

THE A WORD

Episode Two
SHOOTING SCRIPT

Written by

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1 **EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. ROAD. DAY 4. 07:27.**

JOE walking, headphones on, down the middle of the road. He is carrying a wind chime. A small boy in a huge landscape.

JULIAN COPE

(ON HEADPHONES)

"She's flying in the face of
fashion now
Sells the world annually to a
friend.
She's singin' world shut your
mouth, shut your mouth,
Put your head back in the clouds
and shut your mouth."

The sound of a van coming to a halt behind him. We pull out to reveal DAVID, PAVEL and MAYA. MAYA gets out of the van and picks JOE up and walks back to the van with him . . .

CUT TO:

2 **INT/EXT. BREWERY VAN/LAKE DISTRICT. ROADS. DAY 4. 07:28.**

JOE next to MAYA in the van as DAVID drives . . .

JULIAN COPE

(ON HEADPONES)

"World shut your mouth, shut your
mouth,
Put your head back in the clouds
and shut your mouth."

CUT TO:

2A **EXT. HUGHES & SCOTT HOUSES. DAY 4. 07.29.**

MAURICE running past the Hughes and Scott houses.

CUT TO:

3 **OMITTED**4 **OMITTED**5 **EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 4. 07:55.**

PAUL alone. Digging a trench where the foundations of the deck are going to go. Preoccupied. Determined.

CUT TO:

6

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 4. 07:57.

DAVID waits in the van outside. PAVEL gets back in the front as MAYA gets out with JOE and walks him back to ALISON.

ALISON

Thank you. Joe. What have I told
you about this?

JOE holds up both his hands so that ALISON can throw him around. REBECCA drifts out, eating her breakfast.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Not today, sweetheart.

REBECCA

I'll swing you round if you like,
Joe.

ALISON

No, love. He really doesn't need
swinging round.

REBECCA

Come on!

JOE is going to rush into REBECCA's arms but ALISON puts a restraining hand on REBECCA's shoulder.

ALISON

If we swing him round every time he
comes home then we are reinforcing
him walking out on the road every
day.

REBECCA looks puzzled at ALISON and goes inside.

JOE

I want Dad.

ALISON heads inside, as JOE does the door routine behind her.

CUT TO:

7

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 4. 08:30

PAUL digging as the OTHER WORKERS arrive, get out of their car and give him the odd worried glance, nodding hello.

SALLY arrives as PAUL is wheeling a barrow towards the spoil heap where she is standing.

SALLY

What are you doing?

PAUL

Saving a hundred quid a day in
labour costs.

SALLY

If you're paying them a hundred
quid a day no wonder you're in
trouble.

PAUL

A month of this and I've covered
the cost of the bifold doors.

SALLY

You'll get in the way of the proper
guys.

PAUL

I can dig a hole, Sally.

SALLY

You always could Paul, you always
could.

SALLY goes back inside. PAUL carries on.

CUT TO:

8

EXT. CONISTON. ZEBRA CROSSING NEAR MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL.
DAY 4. 08:50.

ALISON walks with JOE to school, who is wearing his headphones. ALISON pays a little too much attention to RALPH the Lollipop man as they cross the road.

CUT TO:

9

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. DAY 4. 08:58.

ALISON stands outside the school. She watches JOE stand opening and closing the door as the other kids run in in twos and threes, animated, interacting.

ALISON

Joe?

JOE turns to her and carries on with the door routine . . .

ALISON (CONT'D)

You might want to go in now?

JOE ignores this advice. ALISON stands and waits until the routine is complete and JOE finally goes inside. ALISON notices OTHER CHILDREN and PARENTS noticing this.

CUT TO:

10

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. PLAYGROUND. DAY 4. 09:10.

ALISON stands watching the empty playground. Kids can be heard inside the school. She isn't showing any signs of moving.

JUMP CUT TO:

11

OMITTED

12

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. PLAYGROUND. DAY 4. 10:05.

ALISON standing with a coffee watching a reception class PE lesson. Kids balancing bean bags on their heads but JOE has splintered off and is busy putting his bean bag into the equipment bucket then taking it out again. Finally an ASSISTANT takes him by the hand, puts his bean bag on his head and holds it there and "does" JOE's turn with him . . .

It is a kindly gesture and JOE doesn't seem unduly bothered but not engaged.

JUMP CUT TO:

13

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. PLAYGROUND. DAY 4. 10:40.

It is raining. But ALISON remains standing there in the pouring rain watching the empty playground.

JUMP CUT TO:

14

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. PLAYGROUND. DAY 4. 12:00.

The class pour out into the playground, a scrum of activity and chatter and pushing. A small distance behind them JOE emerges, alone, and heads over to the corner of the playground where he is most likely to be ignored.

We pull out to reveal that ALISON is watching this. She hasn't moved all morning.

JUMP CUT TO:

15

EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 4. 16:00.

ALISON is serving coffees and pastries to CUSTOMERS. A fair few are PARENTS from JOE's class, including LINDA. And some of the CHILDREN play around the tables.

JOE plays on a gate on his own, away from the others. A knackered looking PAUL approaches, holds out his hand, JOE takes it and they head to the car. PAUL waves tiredly back in ALISON's direction.

TERRY
We're out of Blueberry Muffins.

ALISON watches PAUL and JOE go, looks at the OTHER PARENTS.

TERRY (CONT'D)
That was a fact, not my mantra.

ALISON ignores him, lost in thought as something falls into place for her . . .

CUT TO:

16

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. STUDY. DAY 4. 18:10.

PAUL and JOE are in front of the computer - which is playing music, the screensaver on - both lost in their own worlds. ALISON comes in from work at the end of the day and stands on the edge of the room.

ALISON
What are you doing?

PAUL
Having fun. I think that's allowed when he's been at school all day.

ALISON
Can you just do something else for five minutes? Take a break from the music?

PAUL looks at ALISON.

PAUL
Now?

ALISON doesn't move. Reluctantly he takes a puzzle down from the shelf. A simple inset tray with animals, etc.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Hey. Mozart. How about we do this?
Hey? Joe?

JOE turns, disinterested from the computer screen.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Hey? Look. Got a zebra on the move here.

PAUL puts the zebra into JOE's hand. JOE smiles, looks at it, puts it down and turns back to the screen.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Joe? I got a Tiger. Joe?

ALISON

You might want to turn the music off.

PAUL turns it down, pulls at JOE.

PAUL

Joe, come on, kidda'. (STARTS TO SING - MAKING UP TUNE AND LYRICS AS HE GOES ALONG) "I've got a tiger. A little tiger. He's singing like a tiger might. How does a Tiger sing? We don't know. We've never heard it."

JOE smiles and takes the Tiger and looks at the puzzle board.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(STILL SINGING)

"Where does the Tiger live? Joe is going to find it? He is going to find it!"

JOE puts the Tiger into place.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(STILL SINGING)

"And now the Lion, who has a different tune, but the lyrics are just as bad, because we never heard a Lion sing before . . ."

JOE laughs and puts the Lion in place. He is more engaged now, starts to look by himself . . . ALISON smiles. PAUL looks up and smiles.

ALISON

You're a great Dad.

PAUL

You're a great Mum.

They kiss.

ALISON

See. Nobody else could have done that. What you just did. You know him.

PAUL

(KISSING HER)

I do.

ALISON

We're taking him out of school.
It's for the best.

PAUL

What?

ALISON exits, leaving PAUL shocked and pissed off. He follows her out.

CUT TO:

17

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 4. 18:15.

PAUL follows ALISON into the kitchen. JOE's music playing in the background, "Accidents Will Happen" Elvis Costello.

ALISON

School doesn't suit him. Not right now.

PAUL

He's only been there a fortnight!

ALISON

Have you seen him in the playground? Have you seen any of the other kids talk to him?

PAUL

It's early days. The school know what they are doing.

ALISON

Did your school know what they were doing with you?

PAUL

That was different. We were in the dark ages back then. My Dad thought dyslexic was another word for being thick.

ALISON

Joe goes to school. He gets labelled. It's over.

PAUL

He's been labelled already. By an expert in autism.

ALISON

One expert. Just one! She looked about 20 and she's on Facebook every night!

PAUL

Two experts since we're counting. How do you know that?

Suddenly music bursts out of Joe's bedroom.

ALISON
(SHOUTING)
Joe! Turn that down!

Another song comes on at the same volume.

PAUL
Don't shout at him!

ALISON
I'm not shouting at him. I'm
raising my voice. Don't shout at me
because you're upset.

PAUL
What if the next expert tells you
what you don't want to hear? Do you
find another? Then another? Until
Professor Autism waves his magic
wand and makes everything good?

ALISON
Do you have a better plan?

PAUL
We do what normal people do. Talk
to the school. We tell them about
the diagnosis.

ALISON
I am doing something, Paul. You are
talking about doing something. That
is the difference between us.

PAUL
In case you hadn't noticed I'm
building a restaurant!

REBECCA comes in.

REBECCA
Really? I was wondering what that
pile of rubble by the Diner was...

PAUL exits, aware now of the sound of tiny snatches of a song
are being played at full volume.

PAUL
(SHOUTING)
Mozart! TURN! THAT! DOWN!

PAUL exits. REBECCA shocked.

CUT TO:

18

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. GARDEN. DAY 4. 18:25.

REBECCA and JOE side by side on the swings, both wearing headphones.

