

MOVING ON 10

Episode 1

FROZEN

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GREEN SCRIPT

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Old St Lawrence School  
Westminster Road  
Liverpool L4 3TQ

1 INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 1 08.00

1 \*

ALISON "ALI" REDA (late 30s) - mum, wife, estate agent and miracle worker, careers around her kitchen, feeding herself and her twin 4-year-old children LEILA and SAM.

\*

It's a scene of vaguely-organised chaos as toast and fruit are sliced up for the children, coffee poured for Ali, lunches prepared - all to the maniacal ranting of something spilling forth from the RADIO.

And yet, in the middle of this little slice of domestic theatre, Ali seems to be in her element.

Kisses regularly land on the kids' heads and she even manages a sway of the hips for some distant chart topper care of the radio.

Her smiles widens at the SOUND of the front door CREAKING open.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Morning!

ALI

Hiya mum!

To the kids.

ALI (CONT'D)

Say hello to Gran...!

Silver-haired and wrapped up against a cold morning, Ali's mum, MAGGIE (60s) strides into the room, stuffed shopping bag in one hand, bundle of mail in the other.

MAGGIE

Morning my little angels!

She plants a kiss on each of the kids. A quick kiss for Ali and the mail is dropped into her hands.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Nursery Goddess AND Postman Pat.

ALI

What would we do without you?

She surveys the chaos.

MAGGIE

You'd be fine. Just fine.

Maggie takes off her coat and immediately sets about taking care of the kids.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
You get to work darling.

The front door SQUEAKS open again.

The sweating, dishevelled form of RAFIQ "RAFI" REDA (late 30s) comes racing in. Ali looks horrified. \*

ALI  
Rafi?

RAFI  
Don't worry. Not fired. Not redundant.

He races upstairs.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Just forgot my wallet, phone -

He races back down again.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
- and my mind.

He blows them all a kiss and races out the door again.

MAGGIE  
Bye.

Ali barely notices him fly out the door.

Something amongst the mail has caught her eye. She studies one letter intently. Concern etched across her face.

Maggie, clearing up around the twins, studies her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
Ali?  
(beat)  
Ali! What's up -

ALI  
Nothing.

MAGGIE  
Really?

ALI  
It's just a letter - from the IVF clinic.

MAGGIE

Why would -

ALI

Well - we had one embryo left -  
frozen. They want confirmation  
we're happy for them to keep  
freezing it -

The word sticks in her throat. She almost WHISPERS it to her mother.

ALI (CONT'D)

- or 'dispose' of it.

She's studying the letter. Taking in that word.

MAGGIE

Hey love -

ALI

It's just weird -

An attempt at a smile.

ALI (CONT'D)

To hear from them. After all this  
time.

Maggie smiles at her grandchildren.

ALI (CONT'D)

And weird to think that, somewhere,  
there's another one that -

A deep breath. A shake of the head.

ALI (CONT'D)

I'd better get to work. Thanks,  
Mum.

A kiss. Ali slips a coat on, grabs a stuffed lunch box from the table and turns to her kids.

ALI (CONT'D)

Son that made me a mum!

A kiss.

ALI (CONT'D)

Peggy Sue who made it two!

Another kiss. A hug for her mum.

ALI (CONT'D)

Taa-raa Mum. Thanks.

She heads for the front door, letter still in hand.

ALI (CONT'D)  
I should be back by four.

A nod.

And with that Ali disappears out the front door.

2 EXT. REDA HOME. DAY 1 CONT.

2 \*

The front door SLAMS shut behind her and Ali stops. Leaning against the closed door she draws a deep, composing breath.

She gives the clinic's letter one final glance before stuffing it deep inside her handbag.

ALI  
Right!

And she's off into the world.

3 INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. NIGHT 1 23.00

3 \*

Ali and Rafi's bed is more of an improvised study than a place to lay one's head. He sits in the middle of the organised chaos in his pyjama bottoms.

Around him lie various bundles of paperwork, a battered laptop and a glossy folder marked 'Management Training Programme'.

Rafi reads through a slip of paper and lets out a GROAN.

A muffled VOICE.

ALI (O.S.)  
Thad baad?

RAFI  
You can't imagine.

Ali appears at the bedroom door, toothbrush in one hand and a basket of clothes washing in the other.

ALI  
Try me.

He looks at her. Toothpaste spilling out of her mouth.

RAFI  
You've got quite enough on your hands.

A LAUGH.

He goes back to his studying.

A moment later, the bedroom door closes as Ali returns, dropping the clothes basket next to the bed. She slides beneath the bed's duvet and Rafi's piles of homework.

Unfazed, he continues studying, just steadyng the paperwork on the duvet as Ali settles in the bed.

She flicks off her bedside light. Rafi winces and edges closer to his side of the bed and the light there.

ALI

Night.

RAFI

Night love.

Without looking up, he reaches out a hand to her. She takes it. He continues poring over his homework.

Ali watches him. Then...

ALI

You ever wonder about more kids?

RAFI

Do you ever wonder about more hours in the day?

ALI

I'm serious.

RAFI

So am I. We've got two beautiful kids. We're so lucky -

ALI

We could have a third.

He ploughs on with his work.

RAFI

We could. But then we'd probably be dead.

She winces.

RAFI (CONT'D)

Sorry. Bad joke.

He takes her hand.

RAFI (CONT'D)

Look. We're lucky. We're lucky to have those two.

Rafi starts packing up his homework.

RAFI (CONT'D)

We're lucky to have you. I'm lucky  
to have you. After what that  
pregnancy did to you. After what  
the delivery nearly did to you -

He stops. A tender kiss.

RAFI (CONT'D)

No more.

He clears the bed of his work.

ALI

Says you.

RAFI

Says common sense!

Rafi rolls back onto the bed and under the duvet. He flicks his light off.

He slides across to Ali.

ALI

Really? Oh God and great dictator  
of fertility -

Ouch! He pulls away.

