

# THE A WORD

Episode Three  
SHOOTING SCRIPT

Written by

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1 **EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. ROAD. DAY 10. 07:20.**

An empty road. The sound of music through headphones. WRECKLESS ERIC - "Semaphore Signals". Pull out to see JOE walking down the empty road, headphones on. A small boy in a huge landscape. He is holding a garden gnome in a football shirt which he has lifted from a garden somewhere.

SONG  
(ON HEADPHONES)  
"I'm sending semaphore signals to  
the green belt,  
Semaphore signals down to her  
house,  
Semaphore signals to the gal I  
love,  
Semaphore signals coming down from  
above."

Then the sound of a large van stopping behind him.

We pull out to reveal the "Polish Lads" including PAVEL - the driver, DAVID, and now MAYA who jumps out and steers JOE back towards the van.

CUT TO:

2 **INT/EXT. BREWERY VAN/LAKE DISTRICT. ROADS. DAY 10. 07:25.**

JOE sits with MAYA and DAVID as the van works its way through the Lake District.

CUT TO:

3 **INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 10. 07:30.**

The alarm goes off. PAUL wakes up and instinctively turns to one side. The bed is empty. ALISON nowhere to be seen. He checks the clock. 7.30 . . .

CUT TO:

4 **INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 07:33.**

ALISON is cleaning the kitchen floor. Everything neatly put away. PAUL enters, still half asleep, watches ALISON's frantic cleaning for a few moments.

PAUL  
Is it Christmas already?

ALISON  
Just don't make crumbs.

PAUL

I haven't eaten yet. I've got  
nothing to make crumbs with . . .

He crosses to the toaster, REBECCA enters, hair wet from the shower, rehearsing lines from a school play - Antigone - for which she is clutching a script.

REBECCA

"Natural justice, which is of all  
times and places, numinous, Not  
material, a quality of Zeus. . ."

ALISON

That's easy for you to say.

REBECCA mock applauds. PAUL laughs.

PAUL

Still think you should have done  
Toad of Toad Hall like we did.  
People still talk about my unusual  
Badger.

We notice a school art poster for Antigone pinned over Joe's timetables. REBECCA looks at ALISON madly cleaning.

REBECCA

(LAUGHS)

Mum? Suffragettes died so you don't  
have to do that.

PAUL

Displacement activity. Speech  
Therapist arrives today.

REBECCA

Do I really need to be here for  
that?

ALISON

Are you a member of this family?

REBECCA

It's optional? Now you tell me.

ALISON

Then you're staying.

REBECCA

The woman is coming to see Joe,  
isn't she? Not me.

ALISON

"The woman" is going to come up  
with a programme for Joe. So we all  
have to be here.

REBECCA

I thought 'Pingu' was his  
programme.

PAUL

(AMUSED - TO REBECCA)

Are you worried? Worried that she  
will look at you and think, "Now  
there's the problem in the family.  
Not the boy. The girl with the  
streaks in her hair and the tattoo  
on her ankle that she thinks her  
parents don't know about?"

ALISON

(SNAPPING)

Nobody is calling him the problem  
in the family. Nobody! Not even  
you! Okay?

PAUL

Okay . . . okay.

The mood changed by ALISON. PAUL and REBECCA exchange a look.  
PAUL shrugs. A car horn sounds outside.

CUT TO:

5

EXT. HUGHES & SCOTT HOUSES. DAY 10. 07:35.

We are watching this initially through a car windscreen.

MAYA leads JOE to PAUL, who's coming out of the house. He  
grabs JOE as MAYA returns to the van.

PAUL

Hey, Mozart! Where have you been? I  
missed you.

PAUL throws JOE up into the air. Reveal the POV is that of  
MAGGIE - an anxious looking woman in her mid 30's. She  
watches attentively as JOE does 'the door routine' and goes  
inside.

EDDIE comes out of his house and crosses to the van before  
they drive away.

EDDIE

I'll be in a bit late this morning,  
lads. We've got a family thing.

PAUL also waves 'Goodbye' to the Polish lads.

PAUL

You still playing nice with Eddie,  
guys?

Thumbs up from the van as they drive away. EDDIE turns to PAUL, lighthearted but slightly needled.

EDDIE

You talking to my guys? I hope you're not trying to get back in with them now you've put the restaurant on the market.

