

# THE A WORD

## SERIES 3

### Episode Six

#### SHOOTING SCRIPT

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1 EXT. LAKE DISTRICT ROAD (HONISTER PASS). DAY 21. 08:50.

The road. Familiar.

We find REBECCA, walking, slowly. 37 weeks pregnant. She's wearing headphones. Singing. Determined. Arctic Monkeys, 'When The Sun Goes Down'.

REBECCA / ARCTIC MONKEYS

"I said 'who's that girl there?'  
I wonder what went wrong  
So that she had to roam the streets  
She dun't do major credit cards  
I doubt she does receipts  
It's all not quite legitimate. . ."

REBECCA walks on.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. MANCHESTER STREET. DAY 21. 08:51.

JOE walking down a street in Manchester, ALISON following. JOE also with headphones on, singing the same song.

JOE / ARCTIC MONKEYS

"And what a scummy man  
Just give him half a chance  
I bet he'll rob you if he can  
Can see it in his eyes, yeah  
That he's got a driving ban  
Amongst some other offences . . ."

CUT TO:

3 EXT. LAKE DISTRICT ROAD (HONISTER PASS). DAY 21. 08:52.

REBECCA walking and singing. And now we reveal MAURICE following, in civvies, pushing a wheelbarrow with a huge cushion in it - unclear why.

REBECCA

"And I've seen him with girls of  
the night  
He told Roxanne to put on her red  
light  
They're all infected but he'll be  
alright  
'Cause he's a scumbag, don't you  
know  
I said he's a scumbag, don't you  
know!"

The riff kicks in. We enjoy it for a few seconds. Then MAURICE shouts over.

MAURICE

You still feeling all right? Not  
too jiggered?

REBECCA stops. Turns. Pulls one headphone out.

REBECCA

I'm fine Granddad. And just for the  
record, I would crawl home on my  
hands and knees before I got in  
that thing.

REBECCA turns back and starts walking again. MAURICE knows  
not to interfere.

MAURICE

Right you are.

The music full fat again as we . . .

CUT TO:

4

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. RALPH'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 08:55.

LOUISE stands at the door of Ralph's bedroom, watching RALPH  
carefully packing a box with books. Removal boxes around. A  
suitcase open. Signs of the big move everywhere. LOUISE's  
expression her default for most of the episode - determined  
to be businesslike and hold it together.

CUT TO:

5

EXT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. ENTRANCE. DAY 21. 08:57.

Close on JOE walking to the school entrance, no headphones on  
now. ALISON with him. The music fades as . . .

ALISON

It won't be me picking you up after  
school, remember? You go to your  
Dad's tonight.

JOE

It won't be you.

ALISON

That's right. Handshake or hug?

JOE

Handshake.

JOE shakes hands with ALISON, but doesn't go to HEATHER.  
Instead he looks past ALISON to someone approaching. ALISON  
turns to see it's BEN. She smiles, surprised. JOE waits to  
shake BEN's hand then turns and walks to HEATHER.

HEATHER

Thanks, Alison. Good morning Joe.  
We've got your special guest coming  
today, haven't we?

JOE

Yes, thank you.

JOE heads inside. ALISON turns to BEN.

ALISON

Hello. You're back! Nice surprise.  
I thought you weren't due till  
tomorrow.

BEN

I got the job finished early. And  
as much as I enjoy the cultural  
offerings of Derby I thought . . .

Both stand for a moment.

ALISON

Give me a sec.

ALISON heads for another PARENT who has just dropped a kid off. BEN watches her go and we . . .

CUT TO:

6

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT ROAD (HONISTER PASS). DAY 21. 09:00.

REBECCA and MAURICE heading back home. Side by side now.

MAURICE

Your Grandma was very tetchy at  
this stage too.

REBECCA

I'm not tetchy. I just don't want a  
ride in a wheelbarrow.

MAURICE

You might have no choice in the  
matter. Your Grandma used to faint  
a lot in the final trimester.  
Especially with Eddie.

REBECCA

Of course she did.

MAURICE

I'm not kidding you. I took both  
our babies out in one of these too.

REBECCA

That explains so much.

MAURICE

Blokes didn't push prams round here  
in the 80s and my two were  
monsters.

REBECCA

(LAUGHS)

You can't say that about your own  
babies.

MAURICE

I think you'll find you are the  
only one allowed to say that about  
your own babies.

MAURICE looks at REBECCA.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

It'll be lovely to have a baby to  
put in this barrow again.

REBECCA

There's a sentence to melt the  
heart.

They are both equally amused by the other. And then MAURICE  
freezes. He remembers something - looks at his watch.

MAURICE

Shit. Sorry. I need to go.

MAURICE stares at the barrow, realises he has no choice but  
to take it with him, and dashes off.

CUT TO:

7

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. DAY 21. 09:10.

MAURICE enters, out of breath. LOUISE is shouting up the  
stairs - a thousand things in her head.

LOUISE

Kitchen stuff is in the box marked  
kitchen stuff apart from that new  
set of pans I bought you. Pillows  
don't need to go in boxes, they  
only take up room. (TO MAURICE)  
Unbelievable. What time do you call  
this? We told Katie we'd be there  
at 10.30!

LOUISE heads past MAURICE to the front door. Opens the front  
door, a beat, heads back to MAURICE as . . .

MAURICE

I'm here now aren't I.

LOUISE

Why is there a wheelbarrow outside?  
Where's the van?

MAURICE

What van? I thought we could do it  
in the barrow. He hasn't got a lot  
of stuff, has he?

LOUISE

You can't be serious.

MAURICE

Be a couple of trips maybe, but...

At that moment, the sound of a van horn outside. MAURICE  
can't help but sound triumphant.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

That'll be Paul. With the van.

LOUISE

You bastard.

MAURICE

Now will you just calm down.

LOUISE

I was calm until you got here.

PAUL enters, as RALPH comes down the stairs.

PAUL

Morning, guys. (SHOUTING UP THE  
STAIRS) Hiya, Ralph. Big day.

RALPH

Big day.

PAUL

I'll come up and you show me what  
to load up first, yeah?

As he eases past them, PAUL notices LOUISE isn't smiling and  
MAURICE is looking rather nervous. He disappears upstairs.

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

I hope you've soft wrapped your  
breakables if that doesn't sound  
too dodgy.

LOUISE fixes MAURICE with a killer gaze. He smiles.

MAURICE

Everything's under control. I know  
it's a big day. Huge. Probably the  
biggest day of your life since you  
actually had Ralph. Bigger.

(MORE)

MAURICE (CONT'D)

I'm just trying to help you to stay  
calm and keep it all in  
perspective.

LOUISE

Thanks.

LOUISE heads up the stairs, not angry, just businesslike.

CONTINUOUS:

7A

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. RALPH'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 09:11.**

PAUL is standing on the bed, taking down the Paul Pogba poster and handing it to RALPH - to discover, beneath it, a poster of Wayne Rooney.

PAUL

Bloody hell, Ralph. How many  
seasons do you go back?

LOUISE enters, wants to stay busy.

LOUISE

Here you go. I'll roll that up for  
you.

RALPH hands her Paul Pogba. LOUISE rolls it up and as she does so, she looks around at the walls stripped of pictures, the shelves empty, the wardrobe empty and removal boxes on the floor. PAUL, meanwhile has taken down Wayne Rooney to reveal a poster of Ryan Giggs beneath it.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

I've packed your DVDs in with your  
CDs downstairs.

RALPH

Thanks.

LOUISE

I hope you've got enough storage  
space in your bedroom. Once Katie's  
things are in too . . .

LOUISE is determined to hold it together but it is a struggle. And finally Ryan Giggs comes down to reveal Eric Cantona behind him.

RALPH

Leave Cantona up.

PAUL

Okay.

LOUISE exits with the posters.

LOUISE

I'll do these downstairs. Get out  
of the way.

PAUL

(OF THE REMAINING POSTER)  
Is that the one the tunnel's  
behind?

RALPH ignores PAUL, doesn't get the reference. PAUL picks up a box, exits, leaving RALPH for a moment to look around at the bedroom he grew up in.

CUT TO:

7B

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. DAY 21. 09:12.

LOUISE in the hall with posters as MAURICE enters from outside.

MAURICE

You okay?

LOUISE

His United posters. Not sure where  
he's going to put them.

MAURICE

Tell me he's left us Eric Cantona.

PAUL is coming down the stairs.

PAUL

Yes. That's the one he's hiding the  
tunnel behind.

No reaction from MAURICE or LOUISE.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Shawshank Redemption? Anybody?

Still nothing. PAUL presses on with the box, reflecting that he is wasted on this crowd.

CUT TO:

8

EXT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. ENTRANCE. DAY 21. 09:15.

BEN is waiting by his van. It's been a while - the school entrance is empty now. ALISON says goodbye to the PARENT and hurries across.

ALISON

Sorry. Sorry. Summer Fair Raffle  
Prizes. Bane of my life.

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

Thanks for waiting. Are you going to be late for work?