RAFI

Dictator? Really? That's how you  
see -

A child's CRY rings out.

RAFI (CONT'D)

I'll go.

ALI

It's okay.

RAFI

Nah. I've not seem them all day.

He climbs out of the bed. A roll of the eyes.

RAFI (CONT'D)

A chance for some quality time  
together.

ALI

We need to talk about this.

RAFI

No. We don't.

He kisses her on the head and disappears into the darkness.

Ali lies there as she listens to his calm, gentle MUFFLED VOICE drifting through from the kids' bedroom. Before she knows it, she's out cold.

4 INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 2 08.00

4 \*

Rafi rushes into the kitchen, cup of tea in one hand, suit jacket in the other.

ALI

Did the porridge come out?

He glances at his damp jacket. A nod.

A kiss for his son.

RAFI

Look! All gone.

Ali starts slipping the kids into padded outdoor jackets.

ALI

C'mon, nursery -

Rafi puts his jacket on, still dabbing at the damp patch on the lapel.

ALI (CONT'D)

What time will -

RAFI

Late. I'm sorry -

He kisses the kids.

ALI

Okay. But can we talk tonight?

RAFI

Course. About what?

ALI

Remember last night?

A shake of his head.

A nod of hers towards the twins.

ALI (CONT'D)

A third -

RAFI  
You are joking?

ALI  
No. I'm not.

RAFI  
Ali!

ALI  
Rafi!

The SOUND of LAUGHTER bursting from the kids.

RAFI  
(re. the noise)  
And you want *another* one?

ALI  
I want to talk about it.

He glances to the clock.

RAFI  
Well, not now.

Rafi picks up a laptop bag. He makes for front door.

Ali races around and stands in front of him. Blocking his path.

ALI  
Well, when?

RAFI  
I dunno? When they're in school?  
Secondary school.

ALI  
Rafi. Seriously -

RAFI  
Ali. Seriously. Look at us. We're  
done. No more.

A kiss for her and he's gone.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Bye gang! I love you!

Ali just stands there.

Ali's by the window, sorting new property brochures for the display.

A NEW MUM stops outside, browsing the window, a newborn BABY clamped to her chest in a baby carrier. A YOUNG DAUGHTER clings to her hand. From behind the glass, Ali is so close to them, feels she can almost touch the baby - almost smell that sweet, unique 'new baby' scent. And then the mum walks away. And it's gone.

Ali doesn't move so much as an inch. Frozen in the moment.

5A EXT. IVF CLINIC. DAY 13.25

5A

Ali sits in her car outside the clinic, lost in thought.

6 INT. IVF CLINIC - RECEPTION. DAY 2 13.30

6

Ali walks into the busy reception area of the fertility clinic. She stops and looks around. The walls are adorned with hundreds of photos of new born babies and toddlers.

To her side, several WOMEN sit waiting to see the doctor. A few have coveted baby bumps at early stages of development.

Ali walks towards the reception desk. The receptionist, MARIE (30s/40s) has her head stuck to the phone. A polite 'hang on' smile for Ali.

Ali scans the wall of faces. All those new lives. Those victories. Her eyes spot something - someone. Rafi. A slightly faded photo shows Rafi and Ali holding two tiny bundles of new life - their precious twins. A smile.

ALI

Reda. Ali -

\*

Marie twigs. Remembers them.

MARIE

Alison. And Rafi. Yes.

A nod. Ali gives an almost unconscious, surreptitious look around the room.

MARIE (CONT'D)

How are you both? And the twins,  
wasn't it?

ALI

Yes, Leila and Sam.

She nods to their photo on the wall behind Marie, who turns to spot the picture.

MARIE

Of course! Gorgeous.

ALI

They can be.

Polite LAUGHTER.

ALI (CONT'D)  
Anyway, I received a letter  
regarding our last, frozen embryo.

A nod.

ALI (CONT'D)  
A notice of disposal or renewal of  
storage.

Ali lowers her voice, leaning into Marie.

ALI (CONT'D)  
I just want to enquire about the  
embryo and either using it or  
continuing to store it.

Marie studies her computer screen.

MARIE  
Well, looking at this, both are  
viable options. It just depends  
upon your, errm, situation.

ALI  
You mean cost.

MARIE  
That's one factor.

ALI  
And the other?

MARIE  
Time. How long you want to wait -

Another quick look to the computer screen.

MARIE (CONT'D)  
- How long you're able to wait -

Ali looks all those newborn faces up and down.

ALI  
Are we running out of time?

MARIE  
That's not for me to say Mrs Reda.  
But yes, there are always risks -

ALI  
- With older mums.

\*

MARIE

Like I said -

ALI

We're out of time.

SILENCE.

Marie studies Ali's face.

MARIE

Listen, do you want me to see if  
Doctor Bello is free now - ?

ALI

No, it's fine.

MARIE

You sure?

ALI

Absolutely. We'll be in touch.

MARIE

Okay. And next time bring us a new  
photo for the wall...

A nod. Ali walks away, face down, not making eye contact with anyone.

7

INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 3 08.15

7 \*

Maggie arrives to a tornado of SCREAMING and LAUGHTER from the children as Ali puts on her coat for work.

Staring at her kids, Ali looks utterly broken.

ALI

How is it even physically possible  
they're awake?

Maggie removes her coat, kisses her grandchildren.

ALI (CONT'D)

None of us slept last night.

Another wave of LAUGHTER.

ALI (CONT'D)

Well, Rafi got a few hours on the  
couch - it's his first exam today.

MAGGIE

Oh, let me know how he goes.

ALI

Meanwhile, us three shared our bed.

The kids head for the patio doors/back garden. Relief!

MAGGIE

Coffee?

ALI

I've got to rush.

MAGGIE

Cheap. Nasty. Sweet coffee. C'mon, you've always got to rush.

Maggie ignores Ali's protestations and heads for the kettle.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Just stop. For a minute.

After a moment, Ali takes her coat off.