PAUL

What's that got to do with you?

CUT TO:

6

INT/EXT. MAGGIE'S CAR/HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 10. 07:43.

MAGGIE sprays some Rescue Remedy into her mouth. Checks her hair. Takes a deep breath and gets out of the car and crosses to the house . . .

EDDIE (V.O.)

I'm planning three special ales for the launch. So I need some notice if it's not going to happen.

CONTINUOUS:

7

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 07:44.

ALISON, NICOLA, REBECCA and MAURICE sit and wait. JOE is at the table too. Headphones on. Eating breakfast. PAUL and EDDIE enter . . .

ALISON

What's not happening?

EDDIE

The restaurant?

ALISON

Oh, that.

ALISON dismisses this with a shrug. PAUL shakes his head, "No". EDDIE sits next to MAURICE who has notebook, pencil and two books on speech therapy in front of him.

EDDIE

(TO MAURICE)

Think the rebranding should be more radical. Take a leaf out of Brewdog's book.

EDDIE reaches for MAURICE's notebook and MAURICE slaps his hand down firmly on it.

MAURICE

No. This is my Speech Therapy notebook. I don't want your scribble all over it.

EDDIE

(AMUSED)

It might not be the notebook kind of therapy, Dad.

MAURICE

If there's role play then consider me gone.

EDDIE

You've got to get over that Pictionary defeat, Dad. It was two Christmases ago.

MAURICE

Beatbox isn't a word.

ALISON

She isn't that kind of therapist. Is she Nicola?

NICOLA

I don't know.

EDDIE glances at NICOLA, slightly questioning.

ALISON

(TO NICOLA)

But she is the best, right?

NICOLA

I don't think there's a league table. But I hear she does good work with families of children on the spectrum.

MAURICE

"Children on the spectrum". Is that what we say nowadays? It sounds like a charity single. I can't keep up.

EDDIE

Dad. For once, your feelings of pain and discomfort aren't the priority here.

REBECCA and EDDIE both laugh. MAURICE shakes his head, can't see the joke.

ALISON

Let's just try and be ourselves.

PAUL

Are you sure that's wise?

The doorbell goes. ALISON exits. The others sit in silence.

EDDIE

One last chance to tell me I was  
adopted, Dad.

MAURICE scowls in despair. JOE has drifted from the table and is on the floor listening to music.

CUT TO:

8

INT/EXT. HUGHES HOUSE/FRONT DOOR. DAY 10. 07:45.

ALISON opens the door to see MAGGIE at the door. Her anticipation is punctured by surprise.

ALISON

Oh, my God. Margaret? Margaret White? It's me. I was Alison Scott? Remember?

MAGGIE, businesslike, but ALISON fails to notice this.

MAGGIE

Yes. I remember. Hello, Alison. I prefer Maggie by the way.

They shake hands.

ALISON

Sure. Come in. What a surprise.  
Goodness. How long has it been...?

MAGGIE

16 years.

ALISON

You haven't been back here since  
you left school? Really?

MAGGIE

(BUSINESSLIKE)

Never been back. Till now.

MAGGIE doesn't offer any explanation but follows ALISON in to the kitchen.

CUT TO:

9

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 07:46.

ALISON and MAGGIE enter to be faced by MAURICE, NICOLA, EDDIE, PAUL and REBECCA.

ALISON

Dad? Do you remember Margaret? I mean, Maggie?

MAURICE

Is this part of the test or can I be honest? Because to be honest...

MAGGIE shakes MAURICE by the hand.

MAGGIE

Don't worry. I don't remember you either. And it's not a test. None of this is a test.

ALISON

Shall I make some coffee? Have you eaten? This is Joe. Where are you staying? How was the journey?

MAURICE makes a small 'calm down' gesture. MAGGIE looks at JOE for a moment and then out into the garden.

MAGGIE

Hello, Joe. (BEAT) Is that a table tennis table? Do you have bats?

PAUL and EDDIE exchange glances. This was an unexpected turn.

CUT TO:

10

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. GARDEN. DAY 10. 08:10.

MAGGIE watches as EDDIE, MAURICE, PAUL and NICOLA negotiate setting up the table tennis table and squabbling. MAURICE is going through a box of bats.

MAURICE

This is my old bat. I can tell by the handle.