BEN

Not going to work today. I think I deserve a day off.

ALISON

Oh. Right. Good for you.

BEN

Can you get the day off too?

ALISON

If it's your photos of the wonders of Derby then maybe we could do it tonight?

BEN

I'm serious. Can you get the day off? We need to go somewhere quiet and talk. I mean I need to talk. It can't wait.

ALISON

Right. Right. I can probably knock off at lunchtime.

On ALISON, puzzled, surprised.

CUT TO:

9

INT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. ZEBRAS CLASS. DAY 21. 09:40.

The other CHILDREN are working with their LSAs etc, while HEATHER and JOE put chairs into a horse shoe arrangement.

HEATHER

I think that will be about right.  
Will you want to sit at the front with your visitor? Here?

HEATHER puts one of the chairs next to the visitor's chair.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Or will you want to sit with the rest of the class. Like this?

HEATHER moves the chair back to the horse shoe.

JOE

Let me see now. 'Transmission'.

HEATHER doesn't answer. Just a firm, friendly insistence.

HEATHER

Let's think about the chair. Here  
or there?

JOE has a moment to think about this. Then takes the chair  
and puts it next to the visitor's chair.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Okay. That'll be good. Then she  
won't be nervous because she knows  
she will have you there.

JOE sits on the chair.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Exactly. And you won't be nervous,  
will you?

JOE looks at HEATHER and says, with unusual clarity -

JOE

I won't be nervous.

TANYA

Who's your visitor, Joe? Is it  
Aslan?

JOE looks out at the other CHILDREN and watches them for a  
few moments, and then, to himself . . .

JOE

Joy Division. 1979.

CUT TO:

10

EXT. RALPH & KATIE'S FLAT. DAY 21. 10:25.

REBECCA walks to Ralph & Katie's door. Tom's car (which she's  
borrowed) is parked up. She's carrying flowers and a parcel.

She knocks on the door. She waits. No reply. She knocks again  
and KATIE opens the door immediately - clearly having been  
behind it all along.

REBECCA

Oh, hello!

KATIE

I just wanted to hear it again.  
Never had my own front door before!

REBECCA

I'm your first visitor?

KATIE

Yes! Come in.

REBECCA follows KATIE inside.

CUT TO:

11

**INT. RALPH & KATIE'S FLAT. KITCHEN/L'ROOM. DAY 21. 10:40.**

KATIE and REBECCA are on the sofa - which is still in its polythene cover - having a brew. KATIE unwraps REBECCA's parcel. REBECCA gestures to JEAN, who is busy organising things in the background.

REBECCA

So I'm not your first visitor? I'm  
not even your first pregnant  
visitor.

KATIE

Jean doesn't count. She's my  
social worker.

JEAN

I don't count. I'm her social  
worker.

REBECCA laughs. KATIE has unwrapped the parcel. It's a toastie maker.

KATIE

Fantastic. Thank you.

REBECCA

First year of University I lived  
off toasties. There's no food on  
earth that can't be made better by  
putting it in toast.

KATIE

I'd hug you but you're massive.

REBECCA

Don't even try. (BEAT) So are you  
ready for married life?

KATIE

(SHOUTS OVER)

Am I, Jean?

JEAN

You are now you've got that.  
(TOASTIE MAKER)

REBECCA

You and Ralph are, like. Well,  
you're what I want . . .

KATIE

But not with your baby's Dad?

REBECCA

No.

KATIE

Where is he?

REBECCA

Australia.

KATIE

Did you send him there?

REBECCA

(LAUGHS) No. He's there for his course. He'll be involved in the baby's life. He just won't be my partner. He won't be my "Ralph".

MAURICE comes bouncing in, carrying a box of Ralph's stuff.

MAURICE

Books in here? You've found the kettle? Let's get some pictures on these walls and then I'll talk you and Ralph through the fuse box!

RALPH enters, also carrying a box. LOUISE behind him.

LOUISE

This is bedding, Katie, so you might want to take this upstairs yourself.

MAURICE

I'll do it.

LOUISE gives MAURICE a look. Then exits.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Then again, good idea for you to do it, Katie.

REBECCA stands, hugs KATIE goodbye.

REBECCA

Here's to interfering families. See you later.

KATIE

You don't have to go.

REBECCA

I have to be somewhere. I love your new place. Bye Ralph!

REBECCA exits.

MAURICE

I'll put the kettle on, shall I?

KATIE

I'll do it.

RALPH

I'll help.

RALPH follows KATIE to the kitchen.

MAURICE

Then the lads can tune the telly,  
hey, Ralph?

MAURICE looks at LOUISE who, in the time it has taken him to faff about, has come back in with a second box.

LOUISE

Were you planning on actually  
bringing any boxes in, Maurice, or  
did you just bring them out for a  
drive?

MAURICE heads out to the van and we . . .

CUT TO:

12

**INT. RALPH & KATIE'S FLAT. KITCHEN/L'ROOM. DAY 21. 12:29.**

Close on the back of MAURICE's head as he sits tuning the telly. Pull out to reveal that behind him, everybody else has done the real work of unpacking and starting to put things in to some kind of order. LOUISE, RALPH, JEAN and KATIE at the table - JEAN going through the keys. Four sets - freshly cut.

JEAN

Utility bills. List of phone  
numbers and, most important of all.  
Keys. Katie and me have labelled  
them all up. Front Door, Yale,  
Mortice and back door. Best test  
them to make sure they work.

KATIE

Oh. Wait.

KATIE gets two keyrings out of her pocket. One with a photo of her on it, the other with a photo of RALPH on it. She gives RALPH his keyring.

KATIE (CONT'D)

There you are, my darling.

RALPH looks at the keyring.

RALPH

Thank you my darling.

A look between MAURICE and LOUISE.

LOUISE

Romance is one thing. Making sure  
the keys open the doors is another.

RALPH

We will test them.

LOUISE

Right.

RALPH

When you've gone.

LOUISE looks at RALPH. She gets it.

LOUISE

Of course. Of course. Maurice!

MAURICE

I've still got the pictures to  
hang.

LOUISE

I think Ralph and Katie have got a  
million things to do. And we're  
getting in the way.

LOUISE gives MAURICE a look.

MAURICE

Oh. Right. I see. Yes. Independent.

MAURICE couldn't make it more obvious that he understands  
LOUISE's look. RALPH shows LOUISE a set of keys.

RALPH

These are emergency keys.

LOUISE

Thank you.

RALPH

For an emergency.

LOUISE

Understood.

RALPH pointedly hands the keys to LOUISE. MAURICE kisses  
KATIE on the cheek. He is clearly getting emotional. LOUISE  
notes this, stays controlled.

MAURICE

Good luck. Good luck love. Big day.  
Big day.

MAURICE shakes RALPH's hand - on the verge of tears but  
trying to hide it.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Play the game not the occasion,  
Ralph. Matt Busby said that.

RALPH has no idea what MAURICE is banging on about. LOUISE faces RALPH, holds both his hands in hers. No hint here of emotional turmoil.

LOUISE

You, young man, have done it. Like you said you would. Your own place. Lovely 'missus. Independent. This is the proudest day of my life. And it should be yours too.

MAURICE tries to join in.

MAURICE

And . . .

LOUISE cuts him short.

LOUISE

Come on, Maurice. Can we please leave this lovely couple to get on with it. We'll be invited for tea soon enough.

MAURICE

We could arrange it now.

LOUISE

No, we couldn't.

MAURICE nods his goodbyes and he and LOUISE exit.

CUT TO:

13

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. DAY 21. 12:43.

LOUISE and MAURICE enter. No Ralph. For the first time.

MAURICE

I'll stick the kettle on.

LOUISE doesn't say anything. She heads upstairs. MAURICE heads for the kitchen.

CUT TO:

14

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. RALPH'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 12:44.

LOUISE enters RALPH's bedroom. The walls stripped bare. The wardrobe empty. She stands in the empty bedroom and takes it in. Her expression doesn't give anything away for now.

She crosses to Ralph's bed. Straightens the duvet. Sits down on the bed. Takes a moment and then it comes. It hits her like a train. The sorrow of losing him. She sits there and starts to cry and the force of it surprises her. This is what she has been holding back. And now she cries like she might never stop but still - being LOUISE - covers her mouth to try and hide the sound.

CUT TO:

15

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 12:45.**

MAURICE stands and watches the kettle boiling. The kettle turns off. He notices the sudden silence. Puts a tea bag in each cup. Stares at them for a moment. Then something dawns on him. A brilliant idea. Of course. He knows what he has to do. He decisively heads out into the hall and out . . .

CUT TO:

16

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. RALPH'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 12:46.**

LOUISE brought back to earth by the sound of the front door slamming. She dries her eyes. Recovers herself. Stands up and shouts downstairs.

LOUISE

Maurice?

Silence. On LOUISE, thrown.

CUT TO:

17

**OMITTED**

18

**INT. MAURICE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 13:01.**

We hear the front door go and PAUL enters the kitchen. Starts getting cleaning stuff together to take to the new house.

