard to talk to Shelley had grown into a call for action.

4 OMITTED 4

5 OMITTED 5

6 INT. LEONARD'S HOUSE - DAY 6

Leonard leaves the house.

6A EXT. LEONARD'S HOUSE - DAY 6A

Closing the door behind him, Leonard hurries down the driveway.

7 EXT. STREET - DAY 7

Leonard walks down the street with a sense of purpose.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Since losing his mother, Leonard had felt a pull to break free from his comfort zone.

8 INT. BUS - DAY 8

Leonard sits upstairs in his usual spot, staring thoughtfully out the window.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It occurred to him that it would defeat the purpose of his quest to expand his universe if he didn't act upon the opportunities it provided.

9 INT. PHOTOCOPYING AREA, OFFICE - DAY 9

With a look of deep concentration on his face, Leonard stands perfectly still by the photocopier as it sorts and stacks the rectified missalettes. The rest of the STAFF go about their day in a SPEEDED UP flurry of activity.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

However, as a shy child, he had learned to enjoy his own company, spending countless hours inside his head. A very useful skill in life but not a great place to meet people.

9A      INT. OFFICE - DAY

9A

Leonard is now at his desk. He peers over his desk divider to be sure Shelley is at her desk.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

As a result, something as seemingly simple as speaking to Shelley, became a monumentally daunting task.

Leonard picks up his empty coffee mug, steals himself and stands... only to be interrupted by Rhona and Mark Baxter's arrival at his desk.

MARK BAXTER  
Lennington Steele.

LEONARD  
Hey Mark. Rhona. I was just-

RHONA  
(cutting him off)  
Good news. We received feedback from Market Research on our latest opus. Mostly positive.

Mark Baxter nods emphatically.

MARK BAXTER  
Very positive.

LEONARD  
Great. Can we talk about this-

RHONA  
(interrupting)  
A couple of small tweaks.

MARK BAXTER  
Teensy.

Leonard immediately becomes suspicious, he'll decide if a tweak is teensy.

RHONA

Quite a few said they found it...  
old fashioned.

LEONARD

It's set in ancient Rome.

RHONA

That's the thing, you see, we don't  
live in ancient Rome.

LEONARD

Excuse me?

MARK BAXTER

I think, what Rhona's saying is, it  
needs to be more relatable.

RHONA

I'm thinking... family.

MARK BAXTER

I like that!

LEONARD

Right. When you say 'family', what  
exactly do you mean?

RHONA

(spells it out)

Family is very relatable.

Mark nods slowly, he couldn't agree more.

MARK BAXTER

It places an emotional heart at the  
centre of the piece.

Leonard is baffled but, with a polite smile, does his best to  
be diplomatic.

LEONARD

Sure. Yes. I'm all for that.  
Although, I might need a little  
more than just the word 'family'.  
I'm still not entirely sure what  
you're asking me to do.

RHONA

Leonard, I'm the head of marketing.  
I already have a job. I can't do  
your job too.

MARK BAXTER

Look, the headline here is, have fun with it.

RHONA

Exactly.

Mark Baxter gives him a friendly pat on the shoulder.

MARK BAXTER

Thanks, Len.

Rhona and Mark Baxter walk away.

Leonard watches them go for a confused beat... then remembers his mission. Looking to Shelley's desk, he sees she's gone. Deflated, he sits back down.

9B

INT. OFFICE (MONTAGE) - DAY

9B

A distracted Leonard plays with his empty coffee mug... until he notices Shelley is back at her desk.

With a determined look in his eye and his coffee mug in his hand, Leonard marches towards Shelley's desk.

HELPDESK GREG sits nearby, bobbing along to the music on his headphones.

Halfway there, A CO-WORKER arrives at Shelley's desk with a folder for her. Without adjusting his speed, our hero turns on his heels and walks back towards his desk.