CUT TO:

19

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 5. 07:30.

PAUL lies alone in bed, listening to the activity of the morning which seems unusually loud for such an early hour.

CUT TO:

20

OMITTED

21

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 5. 08:05.

ALISON is in full bulldozer mode. A rather stunned looking group of MAURICE, PAUL, EDDIE and NICOLA sit round as ALISON distributes blank A4 timetables. She has sellotaped a big blank timetable to the kitchen table and distributed marker pens for people to offer their services. She has cleared the kitchen cork board and has put up a list of possible activities. Somewhere in the house we can hear Joe's music playing.

MAURICE

Home schooling? What? Not meaning to be offensive but if Joe's a bit 'damaged stock' already won't this just make him even more of an oddball.

EDDIE

That's you not meaning to be offensive?

NICOLA

Home schooling's not that unusual, Maurice.

MAURICE

In London, perhaps.

ALISON

(PRESSING ON)

I've broken the days down into three sections. There's a list of activities up on the side of the fridge. People just fill in when they think they can help and what they can offer.

EDDIE

Are you getting any advice on this
or just diving in . . . it seems to
me that . . .

ALISON

(IMPATIENT)

We're going to get advice. Expert
advice. Aren't we, Nicola?

NICOLA - on the spot - nods. EDDIE looks puzzled.

PAUL

We'll take any advice we can as
long as Alison agrees with it.

ALISON

(TO EDDIE)

Are you going to help with any
sessions with Joe? Yes or no?

EDDIE

I could do some early mornings and
late afternoons for sure.

ALISON

(PRESSING ON)

Nicola. I'm putting you down for
more sessions than anybody else
because of your expertise but
mainly because you aren't working
at the moment.

NICOLA

I'm hoping that might change.

ALISON

Really?

EDDIE

No need to sound so surprised.

MAURICE

Glad to hear it. Once you get
settled you can really start to put
the past behind you.

NICOLA

I already have Maurice. Now perhaps
you can put my past behind you too.

MAURICE slightly thrown by this, EDDIE smiles and squeezes
NICOLA's hand.

MAURICE

Will this kid have any free time at
all?

ALISON

Not if I can help it. And once he's had all this intensive input maybe he'll be able to go back to school and cope.

PAUL

And he can live a long and unhappy life like the rest of us.

ALISON

The older he gets the more distressing for him to be in a world he doesn't understand. That's real distress. Real pain. Our son.

Silence around the table. PAUL is seething inside for being called out like this. REBECCA enters from her bedroom, school uniform, texting away and smiling. She looks up, surprised to see everybody so early.

REBECCA

Hiya. What's happening?

ALISON

We're putting a rota together. For home schooling Joe.

REBECCA

One. That's insane. Two. I'm going to miss the bus.

REBECCA can't get out of there quick enough.

ALISON

That doesn't get you off the hook on the Joe rota, young lady!

REBECCA

Is that what we're calling him now? Joe Rota. He's Joe. He's always been Joe. Why wouldn't we want him to be Joe?

REBECCA exits. PAUL smiles to himself. ALISON catches it.

MAURICE

So how exactly are you going to work if he's at home all day?

ALISON

I'll give up work if I have to.

MAURICE

What are you going to eat? Wishful thinking on toast?

ALISON

I haven't planned every last detail yet. All I need to know right now is if you are going to help me or not.

MAURICE

Even if I think it's a mistake?

ALISON

Are you going to help me or not?

ALISON stares at MAURICE, unyielding. He knows stubborn because he knows it's what she got from him. He starts to write down his name on the blank timetable and underneath it "Long Walks".

MAURICE

Why can't you be more like your Mother?

NICOLA starts to add her name too. ALISON looks determined and triumphant. PAUL looks dismayed.

CUT TO:

22

EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 5. 10:02.

MAURICE heads up a garden path and rings on the doorbell. He waits. Looking up and down the road as he does so, clearly keen not to be spotted. Finally the door is answered by LOUISE - a woman in her mid-40s.

LOUISE

Hello, Maurice. Come in. And try not to look so guilty. We're not doing anything to be ashamed of...

MAURICE

Speak for yourself.

MAURICE follows LOUISE into the house. She shuts the door behind them and we . . .

CUT TO:

23

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. OFFICE. DAY 5. 10:15.

ALISON in the office with EDDIE. JOE is on the office computer. ALISON glances out and sees MAYA on the brewhouse floor.

ALISON

(PUZZLED)

Is Maya still working for you?

EDDIE

Is that what you came here to ask
me?

ALISON

No. I want your blessing for me to
send Joe's reports to Michael and
for him to talk them through with
Nicola.

EDDIE

Michael who?

ALISON

You know very well.

EDDIE

Oh. Nicola's ex-lover. That
Michael.

ALISON

Yes. Like you said. We need an
expert. And he's a real expert.

EDDIE

He's certainly that.

ALISON

Nicola won't talk to him unless
you're okay with it. Do you mind?

EDDIE

Would it make any difference to you
if I did?

ALISON

No. Not really.

EDDIE

So it isn't a question.

ALISON

Don't make this difficult for me.

EDDIE

No. I mean. A question requires an
answer. There is no answer. So it's
not really a question.

ALISON

Christ. It must be hard being you
sometimes.

EDDIE

Yes. It is. (BEAT) If you want
Nicola to talk to Michael about Joe
then do it. But don't ask me to
like it.

ALISON nods.

CUT TO:

23A EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 5. 10:19.

A detached house. From inside we can hear singing - "If You Could Read My Mind" - in a faltering voice, accompanied by a piano.

MAURICE (O.S.)

(SINGING)

"I'd walk away like a movie star
Who gets burned in a three way
script . . ."

CONTINUOUS:

24 INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 5. 10:20.

We start in the hall. We can hear music. We slowly realise this is the voice of MAURICE and come in on him singing - falteringly - standing up at a music stand with LOUISE on the piano.

MAURICE

(SINGING)

"Enter number two:
A movie queen to play the scene
Of bringing all the good things out
of me.
But for now, love, let's be real;
I never thought I could feel this
way
And I've got to say that I just
don't get it.
I don't know where we went wrong
But the feeling's gone and I just
can't . . ."
Oh, shit! I'm shouting again,
aren't I?

LOUISE

Yes. You lost the breathing. When
you let out that final breath on a
note think of what it's like to
hold in a fart and then, finally
relax and let it go.

MAURICE

I've never held in a fart in my
life.

LOUISE

Maybe you should start. Otherwise
good Maurice, not bad at all . . .

MAURICE

Don't patronise me, Louise. I haven't been practising. There's been stuff at home.

LOUISE

I'm sorry to hear that. Now. Have you got a moment? I have a proposal to put to you.

MAURICE shifts uneasily and looks down at his watch.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

It won't take long.

MAURICE follows LOUISE out of the music room.

CUT TO:

25

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 5. 10:32.

MAURICE sits alone on a sofa. LOUISE comes in with tea, and, despite empty chairs, sits next to him on the sofa. A little closer than is comfortable.

MAURICE

Before you ask. I don't want to take up the ukulele.

LOUISE

This is what I am thinking. That you are alone and I am alone. And neither of us are particularly short of company or commitments. You with your business and your family, me with my teaching and the choir and Ralph. But . . .

MAURICE

I really can't hang about, Louise...

LOUISE

Here's the "but." I'm just going to say it. I miss sex. Do you?

MAURICE

I'm sorry?

LOUISE

I miss sex.

MAURICE

I'm sorry to hear that . . . Have you thought about the internet.

LOUISE

(MAKES A FACE)

It's nasty out there, Maurice.
So I was thinking that you and I
should perhaps start a sexual
relationship.

MAURICE

(THINKS SHE'S JOKING)

Will it help me hit the low notes?

LOUISE

(NOT LAUGHING)

I'm serious. It strikes me as a
practical solution. We're not
teenagers and we know our needs. We
seem to like each other. I can see
the thought horrifies you so I will
say no more about it.

MAURICE

It isn't that.

LOUISE

Perhaps you don't miss the sex.

MAURICE

It isn't that either. I am afraid I
don't find you . . . I don't think
of you in that way.

LOUISE

Oh.

MAURICE

I'm kind of wishing this
conversation had been about the
ukulele.

LOUISE

(A BEAT)

Right. Well. Thank you for your
honesty.

MAURICE

(STANDS)

I should go now.

LOUISE

Of course. Next week, then. And if
you do practise then remember to
sing those low notes from down
here.

LOUISE remains seated while MAURICE leaves the house.

CUT TO:

26

OMITTED

27

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 5. 19:45.

NICOLA and EDDIE tidying up after a meal.

EDDIE

You should talk to Michael by the way. About Joe. I mean, it's his specialist subject so . . .

NICOLA

Alison spoke to you?

EDDIE

Yes. And, you know, it's for Joe.

NICOLA

You'd be all right with it?

EDDIE

Sure. You know what. I think you should meet up to discuss Joe if you have to.

NICOLA

I was thinking that too.

EDDIE

You were?

NICOLA

Michael is teaching in Manchester two days a week at the moment.

EDDIE

How do you know that?

NICOLA

Because I get emailed all the courses, the BMJ training courses.

EDDIE

Well. There you go then. Perfect opportunity. You can nail the diagnosis. Because if anybody isn't hearing it right now it's Alison...

EDDIE starts to clear the plates.

