

EPISODE 4
(Parents Evening)

1. EXT. HOUSE. DAY – D1

KAREN (OOV)

Mum!... Mum!

2. INT.KITCHEN. DAY –D1

MUM is clearing old food out of the fridge. KAREN enters from the Living Room

KAREN

Mum? Which is worse 'serious' or 'severe'?

MUM

Eh?

KAREN

Well the man on the telly just said that the terrorist threat has gone from 'serious' to 'severe', is that worse?

MUM

I...I'm not sure

KAREN

I need to know what the terrorist threat is, otherwise I won't know how alert I should stay when I'm on the lookout for suspect packages in the playground

MUM

Darling, listen honestly, don't worry about that stuff, it's just an excuse for men to stand in front of big buildings shouting into microphones

POSS IMPROV on Terrorists and other stories on the news that worry KAREN. MUM reassures her

KAREN

They'll probably blow up Big Ben first won't they before they get on to my school

MUM

It's not something you need to be scared of

KAREN

So why have they got such a frightening name...they've got 'terror' in the name. They should call them something else

(The improv ends with....)

MUM

There's some risks that are so minimal that they're not worth worrying about...You're more likely to be hit by lightening

KAREN

So people can be hit by lightning.....I thought it was just trees

MUM{(tries to reassure KAREN)}

Well.....it's mostly trees

KAREN

But of course scientifically lightning's going to hit tall people first isn't it?

MUM

Er yes.....scientifically....that's correct.

3. INT LIVING ROOM DAY – D1

JAKE is watching TV – BEN jumps onto the sofa

BEN

Why are you watching this?

JAKE

It's about the Large Hadron Collider. We've got to do a project about this in Physics

BEN

The large Hadron Collider is cool. It can destroy the entire Universe?

INTO TOPICAL DIALOGUE B

BEN says you don't need to watch this...just ask me

BEN gets very excited about a possible annihilation event and JAKE tries to stick to the facts. BEN could also interrogate him about 'The Big Bang', 'Big Crunch', 'Parallel Universes' etc.

BEN the big bang...there wasn't a big bang because it was a vacuum. It should be called the big 'shh'

BEN In another universe I might not have a brother – just a leopard etc

JAKE is there another universe where I decide to punch you in the face?

BEN and another one where you don't

4. INT. KITCHEN DAY – D1

We hear the front door slam

MUM

(calls)

Hiya

DAD enters

DAD

Sorry I'm late. "Passenger action" at Victoria...think they might have lynched a driver. (he hears the noise in the LIVING ROOM)
What's all that noise?

MUM

Oh, they're just having a fight about the origins of the universe.
Tea?

DAD

Please. When are we setting off?

MUM

About quarter of an hour.....What was today's school like?

DAD

Tough. I'm one of thirteen supply teachers

MUM

Thirteen?

DAD

My class's most popular excuse seems to be 'My pitbull ate my homework'

KAREN

Dad, which is worse, 'serious' or 'severe'?

DAD

Eh?

MUM

She saw something about the terrorist threat

DAD

Hey, listen, you don't have to worry about all that. Did you know, statistically, this is the safest time ever to be a child in England

KAREN

Ben got mugged

DAD

Yes, I know, but, y'know, in the 1500's he'd have probably died in a crusade or caught the plague -

KAREN

No, he got mugged today

DAD

Oh no...what again?

MUM

(brings his tea)

'Fraid so. Same spot. Ratley Road

DAD moves to the doors into the Living room

5. INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY D1

JAKE and BEN are watching TV

DAD

Just heard your news, Ben, are you alright?

BEN

Eh?...Oh yeah...I didn't know the squirrel was going to do that

DAD (momentarily thrown)

No I mean, you being mugged

BEN

Oh , that...yeah...I didn't have a mobile phone. So in the end they just took my geometry kit. They said they had a knife, but they always say that.

DAD

Did you tell a policeman?

BEN

Couldn't find one...which is annoying...cos' it meant I didn't get a ride in the police car

6. INT. KITCHEN.DAY – D1

DAD, standing in the doorway of lounge, talking to MUM

DAD

What are the school doing about this?

MUM

Well, what can they do?

7. INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY – D1

BEN

I've got off quite lightly. Ibrahim's been mugged five times now. Same boys.