Then he and we hear a thundering down the stairs. MAURICE bursts into the kitchen with a stuffed holdall on his back and a brass box in his arms.

MAURICE

I'm moving in with Louise!

PAUL

Right. (BEAT, OF THE BOX) I always wondered where you kept the treasure, Maurice.

MAURICE

She's going to be lonely now Ralph has gone. She'll need me there. Makes sense.

PAUL

Right. (BEAT) She doesn't know you're moving in, does she?

HARD CUT TO:

19

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 13:15.**

LOUISE looks at the brass box as MAURICE puts his bag on the kitchen floor.

MAURICE

I realise that it's what you need. And I looked at Ralph and Katie and I thought, you know what, that looks all right.

LOUISE

You're moving in?

MAURICE

I mean. I spend most of my time here anyway. I just think I should make it official.

LOUISE

You're moving in.

MAURICE

Nothing'll change. Not really.

LOUISE

I don't suppose it will.

MAURICE puts out his arms in an impersonation of a homecoming husband.

MAURICE

Darling, I'm home!

LOUISE

You're not going to be doing that, are you?

MAURICE

No. No. Of course not. I'll just find a good place for this.

He means the box. Out on LOUISE, what the fuck is she letting herself in for?

CUT TO:

20

INT/EXT. PAUL'S CAR/PAUL'S HOUSE. DAY 21. 13:17.

PAUL pulls up at the house in his car, with MARK in the passenger seat. They get the cleaning stuff out and go inside.

We pull back to reveal SARAH, holding a cake tin, watching. She's taking some deep breaths. Looks like she's psyching herself up for something . . .

CUT TO:

21

EXT. BAR. MANCHESTER. DAY 21. 13:19.

A bar/cafe in town.

CUT TO:

22

INT. BAR. MANCHESTER. DAY 21. 13:20.

BEN with ALISON, soft drinks in front of them. BEN looks around, both a bit awkward. This isn't quite the reconciliation with BEN that ALISON expected and she finds herself suddenly nervous.

ALISON

I could be wrong but I'm guessing this isn't going to be a marriage proposal.

BEN doesn't smile. Shit. ALISON wishes she hasn't said it.

BEN

When I was away. What did you think? About us I mean?

ALISON a bit taken aback by the immediacy of this. But she can see BEN is serious.

ALISON

Well, I missed you being around. Of course I did. I really did.

BEN

Yeah.

ALISON

And it wasn't as though we didn't talk. I know it's not the same but it was only two weeks and . . . What is this about? Have you taken another job away?

BEN

No. I just wondered what I was doing there.

ALISON

In Derby? Well, you're probably not the first person to have asked yourself that.

BEN doesn't laugh.

BEN

I mean, it was a good job. The money will be handy. But I just thought I'd rather be here. Seeing you. And that it might have been nice if you had said, "Don't go."

ALISON

I wouldn't ask you not to take a job for my sake . . .

BEN

Well maybe you could at least have said, "Do you have to go?"

ALISON

I thought after the weekend away you might have been glad to see the back of me for a while.

BEN

So we could both hide from each other? That's not how couples work, is it?

ALISON

It is in my experience, yes.

BEN

So you do think we're a couple, then?

ALISON

What is this?

BEN

While I was away, I was thinking. About how we get on. Or don't get on. When Joe isn't there. (BEAT) And I reckon the truth is - the thing you like about me most is that I get on with Joe, and Joe gets on with me.

ALISON

Is that a bad thing? I'm guessing it's a bad thing.

BEN

Yes, because when I look at you my heart beats faster.

ALISON

Is that love do you think, or just cholesterol?

BEN

There you go again.

ALISON

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. You've thrown me. This isn't a conversation I thought we'd be having. Joe is the most important thing in my life so I don't see why it's a bad thing that I like you getting on with him.

BEN

It wouldn't be if there was anything more. Maybe I need to feel there's something more . . .

ALISON

(But) we're okay aren't we?

BEN

No, I don't think we are okay. And I think we need to sort it out. Or else . . . we should end it.

ALISON turns this over.

ALISON

You're right.

BEN

Okay.

ALISON

If that's how you feel we should end it.

Out on BEN, this isn't quite what he was expecting.

CUT TO:

23

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 13:23.

PAUL and MARK getting to work cleaning the kitchen. SARAH enters, with the tin.

SARAH

The door was open.

PAUL

Hello!

SARAH  
Housewarming cake.

PAUL  
How lovely. Thank you, Sarah.

SARAH  
The sort of thing that friends do  
for each other.

MARK decides to make himself scarce.

PAUL  
Yep. It certainly is. Although not  
all friends are as good as you.

SARAH  
(SUBDUED)  
Well. I don't know about that.

PAUL  
No. (BEAT) Are you okay?

SARAH  
I'll leave it here, shall I? And  
leave you and Mark to get on.

PAUL  
Grab a paintbrush if you like.  
There's plenty of touching up to be  
done. So to speak . . .

SARAH  
I can't. I'm sorry.

PAUL  
Okay . . .

SARAH  
I've got a slow cooker at home.

PAUL  
Good. Good for you.

SARAH  
And I find when I use it, things  
taste so much better.

PAUL  
Yes. Good. Well. Right.

SARAH  
So I like to think if the  
ingredients were you and me then we  
would . . .

PAUL  
Taste so much better?

SARAH

I just think we should take it slowly. This "thing", this "situation".

PAUL

We've had two kisses in two months. I've heard of pandas hooking up quicker.

SARAH

It went a bit further than that at the wedding. For me at least.

PAUL

Well, yes. But we were interrupted and . . .

SARAH

Who knows, if Bill had taken his anti-histamine, passion might well have been next on the agenda.

PAUL

Indeed. We might have got as far as "Any Other Business".

SARAH

So I was thinking that we should slow things down. Take stock.

PAUL

Add stock. If we're going with the slow cooker thing . . .

SARAH

Be friends for a while. But not lovers.

PAUL

Which we aren't yet . . .

SARAH

No.

PAUL

Are you talking about taking it slow or just not taking it anywhere?

SARAH

I am sorry if I led you on.

PAUL

I hardly think you led me on . . .

SARAH

The thing is, my allergies have flared up and that usually means open season for my irritable bowel.

PAUL

Right.

SARAH

And I have to be on top form for Bill. I'm sorry . . .

PAUL

Sarah. Nothing has happened. So I don't know what you're apologising for.

SARAH

I know you are being kind, Paul. And I value that.

SARAH gives PAUL an awkward hug.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Enjoy the cake. It's got an experimental flour substitute so I'd welcome feedback.

SARAH leaves, PAUL looks baffled . . .

CUT TO:

24

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE. DAY 21. 13:25.

SARAH heads away from the house. MARK watches her go, has clearly been waiting for the coast to clear. He goes back in.

CUT TO:

25

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM/HALLWAY. DAY 21. 13:30.

LOUISE and MAURICE sit in the living room together. MAURICE has his feet up on his box. A long beat. MAURICE glances at his watch, silence.

LOUISE

I've got a pupil in twenty minutes so you're going to have to make yourself scarce.

MAURICE

No problem. Could go earlier if you like? Any time you want me out of the house, just say the word. No problemo.

LOUISE

Why are you talking like that?

MAURICE

Talking like what?

LOUISE

I don't know. It doesn't sound like  
you . . .

MAURICE

Well, anyway. I'll go and give the  
lads a hand at the fire station.

MAURICE gets up and exits into the hallway, relieved.

We return to the living room to LOUISE, also looking  
relieved, and staring down accusingly at the brass shoe box.

CUT TO:

26 OMITTED

27 OMITTED

28 INT. BAR. MANCHESTER. DAY 21. 13:50.

BEN and ALISON together, but not together. Food has arrived.  
Clearly a mistake. Neither of them touch it.

BEN

I hoped you might put up a bit of a  
fight to be honest. Otherwise I  
wouldn't have ordered . . .

ALISON

I hoped you might be a bit more  
long term in your thinking. What  
with you being a gardener . . .  
Nothing can just grow overnight.

BEN looks puzzled.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Apart from cress. Cress grows  
overnight.

BEN

(PRESSING ON)

I know when something's missing.  
And if it's missing at the  
beginning then it's never going to  
be there.

ALISON

But we've only known each other a few months. I've just come out of a twenty year marriage. You've been divorced for eight years. You're clearly ahead of me on this, ready for something more . . . involved? Complicated?

BEN

Yes. If you like, complicated, overwhelming, life-changing even. Hell, Alison, I want you to want me as much as I want you. And you don't. And I don't know that you ever will. And even now your phone's going and you want to look at it.

He's right. ALISON's phone has started ringing.

ALISON

I'm not looking at it.

BEN

I know. But you want to look at it. To check. And that's fine. But it's kind of, like, it's . . .

ALISON

I will always be Joe's Mum. Over and above anything else in my life.

BEN

I know that. And I'll always be Molly's Dad.