NICOLA

You'd be all right with that?

EDDIE

I've said, haven't I?

NICOLA
(SMILES)
Okay.

NICOLA kisses him and heads for the living room. We hear the TV go on. He calmly starts to load the plates into the dishwasher. Then he picks up a dinner plate, lifts it above his head and throws it as hard as he can on to the floor, it smashes. In a moment he is down on his hands and knees picking up the pieces. NICOLA comes back into the kitchen.

EDDIE
Don't come in. I broke a plate.
You'll cut yourself. It's fine.
Nothing to see here. Move along.

NICOLA retreats and EDDIE carries on sweeping up the pieces with a pan and brush as though this were perfectly normal.

CUT TO:

27A

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 6. 06:30.

PAUL wakes up to find the bed empty next to him again.

CUT TO:

27B

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 6. 06:33.

ALISON is sitting at a computer scouring the internet. She has a pen and paper by her side on which she takes notes. She is watching a documentary on autism. 'A Mother's Courage - Talking Back to Autism'. She stops the film for a moment and clicks on to the National Autistic Society website.

Makes a note on her pad, unaware that PAUL is watching her.

CUT TO:

28

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. FELLS. DAY 6. 07:30.

Early morning. We pick out two figures in the landscape. MAURICE and JOE walking together. MAURICE ahead, JOE small but determined behind him.

MAURICE (V.O.)
What do you think about that, then,
Joe. Hey? Standing on the top of
the world.

JUMP CUT TO:

29

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. FELLS. DAY 6. 07:35.

MAURICE stands next to JOE looking down into the valley.

MAURICE

This time next year we'll be running up this, you and me. No danger. Can you see the Diner down there? Hey? Your Dad's new pub? Joe? Follow the river.

MAURICE points then turns to JOE and rather than taking in the wonderful view JOE is looking down at a ring pull he has found on the grass. MAURICE watches as JOE holds it up to the sun and squints up at it. Back on MAURICE. For a man who always knows what to do he doesn't know what to do.

CUT TO:

30

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 6. 07:40.

NICOLA turns to EDDIE. She kisses him, lazily they start to make love, but then EDDIE suddenly remembers again.

EDDIE

What's this? Am I marking my territory?

NICOLA gets up and starts to get dressed.

NICOLA

(SIGHS)

Christ, you give good sabotage.

EDDIE

(PULLING ON HIS SHIRT)

You should know.

Out on NICOLA, this is tough.

CUT TO:

31

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. BATHROOM. DAY 6. 07:58.

NICOLA stands in front of the mirror putting on make up. Half way through she stops. Suddenly and hurriedly she starts to remove the make up altogether.

CUT TO:

31A

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 6. 08.00.

ALISON is still on the internet. A different film on autism this time - 'Sounding the Alarm'. Again she is taking notes.

REBECCA, in school uniform, in a rush, enters and heads for the cupboards.

REBECCA

Is there any cereal left?

ALISON

(WITHOUT LOOKING ROUND)

Only the stuff that's good for you unfortunately.

REBECCA sighs, exasperated and we . . .

CUT TO:

32 (SCENE 32 OMITTED)

33 EXT. CONISTON. BUS STOP. DAY 6. 08:15.

REBECCA, her boyfriend LUKE, 17, and their friend TOM, 17, gay, hang around waiting for the school bus, LUKE with his arm around REBECCA who is eating a bowl of muesli with a distinct lack of enthusiasm. LUKE turns to her - an idea.

LUKE

We could borrow Joe's tent.

REBECCA

A tent? Are you serious? A tent?

LUKE

If you want to as much as I do then a tent would be fine.

REBECCA

OK. You've convinced me. Let's buy a tent so we can screw on a clammy groundsheet with sheep outside.

LUKE

No need to make it sound so sordid.

TOM

On the other hand your tent blackmail line was class itself.

LUKE

Piss off, Tom.

REBECCA turns her attention back to her muesli.

CUT TO:

34 OMITTED

35

OMITTED

35A

EXT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. YARD. DAY 6. 10:36.

MAURICE walks with JOE across the brewery yard. As he does he sees MAYA taking bags of grain off a pallet and heading over to an outbuilding. He considers this as he heads inside . . .

36

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. BREWHOUSE. DAY 6. 10:37.

DAVID and PAVEL look up as MAURICE walks through the brewhouse with JOE. They speak in Polish . . .

DAVID
Czesciej sie teraz tu
pojawia, niz jak zanim
poszedl na emeryture.

SUBTITLE
He's here now more than
before he retired.

PAVEL
On nie ufa Eddie'mu.

SUBTITLE (CONT'D)
He doesn't trust Eddie.

DAVID
Paul tez nie ufa Eddie'mu.

SUBTITLE (CONT'D)
Paul doesn't trust Eddie
either.

PAVEL
Mysle, ze powinnismy zaczac
udawac ze my ufamy Eddie.
Tylko zeby byc uprzejmym.

SUBTITLE (CONT'D)
I think we should start
pretending we trust Eddie.
Just to be kind.

CUT TO:

37

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. BREWHOUSE. DAY 6. 10:38.

MAURICE and EDDIE mid-conversation. JOE, headphones on, watches the two men.

EDDIE checks the pressure in a cask and once he has done so MAURICE can't resist doing the same.

MAURICE
You let her go?

EDDIE
For Joe. Yes. Was there anything
else? I thought you were doing
educational activities today . . .

EDDIE nods towards JOE.

MAURICE
And you let Nicola go and see
Michael. Just like that? Are you
insane?

EDDIE opens the lid on a cask. MAURICE can't resist checking after him. This mime goes on.

EDDIE

It's called trust. It's called
being a grown up.

MAURICE

It's called being a soft touch. You
don't think it was a mistake?

EDDIE

The only mistake I made was telling
you.

EDDIE heads for the office. MAURICE follows him.

MAURICE

Don't you see? She wanted you to
stop her.

EDDIE

What?

CONTINUOUS:

37A INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. OFFICE. DAY 6. 10:39.

MAURICE has followed EDDIE into the office, JOE has followed MAURICE and is drawn to the computer.

MAURICE

You really think that Michael is
the only autism expert in the
country? It was a test.

EDDIE

I'm not sure it's any of your
business, Dad.

MAURICE

You're right. It isn't. But it's
that lack of decisiveness I worry
about. I see Maya's still here.

EDDIE

Yes. She is.

MAURICE

Same problem again. Too nice. You
were always the talented one but
too nice.

EDDIE turns to the computer.

EDDIE
You think I'm the talented one?
Really?

MAURICE exits with JOE.

CUT TO:

38

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. OFFICE/BREWHOUSE. DAY 6. 10:40.

EDDIE's at the computer but he's distracted by the fact that MAURICE hasn't left. He looks down on to the brewhouse floor where MAURICE is talking to MAYA. DAVID has drifted across. MAYA's head has dropped. She walks towards the office. MAURICE looks up at EDDIE as though to say, "That's how it's done", takes JOE by the hand and exits.

MAYA enters the office and starts to pick up her things, choking back the tears.

EDDIE
Maya. I will carry on paying you.

MAYA
How can you when I'm not working here.

EDDIE
Just stay at home for a couple of days. Okay? I'll sort it. Bit of a family crisis at the moment.

MAYA is crying now.

MAYA
To do with Joe? I know. I lit a candle for him at Mass over the weekend.

EDDIE
(SLIGHTLY THROWN)
Oh. Right. Oh . . . I mean it.
About the job. Okay.

MAYA
I have to work. I have to. Please.
I need a job.

EDDIE
Just give me a couple of days. I'll talk the family round. I promise.

MAYA looks at him, disbelieving.

CUT TO:

38A **INT/EXT. EDDIE & NICOLA'S CAR/MANCHESTER. CAR PARK. DAY 6.**
10:45.

NICOLA is sitting in the car, about to meet Michael, parked, and applying the make up she thought better of just a few hours before.

CUT TO:

39 **EXT. MANCHESTER. CAFE. DAY 6. 10:50.**

NICOLA walks towards her meeting with MICHAEL, feeling increasingly nervous. As she gets to the cafe she sees him sitting in the window and watches him for a few moments before he looks up and sees her and smiles. She does an awkward half wave and heads inside.

CUT TO:

40 **INT/EXT. PAUL'S CAR/HAZEL TREE SCHOOL. DAY 6. 11:00.**

PAUL sits in his car and stares at a building opposite. He hesitates. He is not sure if he is doing the right thing. Then he gets out of the car and heads towards the school and presses the buzzer.

VOICE
(ON ENTRYPHONE)
Hello?

PAUL
Paul Hughes. I have an appointment.

CUT TO:

41 **INT. MANCHESTER. CAFE. DAY 6. 11:05.**

MICHAEL has printouts of all the reports on JOE.

MICHAEL
So what do the parents want me to say?

NICOLA
That he doesn't have autism?

MICHAEL
(SMILES, REGRETFUL)
But you know, don't you? These are good people who have done the assessments. Maybe not the best communicators but there we are. . . . and you think so too so . . .

NICOLA

They just need a plan.

MICHAEL

How old is he? Five? There's a brilliant Speech and Language therapist here in Manchester I'm going to refer them to. And the usual advice. They should get all the help and support they can to keep him in the mainstream. Especially in primary school.

NICOLA

They're thinking of home educating.