(to JAKE)

He asked them if he could have a loyalty card

JAKE

That's quite funny

DAD

(to MUM in kitchen)

It's wrong though, isn't it, the way it's just being accepted. It means there's a whole generation of kids growing up just expecting to be robbed...

8. INT. KITCHEN – DAY – D1

MUM

And a lot of kids who think that thieving is an easy short-cut

KAREN

Can I become a Catholic?

This stops MUM and DAD in their tracks

DAD

You want to become a Catholic?

KAREN

Yes. I can, can't I? The Pope's inviting people to join.

MUM

Well, yes, but –

KAREN

But what?

MUM

Well, it would be easier for you to become a Catholic...if you believed in God

KAREN

I only stopped believing in God because he was annoying me

'cos of all the wars and that volcano that got our holiday cancelled (Very short Improv?)

MUM

Right...look, why do you want to be a Catholic Karen?

KAREN

Because I want to go to the same big school as Tanya, and Tanya's applying for a Catholic school.

MUM

(struggling to contain her irritation)

Tanya.....Well, we've talked about this before, haven't we, darling, y'know, just because Tanya's doing something doesn't mean you have to do it

KAREN

I like Tanya, she's my friend, don't you like her?

MUM hesitates, then throws DAD a look – but he turns away, he's not getting involved. As MUM struggles on with KAREN...

JAKE (OOV)

Dad.....

DAD goes through to the LIVING ROOM

9. INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY – D1

JAKE

Dad, why have I got to look after Karen?

DAD

Because me, Mum and Ben will be at Ben's parents evening

BEN

If Mr. Hunslet mentions Lucy Barker and the formaldehyde, that was a misunderstanding

JAKE

The thing is, how am I supposed to have a proper band practice with a 9 year old girl in tow?

DAD

Just stick her in the corner...she can read or draw...or learn the catechism

JAKE

What? Look, I'm serious

As this conversation escalates, we cut back to MUM and KAREN in the Kitchen

10. INT. KITCHEN DAY – D1

MUM

All I'm saying, Karen, is that if Tanya and her twice divorced Mum want to become Catholics to get into this school, that doesn't mean you have to follow suit.

KAREN

(as she heads to the computer)

But I like Tanya. She's my friend. She's chosen me to be in her entourage.

MUM

(half to herself)

Yeah, well, a friend shouldn't outrank you

A firework goes off outside, startling her. DAD enters

DAD

Bloody hell...it's fireworks all year now...

(he starts to browse the newspaper)

Can you remember when it was Fireworks Night – one night...
like it used to be Christmas Day... now Christmas starts in mid-
October... Halloween costumes are on sale in August. I hate
Halloween, I'd ban it.

10A. INT KITCHEN DAY – D1

At the other end of the kitchen, KAREN is on the computer. She has googled, 'how to
become a Catholic'

BEN drifts in.

BEN

You can't ban Halloween

DAD

The only thing in Halloween's favour is that it's environmentally
friendly. Because as all those kids head out to ring on people's
doorbells, all over the country, millions of people switch off the
lights and pretend they're not in.

BEN

You can't ban Halloween, they should ban Guy Fawkes night...

MUM

Eh?

BEN

...Because all the bangs from the fireworks frighten pets, which
isn't fair on the pets, also, can we have a pet?

DAD

We've tried pets and...

BEN

...and not a goldfish or any other pet you can flush down the
toilet, a proper mammal pet, like a hamster, or a dog, or an
ocelot

MUM

An Ocelot?

BEN

Yeah, it's like a leopard, but small enough to take on holiday in a
car

MUM

You can't keep jungle animals in houses

BEN

Michael Jackson had a chimpanzee. And that only ever attacked two people

KAREN stares at the computer

KAREN

Mmm, lots of candles and lovely spangly costumes

She gets up and goes

10(B)

MUM

You can't have a chimp

BEN

How about a skunk then?

DAD

You can't keep skunks as pets Ben

BEN

You can...a boy at school keeps them. And he wants to sell some

MUM

...He keeps skunks?