ALISON

It's different for me. You know it's different. I'll always be Joe's Mum so I'll always be checking my phone. I'm sorry.

BEN

Don't be. But that's kind of the point I'm making.

ALISON looks at BEN.

ALISON

Shit, Ben. I really like you. It's taken me two years since Paul and I split up, and I've only just started feeling anything at all other than how can I get through another day.

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

I'm not ready to feel those things yet, not for you, not for anyone. And I really wish I could because you're lovely.

BEN

But not lovely enough.

ALISON

It's just bad timing. If I'd met you further down the line. When I was a bit more sorted . . . But I didn't. And . . .

BEN

And?

ALISON

Maybe if we end it now we can still be mates. Maybe?

BEN

Course, yes.

ALISON

'Cos Joe's got used to you and he likes you and . . .

BEN

(NOT HARSH)

We can still be mates. I can still see Joe.

BEN stands.

BEN (CONT'D)

Handshake or hug?

ALISON shakes BEN's hand. BEN walks out. ALISON looks down at the two meals in front of her. This time she checks her phone, calls the person back. (We don't see who it is). BEN looks back, sees she is already checking her phone. He smiles and leaves.

ALISON

Hiya. You kept ringing. You're in town? So am I. Have you eaten?

Out on the two untouched meals.

CUT TO:

MAURICE is at the door, brandishing a drill that he's got from his car. RALPH opens the door.

MAURICE

All right, Ralph. I thought now'd  
be a good time to get a few picture  
hooks up.

RALPH

We've done it.

MAURICE

How do you mean?

CUT TO:

30

**INT. RALPH & KATIE'S FLAT. KITCHEN/L'ROOM. DAY 21. 13:54.**

Pictures have been put up on the wall. A painting and two framed sets of photos of RALPH and KATIE.

RALPH

Katie's Dad did them.

MAURICE

Right. All of them?

RALPH

Yes.

KATIE

Do you want a cup of tea, Maurice?

RALPH looks at MAURICE - not encouraging.

MAURICE

Er. No. Actually. I've got to get  
round to Paul's. Got a bit to do  
there as well. Then your Mum'll be  
wondering where I am.

RALPH

Will she?

KATIE

Okay.

MAURICE can't help himself. He goes over and checks out the picture frame is solidly attached to the wall.

MAURICE

Good job that. Your Dad's done a  
good job there, Katie.

Out on RALPH, watching MAURICE, willing him to leave.

CUT TO:

31

EXT. RALPH & KATIE'S FLAT. DAY 21. 13:55.

MAURICE opens the door and finds LOUISE standing there, about to knock.

MAURICE

Oh, hello. I thought you had a pupil.

LOUISE

I thought you were at the fire station.

MAURICE

They don't need anything.

LOUISE

Right.

LOUISE moves past MAURICE, into the house. MAURICE watches her go in. He waits. A beat. She comes out again.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

You're right. They don't need anything.

They walk away together.

MAURICE

Do we need any shopping, or shall we head straight home? Better get used to saying that, hey?

LOUISE cuts him a glance.

CUT TO:

32

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 14:05.

MARK back in the kitchen with PAUL. They both have a slice of Sarah's cake with a brew.

PAUL

Tastes all right for a sad cake, doesn't it?

MARK

It's nice to have friends. The occupational therapist used to say that a lot at my school.

PAUL

It is. I'm not sure if Sarah's a friend or . . . something else.

MARK

There are friends who are close friends, and sometimes one special friend. A boyfriend or a girlfriend.

PAUL

I am aware of the ground rules, Mark.

MARK

Did she hug you goodbye like a friend, or kiss you on the lips or touch you intimately like a special friend?

PAUL

No. It was just a hug. (BEAT) Not even much of a hug if I'm honest.

MARK eats the cake thoughtfully.

MARK

Change can be good. The occupational therapist said that too.

PAUL

And did you ever believe it?

MARK

I believe it about trainers. Not so much haircuts.

PAUL

What about me and Joe moving in here?

MARK

Good change.

PAUL

Rebecca having a baby?

MARK

Good change.

PAUL

Me promoting you?

MARK

Yes.

PAUL waits. Nothing.

PAUL

I'm promoting you. At The Fellside. Head Waiter. It'll mean a payrise.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

Bit more responsibility. You might have to help new staff settle in. But I'll be there. To keep an eye. I think you're ready. Do you fancy it?

MARK

Why?

PAUL

Because you're good at it. And it's not always easy to find something you're good at. Somewhere you fit. But you seem to like it. And I like having you there.

MARK

I'll get a girlfriend.

PAUL

Well I'm not sure I can help you with that but . . .

MARK

What will it say?

PAUL

What will what say?

MARK

My name badge.

PAUL

Oh. Right. Name badge. It'll say: Mark. Head Waiter.

MARK thinks for a few moments.

MARK

Yes. I'll do it. After we've cleared the kitchen. One job at a time, Paul.

MARK continues the tidying.

PAUL

You're right, let's not get overexcited.

MARK

No. We wouldn't want to do that.

PAUL watches MARK for a few moments. Smiles to himself - maybe someone could feel this way and do this for Joe in ten years time.

CUT TO:

33

INT/EXT. TOM'S CAR/PEAR TREE SCHOOL. ENTRANCE. DAY 21. 14:25.

REBECCA has parked up. As she walks to the entrance door, she takes a few moments to gather herself, then heads inside. . .

CUT TO:

34

INT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. ZEBRAS CLASS. DAY 21. 14:30.

The afternoon for Zebras class. CHILDREN doing their thing with LSAs.

There is a tap at the door. HEATHER looks across.

HEATHER

Joe. I think your visitor has arrived.

JOE looks up. We see REBECCA, looking slightly nervous, giving JOE a little wave. JOE heads for the door and looks at REBECCA looking in. He doesn't open the door.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Would you like to let her in, Joe?

JOE opens the door.

JOE

You came.

REBECCA

I said I would, didn't I.

HEATHER has crossed to REBECCA.

HEATHER

Come in, Rebecca. We are just about to start circle time . . .

Stay on REBECCA for a few beats, watching the classroom, watching JOE in the classroom. She is in his world now and she has never really seen it before.

CUT TO:

35

INT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. ZEBRAS CLASS. DAY 21. 14:35.

Circle time. HEATHER talks to the CHILDREN. REBECCA sits at the front of the horse shoe of chairs. JOE is next to her. On a big table to one side are the props of "baby life". A small bath, a life-like doll. Nappies, feeding bottle, etc . . . A pile of worksheets visible with diagrams of a pregnant woman with arrows to body parts to label - not filled in.

HEATHER

So today it is Joe's turn for "Show and Tell". And he hasn't brought a pet, or a drawing, but he has brought something special to him. This is Joe's sister.

JOE

Yes.

HEATHER

Why is it special that Rebecca is here today?

JOE

Her friend.

HEATHER

Her friend?

HEATHER looks at REBECCA who points at her tummy.

REBECCA

Joe's friend is what Joe and I call the baby I am having.

HEATHER

Rebecca has a baby inside her. In her tummy. Do you remember? We learned about how babies are born? And she has very kindly come here today to help us talk about that.

JOE

In private.

HEATHER

That's right. Rebecca will have the baby in private but when it is born she will show the baby to everyone. And maybe Rebecca will bring her baby in to meet us.

REBECCA smiles and looks at JOE. He looks down.

JOE

I don't think that would be a good idea. The baby might break stuff.

REBECCA looks at HEATHER and smiles.

REBECCA

Before we start. I might need to . . . erm.

HEATHER

Of course.

REBECCA

We can start with the joys of  
bladder control!

REBECCA exits.

CUT TO:

36

INT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. TOILET. DAY 21. 14:40.

REBECCA comes out of the toilet. As she heads for the sink she feels a twinge - enough to stop her. She rubs at her tummy, surprised, curious. It passes. So does the moment of worry. It'll be okay.

CUT TO:

37

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 14:45.

MAURICE and LOUISE back at the house.

MAURICE drinking tea from a mug. He has his feet up on the brass box. LOUISE is flicking through a magazine, but not really concentrating.

MAURICE

This is nice, hey?

LOUISE looks up from her magazine. She doesn't reply. Why does this suddenly feel unfamiliar? MAURICE takes a sneaky look at his firefighter bleeper. Hopeful. Nothing.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

I should probably get my own mug,  
hey?

LOUISE

If you like. Maybe something to  
match your shoe box.

MAURICE

Is it a problem? The shoe box. If  
you don't like it we don't have to  
keep it.

LOUISE

No. It's fine. It's just.

MAURICE

It's always been in the family, you  
know. It says "home" to me. But if  
you want me to get rid . . .

LOUISE

No. It's fine, Maurice. It's fine.

It clearly isn't fine. Even MAURICE can tell.

CUT TO:

38

**INT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. ZEBRAS CLASS. DAY 21. 14:46.**

REBECCA is back in the class. HEATHER has brought out a number of worksheets with a pregnancy theme. A poster or whiteboards featuring a diagram of a stage of pregnancy.