MICHAEL

Really? Well they'll need to be tough. And organised. And together. Because whatever they choose to do the parents need to act as a team. That's really half the battle . . .

NICOLA nods her head in agreement.

CUT TO:

42

INT. HAZEL TREE SCHOOL. DAY 6. 11:10.

PAUL is being shown around the special school. There are some children who have severe autism, some children who are not as far along the spectrum as Joe and others a lot like Joe. A teenage boy - ANDY - is showing PAUL round, he points to a closed door.

ANDY

DT in there.

PAUL

What does DT stand for?

ANDY

Woodwork.

PAUL

I could do with some of your DT pupils at my building site.

ANDY

I don't think that would be allowed. Would you like to see the Hall? It's where we have Gathering which is our word for Assembly and where we do PE and Jason hangs off the bars upside down and his Mother has to be called in to get him down.

PAUL

I would like to see that very much indeed.

ANDY

Hmm. Yes. So would I.

PAUL laughs. ANDY doesn't and leads PAUL on towards the hall.

CUT TO:

43

EXT. HAZEL TREE SCHOOL. PLAYGROUND. DAY 6. 11:15.

PAUL sits in the playground with ANDY, watching the other CHILDREN play.

ANDY

This is the end of the tour of our excellent school. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did, yes.

PAUL

I did. Very much.

ANDY

Hmm. Good. So did I.

PAUL

Do you like it here?

ANDY

Of course. I love it here.

PAUL

Did you ever go to a different school?

ANDY

Yes. I did. But my Mum said it wasn't suitable.

PAUL

Right. (BEAT) Did she ever tell you why not?

ANDY

(WITHOUT MISSING A BEAT)

The other children called me things and my Mum told me it was because they were unhappy about themselves. But they seemed to be smiling a lot for people who were unhappy with themselves. So we thought it wasn't suitable, yes.

PAUL

Right. Thanks. Right.

PAUL looks thoughtfully out at the playground.

ANDY

And the teachers help me here.

PAUL

Didn't they help you at your other school?

ANDY

They did. Yes. But they don't say, "Oh, Andy!" here and sigh, like this . . . (ANDY BREATHES OUT).

PAUL

(AMUSED)

Oh. I see.

ANDY

Yes. Indeed. So do I.

PAUL smiles at ANDY and he looks at the variety of CHILDREN in the playground. Is this the best place for Joe or the worst . . . ?

CUT TO:

44

OMITTED

45

EXT. CONISTON. SUPERMARKET NEAR PUB. DAY 6. 11:31.

ALISON comes out of the supermarket, four bags piled with bread and extra milk for the Diner. She is heading for her car when she is stopped in her tracks by the sight of MAURICE with JOE coming out of the pub, him clutching a pint and a newspaper, JOE a fizzy drink, crisps, headphones on. They sit at an outside table, unaware of the storm they are about to unleash in ALISON who crosses the road towards them.

CUT TO:

46

EXT. CONISTON. PUB. DAY 6. 11:32.

ALISON is striding towards MAURICE, face like fury, before he looks up to see her.

ALISON

Is this the best you can do?

MAURICE

We've walked up Catbells and back this morning. We're just regrouping.

ALISON

You've had him for ten minutes and
you've run out of ideas.

MAURICE

Social skills. If the lad can play
a bit of pool and darts and hold a
conversation in a pub, well, that'd
you know, help him fit in when he
gets older.

ALISON

Well, I'm glad you're ambitious for
him.

MAURICE

I'm sorry. I just drew a blank.
This is why he should be in school.

ALISON takes JOE by the hand and he stands.

ALISON

You shouldn't have volunteered if
you were going to find it this
hard.

MAURICE

I didn't volunteer.

ALISON walks away, leaving MAURICE bewildered. He sighs and
watches her go. Then he looks over the road and sees LOUISE
looking over at him. This is all he needs. He stands.

LOUISE

Maurice?

MAURICE hurries off down the high street without looking
back.

CUT TO:

47

EXT. CONISTON. HIGH STREET. DAY 6. 11:33.

MAURICE is walking, he closes his eyes with exasperation as
he hears his name called from behind him again.

LOUISE

Maurice!

MAURICE keeps walking, pretends he hasn't heard.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

Maurice Scott! Maurice! I can shout
this down the high street or we can
talk! And you might want to bear in
mind that I'm classically trained.
I can project!

MAURICE stops. He has no choice.

CUT TO:

48

EXT. CONISTON. HIGH STREET. DAY 6. 11:35.

LOUISE with MAURICE.

LOUISE

It's ridiculous that you are avoiding me like some teenage boy who has been dumped at a Disco.

MAURICE

(LOOKING AT HIS SHOES)

Yeah. Okay.

LOUISE

I don't want to lose a friend because he can't satisfy my sexual needs. I will never mention it again. At least not to you.

MAURICE

Can't satisfy your sexual needs? That isn't exactly what I said.

LOUISE

I will move on.

MAURICE

There's a list?

LOUISE

That's none of your business.

MAURICE

Where was I on the list?

LOUISE

It's irrelevant now. I will see you for your lesson as usual. And we will never speak about this again.

LOUISE turns and walks away, leaving MAURICE not feeling the relief he hoped he would feel.

CUT TO:

49

EXT. PLAYGROUND. DAY 6. 12:05.

ALISON watches JOE sitting at the top of a slide, sitting not moving, stopping the smaller kids behind him from coming down. A ritual that suddenly seems more painful to watch.

ALISON

Joe. The other children are
waiting!

ALISON crosses to the slide and offers JOE her hand but JOE waits till all THREE CHILDREN are crushed up behind him before sliding down, then, before the other KIDS have a chance he turns and climbs back up the slide.

ALISON feels embarrassed and then ashamed for being embarrassed.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Joe. You're spoiling it for the
other children. Come on. Let's go!
Let's go.

JOE lies down on the slide and ALISON tugs him down with a bit more force than is strictly necessary.

ALISON (CONT'D)

(GENTLER)

Come on, Joe. I'm sorry. I know
what we can do!

CUT TO:

50

INT. CINEMA. DAY 6. 13:35.

A near empty cinema. ALISON and JOE, with boxes of popcorn, head for their seats. ALISON turns to JOE and gives him a conspiratorial smile as they sit.

CUT TO:

51

EXT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. YARD. DAY 6. 13:40.

EDDIE walks out into the brewery yard, checking his phone. Nothing. He dials a number . . .

CUT TO:

52

INT. MANCHESTER. CAFE. DAY 6. 13:41.

NICOLA sits on her own, staring out into Manchester. Her phone starts to ring. She sees the name - EDDIE. Clicks it to silent and ignores it as MICHAEL returns with two more coffees and two cakes.

NICOLA

I didn't ask for cake.

MICHAEL

I think you've lost weight.

NICOLA

I'm in the Lake District. I'm walking more.

MICHAEL

Not because you were pining, then?

NICOLA doesn't respond. MICHAEL, realising he has overstepped the mark is suddenly businesslike, hands NICOLA a raft of papers.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

The speech and language therapist referral is in there. And a covering letter for the GP if you need it.

NICOLA

Thank you.

MICHAEL

So what is this really about? You. Coming here. To see me.

NICOLA

It's about Joe.

MICHAEL

We could have talked about Joe on the phone.

NICOLA

Terrible reception in the Lakes. Besides. This is easier.

MICHAEL

Not for me, it isn't.

NICOLA

Oh. I'm sorry.

MICHAEL

Meet you and not touch you. Meet you and be what to you? I don't understand.

NICOLA

Michael.

MICHAEL

I can't help it. I've missed you.

NICOLA

I've missed you too.

MICHAEL

Well, that's good. Because a job has come up in London and . . .

NICOLA

Michael. (NICOLA PUTS HER HAND ON HIS) I can't even think about that.

MICHAEL

Why not. Why not? Because it hasn't worked, has it?

NICOLA

What hasn't?

MICHAEL

Spending time apart. So we could get over each other. It hasn't worked. Not for me, at least.

NICOLA

It will. It's like any addictive state. You need time for new patterns to form.

MICHAEL

I love it when you talk neurology.

MICHAEL puts his hand on hers. NICOLA looks nervously around as though someone might move in at any moment.

NICOLA

Michael, I . . .

MICHAEL's phone goes off.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry . . . I've really got to . . . (INTO PHONE) Hello! Yes! Yes.

MICHAEL waves at his phone, walks to the corner of the cafe turns and holds a "five minute" hand up to NICOLA. NICOLA waits till his back has turned and rushes out of the cafe.

CUT TO:

53

EXT. MANCHESTER. STREET. DAY 6. 13:46.

NICOLA walks through the streets back to the car park.

EDDIE (V.O.)

(PHONE MESSAGE)

Hi, love. Just wondering how you're getting on. Hope it's a constructive day. So. Call me. Bye!

CUT TO:

54

INT/EXT. EDDIE AND NICOLA'S CAR/MANCHESTER. CAR PARK. DAY 6.
13:55.

NICOLA gets into the car, sits and grabs the wheel and tries to compose herself. She checks her phone. 8 messages. All from EDDIE . . .

EDDIE (V.O.)

(PHONE MESSAGE)

Hiya. Don't know if you tried to

ring but just saying, "Hello."

"Hello!" Bad joke. Give me a ring.

CUT TO:

55

INT/EXT. EDDIE AND NICOLA'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT VALLEY. DAY 6.
15:05.