BEN

Yeah, Oliver, in Jake's year

DAD

Nah

BEN

He does. Ibrahim told me. He said 'Oliver in year 11 has got some skunk to sell'

MUM and DAD look at each other, concerned

BEN cont'd

...that should be skunks shouldn't it? ... or is it one of those plurals that stays the same, like sheep? Why can't you say 'sheeps'? That must be very confusing for shepherds, if –

MUM and DAD have not been listening to a word of this

MUM

(getting rid of BEN)

Actually, Ben, um, could you go up and collect all your dirty laundry and sort it into whites...and blacks and colours

BEN

...What... all my dirty laundry

MUM

Yes.

BEN

(exits muttering)

The woman's laundry obsessed...

(10C) As soon as he's gone, MUM crosses to DAD

MUM

Skunk? That's dope, isn't it?

DAD

Strong dope.

MUM

And Jake's mate, Olly, is selling it

DAD

Well, whoa, hold on, we've got this from Ben, via Ibrahim, that's like reading a Wikipedia entry posted by Jeffrey Archer – We shouldn't jump to any conclusions.

MUM

No, no, you're right.....I bet he is selling dope though

DAD

Sue –

MUM

He's the type, very 'alternative'...wears those skinny jeans

DAD

There is no 'type', Sue it's –

MUM

What if he's been selling it to Jake? I told you he's been very...you know...very... (she can't find the word)

DAD

Let's just take it a step at a time

MUM

We have to broach it with him...Jake!

DAD

Oh for... OK, but let's just do it nice and gently, eh?

MUM

Ok...Jake! Come in here a moment

DAD

We don't want him going on the defensive, that'll get us nowhere

MUM

No, fair enough

(10D) Reluctantly, JAKE comes into the kitchen

JAKE

What is it?

DAD

Well...we'd welcome your input on something, y'see, it's come to our attention that, um... you know your mate Olly

JAKE

Yes

DAD

Well...

MUM

Is he selling drugs?

DAD's dismayed by her bull-in-a-china-shop impression

JAKE

...What?!

MUM

Is he selling 'skunk'?

JAKE

Je-sus! No! What the – what the hell gave you that idea?

DAD

Well, um, it was something that Ben heard that –

JAKE

B-en! You're basing this on information from Ben?

DAD

Just something he heard, that he didn't understand, but –

JAKE

You're actually listening to Ben! The boy who told his class that he bumped into Barack Obama in LIDL'S

DAD

Yes, but –

JAKE

I'm not doing drugs, ok?

MUM

We didn't say you were. We were just –

JAKE

Accusing Olly of being a pusher!

DAD

Well no, we're just –

MUM

Are there kids pushing drugs?

JAKE

Of course there are, it's a school!

MUM is a bit taken aback by this answer

JAKE (CONT)

But I'm not taking them and Olly isn't selling them

MUM

Then why did –

JAKE

You two are a joke!

MUM

Then why did Ben –

JAKE

Total joke

MUM

Why did Ben say that –

JAKE

This is pathetic

MUM

A kid called Oliver –

JAKE

For Christ's sake

MUM

...In your year –

JAKE

(loud and fast)

Look it's not that Oliv-!

(JAKE stops himself, a fraction too late)

This is stupid, I don't have to answer this

(He exits angrily down the corridor)

MUM

...'It's not that Oliver' ...that's what he was going to say...
(she moves to the computer)

DAD

What are you doing?

10(E)

BEN comes in from the LIVING ROOM

BEN

Can I have a rat? 'Cos Michael Jackson had a rat. And wrote a song about a rat called Ben, who was like a rat Spartacus who led a rebellion against the humans, so we could have a rat as a pet. Did you name me after Ben?

IMPROV C

DAD - Strangely we didn't name any of our children after psychotic rodents....

BEN suggests a micro pig

DAD – Oh yeah, John at work bought a micro pig, weighs more than him now....lives in his bathroom.

BEN suggests other pets.

DAD is keeping half an eye on MUM at the computer and trying to get rid of BEN

The improv ends with DAD taking command

DAD

Ben....you're supposed to be sorting out your laundry.
Go....upstairs.....now.

MUM waits for BEN to go.

MUM

Well clearly, from what Jake...all but said, there is a boy called Oliver, in his year, selling drugs and...according to his year list there is just one other boy in his year called Oliver...that one there

(she points at a name on the screen)

DAD

...Do we know him?