8 EXT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 3 08.30

8 \*

Ali sits near the kitchen's rear patio doors, watching Sam and Leila through a net curtain as they play.

Ali checks her watch.

Maggie sits down next to her, two mugs of coffee in hand.

MAGGIE

Relax. You'll be a little late -

Ali shoots her a look.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

What? Houses are going to stop selling? The property bubble will burst because Alison Reda had a cuppa with her mum?

\*

ALI

Alright. Alright.

They watch the kids again, endless energy.

MAGGIE

You look terrible.

ALI

Oh. Ta.

MAGGIE

Terrible in a way that isn't just about one bad night.

SILENCE.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Is it?

She studies Sam and Leila closely. A smile. A pained, torn smile.

ALI

It's that letter. The one from the IVF clinic.

Maggie just sips her coffee.

ALI (CONT'D)

What?

MAGGIE

You know what. You know how I feel about those places. Messing with nature -

ALI

Jesus! Mum! Look what 'messing with nature' did...

She nods towards the kids in the back garden.

MAGGIE

Oh Ali! I know. Those children -

Maggie wells up, her gaze fixed on her grandchildren.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Well. My world -

ALI

So why shouldn't we go back one more time? There's a life. Our child. Just sitting there, like we left it at a service station or something.

Maggie gulps her coffee. Searching for the words. For the argument.

ALI (CONT'D)

You say that's messing with nature. I say it's their brother or sister -

Maggie stares straight ahead, into the garden. Not looking at her daughter, but out through the net curtain.

MAGGIE

There are lots of ways of messing with nature. Of messing with His vision.

ALI

Mum! Enough -

MAGGIE

Ways that mean life isn't started.

A deep breath.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

That means it stopped. Before it  
ever really had chance to get  
started.

ALI

Mum?

SILENCE save for the CRIES OF DELIGHT from the garden.

MAGGIE

That it was robbed. Of everything.

She turns to her daughter.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

That I robbed it of life.

Ali takes her hand.

ALI

Oh mum.

MAGGIE

You assume I think engineering a  
life is wrong. A moral crime.

A shake of the head.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

To deny a life. To deny that. That  
is a crime. A mistake. One I know  
will haunt you.

SILENCE. Ali just studies her mum's face.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

And never, ever quite leave you.

Mother and daughter sit there for an age, simply holding  
hands.

Ali taking in her mother's confession - the subtext of it.

Ali stares silently up the ceiling, her mind racing.

Rafi rolls over and stirs.

RAFI

Hey -

ALI

Hey.

RAFI

Can't sleep.

A shake of the head.

RAFI (CONT'D)

What's up?

ALI

Nothing.

RAFI

What's on your mind?

ALI

Babies. Well, one.

RAFI

Ali -

ALI

What do you mean 'Ali'?

RAFI

Nothing. But we've talked about -

ALI

No, we haven't. You won't.

RAFI

Well, we seem to have forgotten the last time we were pregnant.

ALI

Trust me. I haven't.

RAFI

And we seem to have forgotten the hell of the first year or two of having babies.

ALI

Hell?

RAFI

Yes. Hell.

ALI

So, that's how you see our -

RAFI

I'm not going to do this Ali -

ALI

What? Discuss this? Really?

RAFI

We're not going to do this.

He gets up out of the bed.

ALI

You're leaving?!

RAFI

I'm going the loo! Christ!

ALI

We'll talk when you come back.

RAFI

No. We'll sleep.

With that, Rafi disappears to the bathroom.

ALI

You know, I just want to talk.

RAFI (O.S)

And I don't!

ALI

And I'm now talking to a wall.  
Literally.

A deep breath from Ali.

A FLUSH from the toilet, before Rafi comes back in, climbing straight into bed.

RAFI

We're done.

ALI

Really.

RAFI

Yes.

She sits in the small waiting area, again surrounded by seemingly endless photos of new families and depressingly cheery motivational posters.

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN sits alone, her eyes flitting around the room and snatching envious glances at the photos.

Marie, the same receptionist, calls out.

MARIE  
Mrs Reda? Hello.

\*

Ali walks over to the counter.

Relief. A welcoming smile.

ALI  
Hello. Again. Just here to pick up my medication.

MARIE  
Well, where's my photo of your twins?

ALI  
Eh?

Marie nods to the wall of faces.

ALI (CONT'D)  
Oh! Sorry - yes -

A smile.

MARIE  
Don't be silly. I'll just get your prescription.

Marie disappears into another room - leaving behind the wall of photos. And Rafi's face staring at Ali.

She turns away. A MAN walks into the reception. Carrying two takeaway cups of coffee, he sits down next to the Middle-Aged Woman. With a gentle kiss, he hands her a coffee.

MARIE (O.S)(CONT'D)  
Here you go.

Ali spins back round. Marie hands her a small bag of drugs and syringes.

MARIE (CONT'D)  
Are we billing to the address on file?

Ali reaches into her handbag.

ALI  
My credit card.

Ali hands over her plastic. Marie processes the payment. As they wait...

MARIE  
Now, do you want to wait a moment  
and I can show you how -

ALI  
That's fine. I know. I remember -

MARIE  
You sure?

ALI  
Trust me. There are some things you  
never forget - no matter how hard  
you try!

A nod. An awkward wait as the transaction is approved. Polite smiles.

MARIE  
Okay, all approved.

She hands Ali a receipt.

ALI  
Ta.

MARIE  
Good luck.

Ali takes the bag and walks out. A faint, kind smile for the Middle-Aged Woman anxiously sipping her coffee.

11 INT. REDA HOME - BATHROOM. NIGHT 4 19.30

11 \*

Ali sits on the loo, the bag of prescription drugs at her feet. She holds a leaflet in one hand and a syringe in the other.

She silently reads and rereads the leaflet. Finally, she holds the sharp tip of the syringe against her stomach. A wince.

A deep breath.

RAFI (O.S.)  
Ali?