NICOLA has stopped the car and is having a cigarette with the window open.

EDDIE (V.O.)

(PHONE MESSAGE)

Just give me a ring. Reception

isn't brilliant . . . but just

wondering what time you'll be back.

NICOLA snaps the phone off.

CUT TO:

56

INT. CINEMA. DAY 6. 15:38.

ALISON and JOE sit side-by-side watching the film. JOE bobs his head along to the music - slightly exaggerated - and as ALISON turns to look at him she sees two OLDER BOYS, age 12 or 13, in the seats behind bouncing in an imitation of him. They stop when ALISON looks but she can sense it starting again. This time she turns and sees that JOE is smiling at them as they impersonate him. Heartbreakingly, he thinks he is part of the game not the butt of the joke.

ALISON puts her hand on JOE's knee to make him still but he pulls her hand off and stands up then sits down and turns to the OLDER BOYS. The OLDER BOYS do the same, then sit down when ALISON turns. She watches the film for a few beats then turns to them, leans towards them and whispers softly and gently.

ALISON

Boys! Boys! When you grow up you'll both be ugly. And you'll never have girlfriends. So enjoy taking the piss out of my son because this is as good as it gets for you two.

ALISON turns back, puts a protective arm over JOE's shoulder and carries on watching the film.

CUT TO:

56A INT. CINEMA. FOYER. DAY 6. 16:05.

The film has ended, the OLDER BOYS come out of the cinema and head off, then ALISON with JOE.

ALISON

That was good, hey?

JOE

Again.

ALISON

(JOLLY)

Oh, no, no, no, no. Time to go home
for tea now, young man.

But as ALISON turns JOE has disappeared back into the Cinema.
She goes after him . . .

ALISON (CONT'D)

Joe!

ALISON heads back inside.

CUT TO:

56B INT. CINEMA. DAY 6. 17:52.

ALISON and JOE sit watching the film again. ALISON looking at JOE more than she is looking at the film, close to despair. She takes her phone out and starts to text.

CUT TO:

57 INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 6. 19:01

REBECCA enters the kitchen, returning home from school. She's reading a text from Alison: 'Gone to Lancaster with Joe. Can you get your own tea? x'

REBECCA

Hello! Hello? Hello?

No reply, then she sees the note on the kitchen table and a ten pound note next to it. INSERT: "BACK AROUND 8. MONEY FOR TEA. DAD XXX"

REBECCA sits down at the table, turns the note over, and reaches for her phone.

CUT TO:

58

INT/EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. HALL/FRONT DOOR. NIGHT 6. 19:10.

REBECCA opens the door and LUKE virtually falls into her arms. They kiss passionately in the hallway. He is carrying beers.

CUT TO:

59

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. REBECCA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 6. 19:15.

REBECCA and LUKE sit on Rebecca's bed. They both look around, unsure how to make the next move.

The combination of posters on the wall, pop groups, political posters, etc.

LUKE

How long have we got?

REBECCA

About an hour. Mum's taken Joe to Lancaster and Dad's working late.

LUKE faces her, opens a beer, offers REBECCA first sip.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

No, thank you.

REBECCA pushes the can to one side and kisses LUKE. No time to waste. They kiss and lie on the bed.

LUKE self consciously takes a condom in its foil out of his top pocket. REBECCA and he look down at it for a moment - self-conscious, as though it is going to act alone.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I would have preferred flowers but

• • •

She turns to LUKE and smiles and they start to kiss, pulling at each other's clothes as they fall on to the bed.

LUKE starts to take off REBECCA's top and then the front door sounds and before they can react the sound of EDDIE's voice in the house.

EDDIE (V.O.)

Hello? Rebecca?

A look of shock and panic on REBECCA and LUKE's faces.

REBECCA
(SHOUTING)
Hiya, Eddie! Won't be a minute.

LUKE looks aghast as REBECCA pulls her top back on and . . .

CUT TO:

60

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 6. 19:17.

REBECCA comes into the kitchen to find EDDIE opening two pizza boxes on the kitchen table.

EDDIE
Your Mum texted me, she wanted me to get you something healthy for what I must learn again to call your tea . . . I know it's early but thought since we've both been abandoned . . .

REBECCA
Great. Yes!

EDDIE
(LOOKING PAST REBECCA)
Sorry. I didn't realise you had company.

LUKE
Hi. Mr. Hughes. I'm Luke.

EDDIE
It's okay. You can relax. I'm her Uncle, not her Dad.

LUKE
Oh. Right.

EDDIE
So I'll probably let you off with a warning and a kneecapping. Stay there while I go and get my rifle.

LUKE
What?

REBECCA
He's joking. It's the family sense of humour. (TO EDDIE) We were doing homework.

EDDIE
Right. Good. Well, that's good. Are you staying for some pizza, Luke?

LUKE

No. I'd. I'd better be going.

EDDIE

There's plenty. And we could discuss wedding arrangements and so on.

REBECCA

Ignore him. I'll see you tomorrow.

LUKE

Yeah. Nice to meet you.

LUKE exits and, as he does so, EDDIE and REBECCA notice the condom, still in its foil, attached to the back of his shirt. It drops down and the sound seems deafening. Nobody says anything. LUKE puts his foot on it and half limps out, keeping it concealed by his foot.

CUT TO:

61

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 6. 19:55.

EDDIE and REBECCA watching TV and eating pizza.

EDDIE

He seemed nice. Luke.

REBECCA

Yes.

EDDIE

If a little physically . . . is that limp of his an injury or (a disability) . . .

REBECCA

(LAUGHING)

Stop it.

They both chew thoughtfully for a few beats then EDDIE breaks the silence.

EDDIE

I'm sorry if I, erm, interrupted . . . if you were busy . . .

REBECCA

No. Well. Don't be sorry. I was . . . well, in a way I'm glad you turned up.

EDDIE

He wasn't getting heavy with you, was he? I mean he wasn't . . . forcing anything or . . .

REBECCA

No, No, no. Nothing like that. No.
He's lovely. One of the good ones.
Not at all rapey.

EDDIE

Rapey? Is that a word now?

REBECCA

Inbetweeners.

EDDIE

What?

REBECCA

Never mind. It's just . . . you
know. (VERY EMBARRASSED) God. How's
your pizza?

EDDIE is amused, they both are by REBECCA's evasion.

EDDIE

The pizza? The pizza is what pizza
always is. Cheese on toast in a
good suit. I know you want to
change the subject and God knows
you're right but what I'm going to
say, right now . . .

REBECCA

Erm . . . you probably don't want
to say.

EDDIE

Rebecca. Relax. You're 16 years of
age. I don't need to know what
you're doing and not doing.

REBECCA looks aghast and buries her head in her hands in
embarrassment.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

The condom. That's a good thing. I
suppose. And it's none of my
business so tell me to shut up at
any moment. But I know what it's
like to grow up round here. Not
enough to do. And having sex seems
like a good way to pass the time
before you leave. And that's fine
if that's what you want. But you
need to be sure that's what you
want. Just be sure it's what you
want. Not just because he thought
it was a good idea . . . okay?

REBECCA stares down at her pizza.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Sex is important. But it isn't
everything. Okay?

REBECCA, mouth full of pizza, blushing now.

REBECCA
I get it! I get it! I really get
it!

EDDIE
So. Anyway. How is school going?

REBECCA
Fine. How are you and Nicola doing?

EDDIE
We're good. Yes. Thank you for
asking. That's quite a question but
I probably deserve it after what
I've just been saying to you . . .

REBECCA
I really, really like having you
living here again. And I really
like Nicola. And I know . . . what
happened.

EDDIE
Everybody knows what happened.

REBECCA
I just don't want you going away
again.

EDDIE
We're not going anywhere. I promise
you that.

REBECCA
(SMILES)
Good.

PAUL enters.

PAUL
Hiya guys, where are Alison and
Joe?

REBECCA
Where've you been?

PAUL
(REACHING FOR A SLICE)
Just up at the restaurant. Trying
to get the kitchen sorted out.

EDDIE

I called in at lunchtime and you weren't around.

PAUL

I was there.

EDDIE

You're normally outside.

PAUL

I was inside.

PAUL doesn't offer any more and starts to eat the slice of pizza and we . . .

CUT TO:

62

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 6. 20:18.

EDDIE sits trying to watch the television but he is restless, checking his watch, and, humiliatingly finds himself staring out of the window as NICOLA drives around the corner. He sits down quickly, stares at the television.

CUT TO:

63

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 6. 20:20.

EDDIE sits on the sofa, acting casual. NICOLA enters.

NICOLA

Hi.

EDDIE

Oh, hi. You're back.

NICOLA

Yes. Long day.

NICOLA sits next to him on the sofa, curls into him. He is burning to ask her but also happy that she is being so affectionate. They both stare at the screen.

CUT TO:

64

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. JOE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 6. 20:55.

ALISON carries the sleeping JOE into his bed and gently lays him down. PAUL comes in from the shower, hair wet, embraces her.

PAUL

Tough day?

ALISON

I feel like weeping.

PAUL

What happened?

ALISON

Too much to think about.

PAUL

Emotionally distraught, exhausted, overwhelmed. (MOE FROM 'THE SIMPSONS' VOICE) That's when I make my move.

ALISON smiles, PAUL kisses her. He is joking. They head to bed.

CUT TO:

64A

EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 7. 07:25.