JOE is with an LSA putting a nappy on the lifelike doll. He is quite engaged with this. We watch him from REBECCA's POV.

HEATHER shows the CHILDREN a baby photo of JOE.

HEATHER

(POINTING TO JOE'S PHOTO)

This is Joe when he was a baby. And this is Joe now. (POINTS TO JOE).

HEATHER holds another photo up and then passes it round.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Who do we think this baby is?

TANYA

Heather.

HEATHER

That's right. That's me when I was a baby. A long, long time ago. We were all babies once.

TANYA gives REBECCA a picture she has drawn of her - the long legs, head and the tummy with a stick man inside it.

REBECCA

(SLIGHTLY ALARMED)

Thank you. That's lovely.

HEATHER glances over at the picture.

HEATHER

That's what the world sees when they look at you. They just aren't as honest as our kids.

From JOE's POV we watch REBECCA, in his world. The CHILDREN moving around him. HEATHER and REBECCA chatting. We don't hear the following:

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You will bring the baby in, won't you?

REBECCA

I'll probably leave it with you for a few days if that's okay?

HEATHER

Maybe not take it that far.

REBECCA notices JOE looking over and relaxes. He fits here. She feels glad for him, reassured.

Then both are snapped out of it as . . .

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Okay. Before Rebecca goes, does anyone want to ask her any questions?

CUT TO:

39

INT. BAR. MANCHESTER. DAY 21. 14:50.

ALISON sitting where we left her, the two meals still there, she picks unenthusiastically at a chip. She looks up and smiles. And there he is - EDDIE. He smiles and comes over.

EDDIE

Daytime drinking. A sight to bring a tear to any Brewery Executive's eye.

ALISON

(HUGGING HIM)

It's lime and soda. Is that what you're calling yourself now, a Brewery Executive?

EDDIE

Amongst other things.

ALISON

What are you doing up here?

EDDIE

Don't tell Dad, but we're buying up another brewery. I've really gone to the dark side. (BEAT) More to the point, what are you doing here?

He means the surrounds of a bar in daytime.

ALISON

Oh, it's just a little place I come to be chucked.

On EDDIE, realising ALISON is serious.

CUT TO:

40

INT. PEAR TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL. CORRIDOR. DAY 21. 15:05.

School is now finished for the day. HEATHER with JOE and REBECCA in the corridor outside Zebras class. HEATHER and REBECCA both smiling, amused by what they've just heard.

HEATHER

You okay?

REBECCA

They don't pull their punches, do they? That Q&A was far more graphic than I thought it was going to be.

HEATHER

We like our kids to use the proper terms. No 'foo foo' and 'diggle' here.

REBECCA laughs.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

But I hope it wasn't too traumatic. It was the liveliest Show and Tell since the Reptile Man came in.

REBECCA

I won't ask.

HEATHER

Oh. Hang on. Stay there. We got you something!

HEATHER nips back into the classroom. Reappears a few moments later with a wrapped package.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Just a small thank you. We normally go a bottle of wine but this might be more useful . . .

HEATHER hands the package to REBECCA.

REBECCA

Thank you. (BEAT) And thank you for being Joe's teacher.

HEATHER

(FLUSTERED BUT PLEASED)

Well, we do our best, you know.

HEATHER smiles, retreats into the classroom.

CUT TO:

41

INT/EXT. TOM'S CAR/PEAR TREE SCHOOL. ENTRANCE. DAY 21. 15:10.

REBECCA sits in the car with JOE, unwrapping the present. It is a babygro with Zebras on it.

REBECCA  
Who do you think this is for?

JOE looks at the present.

JOE  
(POINTING AT HIMSELF)  
Not me. (POINTS AT REBECCA). Not you.

JOE then points at REBECCA's tummy.

JOE (CONT'D)  
My friend.

REBECCA holds the babygro up.

REBECCA  
That's right. From the kids in your class.

JOE  
Zebras class.

REBECCA  
(SMILES)  
I liked the kids in your class, Joe.

JOE  
Do you need your headphones, Joe.

REBECCA  
Don't worry. It's not going to be a long conversation. It was nice for me to see you there. Because now, when I think about you at school, I can picture you. In my head.

JOE  
Is it a good picture. Or a bad picture.

REBECCA  
It's a very good picture. Because you seem happy there. And you do stuff that's good. And that's a good feeling.

JOE  
I think the car wants to go home now.

REBECCA  
(LAUGHS)  
I think it probably does, yes.

REBECCA, amused, starts up the car.

CUT TO:

42

INT. BAR. MANCHESTER. DAY 21. 15:11.

EDDIE with ALISON - the chips on one plate have all gone.  
ALISON is listing Ben's good qualities.

ALISON  
He was good looking. He was kind.  
He was great with Joe. Even Dad  
liked him.

EDDIE  
Have you got his number?

ALISON  
I'm just not ready. I wish I was.  
(BEAT) What would a grown-up do in  
these circumstances?

EDDIE  
What are you asking me for? You've  
been grown up since you were nine  
years old. You're the best grown-up  
I know. Since Mum died you're the  
only grown-up I know.

ALISON  
She'd have known what to do.

EDDIE  
Maybe Dad would know what to do.

ALISON  
(LAUGHS)  
Dad would think he knew and Mum  
would know. That was the  
difference.

EDDIE  
She'd have just said be honest.  
With him. With yourself. She didn't  
believe in secrets.

ALISON  
I don't know about that.

EDDIE  
What?

ALISON

You knew about the salsa lessons,  
right?

EDDIE

Mum had salsa lessons. When was  
this? Our Mum? My Mum?

ALISON

Yes.

EDDIE is surprised.

EDDIE

Salsa lessons? Did Dad know?

ALISON

No. I don't think he did. I think  
that might have been the point. One  
little part of the world that was  
just for her . . .

EDDIE

I can't believe living with Dad all  
those years would drive a woman to  
such a thing.

ALISON laughs. Checks her phone.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Ben was right about your phone. You  
do check it a lot. It is annoying.

CUT TO:

43

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 16:20.

An empty valley. Stone Roses, 'What the World is Waiting For' plays full fat - the song already a few minutes in. TOM's car comes into view and we stay on the car for a bit and big up the Stone Roses and then . . .

CUT TO:

44

INT/EXT. TOM'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 16:21.

REBECCA and JOE in the front seats. Both facing forward, singing along together, loud - the song playing out of the car speaker via bluetooth.

REBECCA/JOE/ROSES

"Anytime you want it then it's  
there  
All you gotta do is stop it  
On the corner and ask  
Say hey you don't live today  
(MORE)

REBECCA/JOE/ROSES (CONT'D)

Stop the world  
Stop the world  
I'm getting off!"

The music stops abruptly.

REBECCA

Oh.

JOE carries on singing acapella.

JOE

"I'm getting off."

REBECCA

My phone's dead.

JOE stops singing. They drive on in silence for a few beats.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

You know what, Joe, we can't do  
this without music.

REBECCA pulls up on the side of the road.

CUT TO:

45

INT/EXT. TOM'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 16:22.

REBECCA is trying to find the plug for her phone, but it's not in the car.

REBECCA

I can't plug it in. Sorry.

As REBECCA puts her phone down she feels a sudden sharp pain.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Ow.

JOE

Ow.

REBECCA winces.

REBECCA

That was a bit sharp. I shouldn't  
have had that fourth biscuit.

JOE

Ow!

JOE turns the word over, it has clearly troubled him. REBECCA starts the car but as she does so she feels another deeper pain.

REBECCA

Oh. Owww!

JOE puts his hands over his ears.

JOE

(REPEATING IT BACK)

Owww!

REBECCA

Sorry, Joe, sorry. I'm sorry. I  
don't mean to scare you, but it  
really hurts. It really hurts . . .

Out on REBECCA, looking at JOE, she turns off the engine.

CUT TO:

46

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 16:23.**

MAURICE stands, staring out of the window. LOUISE enters, carrying tea, she looks at the brass box, then to MAURICE, then back again.

LOUISE

You are free to come and go as you  
please, Maurice. I fit the  
electronic tag tomorrow.

MAURICE

What?

LOUISE

You. Staring out of the window. If  
you were a dog you'd have your lead  
in your mouth.

MAURICE

I might go for a quick walk round  
the block as it happens. If you  
don't mind.

LOUISE

Of course I don't mind. You don't  
have to ask me for permission. When  
did you ever ask me for permission?

MAURICE

(HESITANT)

Rightio. Do you think I need a  
coat?

LOUISE

Okay. Enough is enough! I can't  
stand this, Maurice. I can't do  
this anymore!

MAURICE shocked by her vehemence.

MAURICE  
How do you mean?

LOUISE  
This arrangement. It's not working  
is it! It's just not us! You must  
see that!

MAURICE  
It's only been three hours, Louise.

LOUISE  
Is that all?

MAURICE flinches slightly, LOUISE relents.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
(GENTLER)  
I think we both know it isn't  
working out, don't we.