MUM

Only joined this year, but he's already the golden boy, captain of the football team, and his Dad was the one at the quiz night querying all the answers. And now it turns out the golden boy is a drug p –are you alright sweetheart?

(10F)

KAREN is standing in the doorway

KAREN

If I do become a catholic, will I be allowed to eat bacon?

MUM

... Yes

KAREN

(exiting)

Oh well that's alright then

(10G)

MUM

(checks KAREN is out of earshot)

...Well we can't just sit on this information, can we

DAD

I'm not sure, Sue

MUM

Well...say, if Jake was selling drugs...and some other parents found out, we'd want them to tell us, wouldn't we

DAD

Yeah, but what evidence could we quote? A slip of the tongue from Jake and some gossip from Ben

MUM

... best if we don't mention, Ben

DAD

But...

MUM

We don't want this...Oliver...to carry on pushing

DAD

No but all I'm saying is that we need facts

MUM

God...it's a difficult call...maybe we should raise it with the school?

DAD

Maybe. But let's think this through. If we get this wrong, it could be very messy. And it could make life tricky for Jake, so...

MUM

OK maybe I am overreacting...it's just one kid so...

(10H) BEN enters

BEN

Do I really need to come to this?

MUM

Yes, it's the first Parents Evening, it's so everyone can, y'know, discuss how you're getting on.

BEN

I'm settling in fine. They've given some of the new kids, mentors

DAD

Oh, right that's a good idea

BEN

I got Andrew in year 10

MUM

Oh, right, and what sort of helpful stuff has he told you?

BEN

(taking an apple and leaving)

He says there's no CCTV behind the cricket nets...and to remember that they can't search your underpants

MUM shoots DAD a look

DAD

(calls)

OK, everyone, let's go!

BEN

A tiger then.....'cos on YouTube there were the two men who had a pet tiger in a house. It's fine, provided you don't turn your back on the tiger because then it can mistake you for pr –

DAD

Let's go.....

[NO SCENES 11, 12, 13 – ALL PART OF SCENE 10]

14.EXT. HOUSE .DAY – D1

KAREN (OOV)

When I'm a catholic will I be allowed to drink alcohol?

DAD (OOV)

It's virtually compulsory...now get your shoes on

15. EXT. SCHOOL CAR PARK. DAY – D1

The family are getting out of the car.

KAREN

Why couldn't I have gone and stayed at Tanya's?

MUM

Because she didn't invite you

KAREN

Tanya's fun, I'm bored with this family

DAD

Alright Karen –

KAREN

I could have just stayed home on my own

MUM

Well that would be illegal, Karen. Nine year olds have to be with somebody

KAREN

Why?

MUM

In case something happened, y'know, I mean, I dunno, what if there was a fire?

KAREN

If there was a fire, I would leave the house in an orderly fashion and assemble myself at the fire assembly point and await further instruction.

MUM

Right, well –

KAREN

Where is our fire assembly point?

MUM

Erm...well, we haven't got one really

KAREN

You're giving me all this stuff about what responsible parents you are and yet we don't even have a fire assembly point

JAKE

So, if I look after her, I get to go to Max's after band practice, that's the deal, yeah?

DAD

Yeah, OK

JAKE

Come on then, Karen

He leads KAREN off

KAREN

(as she goes)

No fire assembly point, can you believe that?

MUM, DAD and BEN enter the hall

16. INT. ASSMEBLY HALL

Various teachers are sitting at desks with their name on. Parents are hovering, standing, being interviewed, etc. MUM, DAD and BEN enter, They see a POLICEMAN at a desk

DAD

Oh, what do you know, a policeman... 'cos you really need one here...ready to kettle the threat to public order that is a parents evening

MUM

I suppose we could report Ben's mugging...

DAD (reluctant)

Yeah OK...oh no, he's one of those toy policeman (we see him from DAD's P.O.V) He'll only give us a leaflet...OK, Ben, who's first on your list?...Mr Blain

BEN

(spots a friend)

Hey Ibrahim!

MUM

Don't wander off!