Early morning as ALISON opens up the Diner.

CUT TO:

65

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 7. 07:30.

PAUL opens his eyes. It is 7.30am. ALISON is not in bed.

He rubs his eyes awake and . . . he hears Joe's music playing somewhere in the house and remembers.

CUT TO:

66

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 7. 09:05.

PAUL stands opposite JOE. He gently takes away his iPod and his headphones and holds them behind his back. He leans forward, conspiratorial, trying to turn this into a game.

PAUL

Mozart. This is what we're going to do. We'll put on the timer. Right? Ten minutes. Yeah? Ten minutes and no music. So you read a book. If you don't want to do that then you do some colouring in or that lego you got for your birthday . . . yeah?

JOE

(TO HIMSELF)

I'm going to use the timer.

PAUL

Exactly. How hard can it be? Good lad, Mozart.

JOE looks at the book, starts to turn the pages. Sees a picture of Buzz Lightyear.

JOE

To infinity and beyond.

PAUL

Not even that long. Just ten minutes.

JOE looks blank. PAUL heads to the kitchen, half regretting his joke.

CUT TO:

67

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 7. 09:07.

PAUL comes in to the kitchen, feeling that this is working out easier than he could have hoped. He sits down with the laptop and the spreadsheets out before him. He looks at the work for a moment and as the figures and words start to jump up before his eyes the sound of loud music comes from behind him.

PAUL

Mozart! Joe!

PAUL rushes out of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

68

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 7. 09:08.

JOE has rigged up REBECCA's iPod and speakers and is playing some of her music loud, singing along to Will Young.

JOE

(SINGING)

"I think I'd better leave right now, Before I fall any deeper!"

PAUL

Turn it off, Joe.

JOE

(SINGING)

"I think I'd better leave right now, Feeling weaker and weaker!"

PAUL

Turn it off.

But JOE keeps singing . . .

JOE
(SINGING)
"Somebody better show me out . . ."

PAUL reaches down and unplugs the iPod dock from the wall. He picks them up and walks out of the room.

PAUL
Five minutes. Then you get the music back.

JOE doesn't move. He looks at PAUL and stands and suddenly jumps and follows PAUL out of the room.

CUT TO:

69

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. HALL. DAY 7. 09:09.

JOE pulls at PAUL and hits his back as he walks across the hall with the iPod and dock. PAUL turns to JOE.

PAUL
It isn't going to happen, Joe. Five minutes. Just five minutes.

JOE grabs his wrists but PAUL wriggles away and doesn't look back.

CUT TO:

70

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 7. 09:10.

PAUL reaches the kitchen. JOE can be seen through the open door slumped down against the wall. PAUL puts the dock on the table, sits down once more faced with paperwork. JOE starts up a distressed chant.

JOE
Music! Music! Music! Music!

And then JOE slumps forward and starts to cry and bang the floor. Throwing himself forward. PAUL crumbles, rushes across with the iPod dock.

PAUL
Mozart! Mozart! Okay. Calm down.
Come here. Music. Here we go.
Daddy's being daft. There you go.
Mozart? Hey?

JOE looks up, unsmiling. PAUL plugs in the dock. PAUL turns on a track. 'Story of the Blues' by Mighty Wah.

PAUL (CONT'D)

There we go. Mighty Wah. What could be better than that?

JOE looks down at the dock.

JOE

Story of the Blues. Mighty Wah.
1982. Pete Wylie.

PAUL heads back to his work, knowing deep down he has failed.

CUT TO:

71

EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 7. 11:35.

NICOLA and ALISON stand a short distance from the Diner at the gate as an increasingly annoyed TERRY deals with an ever growing queue. We join them mid-conversation.

ALISON

(IRRITATED)

I thought he was supposed to be an expert.

NICOLA

He is. And he agrees with the diagnosis so perhaps . . .

ALISON

Perhaps they're all wrong.

NICOLA

Autism isn't Joe's biggest problem, Alison. It's the consequences of it. His ability to make relationships. That includes you, by the way . . .

ALISON

Oh, don't worry about that. We have a great relationship.

NICOLA

Good. But it might never be the relationship you imagined you'd have with your son. And you're allowed to mourn that.

ALISON looks at NICOLA. Hiding her irritation.

ALISON

Is this you talking now? Or Saint Michael?

NICOLA

Does it matter?

ALISON

Not really. But one of you is full of shit and I just wondered which one.

NICOLA

Alison . . . I . . .

ALISON

I just need advice. Practical advice about the home schooling. I don't need "Thought For The Day". All right?

NICOLA

Okay. He's recommended a speech therapist and he thinks the more peers he encounters, at cubs, at sports clubs, at school . . .

ALISON

And what if the "peers he encounters" take the piss or bully him?

NICOLA

I'm not sure that social isolation is a cure for social isolation.

ALISON

Was it tough for you seeing Michael again?

NICOLA is slightly thrown by this complete change of tack.

NICOLA

Yes.

ALISON

And he's clearly very persuasive. I mean, you know from personal experience how persuasive he is.

NICOLA

(WITH ALARMING CLARITY)

Are you saying that because I fucked Michael I have lost my critical faculties when it comes to judging him as a Paediatrician? Because I don't think that's true. Or fair.

ALISON

You're very . . . direct.

NICOLA

And you're very fierce. Which is good. You're going to need to be.

Out on ALISON, heading to the Diner, TERRY opens his arms in a gesture of exasperation.

TERRY

Thank you for joining us. I love nothing more than serving an angry mob single handed.

CUT TO:

72

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 7. 17:45.

PAUL is at the table, papers spread out before him, on the phone. JOE is close up to the iPod dock - staring at it - PAUL singing along to the opening of 'Story of the Blues' which JOE keeps starting and repeating.

PAUL

(A LITTLE STRAINED NOW)
"Here in my pocket, I've got the story of the Blues, Try to believe me, 'cos it could be front page news."

ALISON enters, crosses and turns off the music.

ALISON

Has he been listening to music all day?

PAUL

Not all day. He took some time off to trash the kitchen because he loves home schooling so much.

ALISON reaches for a bottle of wine to open it, PAUL grabs the bottle from her hand.

PAUL (CONT'D)

No, no, no. Not yet. You have to hoover for half an hour and then I might let you have a glass.

ALISON

(REACHING FOR THE BOTTLE)

Don't be a dick.

PAUL

(PULLING THE BOTTLE BACK)
I'm applying behavioural analysis.
Just like I did with Joe.

ALISON

No. You're not.

PAUL

Half an hour. And you get a drink.

ALISON

You think I've got a drink problem?

PAUL

No. I'm just trying to give you some idea of what it feels like for him.

ALISON

It's not my behaviour that needs to change.

PAUL

Isn't it?

REBECCA enters.

REBECCA

Hi, guys.

ALISON

It's not me that is locked into their own world. He needs help.

REBECCA

A kid came to school today with a gun and blew half the class away.

PAUL

I don't doubt that. I just don't think this is the help he needs. There are other ways.

ALISON

Where are you going, Rebecca?

PAUL

. . . other schools.

REBECCA

I'm taking Joe out. Anything has got to be better than this.

JOE smiles and launches himself at REBECCA. REBECCA and JOE have disappeared out of the door before ALISON gets a chance to contradict them.

PAUL

There are schools more suitable for his needs. Specialist schools.

ALISON

A special school? Have you any idea what that would mean?

PAUL

I do actually. I went to this one. Yesterday.

PAUL slaps the school brochure for Hazel Tree School down on the kitchen table.

ALISON

You seriously went and looked at this?

PAUL

Yes. I did. And, you know what? It was okay. I thought it was lovely. I thought people were kind.

ALISON

Right until he's 18 and finds out the world isn't all soft play areas and kindly teaching assistants.

PAUL

I didn't say it was perfect. I said it was better than we could give him. What do you think?

ALISON turns the pages in silence. PAUL gets hopeful.

ALISON

Are you mad? What sort of role models were at that school? Kids with autism. He's a great mimic. He'd come out more autistic than when he went in.

PAUL

I thought we weren't going to use that word. (BEAT) It's simple, love. The school knew what they were doing. And we don't.

PAUL grabs his jacket and exits.

CUT TO:

73

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. GARDEN. DAY 7. 18:01.

REBECCA and JOE on swings, side by side, JOE with his headphones on, REBECCA texting. Behind them, the Fells' lakes stretch out beneath an impossible sky. JOE starts to sing. 'A Certain Romance' by The Arctic Monkeys.

JOE

(SINGING)

"Well oh they might wear classic
Reeboks
Or knackered Converse
Or tracky bottoms tucked in socks
But all of that's what the point is
not

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)
 The point's that there ain't no
 romance around there."

REBECCA turns and laughs at this.

CUT TO:

74

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. GARDEN. DAY 7. 18:02.

REBECCA pushes JOE on the swing, as high as he will go, that impossible high that looks like the kid is going to go over the top of the frame. Both of them shouting at the top of their voices to Arctic Monkeys. JOE headphones on, his senses flooded with the movement of the swing, the sense of imminent falling, the words of the song and the safety of his Sister behind him, always pushing . . .

JOE/REBECCA
 (SINGING)
 "You know, oh it's a funny thing
 you know
 We'll tell 'em if you like
 We'll tell 'em all tonight
 They'll never listen
 Cause their minds are made up
 And of course it's all okay to
 carry on that way."