Out on MAURICE. He isn't disagreeing.

CUT TO:

47

INT/EXT. TOM'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 16:24.

REBECCA with JOE, starting to panic now.

REBECCA  
What I'm going to try and do, Joe,  
is drive. I think the pains have  
gone away for now and if they come  
back, I'll stop. Okay?

JOE nods.

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
Right.

REBECCA starts the engine again, but then, as she does so, something worse than pain happens. The car seat grows a shadow of damp. Her waters have broken. She turns off the engine. She looks at JOE.

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
We are going to have to stay very  
calm. I think the baby's coming. Do  
you understand?

JOE  
The friend.

REBECCA

Yes. The friend. The friend is coming.

JOE considers this for a few moments - and then does something he rarely does. He asks a direct question.

JOE

What should we do?

REBECCA registers a moment of surprise that JOE has asked a direct question.

REBECCA

I don't know.

A beat.

JOE

Are you hungry.

REBECCA

Not right now. No.

JOE

Something happens.

REBECCA

(HALF LAUGHING)

You're right there, Joe, it really does.

REBECCA gets another contraction pain and cries out.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Joe. Just hold my hand. Yeah? Just stay and hold my hand . . .

But instead, JOE reaches down by his feet for his headphones, which are plugged into his iPod. He promptly puts them on, and puts the iPod in his pocket. He opens the car door.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Joe? Joe!

REBECCA keeps calling his name but JOE gets out of the car. Again, unusually for him, he looks one way, then the other. Then walks off, purposefully. On REBECCA, panic taking over.

CUT TO:

JOE walks down the long empty road - his headphones on, music full fat. We hear it too - 'That's Entertainment!' by The Jam - but this time JOE doesn't sing along.

## THE JAM

"A police car and a screamin' siren  
 Pneumatic drill and ripped-up  
 concrete  
 A baby wailing, a stray dog howling  
 The screech of brakes and lamplight  
 blinking  
 That's entertainment  
 That's entertainment . . ."

And then something new happens. The music fades until we are watching JOE walk in complete silence - all we can hear is the wind, his breathing, his footsteps.

On JOE, looking straight ahead, walking with purpose.

CUT TO:

49

**INT/EXT. TOM'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 16:26.**

REBECCA has moved to the passenger side and put the seat back. She is in pain and looking out at the empty landscape.

## REBECCA

Don't let this happen. Don't let  
 this happen. Hold on. Don't let  
 this happen.

CUT TO:

50

**EXT. LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 16:27.**

Back to JOE walking down the middle of the road - as the music fades in again - 'That's Entertainment.'

And now a car appears from round the bend. The car slows down and stops. A man, LUKE, and a woman, SUE, get out of the car. They approach JOE. He takes his headphones off. The music cuts out.

## SUE

Hiya, love. What you doing out  
 here? Are you on your own?

## JOE

Are you on your own.

LUKE and SUE exchange a look, clearly this boy is different.

## SUE

Is your Mum around, love?

JOE points in one direction.

## JOE

It's called Manchester.

SUE

Or your Dad? What about your Dad?

JOE points in the direction he has just walked from, then looks back at SUE.

JOE

The new friend is coming.

LUKE

(ENCOURAGED)

So you're with a friend?

JOE

My Sister. Rebecca. But it's private. I don't want to see her vagina.

HARD CUT TO:

51

INT/EXT. TOM'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 16:33.

Tight on JOE - headphones on. A new song playing: 'Common People' by Pulp - full fat - blocking out the world. It plays over the dialogue, obscuring it for us as well as JOE.

PULP

"Sing along with the common people  
 Sing along and it might just get  
 you through  
 Laugh along with the common people  
 Laugh along . . ."

From JOE's POV we see:

The passenger door is open, SUE is crouched down next to the seat. REBECCA is breathing. (We won't hear the following):

SUE

It's okay, Rebecca. We've phoned for help.

LUKE

Yeah. Yeah. Craiggsmere Pass. About three miles from Keswick Junction.  
 Yeah. (TURNS TO SUE) Ambulance not far off now . . .

Music still playing. On JOE's face, taking this in.

CUT TO:

52

INT. BAR. MANCHESTER. DAY 21. 16:36.

EDDIE is finishing the chips on the second plate. He looks up at ALISON.

EDDIE  
Did Ben order a pudding by any chance?

ALISON's phone goes. She looks puzzled. Answers it.

ALISON  
Hello? Yes. Yes. Where? Right.  
Thank you. I'm on my way. I'm on my way.

ALISON hangs up and starts to move, EDDIE has no choice but to follow her as they rush out.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
That was a woman called Sue.  
Rebecca's gone into labour in the car.

EDDIE  
What car?

ALISON  
How is that important?

EDDIE  
I don't know. I'm in shock. I don't know why I said it.

They exit at pace.

CUT TO:

53

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 16:38.

LOUISE and MAURICE. He has his holdall and the brass box back at his feet, and a hangdog expression.

LOUISE  
Think about this. Why did you move in?

MAURICE  
Because I thought the time was right.

LOUISE  
What you and me have got. It works.  
We don't have to change it.

MAURICE  
Ralph's moved out. I hate the thought of you being lonely.

LOUISE

You moved in here when you'd rather be at home because you think I'm lonely.

MAURICE

Yes.

LOUISE

And I love you for that.

MAURICE

Oh. Right. I thought that sort of thing annoyed you.

LOUISE

I love you because you annoy me. Hell, Maurice, some days the irritation is the only bit of love I have left for you.

MAURICE

So you want me to annoy - (you?) Hang on, what did you say then?

LOUISE

I said I love you, Maurice!

There. She's finally said it.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

And you don't have to try to annoy me. Believe me. You are infuriating.

MAURICE

Oh.

LOUISE pulls him in to a passionate kiss and we . . .

CUT TO:

54

INT. MAURICE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 17:02.

PAUL is washing up. MAURICE comes in carrying his brass box and holdall - but all smiles.

PAUL

Has Louise chucked you out already?

MAURICE

Yes! Because she loves me!

On MAURICE, as though this explains everything. Before PAUL can ask him any more his phone goes.

PAUL  
Hello. Stay calm. What? What?

PAUL looks at MAURICE and we . . .

CUT TO:

55

**INT. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR/WAITING AREA. DAY 21. 18:25.**

Pick up a NURSE walking down a corridor. We follow her to a waiting area where we find MAURICE, PAUL and TOM waiting. We stay with them.

MAURICE  
Someone should go and see what the problem is.

PAUL  
She's in labour. She's fine. Alison will come and get us when they have any news.

MAURICE  
She's early. You forget I'm emergency trained.

MAURICE starts to head away. PAUL stops him.

PAUL  
As a firefighter. So unless the maternity unit is on fire or there's a baby up a tree . . . Sit down, hey?

EDDIE enters, with JOE, carrying drinks and buns.

MAURICE  
And he's back. The hero of the hour.

EDDIE  
Thanks, Dad.

MAURICE  
I meant Joe.

EDDIE  
I know.

PAUL  
Thanks Eddie. You did get decaffeinated for your Dad, didn't you?

MAURICE gestures for JOE to take his headphones off - he holds a bun at arm's length.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Maurice, what are you doing?

MAURICE  
Are you going to tell us how you  
knew what to do?

JOE  
The seat was wet. In the car.

MAURICE looks faintly disturbed by the detail.

EDDIE  
That serves you right, Dad.

PAUL  
(TO JOE)  
So that was how you knew?

JOE puts his hands to his ears and makes the same noise that  
he made when in the car with REBECCA.

JOE  
Then, Ow! Ow! Ow!

JOE puts his headphones back on. Nothing more to say. The men  
sit in silence for a moment.

MAURICE  
Gonna be some valet job on your  
upholstery, Tom. Have you thought  
about that?

TOM  
Not till you mentioned it. But rest  
assured I'll think of little else  
now.

MAURICE  
There must be someone who knows  
something . . .

MAURICE walks away. PAUL and EDDIE watch him go - half  
exasperated, half-amused.

EDDIE  
Shall we call security?

PAUL  
Have they still got a shoot to kill  
policy?

CUT TO:

56

INT. HOSPITAL. DELIVERY ROOM. DAY 21. 18:26.

ALISON is with REBECCA in the delivery room, holding her hand. GAIL - the MIDWIFE from Ep4 - is there. REBECCA is nearing her next contraction. Gas and air in play.

ALISON

Well done, love. You're a brilliant girl. You can do this!

GAIL

Not long now.

REBECCA

Talk to me, Mum.

ALISON

Did you hear that? Not long now.

REBECCA

Not birth talk. Something else. Anything else!

ALISON

Ben finished with me today.

The contraction starts to come.

REBECCA

Right. That's good. That's good. I mean it's not good for you but. . .

ALISON

He said I made his heart beat faster every time he saw me.

REBECCA

Like romantically or from a medical condition.

ALISON

That's exactly what I said.

The contraction is getting more intense.

REBECCA

Did he laugh?

ALISON

No. He asked if that was the same for me . . .