CUT TO:

Once again, mug in hand, Leonard makes a beeline for Shelley. Just as he is approaching her desk, her phone rings and she takes the call. Leonard slows down, unsure what to do.

He looks to Greg, who is eating a Creme Egg with a spoon, and holds up the mug in his hand.

LEONARD

Just getting coffee.

Greg shrugs - So?

Leonard moves on, halfheartedly, in the direction of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

Making his fourth attempt, Leonard crosses the office floor, with his mug, in the direction of Shelley's desk.

Nearing Greg, he holds up his mug again.

LEONARD  
Just washing my mug.

Greg looks at Leonard in disbelief - he cares so little about Leonard's mug he is actually irritated by the information.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
The expansion of Leonard's universe  
was proving more difficult than  
expected.

Seeing Leonard approaching, Shelley smiles. Leonard smiles.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Forgetting Hungry Paul's advice,  
Leonard found himself overthinking  
it.

Leonard stops a few feet from her desk and she looks at him expectantly. Leonard opens his mouth to speak... but no words come out. Shelley eyes him, a little confused.

The awkward moment is interrupted by Mark Baxter who appears between them to perch on Shelley's desk with his back to Leonard.

MARK BAXTER  
Shelley, hi. Apologies, I never got  
to properly show you around the  
second floor.

SHELLEY  
It's basically the same as the  
third floor so... apology accepted.

Helpdesk Greg watches this exchange.

MARK BAXTER  
You know, I see you every day and I  
think, she doesn't even know me.

Shelley can see where this is going.

SHELLEY  
Oh, I think I do.

MARK BAXTER

I'm not talking about office Mark,  
award-winning author Mark, surfer  
Mark; I'm talking about the Mark in  
here.

He gives his chest a meaningful pat. Leonard roles his eyes  
and leaves for the kitchen.

SHELLEY

(quiet)

Surfer Mark?

MARK BAXTER

So what do you think? Wanna go for  
a drink with the real Mark Baxter?

SHELLEY

I'm sorry, really, you sound like a  
great bunch of lads, but work is  
work and I don't like to blur the  
lines. It's kind of a rule for me.

Not in the least bit fazed by the rejection, Mark stands,  
giving her a look filled with innuendo.

MARK BAXTER

If you ever change your mind, I can  
introduce you to rule-breaker  
Mark...

He walks away, not looking back.

MARK BAXTER

I think you two would get along  
just fine.

Shelley turns to Greg with a look of disbelief.

SHELLEY

Can you believe that guy?

GREG

I know.

Filled with admiration, Greg watches him go.

Leonard chooses his coffee from the machine. As the machine  
spits out the drink, a frustrated Leonard parrots Mark's  
sleazy attempt to ask Shelley out in the 'coolest' voice he  
can muster.

LEONARD

You know, I see you every day and  
think, she doesn't even know me.  
Not the real me. In here.

He pats his chest.

LEONARD

So what do you think? How would the  
real you like to meet the real me?

Leonard turns and almost jumps out of his skin when he sees Rhona, travel mug at the ready, staring at him.

RHONA

Oh my God, are you asking me out?

Leonard looks terrified.

LEONARD

What? Ah... this is... you see-

Rhona looks genuinely moved.

RHONA

Look at you, you poor thing, you're  
shaking. That is so sweet.  
(blunt/cold)  
But sorry, that's a hard no, not  
for me.

As if nothing happened, Rhona adds a drop of milk to her mug.

Unable to remember the last time he experienced such a wave of relief, Leonard breathes again.

As Rhona moves to leave the room, she pauses at the doorway to let Shelley enter, then looks back to Leonard.

RHONA

(sweet again)

Awwww. Bless.

And she's gone.

SHELLEY

Hey, Leonard.

LEONARD

Hi, Shelley.

Taking an apple from a basket on the counter, Shelley's intrigued.

SHELLEY  
So what was all that about?

LEONARD  
I don't know. Nothing.

Rhona sticks her head back into the room.