ALI

Hang on! I'm on the loo -

FOOTSTEPS on the landing outside.

Another deep breath. Eyes shut.

Ali stabs the syringe into her stomach. Stinging pain contorts her face.

RAFI (O.S.)

Do you want a cuppa?

ALI

Please.

The FOOTSTEPS retreat.

She wraps the used syringe in an old carrier bag and plunges it deep into her handbag.

Ali slumps on the loo. A SILENT SCREAM of pain and frustration.

12 EXT. HIGH STREET. DAY 5 08.55

12

Next day, Ali walks up to her office, mid-morning coffee in hand. As she does, she casually slips the carrier bag containing the used syringe into a bin.

13 EXT. HIGH STREET. DAY 6 08.55

13

Another day. Another used syringe surreptitiously dropped into the bin.

14 EXT. HIGH STREET. DAY 7 08.55

14

And another.

15 EXT. HIGH STREET. DAY 8 08.55

15

And another...

16 INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. NIGHT 8 23.00

16 \*

Ali lies on her bed, a half-read gossip magazine laid out across her. She dozes fitfully, a mug of tea cooling beside her.

Rafi enters the room, switching off the main light as he does. He stops for a moment, a wry, sympathetic smile for his wife.

He walks over and gently kisses her forehead, she stirs a little. He takes the magazine away.

RAFI

Not that you need your beauty sleep, but -

He reaches to pull the duvet across her. He stops.

RAFI (CONT'D)

Christ! Ali!

He nods to a bruise on Ali's stomach - where she's been injecting herself. She tenses.

ALI

Oh, that -

RAFI

That! What happened?

She pulls the duvet across.

ALI

Just a trolley. At the supermarket.  
A runaway. It's alright.

His relief.

RAFI

You're made of sterner stuff than me.

Ali's wincing and furious with herself.

She picks up the magazine again.

ALI

Hey, I was just reading about this luxury spa thingy. Thought it might be nice for your birthday -

RAFI

A luxury thingy?

ALI

Just you and me.

RAFI

No kids, grandmothers or shopping trolleys?

A shake of her head.

RAFI (CONT'D)

You're on.

A sigh of relief from Ali. A kiss goodnight. Ali reaches for her beside light, turning it off and plunging the room into darkness.

17 EXT. ALI'S CAR. DAY 9 09.10

17

Outside her house, Ali sits in her car. The sound of a distant phone RINGING fills the cabin.

JANE (O.S.)  
Williams and Barrett, good morning.

ALI  
Hi Jane, it's Ali.

JANE (O.S.)  
Hey Ali, alright?

ALI  
Actually Jane, not really.

A gulp.

ALI (CONT'D)  
Kids' viruses... Feel awful...  
Won't be in today. Sorry.

JANE (O.S.)  
Bless the little darlings. Well,  
you're missing nowt here.

ALI  
Ta. I'll hopefully be better by  
tomorrow. I'll call -

JANE (O.S.)  
Fine. You take care darling.

An unconscious nod to Jane. Ali hangs up the call.

A deep breath.

We see Maggie is sat next to her daughter.

MAGGIE  
So kiddo, shall we?

A smile.

ALI  
After all those injections?

A nod.

Ali starts the car's engine.

18 INT. IVF CLINIC - RECEPTION. DAY 9 10.30

18

Ali and her mum sit in silence, waiting.

Maggie's gaze is fixed straight ahead - at that wall of newborn photos.

Finally, her specialist, DR JOHN BELLO (50s), appears.

DR BELLO

Ali?

Ali gets up. A warm handshake.

DR BELLO (CONT'D)

How are you?

ALI

Good. Anxious.

He waves her away.

DR BELLO

You're an old hand at this.

He looks around the waiting room.

DR BELLO (CONT'D)

Rafi?

Ali tenses imperceptibly.

ALI

Away with work at the moment -

Maggie gets up.

MAGGIE

A conference. So you've got me.

A nod.

ALI

And mum's got the consent form signed by him.

Maggie hands over a form to the doctor.

DR BELLO

Of course. Well then, shall we?

19 INT. IVF CLINIC - TREATMENT ROOM. DAY 9 10.50

19

Ali lies on a treatment table, dressed only in a surgical gown. Her mother sits to one side, tightly gripping her daughter's hand.

They sit in absolute SILENCE. Maggie's gaze fixed on her daughter. Ali's focused on the ceiling above her.

A SILENCE that drags on for an eternity, punctuated by the rare BABY'S CRY from reception or the MUFFLED VOICE of an overly excited Marie.

Finally, the treatment door swings open. Dr Bello swings in, heads to the sink to wash his hands.

DR BELLO

So! Once more unto the breach, Ali.

ALI

Seems so.

DR BELLO

How are my twins?

ALI

If they're 'your twins' where have you been the last four years of nappies and Calpol?

DR BELLO

Good point. Well made. I'm merely a glorified pelican. The delivery man.

A warm smile for Ali.

DR BELLO (CONT'D)

Right then...

A deep breath. A nod.

Ali reaches for her mum.

ALI

Mum? Would you mind waiting outside?

MAGGIE

You sure love?

A nod. A kiss.

Maggie hesitates, then reluctantly leaves the room.

Maggie sits outside in the waiting room. Alone, she studies the seemingly endless faces lining the wall. New lives of every shape, colour and creed imaginable.

Pure beautiful life.

21

INT. IVF CLINC - TREATMENT ROOM. DAY 9 CONT.

21

Ali lies perfectly still, barely breathing. Instinctively, she plays with her wedding ring.

After a moment.

DR BELLO

Okay!

ALI

Really?

A nod. A smile.

ALI (CONT'D)

I'd forgotten how -

DR BELLO

- easy? Well, the hard part is yet to come!

An easy LAUGH.

DR BELLO (CONT'D)

So, just lie there for a while - twenty-odd minutes - and then I'll see you in reception.

Dr Bello departs, leaving Ali utterly alone.