(16A)

Suddenly they find themselves face to face with a couple, JENNY and MARTIN. MARTIN has a slightly stern air

JENNY

Hallo there

MUM

(thrown)

Oh, hi...didn't expect to see you here

JENNY

Well we've got a daughter in this year, Kara. This is Martin

MUM

Hi Martin...and this is Pete. Pete, this is Jenny and
Martin...Oliver's parents

DAD

(catching on)

Oh right, Oliver the...um... star

JENNY

Yes, well he's settled in really quickly thank goodness, big relief,
because, y'know, we had to take him out of his old school, I mean
we had no choice really because we discovered there was a boy
selling drugs to pupils, can you believe that?

DAD

God

MARTIN

Well, the truth was that, that school was just awash with
drugs...although apparently it's a lot better now

MUM

Is it? Well, actually...

Dad looks alarmed

MARTIN

They should have got to the bottom of it, found out all the facts,
then acted on the basis of the facts.

JENNY

Martin's a lawyer

DAD

Right...(he looks at MUM) a lawyer...

MARTIN

We're suing them, obviously

DAD

(still aimed at MUM) Suing them...

JENNY

To be honest, you can't just blame the school, I mean there must have been parents who knew what was going on, why didn't they speak up? Y'know, I mean if someone knew your kid was involved with drugs, you'd want them to tell you, wouldn't you

MUM / DAD

Well / um / yes of course / absolutely / yes

JENNY

Exactly

MUM

Well, interestingly...

JENNY

Ooh Mr. Maynard's free, sorry, just see if we can nip in there, catch you later

MARTIN and JENNY have disappeared very quickly. DAD gives MUM a look

MUM

Well we have to tell them...don't we? You heard what she said and she's right.

DAD

Yes, but we still can't be sure that their son is –

MUM

Oh come on, what they said all but confirmed it

DAD

I dunno, he's big on facts, and.....

(16B)

BEN arrives

BEN

Mr Blain's free! Come on! Don't worry about the smell, that's just him

17. INT. SCHOOL ROOM

JAKE and his band are setting up with KAREN watching and looking a bit lost. There are some sheet music and lyrics on a table. JAKE is tuning his guitar

MARCUS

I think I should do a big raspy, Kings of Leon, vocal on this one

JAKE

Go easy don't forget your athsma

KAREN

Do you do Michael Bublé songs?

The other band members laugh, JAKE laughs along

JAKE

No

KAREN

But you like Michael Bublé

JAKE is mortified, the others all look at him

JAKE

No, I don't, she's getting confused

KAREN

You sing along with him in his videos

JAKE

Ironically, Karen

(to the others)

I'm being ironic...sending him up. Who gives a toss...

His mates look unconvinced

KAREN

So whose songs do you sing?

MARCUS

We write our own songs

KAREN

(reading lyrics)

Are these the words?

JAKE

(instant)

Don't read those

He moves the lyrics out of her eyeline, then carries on setting up

KAREN

...Why does he want to do that to his bitch?

18. INT. ASSEMBLY HALL – DAY – D1

MUM and DAD are being greeted by MR. BLAIN, with BEN hovering alongside. Mr. BLAIN is a nice, bookish kind, well-meaning teacher with elbow patches

MUM

Hi, Mr.Blain, do you want Ben to sit in?

MR. BLAIN

Actually Ben, why don't you go and relax over there while I chat with your Mum and Dad

BEN heads off. MUM and DAD look apprehensive

(18A)

MR. BLAIN (CONT)

Okey Dokey...well the first thing I should say is that Ben is very bright...but, in teaching terms, he is also quite...quite...

He looks roof-wards, as he searches for the right adjectives. MUM and DAD are on tenterhooks

MR. BLAIN (CONT)

...quite, um...quite challenging

DAD

Challenging?

MR. BLAIN

Yes, really quite challenging...don't get me wrong, I can't fault his enthusiasm for Chemistry, no, not at all...but that combination of energy, curiosity and impulsiveness, does create some health and safety issues.

MUM

Right...is there anything we could do to –

MR. BLAIN

(checking back through his records)

Well, possibly, um...if you could perhaps get him to address his fascination with sulphuric acid

19. INT. ASSEMBLY HALL – DAY –D1

Hard cut to MUM, DAD and BEN being greeted by MISS HARTSON

MISS HARTSON

Mr and Mrs Brockman

DAD

Hi there, do you want Ben to...?
(sit in)

MISS HARTSON

Actually, Ben, why don't you take it easy over there while we chat through the boring stuff eh?