RHONA  
You know what? Fine! You've twisted  
my arm. Let's go on a date. I'll  
drop pin you the restaurant and  
send you the deets.

Leonard is lost for words. Shelley appears amused.

SHELLEY  
Wow. As office fire warden I must  
warn you both not to let things get  
too hot in the kitchen.

Rhona laughs as she leaves. Shelley follows her out, leaving  
Leonard with a theatrical wink.

On Leonard, processing the absolute mess he's created.

11      **INT. OFFICE, LEONARD'S DESK - DAY**

11

Leonard sits at his desk in wide-eyed shock. After a frozen  
beat he shakes it off and gets to his feet - *this ends now.*

12      **INT. RHONA'S OFFICE - DAY**

12

Leonard knocks on an office door.

GREG (O.S.)  
She went out!

To avoid shouting their conversation across the office floor,  
Leonard hurries over the Greg's desk. He is reading one of  
those Jordan Peterson-type books.

LEONARD  
Do you know where?

GREG  
Why?

LEONARD  
I need to clear something up.

Greg rubs his thumb and index finger together, suggesting he wants some money.

LEONARD  
I'm not paying you.

GREG  
Fine. She got a last minute cancellation at the salon.

Greg returns his attention to his book.

GREG  
Went to get her hair done.

He looks up to Leonard, knowingly.

GREG  
Something about a big date.

This is bad.

LEONARD  
Ah.

GREG  
Whoever the lucky lad is, he'd better tread carefully.

He looks around conspiratorially and gestures for Leonard to lean in. An increasingly worried Leonard leans in.

GREG  
(quiet)  
She's on the rebound from that Marco fella. Messy, messy, ugly business.  
(whispers)  
She's still in a very dark place.

This is very bad.

Greg leans back in his chair with a smug smile.

GREG  
Anyway, I can take a message if you like. What would you like me to tell her?

Leonard tries to hide his devastation behind a forced smile.

LEONARD  
Never mind.

As Leonard turns to walk back to his desk, his smile fades -  
*Now what's he going to do?*

13

**INT. HOSPITAL, CORRIDOR - DAY**

13

Helen leads the way and Hungry Paul follows, dragging his heels.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Unlike Leonard, Hungry Paul had no desire to expand his universe. And didn't much appreciate others trying to expand it on his behalf.

HUNGRY PAUL

I don't see how I can help.

HELEN

For some patients, we're the only visitors they get. And they really appreciate it.

13A

**INT. HOSPITAL, WARD - DAY**

13A

The patient in the first bed, MRS. OLIVIA HAWTHORN, is separated from the rest of the patients by a screen, and has a large Sunflower on her bedside table.

She glares at Helen and Hungry Paul.

MRS. HAWTHORN

Religious witch... mind your own business!

Hungry Paul is taken aback but Helen smiles at her as they move on.

HELEN

(aside to Hungry Paul)

She sometimes confuses me with the Hospital Chaplain.

HUNGRY PAUL

Ah.

THE PATIENT in the next bed is asleep.

HELEN

I think we should split up. Don't want to crowd the patients.

Hungry Paul's shoulders drop, daunted by the prospect.

HUNGRY PAUL

Can't we do it together? You know  
small talk is not my area. I never  
know what to say.

HELEN

There's nothing to it; ask them how  
they're feeling and make sure  
they're comfortable.

Helen gently pushes Hungry Paul in the direction of an  
anxious-looking patient (BARBARA) at the end of the ward.

HELEN

What about that lady there?

Hungry Paul watches Helen leave the ward before reluctantly  
moving towards Barbara.

He passes a semi-conscious, VERY ELDERLY PATIENT on the way.  
On seeing him, she gives a weak wave.

VERY ELDERLY PATIENT

Doctor.

Barbara perks up at the word 'doctor'.

Hungry Paul shakes his head 'no'.

HUNGRY PAUL

Sorry. I'll get back to you, I need  
to speak to this lady first.