She lies there for an age. Finally, one hand dares to gently rest on her tummy.

22

INT. ALI'S CAR. DAY 9 14.00

22

Ali pulls up the car in front of her mother's home. She and Maggie sit there for a moment.

MAGGIE

Sweetheart. What -

ALI

What?

MAGGIE

What are you going to tell him? If it works.

ALI

When it works.

MAGGIE

Well, *then* -

SILENCE. Nothing.

Finally, a kiss for her daughter from Maggie.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

You need anything. Anything at all.  
You call.

A nod.

Maggie clammers out.

A deep breath from Ali, mind racing.

And the car pulls away from her mum's home.

23

EXT. COUNTRY HOTEL - GARDENS. DAY 10 13.00

23

Beneath a crisp, pale blue sky Ali and Rafi walk along a path together.

Wrapped up in scarves, hats and wellies - and wrapped around one another - it's difficult to discern where one begins and the other ends.

They walk in perfect, comfortable SILENCE.

Ali lowers her head onto her husband's shoulder.

Rafi closes his eyes, savouring the moment.

24

INT. COUNTRY HOTEL - BEDROOM. DAY 10 16.30

24

Ali and Rafi lie in their vast, luxurious bed - his head on her tummy. A post-coital interlude.

He rolls his head over and gently kisses her stomach.

A finger traces an angry red line across her belly - her cesarean scar. She tenses.

RAFI

Hey!

ALI

I hate it.

RAFI  
It's beautiful.

ALI  
It's ugly.

He turns to his wife.

RAFI  
It's where our children's lives  
began. It's incredible.

A kiss for her.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
And it shows how you survived. How  
you came back to me. To us.

Another kiss.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
It is beautiful.

They collapse into a deep, encompassing hug.

Rafi tenses.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
What's that?!

ALI  
What?

RAFI  
Is that the sound of children about  
to burst in?

But there's just SILENCE.

She elbows him in the ribs. A smirk.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Is that your phone or mine?

More SILENCE.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Or your mother?!

He stretches out. A smile.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
God! The peace! It's beautiful.

He rolls off the bed, nearly falling to the ground.

A shared LAUGH.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
More champagne?

ALI  
But of course, Mr Reda.

\*

Rafi heads to a small table by the window, daylight streaming in across it. He tops up a pair of champagne flutes.

He stares out the window across the green landscape before turning back to Ali.

RAFI  
Just beautiful.

He hands her the champagne flute.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
And you wanted more offspring!

He necks the champagne and leans in for a kiss.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Gonna test drive that giant shower.  
Dinner soon daaarling -

Ali manages a smile as he disappears into the bathroom.

Beside the bed, her phone starts RINGING. A quick look to the screen - 'Home'.

RAFI (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Is it them?

ALI  
How'd you guess?

She put her champagne down answers the phone.

25

INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 11 08.00

25

\*

Downstairs, Rafi is hurriedly preparing slices of toast for the twins - whilst trying to down a bowl of cereal.

Providing commentary to all this is an over-exuberant MORNING RADIO HOST.

RAFI  
Space toast for you.

He drops some triangles of jam toast in front of his son.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Monster toast for you!

He slides Marmite and peanut butter toast before his daughter. CHEERS fill the air.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
You're welcome.

He rewards himself with a slug of coffee, a straightened knot in his tie and a quick look at his management training homework, laid out on the kitchen top.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Daddy's big test today!

But the kids are more interested in their food. Rafi shrugs and turns back to his homework.

26 INT. REDA HOME - BATHROOM. DAY 11 CONT.

26 \*

Ali stands in the bathroom staring at the sink before her.

Staring at the two pregnancy test sticks sitting in the middle of the sink.

Staring at the pair of 'Positive' lines highlighted on each stick.

She grips the edge of the sink tightly, eyes wide with excitement.

She blinks hard and picks up one of the sticks and inspects it more closely.

A smile. A breath.

Heart racing, she takes a final test stick from the pack and unwraps it.

She sits down on the loo to take another test.

27 INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 11 08.15

27 \*

Ali appears in her dressing gown. Rafi looks her up and down.

RAFI  
'Dress Down Day' at the office?

Her hands are clasped behind her back.

ALI  
Choose a hand...

A smile.

RAFI  
Really?

Rafi smirks.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
A 'Good Luck' pressie for my exam?

He jabs a finger towards her left hand.

A deep breath.

She takes her hand from behind her back and slips one of the pregnancy tests into his hand.

For a split second he's confused.

Ali nods to the stick. Suddenly, he twigs.

He holds the stick up, studying it more closely in the morning light. He looks to her. She nods.

ALI  
Yup!

RAFI  
No.

Another nod.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
No!

We stay on Ali as we hear the sound of the kids playing up.

Rafi just stands there, eyes fixed on the test stick. The sound of the kids gets louder, louder...

RAFI (CONT'D)  
ENOUGH!

SILENCE.

And then the sound of CRYING from Leila.

ALI  
(to Rafi)  
Hey!

She comforts Leila.

RAFI  
Hey what?

ALI  
Rafi?

RAFI  
'Hey! I'm suddenly pregnant!  
Surprise!'? 'Hey!  
(MORE)

RAFI (CONT'D)

Turns out we're not done with the  
bottles and baby seats?

\*  
\*

Ali just stares at him.

He gives the test stick a final look. Confusion.

RAFI (CONT'D)

How? How the hell? Years of IVF and  
then this...?

ALI

I dunno. Maybe our weekend away for  
your birthday?

RAFI

If it was that easy -

ALI

Maybe it is!

RAFI

No. It's not.

A look to the clock.

RAFI (CONT'D)

I'm late. I'm sorry, I've got this  
exam.

She looks nonplussed.

RAFI (CONT'D)

The promotion...?

A kiss for both the kids. A big one for his daughter.

RAFI (CONT'D)

Daddy's sorry.

He hands Ali back the pregnancy test stick and races out the door.

ALI

Rafi?