BEN trudges off
(19A)

MISS HARTSON (CONT)

Right, well...teaching Ben is very...
(she considers adjectives, MUM and DAD wait)
..um...stimulating and he's got a real passion for history

MUM

Pete's a History teacher

MISS HARTSON

Oh right, Ben lives and breathes it, which is good obviously...although it can have a downside...for instance, he did a presentation about the Middle Ages...

DAD

Is this his re-enactment of the symptoms of the Black Death?

MISS HARTSON

Yes, quite a few pupils just found it very frightening. In fact, Lucy Barker was off school for two days, I should have checked what he was planning to do...although it was very sudden...the way he threw himself on the ground and started frothing at the mouth, that was...well, I still haven't worked out how he did it

20. INT. SCHOOL ROOM – DAY – D1

JAKE and the BAND are still setting up. KAREN has zeroed in on MARCUS

KAREN

Can I go for a walk?

JAKE

No I'm responsible for you

KAREN

Then where's the fire assembly point?

MARCUS

Up my arse...

KAREN

You're Tanya's big brother, aren't you?

MARCUS

That's right

KAREN

Tanya's cool. I'm a friend of hers

MARCUS

Are you?

KAREN

I'm going to become catholic

MARCUS

(still setting up)

Really? So which dwarf are you?

KAREN

....What?

MARCUS

She gives all her friends dwarf nicknames y'know 'Dopey',
'Grumpy', 'Frumpy', 'Stinky', 'clingy'...so which one are you?

KAREN

(very thrown)

I don't know

MARCUS

I think you might be 'Clingy'

JAKE is trying to pass, with his guitar

JAKE

Ka-ren, stop getting in the way! Just...just go and sit over there

KAREN trudges towards a chair, a little dazed, and sits down.

21. INT. ASSEMBLY HALL – DAY – D1

The table of MRS. CRILLY, MUM and DAD are settling into the seat

MRS CRILLY

Hello Mr and Mrs Brockman, hello Ben...actually...

BEN

I'll go and sit over there

(21A)

MRS CRILLY

Well, teaching Ben is very...very...special

DAD

(resigned)

Right

MRS CRILLY

It's always hard settling in...

MUM

Also, it's probably a bit weird for him to be, y'know, at the same school as his big brother

MRS CRILLY

He's got a brother here?

MUM

Yes, Jake Brockman, year 11

MRS CRILLY

(clearly amazed)

What, Jake? Ben is Jake's brother?

MUM

Yes

MRS CRILLY

Jake is Ben's brother

MUM

Yes

MRS CRILLY

Right...gosh...what, not a half-brother with a different –

MUM

- No brother

MRS CRILLY

Crikey...well...(she puffs her cheeks)

MUM and DAD start to look really hacked off

22. INT. ASSEMBLY HALL – DAY – D1

MUM and DAD are queuing for MR. HUNSLET. Across the way, they can see MARTIN and JENNY, chatting to another couple.

MUM

Oh god...this is so difficult

DAD

Maybe you're right. Maybe we should just tell them

MUM

I'm not sure...maybe you're right

DAD

What?

MUM

It's just...

Another couple have been hovering with a child in tow.

WOMAN

Erm...excuse me

DAD

...Yes

WOMAN

Is there any chance we could just nip In ahead of you? Only you're Ben's parents aren't you, so you're likely to be quite a long time.

DAD

(getting out of their path, a bit pissed off)

No, be our guest...

(to MUM)

Where is Ben?

MUM

Over there playing imaginary cricket with Ibrahim

(JENNY and MARTIN join the cue behind them)

JENNY

Hallo again

MUM

(a bit taken aback)

Oh hello

JENNY

Are you waiting to see Mr. Hunslet?

DAD

Yes

JENNY

About Ben?

DAD

...Yes

JENNY

Is there any chance we could –

DAD

(resigned)

Please, go ahead

JENNY and MARTIN shuffle ahead of them

MUM

Is Kara here?

JENNY

No, her brother's looking after her at home

DAD

Oh right, Oliver

MARTIN

Good grief no, no George, our eldest. No, Oliver doesn't 'do' babysitting. He's just bought himself a scooter, so he's forever whizzing here, there and everywhere, all hours of the day. Y'know, one of his friends rings and he's off, whoosh all over town.