He indicates Barbara, who straightens up as he approaches and  
stops at the end of her bed with a forced smile.

HUNGRY PAUL

So, how are you feeling?  
Comfortable?

BARBARA

Yes, thanks.

HUNGRY PAUL

Good. Good. That's good.

Hungry Paul nods uncomfortably for a long, awkward beat.  
Trying to read his face, Barbara becomes increasingly  
anxious.

BARBARA

You said you needed to speak to me?

HUNGRY PAUL  
 Yes. Em... okay...  
 (slow, calming exhale)  
 I'm afraid this is a little  
 difficult for me. I never know what  
 to say in these situations.

Now Barbara is looking really worried. She braces herself.

BARBARA  
 Whatever you have to say, say it.

Hungry Paul is feeling the pressure.

HUNGRY PAUL  
 Right.

Devastated, Barbara puts a hand to her mouth.

BARBARA  
 Is it really that bad?

Hungry Paul considers the question carefully.

HUNGRY PAUL  
 It's just, I don't believe there's  
 anything I can say that's going to  
 make you feel any better.

She begins to cry. Hungry Paul is baffled.

HUNGRY PAUL  
 Are you okay? Should I get the  
 doctor?

Barbara looks to Hungry Paul, confused.

BARBARA  
 You're not a doctor?

HUNGRY PAUL  
 Me? No. Part-time postal worker.

At a sink, Helen is refreshing the water of a vase of flowers.

BARBARA (O.S.)  
 (distant)  
 YOU BLOODY DOSE!

Helen can't help but wonder if Hungry Paul is involved.

20.

Hiding from Barbara, a sheepish Hungry Paul steps in behind Mrs. Hawthorn's screen. Mrs. Hawthorn glares at him for a moment before breaking eye contact to stare straight ahead.

Hungry Paul waits a moment... before quietly taking a seat next to her. They both stare ahead in comfortable silence.

16 EXT. CANAL - NIGHT 16

It's a beautiful crisp evening as the barge restaurant cruises slowly down the canal.

RHONA (O.S.)  
Don't you just love it? Have you  
been before?

LEONARD (O.S.)  
First time.

17 INT. BARGE RESTAURANT, CANAL - NIGHT 17

On board, Rhona and Leonard sit at a table. Rhona's hair looks great. A WAITER takes their drinks order.

RHONA  
A bottle of...  
(to Leonard)  
Are you drinking?

LEONARD  
No, water's fine.

RHONA  
Well I am.  
(to the waiter)  
Prosecco for me.  
(to Leonard)  
I fancy getting a bit fizzy.

Leonard does not like the sound of that.

The waiter leaves and Rhona peruses the menu.

## RHONA So... starters.

Leonard scans his menu.

LEONARD  
What's good?

RHONA  
 Everything. This is absolutely my  
 favourite restaurant.

LEONARD  
 It's certainly different.

Leonard eyes the city slowly passing him by. There is no  
 doubt about it: he is stuck on this date.

LEONARD  
 There's no getting out of here in a  
 hurry.

He's joking... but there's definitely a hint of concern.

RHONA  
 I can think of one way - disappoint  
 me and I'll throw you overboard.

Leonard laughs uneasily at the joke.

LEONARD  
 Do any of the starters come with a  
 life jacket?

Rhona LAUGHS loud, explosive and obnoxious.

RHONA  
 You're funny. I had no idea. I like  
 that.

Leonard smiles batting away the compliment.

LEONARD  
 No, I'm not.

Rhona eyes Leonard as if considering his potential.

LEONARD  
 (worried)  
 Seriously though, I'm really not.

It's later in the evening, the barge continues its slow  
 cruise.

Leonard and Rhona eat their main courses - she's having  
 steak, he's having chicken.

Leonard smiles awkwardly as Rhona drains what appears to be the last glass of Prosecco (there's an empty bottle, upside-down in an ice bucket next to the table), the effects of which are starting to show.