REBECCA

Oh. Oh. Oh. Oh.

ALISON

You're doing really well, love, really well.

REBECCA

And was it the same for you?

ALISON

No.

REBECCA

And you told him that too?

ALISON

Worse than that. I used a gardening metaphor.

REBECCA laughs but it turns into a cry of pain and we . . .

CUT TO:

57

**INT. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR/WAITING AREA. DAY 21. 18:29.**

EDDIE is waiting with TOM. Joe and Paul have gone off for a walk. MAURICE emerges from a different corridor.

MAURICE

She's playing a blinder by all accounts. She's on the gas and air and eight centimetres dilated according to the latest report.

EDDIE

"Fine" would have sufficed, Dad, but thanks.

MAURICE

I've missed you putting me right every five minutes.

EDDIE

I know. I've got a lot of catching up to do.

MAURICE

We should drop in on the brewery while you're up here. You could talk me through the changes.

Impress me.

EDDIE

That'd be a first.

MAURICE

I mean it. I'm interested. I've mellowed.

EDDIE looks at TOM and back to MAURICE.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

(TO TOM)

The baby's deadbeat father not  
going to put in a last minute  
appearance, then?

EDDIE

Mellowed . . .

TOM

I doubt it. He's in Australia.

MAURICE

Only Australia? No further?

TOM

He knows she's in labour. I'm going  
to message him with any news.

MAURICE

Very "hands on".

TOM

It isn't like you think, Maurice.

MAURICE

I know. I know. It's modern.

TOM

It's not like it was in your day.

MAURICE

Bloke gets a girl pregnant and  
disappears? Sounds exactly like it  
was in my day. Except they only  
used to get as far as Carlisle.

TOM

The choice might be the same, but  
the reasons are different.

MAURICE

We're going to have to agree to  
differ. I'm a feminist.

EDDIE

And it was when my Dad said that,  
that I realised I was dreaming.

Out on MAURICE, amused despite himself.

CUT TO:

58

INT. HOSPITAL. DELIVERY ROOM. DAY 21. 18:31.

ALISON holding REBECCA's hand. REBECCA doing the breathing and counting - and by now some of these questions are coming through gritted teeth.

ALISON

He said I only had a light in my eye when I saw him with Joe.

REBECCA

And what did you say?

GAIL

Okay Rebecca. Don't push. Don't push. Not yet.

ALISON

I said that you and Joe were the most important things in my life so trusting him with Joe was the highest compliment I could pay.

REBECCA

Did you really say that?

ALISON

No. But I wish I had.

GAIL

Not yet, Rebecca.

REBECCA

(TO HERSELF)

Don't push. Don't push. Don't push.

ALISON

Nearly there now, love. Nearly there.

Out on REBECCA, counting her breaths and we . . .

CUT TO:

59

INT. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR/WAITING AREA. DAY 21. 18:39.

EDDIE, PAUL, MAURICE, TOM and JOE. MAURICE pacing, looks at his watch. TOM has persuaded JOE to use his ear bud headphones so they can share, one each. We occasionally hear their music buzzing through . . .

MAURICE

She should be fully dilated by now - if she's anything like her Grandma.

PAUL and EDDIE exchange a look.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

My Sandra had a miraculous undercarriage, looking back.

EDDIE

Dad. Please. That's my mother you're talking about.

MAURICE

(LOOKING AT EDDIE)

You were a very easy birth. Second birth often is because, you know -

EDDIE

(INTERRUPTING)

I think we're probably pretty up on the reasons why, Dad.

PAUL is watching and enjoying. He has missed this.

MAURICE

And straight on to the breast.

EDDIE

I don't think I was the first baby in the world to do that.

MAURICE

I'm just saying you were very good. As a baby. No bother.

EDDIE

Thanks.

MAURICE

As long as you were full.

EDDIE

Here it comes.

MAURICE

And you took some filling to be fair.

EDDIE

And, thank you. The insult.

MAURICE

Like you say. Got a lot of catching up to do.

EDDIE goes over to MAURICE and kisses him on the forehead.

EDDIE

Don't ever change, Dad.

EDDIE and PAUL laugh. And now ALISON comes round the corner from the delivery room.

ALISON

She's had a little girl. And  
they're both fine.

ALISON hugs MAURICE.

MAURICE

Lovely. Lovely.

ALISON hugs EDDIE. MAURICE shakes hands with PAUL. ALISON then hugs PAUL.

ALISON

A little girl of her own. She's got  
a little girl of her own.

PAUL and ALISON trying to hold back the tears. But MAURICE is already at it, blowing his nose, wiping his eyes. ALISON goes to JOE's level. TOM takes the headphone out of JOE's ear.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Your friend has been born. Rebecca  
has had a baby girl.

JOE looks at ALISON. Nods. Sighs as though relieved.

JOE

It's good.

ALISON

I don't think we can all go and see  
her at once.

PAUL

(TO ALISON)

I think Joe should see her first,  
don't you?

ALISON starts to move away with JOE.

MAURICE

Paul. If she's got my ears, don't  
say anything.

PAUL laughs, they head off to the side ward.

CUT TO:

60

INT. HOSPITAL. SIDE WARD. DAY 21. 19:30.

REBECCA holding the new BABY. ALISON, PAUL and MAURICE appear, with JOE.

ALISON

Go on, Joe. Go and say, "Hello".

JOE crosses to REBECCA and the BABY.

JOE

Hello.

JOE looks at the BABY. REBECCA speaks to her daughter.

REBECCA

This is Joe. He's my brother. He's the best brother anybody could have. And he's your first friend. He sees things other people can't see. And he says things other people can't say. He's got a superpower. And he knows a lot of songs. And he's good at walking. And if he hadn't been good at walking you might not even be here now. And I think you'll like him. I know you'll like him.

JOE

I'm Joe.

JOE puts his hand towards the BABY's hand. She wraps her baby fist around JOE's finger. REBECCA smiles at him. JOE turns to see PAUL and ALISON smiling too. MAURICE, in danger of crying for the third time today, leaves the room, blowing his nose. We stay with JOE, his new friend holding his hand.

CUT TO:

61

INT. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR. DAY 21. 19:31.

MAURICE blowing his nose, trying to man up.

MAURICE

(TO HIMSELF)

Come on, Maurice Scott. Get a grip. It's not as though you haven't seen a fucking baby before.

A NURSE goes by, gives him a glance, and he looks up to see LOUISE arriving.

LOUISE

You okay?

MAURICE

Yes. I'm . . . never better. It's a girl. She's had a girl.

LOUISE

I know. I got your message. That's why I'm here.

MAURICE

And she's beautiful. She's beautiful.

MAURICE hugs LOUISE, she hugs him back, glad that they can share this.

LOUISE

I went back again to see Ralph and Katie.

MAURICE

I knew you would.

LOUISE

They let me in this time.

MAURICE

Well, that's good.

LOUISE

But they made me take my shoes off at the door.

CUT TO:

62

INT. HOSPITAL. SIDE WARD. DAY 21. 19:40.

JOE is looking from REBECCA to the BABY and back again. TOM takes a picture on his phone. EDDIE talks to REBECCA.

EDDIE

She's lovely.

REBECCA

She is, isn't she . . .

EDDIE

You know you can always call me, don't you? Feeding difficulties, sleep disruption, nappy rash. Croop. Sore nipples. I've had them all . . .

REBECCA

(TO THE BABY)

This is your Uncle Eddie. He has a warped and predictable sense of humour.

EDDIE

But, seriously, I've been through this very recently. Call me. Or Nicola.

REBECCA

Thanks, Eddie.

MAURICE and LOUISE enter.

MAURICE

Knock. Knock.

REBECCA

Hiya, Louise.

LOUISE

How are you, love?

MAURICE notices TOM with his phone.

TOM

What shall I say?

REBECCA

Meet your daughter?

TOM

Yes. That sounds good.

REBECCA

I was joking. Send it to me and I'll write something.

MAURICE

Is this the father you're sending it to?

REBECCA

No. I'm sending it to every man I know to put the wind up them. Yes. Just the Dad. Just Danny. He wants to be involved.

MAURICE

Yep. There's nothing like having a photo on your phone to say you're involved.

LOUISE

Maurice. Shut up. Or wait outside.

REBECCA sends the message and we . . .

CUT TO:

63

INT. HOSPITAL. CORRIDOR/WAITING AREA. DAY 21. 19:45.

ALISON sitting alone, turning over the events of the day. PAUL comes round the corner, with a coffee. He hadn't realised she was there.

PAUL

You want to share this coffee?

ALISON  
(SHAKES HER HEAD, "NO")  
You're all right.

PAUL tastes it, winces, hands it to her.

PAUL  
You'd be doing me a favour, really.

ALISON takes the cup, also winces.

ALISON  
You take sugar these days, do you?

PAUL  
No. I pressed the wrong button.

ALISON  
I thought you might be reinventing  
yourself.

PAUL  
As a diabetic?

They both laugh, easy with each other, and then seem surprised at this.