But's he's gone.

Rafi sits alone in an office. An empty desk in front of him save for an exam paper and a pen. He looks like he's a million miles away.

A deep breath. A clenched fist. Renewed concentration.

29 EXT. ALI'S CAR. DAY 11 17.00

29

Ali sits alone in the car outside the house, backseat overflowing with supermarket shopping bags. She fights to hold back tears.

Finally, she simply slams her hand into the steering wheel, over and over and over again.

30 EXT. REDAS' STREET. NIGHT 11 19.30

30 \*

Rafi is trudging home. He pauses at his driveway, studying the house's lit windows.

31 EXT. REDA HOME. NIGHT 11 19.32

31 \*

Rafi stands outside the front door. From inside, the sound of CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER. A wince.

He listens for a long moment. Upstairs, a bedroom light is switched off.

A deep breath. A pause.

He opens the door and steps inside his home.

32 INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. NIGHT 11 CONT.

32 \*

Rafi walks into an empty kitchen.

He drops his work bag on the table and makes for the fridge. Whiskey is soon emptied into a large glass.

Rafi takes in the room - the heart of their home and family. Photographic memories and finger paintings fill the walls. He necks the glass of whiskey.

He begins to pour himself another as Ali walks in.

RAFI

I'd offer you one but you're apparently 'with child'.

ALI

Rafi -

RAFI

But here's the real question.

He finishes his second glass.

RAFI (CONT'D)

How?

Ali stops. He has her attention.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
How on earth are you 'with child'?

ALI  
What?

RAFI  
I've been wracking my brain all day  
- wondering if somehow you'd made a  
mistake -

ALI  
No mistake.

Rafi pours himself another drink.

\*

RAFI  
So how then? Really -

She hesitates.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
We both know the efforts it took  
last time. And now, within weeks  
over you talking about a third, hey  
presto!

Nothing. It's Ali's turn for SILENCE.

He pauses for a moment. Then -

RAFI (CONT'D)  
Is it mine?

ALI  
Oh for God's sake!

And she turns tail and heads out of the room - the SOUND of  
her marching upstairs.

After a moment, Rafi follows...

33 INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. NIGHT 11 CONT.

33 \*

Ali stomps into the bedroom, closing the door behind her.  
Just as Rafi reaches it. He follows her in.

RAFI  
It's -

ALI

Sorry, before you slip effortlessly back into full rant mode, can you please close the door behind you? I don't want the our children having to listen to this -

Rafi taps the bedroom door shut with his foot. Before he can speak.

ALI (CONT'D)

And no. I'm not having an affair.

And before he can reply.

ALI (CONT'D)

And how dare you accuse me of such a thing. How dare you sully something so beautiful.

RAFI

And utterly unexpected. And inexplicable.

ALI

Inexplicable? What are you? Ten? Do you need the birds and the bees explaining to you...?

The volume of their VOICES slowly, inexorably rising.

RAFI

No, but I would like to know how, years after we went through endless tests, drugs, 'interventions' and spent every penny of our savings to do so, we suddenly, miraculously are pregnant again.

His anger - his certainty - have paralysed Ali.

RAFI (CONT'D)

My side of the deal are hardly Olympic swimmers, so, I ask again, who are you sleeping with?

He studies her. Nothing.

Rafi flops on the end of the bed, energy draining from him.

RAFI (CONT'D)

And where the hell do you find the time?

ALI

Oh enough! For god's sake -

Ali stops, mid-retort. Interrupted by loud CRYING from the children's bedroom.

Her parents both look shocked - caught out by her.

RAFI  
That's Leila!

Rafi gets up and quickly leaves the room.

Alone, Ali sits down on the bed, exhausted.

34 INT. REDA HOME - KIDS' BEDROOM. NIGHT 11 CONT.

34 \*

Rafi sits on Leila's bed, gently stroking her forehead. Rafi drags a duvet over her and plants a kiss on her head.

He breathes in the scent of her hair and gently kisses her crown.

He leaves his face buried there for a little while, savouring the presence of this unique, precious soul.

Finally, he stands up and walks over to a second bed containing Sam. He leans in and rearranges a menagerie of cuddly toys and tucks his son in tightly.

Again, he kisses his child and savours his warm, sweet presence.

Getting up, he lingers by the door. Almost not wanting to leave the quiet, perfect contentment of this little room.

35 INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. NIGHT 11 20.20

35 \*

Rafi walks back into the bedroom. Calmer, quieter.

RAFI  
Ali-

She's nowhere to be seen.

A sigh.

He walks out of the bedroom.

36 INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. NIGHT 11 CONT.

36 \*

Ali stands in the kitchen, brewing a cup of tea. A simple, comforting ritual.

Rafi walks in. A pause. A breath.

RAFI

Ali -

She doesn't move.

RAFI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

He walks towards her, a gentle hand on her shoulder.

RAFI (CONT'D)

For how I reacted. This morning.

Just now -

A sip of her tea.

RAFI (CONT'D)

It's just - how - how the hell?

ALI

We got lucky.

RAFI

Ali! We both know luck, fate, faith  
- have nothing to do with this. We  
didn't go through all that - YOU  
didn't go through that hell because  
of luck.

ALI

Well maybe this time -

Again, tempers, pressure rising.

RAFI

No!

A deep breath.

RAFI (CONT'D)

How do I spell this out? You've got  
Endo' and I've got practically zero  
sperm.

His candour and directness stops her.

RAFI (CONT'D)

So I didn't knock you up between  
your hot stone massage and our  
seven course taster birthday meal.

SILENCE.

RAFI (CONT'D)

What. Happened?

Ali studies him as she finishes her tea.

She grips her empty mug tightly.

ALI  
I tried to talk to you about it -

RAFI  
About what?

ALI  
I tried - but when? How?

She nods to the chaos of the kitchen surrounding them.

RAFI  
What, Ali?

She fixes her gaze on his.

ALI  
Our last embryo.