MUM and DAD share a look. DAD decides to go for it

DAD

...that's nice...um...the thing is...

MARTIN

...Yes?

DAD

Well the thing is...

JENNY

What?

DAD

...this is the thing, y'see...um...we –

(22A) BEN calls across

BEN

Ralph's great dane's just had puppies, and we could

DAD

No we couldn't

MUM

And don't shout.

They turn back to discover that MARTIN and JENNY have been ushered forward by MR. HUNSLET

MUM

How were you going to tell them?

DAD

I-I've really no idea, I set off before I worked it out...look maybe we should just tell the school, let them deal with the whole situation.

Another couple are hovering, the woman shapes to speak

DAD (intercepts)

Yes we are, and no you can't

23. INT. SCHOOL ROOM – DAY – D1

JAKE and his band are playing a rather chaotic song, we cut to KAREN'S chair. She is not there

24. INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR – DAY – D1

A long corridor, JAKE'S band music is drifting down it. At the end of this very long corridor, we find KAREN, she stops to look at some of the artwork on the walls. There is a drawing by Ben entitled 'My Sister'. The head is clearly KAREN's but panning down we discover that she has the body of a dragon which is ripping a small animal open. KAREN tilts her head, not sure whether she likes this or not.

25. INT. ASSEMBLY HALL – DAY – D1

The desk of MR. HUNSLET, BEN'S form teacher, who has a file on the desk in front of him. MUM and DAD are settling into their seats.

MR. HUNSLET

Mr and Mrs Brockman, welcome, right at the back of the queue

DAD

(under his breath)

Well we didn't start there

MR. HUNSLET

As Ben's form teacher it's down to me to give the overview, as it were, and I have to say I find Ben..erm

DAD

Challenging?...stimulating? ...'Special'?

MR. HUNSLET

No, I was going to say 'a pain in the arse', if I'm honest

DAD

OK...no, well fair enough

MR. HUNSLET

(bending down to pick up a file)

I mean, very bright and all that, and very popular, but well, there've been quite a few...issues

(He picks up a fat file on the desk)

OK, let's see what we've got here

MUM

He's got his own file?

MR. HUNSLET

(opening it)

Oh yes.

26. INT. ANOTHER SCHOOL CORRIDOR – DAY – D1

KAREN is wandering down the corridor, looking very small. She stops, and peers through the glass of a door. A man in a suit is sitting in the classroom, quietly sobbing to himself. KAREN watches him for a moment, then looks again at the door. It says 'Headmaster'.

27. INT. ASSEMBLY HALL – DAY – D1

MUM and DAD are still with MR. HUNSLET

MR. HUNSLET

...But those...19 incidents apart, y'know. He is slowly settling in...anything you'd like to ask me?

MUM glances at DAD

MUM

Erm...well this doesn't relate to Ben, but we are a bit...concerned that the school may have a bit of a drug problem, (a look at DAD).. pertaining to a particular pupil

MR. HUNSLET

Is this an official complaint?

MUM and DAD are thrown

MUM

Erm...well, we're not sure

MR. HUNSLET

Because obviously if it was an official complaint the school would have to take it extremely seriously and that would set a number of procedures in motion

DAD

Good, well –

MR. HUNSLET

Provided there was evidence. Hard evidence. Do you have hard evidence?

MUM

Well, um..ish...hard-ish...evid-not firsthand evidence as such, more second-hand...sort of rumour, from a ...source

MR. HUNSLET

How reliable is this source?

This is the killer question. Both MUM and DAD can't help looking across to BEN who is pulling a face.

MUM

We...we...don't want to make any official complaint

MR. HUNSLET

Alrighty, well if that's everything, only –

DAD

(grasping nettle)

Actually there is something else. Ben has been mugged twice already this term

MR. HUNSLET

Yes... class average I'm afraid

DAD

Well what's the school proposing to do about it

MR. HUNSLET

Um....Well what can we do?

DAD

You could ask for plain clothes patrols or –

MR. HUNSLET

We've suggested that, but the police say they have 'other manpower priorities'...like booking me for speeding at two in the morning on a perfectly clear road.