RHONA  
How's the chicken?

LEONARD  
Lovely. Great. Perfect.

RHONA  
Give us a bite.

Rhona opens her mouth, waiting for Leonard to feed her.

LEONARD  
Right.

Deeply uncomfortable, he offers her a piece of chicken and she does her drunken best to seductively bite it from his fork. She then proceeds to eat the chicken with her mouth open.

RHONA  
A little dry for me.

LEONARD  
You think? I suppose it could use a little more jus.

Rhona starts signalling for the waiter.

LEONARD  
What are you doing?

RHONA  
You're right, nobody should have to eat this muck.

Now Leonard's worried.

LEONARD  
I didn't say that.

The waiter arrives.

RHONA  
My friend's chicken is over-cooked.  
We'd like to speak to the chef  
please.

LEONARD  
No, that's really not necessary.

WAITER

Apologies. Let me take that for  
you.

LEONARD

Honestly it's-

Rhona holds up a finger for Leonard's silence and the waiter takes his plate.

RHONA

You need to stand up for yourself,  
Leonard.

As Leonard watches the waiter go, Rhona scooches her chair closer to his.

LEONARD

What are you doing?

She gives him a flirtatious smile.

RHONA

I was getting lonely all the way  
over there by myself.

She seductively puts her hand on Leonard's causing him to emit a small shriek as he looks at her.

Rhona then puts her other hand under the table.

RHONA

You have very muscular legs.

Confused, Leonard looks down (we can't see what he sees).

LEONARD

That's not me, it's my chair.

When Leonard looks up again, THE CHEF (MARCO) is marching towards their table and he doesn't look happy.

LEONARD

Oh sweet Jesus.

The broad, Mediterranean, fiery chef arrives. Leonard beams nervously.

LEONARD

Hello. If this is about the  
chicken, which I loved by the way,  
I think there's been some  
confusion.

The Chef notices Rhona.

CHEF  
Rhona?

Obviously faking it, she acts surprised.

RHONA  
Marco?  
(clearly a lie)  
I didn't know you were working  
tonight. This is awkward.

She touches her hair, drawing attention to its great beauty, and then gestures to Leonard.

RHONA  
This is Leonard, he's my date.  
We're on a date.

Marco glares coldly at Leonard and Leonard immediately slides his hand out from under hers. Rhona relishes the moment, hammering it home.

RHONA  
You don't get to be upset, Marco,  
you know what you did.

She leans a little closer to Leonard who leans a little further away from her.

RHONA  
It's no longer any of your business  
where I go, who I see, or where my  
hand is.

Leonard immediately points to Rhona's hand (which is still hidden under the table).

LEONARD  
It's actually on the side of my  
chair, you can look if you want.

Marco's passionate rage is clearly rising and Rhona is loving it.

RHONA  
I've moved on.

She drapes an arm around Leonard's shoulders.

RHONA  
And Leonard isn't going anywhere.

Marco glares at Leonard. Leonard raises his hand.

LEONARD  
Cheque please!

CUT TO:

Leonard is now standing by the till, wearing his coat and ready to leave.

WAITER  
Everything okay, sir?

Leonard smiles weakly.

LEONARD  
(mildly sarcastic)  
Perfect.

He taps the waiter's card reader with his bank-card.

PAN TO:

The front of the barge to find Rhona and Marco sharing a very messy, passionate kiss.

20 OMITTED

20

21 INT. OFFICE - DAY

21

Leonard is at his desk, peering over the top of his partition.

Leonard's POV: A dishevelled Rhona, wearing sunglasses and holding a takeaway coffee, drags her fragile self into her office.

SHELLEY (O.S.)  
Oh my God, what did you do to Rhona?

Startled, Leonard turns to see Shelley standing next to him (still wearing her coat, she has clearly just arrived).

LEONARD  
Me? Nothing. That was all her.  
Although I'm sure Marco helped.