CUT TO:

75

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 7. 19:25.

NICOLA and EDDIE sit opposite each other, pushing their food around their plates.

EDDIE
 How was it, then? Seeing him again?
 Your friend?

NICOLA
 It was strange.

EDDIE
 Of all the paediatric departments
 in all the hospitals in all the
 world, you had to walk into his.

NICOLA
 We met at a cafe. Not the hospital.

EDDIE
 It was a joke. (BEAT) Do you wish
 you still worked at the hospital?

NICOLA

I had a job I loved and I had
colleagues who valued me so yes,
yes I do.

EDDIE's hands shake slightly as he eats.

EDDIE

And do you wish you were still
there with Michael?

NICOLA

No. I want to be with you. That's
why I'm here. There's no other
reason to be here that I can see at
the moment.

EDDIE

Did you still get on? When you
talked?

NICOLA

Yes. Of course.

EDDIE

Not awkward at all?

NICOLA

No.

EDDIE

And did you still fancy him?

NICOLA

Yes.

EDDIE

(SHUTTING DOWN)

Great. Thank you.

NICOLA

What?

EDDIE

Why couldn't you just lie? For
once? Why couldn't you just do that
for me? Hey?

NICOLA

I can't lie.

EDDIE

You can. And you did.

NICOLA

Isn't it better that I told you I
fancied him but I came home to you.

(MORE)

NICOLA (CONT'D)

That I was tempted but did nothing
about it because it's you I love,
you I want a relationship with, you
I want to have sex with . . .

EDDIE

No. Not really.

NICOLA

You told me I should go. You told
me to go to see Michael for them!

EDDIE

You could have said, "No", couldn't
you?

A knock at the door interrupts this . . .

CUT TO:

76

EXT. SCOTT HOUSE. FRONT DOOR. NIGHT 7. 19:27.

PAUL hammering on the door. EDDIE comes to the door.

PAUL

Do you fancy hitting a wall very
hard with a hammer for a couple of
hours?

EDDIE

How did you guess?

EDDIE looks back in the house, then back at PAUL.

CUT TO:

76A

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. NIGHT 7. 19:45.

We can see a light shining inside and hear the sound of
hammering.

CUT TO:

77

INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. NIGHT 7. 19:50.

EDDIE and PAUL line up plasterboard on to walls and hammer
and staple them into place with a nail gun.

CUT TO:

78

INT/EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. NIGHT 7. 21:25.

EDDIE and PAUL, both sweat covered, sip beer and stare into
the darkness.

EDDIE
Still on schedule?

PAUL
More or less. One or two of the suppliers have been getting a bit tetchy. Said they'll come back and take back stuff they've delivered.

EDDIE
Like what?

PAUL
Well, plasterboard for a start, but it's going to be pretty hard to shift now we've nailed it to the wall.

EDDIE turns back towards their handiwork, looks surprised. The two men exchange a smile.

PAUL (CONT'D)
So . . . this Michael thing.

EDDIE
There is no Michael thing . . . let's talk about the Restaurant thing.

PAUL looks at EDDIE and shrugs.

PAUL
What do you want to know? It's already twenty grand over budget. I've got the second wave of electrics to come. I've got to pay for doors that open out on to the deck but can't afford the deck itself and I'm doing my own labouring . . . but it's mine. And it's everything I've ever wanted.

EDDIE
Sounds like a metaphor for something.

PAUL
Everything always reminds you of something else, doesn't it?

EDDIE
Yes. And it's usually Michael.

PAUL looks at EDDIE as he takes a swig of beer. Pats him on the back in a gesture of manly emotional support and gets up and starts assembling more plasterboard.

CUT TO:

78A **EXT. MAYBROOK MEDICAL CENTRE. DAY 8. 10:03.**

NICOLA heads into the medical centre.

CUT TO:

79 **INT. MAYBROOK MEDICAL CENTRE. CONSULTING ROOM. DAY 8. 10:18.**

NICOLA is sitting opposite DR GRAVES who is signing the referral forms that MICHAEL had given her.

DR. GRAVES

I would have referred him without you consulting a specialist.

NICOLA

The family were worried about you. Thought you were obstructive about the hearing test a few months ago.

DR. GRAVES

He doesn't have a hearing problem, does he?

NICOLA

No. As you can see. It's a different kind of problem altogether.

DR. GRAVES

I do have the authority to refer children to Paediatricians.

NICOLA

I think they just thought they needed to see a real expert as soon as they could.

DR. GRAVES

Well, thank goodness a little bit of London expertise has come to us.

DR. GRAVES hands the papers over to NICOLA.

NICOLA

Pity you're too chippy to take advantage of it.

NICOLA exits. DR. GRAVES looks reluctantly impressed.

CUT TO:

80 **INT/EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 8. 10:45.**

ALISON is serving LINDA. TERRY cooking alongside.

LINDA

Joe still off school?

ALISON

Yes . . . I didn't really want to say anything but he's on a gifted and talented project.

LINDA

Oh?

A glance from TERRY to ALISON but he stays quiet.

ALISON

Yes. The school suggested it. For a couple of months. It's a pilot scheme.

LINDA

Gifted and Talented course? Really? I didn't hear about that.

ALISON

I think it was on a "need to know" basis. So the other children aren't demoralised.

LINDA

Right.

JOE, in a hard hat, is standing on the roof of the restaurant looking down . . . while PAUL is below embroiled in plans with SALLY as the BUILDERS stand by awaiting instructions. ALISON can see this but LINDA, thankfully, has her back to it.

CUT TO:

81

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. OFFICE. DAY 8. 11:05.

ALISON with EDDIE. JOE is on the office computer.

ALISON

It'll just be for a couple of hours. I promise. He can't hang around on a building site.

EDDIE

Did the timetable break down already? Do you want me to take a look? Systems Analysis.

ALISON

Please, Eddie. Do you mind?

EDDIE

It's another of those questions
that aren't really questions, isn't
it?

ALISON exits. EDDIE turns and stares at JOE on the computer.
He thinks for a moment then starts to dial a number on his
phone.

CUT TO:

82

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 8. 18:05.

PAUL counts a number of bank notes into the hands of a
BUILDER . . .

He walks away, getting into a car and driving away.

PAUL stares down at the remaining notes and sticks them in
his back pocket, looks at the fading light, takes a deep
breath and carries on digging alone.

CUT TO:

83

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE/GARDEN. DAY 8. 18:45.

A knackered PAUL, clutching his back a little, arrives home
and enters the house. As he does so he looks in the garden
and sees MAYA playing a singing game with JOE. PAUL looks
puzzled. She looks up and smiles at him and waves and returns
her attention to JOE . . .

CUT TO:

83A

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 8. 18:50.

PAUL hands MAYA two twenty pound notes.

MAYA

This is too much. I have change.

PAUL waits while MAYA fishes a ten pound note out of her bag
which she hands to him.

PAUL

Thank you.

MAYA

Thank you. Any time you want help.
I need the work and Joe is lovely.

PAUL

Thanks. But I think we'll be okay.

MAYA gives a half shrug, half puzzled smile and walks away.
PAUL looks down at the ten pound note.

CUT TO:

84

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 8. 18:56.

PAUL is cooking and JOE is watching Mr. Bean on a portable DVD player. Again he sometimes stops the player and watches the same scene over and over. ALISON enters.

PAUL

What's going on?

ALISON

Hello to you too. How was your day?
Well I just headed off a Terry
mutiny by going to the cash and
carry. That man has a commitment to
blueberry muffins that borders on
the weird.

PAUL

When did we hire Maya?

ALISON

We didn't hire Maya. We needed a
babysitter for a few hours. We know
her. She's lovely.

PAUL

Thirty quid's worth.

ALISON

I'd rather spend the money than
have him on the roof of a building
site waving a nail gun!

PAUL falls silent, chops vegetables.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Great. Now we have "Passive
aggressive cookery for beginners."

PAUL

So the brewery can't afford Maya
but we can?

ALISON

It's one afternoon. Cash in hand.

PAUL

Three days in to your timetable and
we've already hired staff. What are
we? Downton Fucking Abbey?

ALISON

It was a one off.

PAUL

Till when? The next time your timetable breaks down? You've already sacked Maurice!

ALISON heads out.

ALISON

Joe. Bath time, love.

PAUL watches her go. Exasperated. Lays down his knife and heads outside.

CUT TO:

85 (SCENE 85 OMITTED)

86 EXT. HUGHES & SCOTT HOUSES. NIGHT 8. 18:58.

It's getting dark. NICOLA, having a cigarette, watches as PAUL comes out of the side of the garage clutching an old 'For Sale' sign which he then rams into the boot of the car before driving away... She's about to head inside when she spots MAURICE running, wearing a head torch. She looks puzzled and amused, and heads inside.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. NIGHT 8. 19:20.

The light has faded now. PAUL, a lone figure, can be seen hammering the 'For Sale' sign into the ground next to the restaurant.

CUT TO:

88 INT. SCOTT HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 8. 19:35.

EDDIE and NICOLA cooking together. She turns to him and kisses him passionately. He looks delighted.

EDDIE

What was that for?

NICOLA

For being as sane as you are when you come from such a pathological family.

EDDIE
(KISSES HER BACK)
It's a pretty low standard.

NICOLA
(KISSES HIM)
No. I mean it. You're a miracle.