DAD

Well, I happen to be a teacher and I feel that this school is not taking its responsibilities seriously enough. You are supposed to be looking out for the welfare of these children, you have a duty of care.

(27A)

The COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER calls them from the entrance to the hall.

CSO

Whose child is this please?

(he has KAREN with him)

Only I found her wandering in the car park.

MUM and DAD look suitably embarrassed.

28. EXT. HOUSE. NIGHT – N1

Establisher

29. INT. KAREN'S BEDROOM – NIGHT- N1

MUM is saying goodnight to KAREN

KAREN

Mummy....you're right. Tanya is a right cow

MUM

I never said that

KAREN

You did.....to Daddy, when you didn't know I was on the toilet. I think I need some new friends. I'll go on Facebook tomorrow and get some

MUM

Er.....Ok

KAREN

So I don't want to be a Catholic any more...Anyway they've
all these silly rules about women

MUM

Right

KAREN

It would have been hard for me to become Pope

MUM

It's their loss

KAREN

Could I become Archbishop of Canterbury?

MUM

Well, maybe one day

KAREN

What's Canterbury like? Has it got a Nandos?

MUM

Um....probably

KAREN

Ben's done a drawing of me as a dragon
(she rolls over to go to sleep)
I rather like that

MUM turns out the light

30. INT. HALL. NIGHT – N1

DAD is closing the door, there are sirens outside

DAD

I've put out the milk bottles... there are two foxes sitting, waiting
by the gate.

MUM (coming down the stairs)

It's bins night

DAD

Oh yeah... Jake's late. Back by 10:30 we said

MUM

What time is it now?

DAD

10:33. Shall we ring him?

MUM

Best not, it'll feel like we're anxious

DAD

But I am, anxious

They head into the kitchen

31. INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT – N1

MUM

Well me too, but we don't want to communicate
our...anxiousness-ness to him, do we

DAD

No, I suppose not...I know, I could text him, a text is like a less
anxious version of a phone call.

MUM

He's only a few minutes late, leave it he'll turn up in a sec

DAD

Yeah, ok

Some more sirens go past

DAD

...If he's not back by 10:38 I'll text

MUM

10:40 maybe

DAD

OK, yeah, 10:40

They start to do night time things in the kitchen

MUM

We were right to let him stay out, weren't we?

DAD

'Course we were, you've got to take some risks.....it's just working out which ones.

MUM

Mm although I am going to have a word with Ben about the sulphuric acid...in the morning...I didn't want to get him too excited at bedtime

DAD

Maybe do it in the morning
(glances at his watch again)
10:35, I could text him, I could make it jokey

MUM

We said 10:40

MUM sticks on the kitchen TV

PRESENTER (OOV)

...the body of a young man was...

She switches it off

MUM

OK, text him

Suddenly they hear JAKE's key in the door and they both bullet towards the hall, though when they get there, they try to appear casual.

32. INT. HALL – NIGHT – N1

MUM / DAD

(absurdly relaxed and cheery)

Hi / Hiya (etc)

JAKE

Hiya. Sorry I'm a bit late, bus didn't come for ages, you weren't worried were you?

MUM / DAD

Good God no / no / not at all / not in the slightest (etc)

JAKE

Good, OK then, I'm off to bed
(he heads off up the stairs)

MUM

OK, night, night

DAD

Yeah, night, night, nice to have you back

MUM

Why did you say that?

DAD

I don't know

They head off towards the kitchen

33. INT. KITCHEN – NIGHT – N1

MUM

You've communicated anxiety to him now

DAD

(picks up the rubbish bag)
I couldn't help it, it just came out

MUM

...Do you think that Oliver has tried selling drugs to Jake?

DAD

Well maybe...God knows? I mean, we just have to trust his common sense, don't we

MUM

Yeah...suppose so...we did do the right thing about Oliver and the drugs, didn't we?

DAD

Well we couldn't just sit on the information, could we, that would have been irresponsible.

MUM

No, we had to tackle it somehow

DAD

(picking up the bin bag)

Exactly. And we did the right thing by bringing it to the attention of the school.

MUM

They won't know the anonymous note was from us, will they?

34. INT. HALL – DAY – D1

DAD

No, I did it in block capitals, we'll be fine

END