ALISON  
It'd suit Sarah. She could bring  
you back to sparkling health by way  
of Manuka Honey and Lentil Crisps.

PAUL  
Lentil Crisps are surprisingly  
moorish.

ALISON  
I'll take your word for that.

PAUL  
They're like a Puritan Quaver.  
Although, sadly, I will have to buy  
my own supply from now on. Sarah  
and I don't seem to be . . .

ALISON  
I didn't know you were.

PAUL  
I know. That's what's confusing.  
I'm not sure we were going out, and  
now I'm not entirely sure what it  
was that's finished.

ALISON  
Ben called it a day as well today.

PAUL

You don't have to say that to make me feel better.

ALISON

I'm not. He said he realised my main reason for being attracted to him was that he was good for Joe. And he was right.

PAUL

Really? What about his devastating good looks and the faint smell of potting compost?

ALISON

He meant I liked that he liked Joe more than anything else. And I wasn't ready to try harder to make it work. And he was right. I really wasn't.

PAUL

When did you first discover you were really bad at life?

ALISON laughs. A moment of the old them breaks through the pain and the awkwardness.

ALISON

We're both going to need our free time for Rebecca's baby.

PAUL

Very true. And thanks for not using the Grandchild word.

ALISON

I know. Terrifying.

PAUL

Do you think she'll be all right?

ALISON

I think she'll be fine. She's strong.

PAUL

I know. But she shouldn't have to be that strong, should she? Not at her age.

ALISON

We'll be there for her.

PAUL

Yep.

ALISON

Two failures who have just admitted that they don't have a clue how to do life.

PAUL

"If we don't succeed, we have to fail beautifully."

ALISON

Is that Samuel Beckett?

PAUL

Jurgen Klopp.

ALISON smiles at this. And they sit in silence for a moment, more relaxed with each other than they can remember being for a long while. Things have moved on - one day this might even be easy.

CUT TO:

64

INT. HOSPITAL. SIDE WARD. DAY 21. 19:50.

REBECCA is snoozing. LOUISE has the BABY in her arms.

LOUISE

Baby's head. Smells like heaven.

MAURICE

Yeah.

MAURICE checks that REBECCA is sleeping. She seems to be. He looks at LOUISE for a long beat. She looks up, suddenly self-conscious.

LOUISE

What?

MAURICE lowers his voice.

MAURICE

Don't go making a fuss but, will you marry me?

LOUISE

You don't have to propose to me for the baby's sake, Maurice. You know it's not ours, don't you?

MAURICE waits. A beat. Then a voice from the door.

EDDIE

Say yes. Please say yes, Louise.

LOUISE turns to MAURICE and we . . .

CUT TO:

65

**EXT. SOMEWHERE BEAUTIFUL. LAKES. DAY 22. 13:20.**

A new day. A wide shot of somewhere beautiful in the Lakes. PAUL, ALISON, REBECCA and the BABY are walking from Paul's car to a place with a view of the Lake. We should get the sense it is near to home.

MAURICE (O.S.)

What kept you?

REBECCA looks towards MAURICE.

REBECCA

Dad wouldn't drive faster than ten miles an hour.

MAURICE

No change there, then.

Now we reveal MAURICE, who is standing with LOUISE, EDDIE, JOE and TOM. TOM is setting up his camera on a tripod. ALISON notices RAMESH has arrived on his bike and is looking on.

ALISON

Hiya Ramesh. Nice to see you.

MAURICE

Turns out Ramesh's Uncle was the paramedic that drove Rebecca to hospital.

PAUL

I thought he worked in Blackpool.

RAMESH

He moved to Cumbria. He finds it less stressful and the hen parties were getting too much for him.

RAMESH nods sagely - 'you know how it is'.

EDDIE

Have you had much experience of hen parties, Ramesh?

TOM, meanwhile, is lining everybody up for the photo.

TOM

You look a bit washed out, Becky, but I'll give you a digital makeover.

REBECCA

Thanks.

TOM

I don't mean it. You look gorgeous.  
And so does . . .

REBECCA gives TOM a warning look.

REBECCA

Tom.

ALISON

What? Hang on. You've got a name,  
haven't you.

REBECCA

No.

TOM

No. Not at all. Okay everybody. I'm  
going to set the timer and then I'm  
going to run into that gap.

TOM fiddles with the camera. ALISON turns to REBECCA.

ALISON

You can tell me the name. I won't  
tell anybody.

REBECCA

You'll find out soon enough. Don't  
worry.

RAMESH

(CALLING OVER)

What shutter speed are you using?

TOM

I was thinking 1/15th. What do you  
reckon?

RAMESH

Manual settings?

TOM

Ramesh. If I'm honest I'll just be  
glad if I get this lot to shut up  
and look in the vague direction of  
the camera . . .

RAMESH nods - 'good luck with that' - and drifts off with his  
bike. TOM sets the timer.

TOM (CONT'D)

Fifteen seconds. Okay everyone.

TOM joins the right hand side of the group. JOE is at the centre.

TOM (CONT'D)

Ready. Say, "Rosie Sandra Hughes."

MAURICE

What?

ALISON gets it immediately.

ALISON

Rosie Sandra. That's lovely.

MAURICE

(MOVED)

Sandra? Her Grandma's name?

EDDIE

(HANDING MAURICE A TISSUE)

Bloody hell, Dad!

And now we hold on our family against the backdrop of the Lakes. This new blended family, pieced back together. All smiles. Nobody not looking in the wrong direction.

And at the centre, JOE - clutching the hand of the new BABY. Holding his family together so that they can hold him together in return.

Finally, the camera goes off. We stay with the family for a moment more, as music kicks in - 'I Still Do' by I Am Kloot.

The music runs across the following montage:

CUT TO:

65A EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE. DAY 23. 14:05.

Establisher. Everything tidy. Skip and rubbish gone.

The camera tracks back to reveal PAUL and ALISON sitting together outside with cups of tea. Things a bit easier now.

I AM KLOOT

"When I was a child  
I looked up at the sky  
Thought I saw you and I  
In the clouds passing by . . ."

CUT TO:

66

INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 24. 12:20.

New day. MARK is waiting on, PAUL walks across to him and pins a badge on his shirt. 'MARK - HEAD WAITER'. MARK nods, approves . . .

I AM KLOOT  
 "When I was a boy  
 I looked out at the sea  
 Thought I saw you and me  
 In the waves on a breeze . . ."

CUT TO:

67

INT. RALPH & KATIE'S FLAT. LIVING ROOM. DAY 24. 17:55.

RALPH and KATIE watch telly in their new home - no plastic on the sofa now. RALPH keeps his eyes on the screen. KATIE sneaks glances at him. They hold hands . . .

I AM KLOOT  
 "And I still do  
 I still do . . ."

CUT TO:

68

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE. DAY 25. 13:00.

New day. We return to the new house . . .

I AM KLOOT  
 "Still do . . ."

CUT TO:

69

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE. JOE'S BEDROOM. DAY 25. 13:20.

PAUL and REBECCA lead JOE in to his bedroom. JOE has his eyes shut and REBECCA is holding her hands over his eyes just in case. The bedroom is finished, bed made, curtains up. Decorated in the same colours as his old room. JOE opens his eyes and looks at it and we . . .

I AM KLOOT  
 "When I was a child  
 I had that look in my eye  
 I had a will to despise  
 Make destruction my life . . ."

CUT TO:

70

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE. REBECCA & BABY'S ROOM. DAY 25. 13:30.

REBECCA gently settles the BABY in her cot in their new room. The room that Paul has made for them . . .

I AM KLOOT

"And I still do  
I still do  
Still do . . ."

CUT TO:

71

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT BENCH. DAY 26. 15:45.

New day. MAURICE and LOUISE sitting together on the familiar bench, MAURICE to LOUISE's right. They're dressed in their regular clothes, how we best remember them. A proper couple now. MAURICE takes LOUISE's hand and we glimpse - on her other hand - an engagement ring. They look out across the landscape, smiling, and we . . .

I AM KLOOT

"And I still do  
I still do  
Still do . . ."

CUT TO:

72

OMITTED

73

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE. DAY 27. 14:10.

New day. The house is still. A few beats, then the front door opens and . . .

. . . out comes JOE. Headphones on.

He picks up the words of the song - and we follow him as he leaves the house and walks off up the road and sings loud.

JOE / I AM KLOOT

(SINGS)

"When I was a boy  
I looked out at the sea  
Thought I saw you and me  
In the waves on a breeze . . ."

CUT TO:

74

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT ROAD (HONISTER PASS). DAY 27. 14:25.

And here we are. As we began, years ago.

Honister Pass. A desolate landscape, hills climbing either side.

JOE is alone, walking. He has everything he needs. The world that he creates for himself. A combination of music and love and what we call his autism and he just calls himself. Joe.

JOE  
(SINGING)  
"And I still do  
I still do  
Still do  
  
I still do  
I still do  
Still do."

END OF EPISODE  
SIX