RAFI  
Our what?

ALI  
We had one embryo - one child -  
frozen in that clinic and I  
couldn't leave it there.

Rafi is SILENT.

ALI (CONT'D)  
So, I gave it a chance.

A half smile. An apology? A hope?

RAFI  
You wouldn't do that. You didn't -

Ali launches herself at her handbag, ceremoniously lifting it upside down and spilling the contents all over the table.

She grabs a folded and worn sheet of paper and prods it into Rafi's grasp. The letter from the IVF clinic.

ALI  
There.

Rafi just stares at the letter for an age, studying it.

ALI (CONT'D)  
No affair. Just a part of me. A  
part of us, stuck in a freezer.

He twigs.

RAFI  
That bruise. On your stomach.  
Injections.

A nod.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
How could you? Why would you do  
that to yourself? Put yourself  
through this -

He holds his ground but she can barely look at him.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
That pregnancy nearly broke you.  
The delivery nearly took all three  
of you. Ten minutes, Ali. There was  
less than ten minutes to save you  
all. My entire world.

SILENCE.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
We got away with it. That time.

Half a step towards her. Gentler.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
How could you make that decision  
like that. Without me. Without us?

He squeezes the letters in his grasp. A paper stress ball.

ALI  
I tried. Again and again.

RAFI  
Clearly not that hard -

ALI  
I tried Rafi.

RAFI  
This! This is the most we've talked  
about it!

ALI

Every time I tried to speak with  
you, your head's down in that  
flipping homework - running out the  
door -

RAFI

Homework to get a better job. A  
better life for us. Just some, some  
breathing space -

ALI

Well, we've got a pretty different  
idea of 'better' if that's what you  
want.

RAFI

And you've got a pretty poor  
memory. That pregnancy was hell -  
right up to the last moments -  
lying there in a blood-soaked bed -  
alarms going off and us - me -  
utterly helpless. Your life - our  
life - draining away -

ALI

Here we go again. Yes, you  
mentioned it. Again. Barren woman  
cheats the odds and survives. Jesus  
Christ Rafi! I get it.

RAFI

No! Love of my life nearly dies  
creating those two, beautiful,  
perfect miracles.

She's SILENT.

RAFI (CONT'D)

I can't bear to see you go through  
that again. I didn't think you ever  
would want to. The truth is, if  
that pregnancy didn't kill us, life  
is. We lead separate lives. We've  
had to. And we have to go away to  
some country estate to have two  
minutes alone. It's killing us.

He dares to get closer.

RAFI (CONT'D)

I wanted - I want - those two  
upstairs. But I want and I need  
you. You and me. And they need us.  
More than another brother or  
sister.

Ali hardens.

ALI

Well, that's what they've got coming. And I can't believe you cannot see how that might make our lives - their lives - richer. Happier.

She starts picking up her belongings and dropping them back into her handbag.

Rafi just watches her.

RAFI

So, that's it?

She ignores him, clearing the table of her belongings.

RAFI (CONT'D)

You're pregnant. End of. Sod the risks. Sod everything.

ALI

We're pregnant.

RAFI

Oh, it's 'we' now is it? Well, 'we' weren't in the clinic. 'We' didn't sign the consent form, did 'we'?

He drops the clinic's letter on the table and walks out.

37 INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. DAY 12 06.30

37 \*

Dawn. The SOUND of Sam and Leila in high spirits in their room. Ali wakes with a start, tries to get her bearings.

Rafi is nowhere to be seen.

As big a smile as she can muster for the kids...

38 INT. REDA HOME - LIVING ROOM. DAY 12 06.45

38 \*

Ali, still in her nightclothes, tiptoes into the living room. Rafi lies asleep, stretched out across the couch beneath layers of blankets and sheets.

She silently places a cup of tea on the floor next to him and creeps out of the room.

Rafi opens an eye, not moving lest he catch Ali's attention.

39 INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 12 17.15

39 \*

Ali walks in from work, removes her coat, drops her bag.

ALI

Hi Mum.

Maggie is preparing food for the kids - the sound of them once again racing around out in the back garden.

MAGGIE

Hi love.

ALI

They okay?

MAGGIE

Fine. Unicorn races. Should be nicely knackered for bedtime!

A LAUGH.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

You look exhausted.

A nod.

ALI

Well, I should be - I'm pregnant.  
It worked.

Maggie freezes.

And then an enormous, wordless hug for her daughter.

MAGGIE

Why didn't you tell me?

ALI

I'm telling you now. And, well,  
it's been complicated -

MAGGIE

Rafi?

A nod.

ALI

He's furious.

MAGGIE  
He shouldn't be.

Ali watches the kids outside playing.

ALI  
Yes, he should.

MAGGIE  
It's a miracle. He should be  
thrilled.

ALI  
It's not a miracle, Mum. It's  
science and it was a decision. One  
he should have been part of.

The kids keep racing, around and around.

ALI (CONT'D)  
One that might have ruined all  
this.

A lingering look at her children.

MAGGIE  
Well, sort it out.

ALI  
Thanks mum, I think I've had quite  
enough advice.

MAGGIE  
So it's my fault?

ALI  
I'm not saying that.

MAGGIE  
That's your trouble. You don't seem  
to be saying much to anyone.

She nods to the phone.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
Call him. Talk!

Maggie opens the back door; the sound of the kids gets  
louder.

39A EXT. REDA HOME - DOORSTEP. DAY 12 17.45

39A \*

Wrapped up for the cool evening, Maggie opens the front door.

MAGGIE

Taa-raa!

A CHORUS of "GOODBYES" spill out from the house as she closes the door behind her and is startled to see Rafi stood to the side, his jacket collar popped against the cool air, hugging his briefcase to his chest. He's clearly been there some time.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Rafi! You'll catch your death out here!

He's unmoved.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

RAFI

You know. You knew. Didn't you?

A breath. A nod.

RAFI (CONT'D)

And you know what the last pregnancy nearly did to her. The delivery almost killed her - your own daughter.