Fascinated, Shelley drops her bag on the desk and perches next to it.

SHELLEY  
*Marco was on your date?*

Leonard slumps down into his seat, haunted by the memory.

LEONARD  
It wasn't a date.

He drops his face into his hands.

LEONARD  
I'm such an ass.

SHELLEY  
Don't worry about it, we're all  
asses.

She stares into the middle distance for a moment, struck by a thought.

SHELLEY  
Isn't it ironic that nobody likes a  
smart-ass or a dumb-ass?

Leonard lowers his hands from his face, considering her words.

LEONARD  
I can't say I've ever thought about  
it. Although, now that you mention  
it, it's even more ironic that the  
only good ass is a bad ass.

Shelley laughs and Leonard smiles.

SHELLEY  
So, if it wasn't a date, what was  
it?

LEONARD  
It was a set-up. A trap.

Shelley leans in, prepared for some class A gossip.

SHELLEY  
Tell me more.

LEONARD  
I don't want to talk about it.

She casually leans back, pretending to be fine with that...

SHELLEY  
Fair enough.

Then stares at him for an intense beat, struggling to contain herself. She's fighting a losing battle.

SHELLEY

Nope. Can't do it. You have to tell  
me every single little detail.  
We're going to need coffee.

Shelley drops her bag on Leonard's desk and heads towards the kitchen.

SHELLEY

Don't start without me!

As she goes, Leonard notices a bag of sweets poking out of her handbag - sweets with a very distinctive, and somewhat familiar, wrapper.

He looks to his wastepaper basket and sees it - the mysterious sweet he found on his desk earlier in the week is a perfect match!

NARRATOR (V.O.)

For the first time since his mother died, Leonard felt his universe beginning to expand.

Leonard looks back in Shelley's direction and smiles to himself.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Making space for an infinity of possibilities.

22

**INT. PARLEY VIEW, LIVING ROOM - DAY**

22

Helen & Peter sit on the couch drinking tea. Peter watches his TV quiz show while Helen works on her jigsaw.

PETER

The Pickwick Papers.

TV HOST (O.S.)

The Pickwick Papers.

Helen is suddenly struck by a thought.

HELEN

Where's that son of ours?

Peter looks to Helen, distracted by her question.

PETER  
He went out.

TV HOST (O.S.)  
(in the background)  
Hindustan is the middle Persian  
name for which country?

HELEN  
Went out where?

PETER  
He didn't say.

Helen shrugs it off. Peter looks back to the TV.

PETER  
Rudyard Kipling!

TV HOST (O.S.)  
India.

There's an awkward beat as Peter steals a panicked sideways  
glance at Helen.

Helen seems oblivious, staring thoughtfully at her jigsaw.

TV HOST (O.S.)  
Name the noble prize-winning author  
who was born in India on the 30th  
of December 1865?

CONTESTANT (O.S.)  
Rudyard Kipling.

TV HOST (O.S.)  
Correct.

TV HOST (O.S.)  
Born Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu, she  
was better known as-

Thinking he's in the clear, Peter looks back to the TV.

PETER  
Mother Teresa!

CONTESTANT (O.S.)  
Mother Teresa.

TV HOST (O.S.)  
Correct.

Helen looks up.

HELEN  
Well done, love.

Peter looks pleased.

Returning her attention to her jigsaw, Helen smiles to herself.

23

**INT. HOSPITAL, WARD - DAY**

23

Once again, Hungry Paul sits in comfortable silence with Mrs. Hawthorn, both staring ahead at nothing.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Elsewhere, without trying, Hungry Paul was gently expanding someone else's universe.

Mrs Hawthorn takes Hungry Paul's hand without altering her straight-ahead gaze. He accepts it without trying to catch her eye or check her motive.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
An incredible achievement, if he were to think about it. But that was never Hungry Paul's style. He simply wasn't one for overthinking things...

We leave them, still holding hands, enjoying a kindred peace.

The End.