They kiss again, EDDIE laughs and they start to undress, there and then, in the kitchen, fast, urgent . . .

CUT TO:

89

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 8. 19:38.

EDDIE pulls the curtains closed and NICOLA, already undressing comes to join him. They fall on to each other as they sink to the floor.

NICOLA
Get a cushion!

EDDIE rushes for a cushion and puts it underneath NICOLA's head. Then the doorbell goes.

EDDIE
(WHISPER)
Don't answer it.

NICOLA
(WHISPER)
Okay.

But then the person outside is clearly leaning on the bell and not going anywhere.

CUT TO:

90

EXT/INT. SCOTT HOUSE. FRONT DOOR. NIGHT 8. 19:39.

DR. GRAVES has one hand on the bell and another propping open the letter box and looking inside. He suddenly stands back. EDDIE answers the door, flushed, T shirt and trousers on but bare feet.

DR. GRAVES
Sorry to disturb you.

EDDIE
If you were sorry to disturb me you might have stopped ringing the bell.

DR. GRAVES
Keys.

NICOLA emerges from the living room, fully dressed, not at all flustered.

NICOLA

Keys?

DR. GRAVES

We open at 8. First person in washes the floor. You start in a week.

NICOLA

Why the delay?

DR. GRAVES

I have to interview the other candidates before deciding on you.

DR. GRAVES gets on his motorbike and rides away at speed.

NICOLA

What a prick.

EDDIE

A prick who seems to have just given you a job.

NICOLA smiles and looks at EDDIE. They shut the door. They kiss passionately, they start to pull at each other's clothes.

CUT TO:

91

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 9. 07:15.

PAUL wakes, again ALISON is already up. This is beginning to become a habit.

CUT TO:

92

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. STUDY. DAY 9. 07:20.

PAUL enters to find ALISON already on the computer.

PAUL

So many cures for autism available online it's a wonder anybody still has it.

ALISON ignores this. PAUL realises he's gone too far. He puts his hands on ALISON's shoulders and kisses the top of her head.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You do know you can't scare Joe's autism away, don't you?

ALISON

Yes. I'm pretty sure if I could I'd have done it already.

PAUL

Where is he?

ALISON

Just a wild guess but is he, by any chance, lying on his bed listening to the record collection of a much older man.

PAUL

No, he's not in his room. That's why I asked.

ALISON looks up at PAUL.

ALISON

He'll be on his walk.

PAUL

It isn't his walk anymore, is it? It's "Bizarre walking behaviour."

ALISON mimes, "Ha, ha, ha" as PAUL exits.

CUT TO:

93

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. ROAD. DAY 9. 07:25.

JOE walking down the road as before, start of the day. Headphones on. (He'll have his rucksack and book bag but we won't register them here). No sign of a van this time . . . he just walks on and on. We can hear the music.

JULIAN COPE

(ON HEADPHONES)

"She always used to live so secretly
I'd be seen in the avenue sound.
And taking on the role of the four winds now."

The music stops abruptly as JOE stops in his tracks. Then he carries on and the music does so . . .

JULIAN COPE (CONT'D)

(ON HEADPHONES)

"Having tea there out in the crowd.
She's flying in the face of fashion, yeah."

CUT TO:

94

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 9. 07:35.

PAUL drinks a coffee and waits for the van with the Polish lads to come by. REBECCA comes out and joins him, ready for school. PAUL puts his arm around her.

PAUL

You're up early.

REBECCA doesn't respond.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What's with the face like a herbal remedy?

A teenage shrug. PAUL gives her a squeeze and as he does so the van appears around the corner and they both smile but there is no Joe with PAVEL and DAVID in the front seat. . . it goes by without stopping.

Instant concern on PAUL and REBECCA's faces.

CUT TO:

95

EXT. SCOTT HOUSE. DAY 9. 07:40.

PAUL hammering on the door, EDDIE answers.

PAUL

Did Joe come round to yours this morning?

EDDIE

Joe, no?

CUT TO:

96

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. JOE'S BEDROOM. DAY 9. 07:43.

REBECCA is looking under Joe's bed. ALISON on the phone.

ALISON

Dad? Dad? Did Joe come over to you this morning? Dad? You're breaking up.

PAUL (O.S.)

Joe! Joe!

CUT TO:

97

EXT. HUGHES & SCOTT HOUSES. DAY 9. 07:49.

REBECCA comes out with ALISON and PAUL as EDDIE can be seen up the hill for a better signal.

PAUL
(CLEARLY PANICKED)
Nobody panic just yet. (OF HIS
PHONE) Bloody signal. Let's just
follow his walk route, he's . . .

EDDIE runs down the hill.

EDDIE
It's okay, guys. It's okay. Maya
just texted. He's with Maya. She'll
stay with him till we get there.

A sigh of profound relief followed by puzzlement.

PAUL
Stay with him? Stay with him,
where?

Out on PAUL, shocked and concerned.

CUT TO:

98

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. DAY 9. 08:18.

JOE stands outside the school with MAYA. He has his rucksack and book bag. Headphones on.

ALISON and PAUL park up and rush across to the school, so do EDDIE and NICOLA. As this unfolds MAURICE turns up and crosses to the school also.

ALISON
Joe? What are you doing here? (TO
MAYA) Thank you. Thank you so much.

PAUL
(MORE SHEEPISH)
Yes. Thank you.

MAYA
I was on my way to the shop when I
saw him just standing here. And it
was so early. I just thought it
seemed strange.

PAUL
What were you doing, Mozart?

JOE
It's school.

ALISON
We aren't going to school at the
moment, Joe. Remember?

JOE

Let me see now. No.

ALISON

So do you want to come home for
some breakfast?

JOE

No. It's school.

ALISON

There's eggy bread. How about that?

ALISON puts her hand out to JOE. He takes it but when she goes to lead him away from school he pulls away again.

JOE

(NODS, CERTAINLY)

It's school.

ALISON

There's eggy bread. If you're quick. And honey and toast. And then we can do all sorts of things.

PAUL looks at ALISON, disbelieving. JOE folds his arms and shakes his head, "No."

PAUL

You can come to school, Mozart.

ALISON

Paul. Hang on . . .

PAUL

(SHARP)

He wants to come to school. Could he make it any clearer?

ALISON glances at PAUL with a slight frown, then MAURICE who is busy looking at the floor, NICOLA who is looking straight at her and EDDIE who is looking at JOE.

CUT TO:

99

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. DAY 9. 08:30.

ALISON stands and watches as JOE does the "door thing" and heads back into school . . .

CUT TO:

100 **EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 9. 09:45.**

ALISON arrives at the Diner, ready to start work. But she is immediately distracted by the For Sale sign outside the gastropub and the sound of banging from the inside.

TERRY already in the Diner, setting up, he nods towards the For Sale sign.

TERRY
How much is he asking?

ALISON stares up at the gastropub for a moment.

ALISON
More than you can afford, Terry.

TERRY
On these wages that doesn't surprise me.

ALISON is already marching up to the gastropub.

CUT TO:

101 **INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 9. 09:50.**

PAUL is measuring up and sawing panels as ALISON enters and makes a point of busying himself at the start of this scene, burying himself in work as an avoidance tactic.

ALISON
What's with the sign?

PAUL
It says, 'For Sale'. I thought I was the dyslexic one.

ALISON
Joe's going to school. I don't need to give up work so maybe we're not going to be as strapped as you thought we were.

PAUL
You think he's going to get all the help he needs at school. Have you any idea how hard it is? How much time and energy that's going to take? We'll need extra help. And advice . . . if that little pantomime at the school gates this morning proved anything it proved that.

ALISON

Yes. And to pay for it we need this place to work.

PAUL

No. I've decided it's for the best.

ALISON

Don't I even get a say in this?

PAUL

So we're consulting each other about the big decisions in our life now are we? That's news to me.

ALISON

Oh. Right. So this isn't the money. It's petulance.

PAUL puts down his work, turns to her, now she has his undivided attention.

PAUL

You take him out of school without asking me. You do a timetable. You send Nicola to talk to Michael. You take on Maya without asking me. You weren't even going to let him go back to school when it was clearly what he wanted! It doesn't matter to you if it's the right decision or not, does it? As long as it's your decision.

ALISON

I love you, Paul. But sometimes you are so full of shit . . . this is about Joe. Not me.

PAUL

Is it? Is it really? You know why I think you took him out of school?

ALISON

Because I love him and I don't want him to be a "condition".

PAUL

Because you don't want anyone to know. Because you're ashamed.

ALISON stops. Half disbelieving. Half insulted.

ALISON

You really think I'm ashamed? Of my own son?

PAUL

Of Joe. Of yourself for not spotting it sooner. Of us for having him. Of me . . . and finally, to round things off, ashamed of being ashamed in the first place.

ALISON is wounded but he has struck a nerve.

ALISON

Right. Yes. And you're so fucking okay with it.

PAUL

No. I'm not all right with it. Not one bit. That's why I can see it in you. (BEAT) Not much fun, is it? Not what you want to be, is it

ALISON looks at PAUL. She doesn't have an answer. He reaches for her hand and squeezes it. She can't quite take his sympathy. She gets up and walks away.

ALISON

If you're going to sell it then sell it. Just don't go round telling yourself it was for Joe.

ALISON exits.

CUT TO:

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EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 9. 09:55.

ALISON walks back down to the Diner, and doesn't look back.

END OF EPISODE