Another nod.

RAFI (CONT'D)

Maggie!

He drops the case to the ground.

MAGGIE

Yes Rafi. My daughter.

A moment. A nod.

An awkward truce.

RAFI

It's -

MAGGIE

Scary.

A maternal pat on the shoulder and Maggie heads down the driveway.

She stops.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Oh! How did the exam go?

Finally, a faint smile. A nod to his briefcase.

RAFI

Good. I got the promotion.

MAGGIE

Oh Rafi!

She walks back to him. A proud kiss on the cheek.

A hug. A long silent embrace.

And then.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

She needs you.

RAFI

I know.

She steps back.

MAGGIE  
You need each other.

RAFI  
Why didn't you say something?

MAGGIE  
Why didn't I say something? Why  
aren't you asking each other that?  
Why aren't you talking?

RAFI  
We are.

MAGGIE  
Looks like it.

A wry smile.

RAFI  
I just can't - not yet.

Rafi picks up his briefcase.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
I can't go in there -

MAGGIE  
Rafi -

He turns away from the home.

RAFI  
Not yet. I don't want more - noise.  
I need - time.

And Rafi walks away, leaving Maggie alone in the driveway.

39B INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. DAY 13 06.45

39B \*

Ali lies in bed - alone. Rafi's not there. A look to the clock. A wince.

Lying there alone, a million thoughts racing through her head.

Thoughts that lead to that tiny, new life inside her.

She gently places her hand on her belly. Outside, the DAWN CHORUS is starting to fill the air.

Finally, a smile - at the simple, deep beauty of the moment.

A whisper to her belly.

ALI

You'd better be sleeping at least.

A rare, peaceful moment to savour.

40 OMITTED

40

41 INT. REDA HOME - HALLWAY. DAY 13 07.15

41 \*

Bleary-eyed, Ali comes down the stairs, just in time to catch Rafi heading out early for work.

He pauses. Words on the tip of his tongue. Is it an apology? But then he's gone.

The energy just leaks out of Ali. Then, a look of horror.

ALI

Oh no!

She races towards the downstairs toilet.

The sound of her VOMITING.

A moment later, the SOUND of Leila and Sam's regular LAUGHTER coming down the stairs. Ali emerges from the toilet and does her best to fix a smile for the kids.

42 INT. IVF CLINIC - TREATMENT ROOM. DAY 14 14.00

42

Ali once again lies prone on the bed in the clinic's treatment room. Her eyes are fixed on the ceiling as Dr Bello conducts an early ultrasound scan on her.

The little stool to the side of the treatment table is empty and Ali looks bereft.

DR BELLO

Well, hello!

On the doctor's display, a grainy, black and white image appears. A brand new life, growing inside Ali.

Finally, a broad, deeply happy smile. A LAUGH.

DR BELLO (CONT'D)

Congratulations mama!

43 INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. NIGHT 14 23.30

43 \*

Rafi creeps into the bedroom and undresses, being sure not to disturb Ali. He slides into the bed, clinging to the very edge of it - his back turned to his wife.

Ali doesn't stir.

He lies there for an age, eyes fixed on some distant, unseen horizon - wide awake.

44 INT. REDA HOME - BEDROOM. DAY 15 06.30

44 \*

Next morning, Rafi is woken by a strange SOUND. He rolls over - Ali's not there. A check of his watch. It's early.

A puzzled look around the room.

That SOUND again. Ali VOMITING.

Instinctively, Rafi leaps out of the bed and races to her.

45 INT. REDA HOME - BATHROOM. DAY 15 CONT.

45 \*

In the bathroom, Rafi finds Ali kneeling before the toilet bowl, retching into it.

He drops beside her, gently pulling her trailing hair out of her face and reaches for her hand. White knuckles hanging on for dear life.

She retches into the bowl again, MOANING with the effort. Their grasp tightens and he WHISPERS something into her ear.

Ali rests her head on the edge of the bowl, the cool relief of the seat. He wipes her brow.

ALI

Can you grab my bag please?

Rafi gets up and heads out.

Ali breathes deeply, calming herself.

Rafi returns with her handbag.

ALI (CONT'D)

There's a hairband in there.

Rafi roots around in the handbag for the hairband. He finds it and hands it to her.

She pulls her hair back out of her face and away from the loo. She gently rests her head onto the toilet seat.

A half smile for her husband.

ALI (CONT'D)

Just like old times.

A weary nod.

Something catches his eye. Something dislodged from her handbag.

Rafi lets out a GASP.

He reaches for the object - unable to peel his eyes away.

A print of the ultrasound scan.

It's a grainy, black and white image - stamped with the date and his surname - and unmistakably a new life.

Without warning and without shame, Rafi breaks down.

The pair of them sit there on the bathroom floor in a tender, encompassing embrace.

46 INT. REDA HOME - KITCHEN. DAY 15 08.40

46 \*

Ali gingerly enters the kitchen. Colour has returned to her cheeks.

Rafi is filling a teapot. Ali nods to the clock.

ALI

You'll be late.

RAFI

I've taken the day off.

She looks stunned.

RAFI (CONT'D)

And your mum's taken the kids into nursery -

He stirs a tea pot.

RAFI (CONT'D)

It's just you and me. At last.

He nods to her tummy.

RAFI (CONT'D)

Well sort of.

A smile.

RAFI (CONT'D)

And whatever happens it's just you and me. Always was. Always will be.

ALI

We've forgotten that.

RAFI

We've forgotten a lot.

He takes her hand.

RAFI (CONT'D)

Whatever happens. And I've no idea what will happen. I'm here. It's you and me.

ALI

And me and you.

Finally. A gentle kiss.

Eyes closed. Peace. Comfort.

Ali sits down at the table. Rafi pours a cuppa.

\*

RAFI  
So Mrs Reda -

He passes her a mug of tea.

RAFI (CONT'D)  
How are you?

END.