EDDIE and MAURICE start a rally even as PAUL is trying to put the net up.

EDDIE

I'm thinking if online sales take off then we might want to convert one of the outbuildings.

MAURICE throws a ball up and hits it against the table.

MAURICE

Fine, yes. (HITTING WITH RELISH)  
Top spin!

PAUL

Would one of you just find a clamp  
for the net and stop showing off!

PAUL heads back inside.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Alison! Get a move on.

CUT TO:

11 OMITTED

12 INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 08:12.

ALISON has a tray of cups out and the kettle on the go. PAUL enters.

PAUL

How long does it take to brew up?  
Everybody's waiting out there!

ALISON

(WHISPERED COMIC HORROR)

It's Margaret White! The Cookie  
Monster! We hated each other at  
school. She used to cry if she  
didn't come top of the class. She  
used to steamroller over me in  
netball.

PAUL

Well, it's only table tennis so you  
should be safe. Come on. We're all  
waiting.

ALISON reluctantly speeds up.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. GARDEN. DAY 10. 08:20.

To their general bemusement EDDIE, PAUL, MAURICE and REBECCA play table tennis. When one partner loses a point NICOLA joins the team and so on . . . rotating.

MAGGIE has knotted some wooden curtain rings onto a rope which JOE is trying to puzzle out. Occasionally he gives up and, without making eye contact, MAGGIE takes the rope back and helps loosen a ring for him to free. In other words, her attention is on JOE but he doesn't feel he is being tested, even though she is talking to ALISON, she is watching JOE. MAGGIE is inscrutable but JOE seems very relaxed with her.

ALISON

I don't want to label him at such a young age.

MAGGIE nods and gently moves herself and ALISON out of JOE's earshot.

MAGGIE

Oh? Why not?

ALISON

Well, it's just . . . I worry that people will start treating him differently.

MAGGIE

And why would that be so bad?

ALISON

It's like he's failed before he has even begun.

MAGGIE

Yes. I can imagine that you might worry about failure.

ALISON

I just don't want it to be public knowledge.

MAGGIE

We need to talk about that.

ALISON

Fine. But it's not up for negotiation.

They gaze over at the table tennis antics for a moment, PAUL pushing MAURICE out of the way. High fiving with NICOLA, etc. JOE hands MAGGIE the rope with all the rings untied.

MAGGIE

Thank you, Joe.

ALISON

Well done! You clever boy.

PAUL

Do you want to play, Joe? Come on. How about a game? Hey?

MAGGIE

Try not to tell him, "Well done" all the time. A lot of this isn't about getting it right or praising him. It's about building up a 'back and forth'. Does that make sense?

MAGGIE walks over to the table tennis, JOE follows her, leaving ALISON behind, slightly unsettled. EDDIE and MAURICE are mid-rally.

EDDIE

I've set up a Twitter Feed for the Brewery.

MAURICE

(BEMUSED)

What?

MAURICE hits a smash which misses the table.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

You did that on purpose!

PAUL thrusts the bat into JOE's hand, and lifts him to the table height, holding him and controlling his hand. EDDIE serves. The ball flies past.

PAUL

A slow one. Eddie. A slow one. Try not to overcompensate. He's just a kid.

EDDIE

Okay. Here it comes.

JOE starts to wriggle but PAUL keeps him there by singing.

PAUL

(SINGING)

"She's singing world shut your mouth . . ."

JOE

(JOINING IN)

"Shut your mouth . . ."

JOE and PAUL return the slow bouncing ball. EDDIE gently nudges him back. PAUL carries on singing.

PAUL/JOE

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

EDDIE makes great play of swinging and missing.

PAUL

Yes. Yes. We did it! We did it!

PAUL swings JOE around. JOE is delighted. Out on MAGGIE who mentally notes this. PAUL sees this and becomes a little self-conscious in his celebration.

CUT TO:

14

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 09:55.

MAGGIE sits around the table with MAURICE, NICOLA, EDDIE, REBECCA, ALISON and PAUL. NICOLA and ALISON both taking notes.

MAGGIE

All communication is an exchange.  
It's like table tennis. Look at us.  
All sitting here. All feeling self-conscious. This is unnatural.

PAUL

It is in this family. Nobody interrupted you.

MAGGIE

By the time we are Joe's age, most of our communication is automatic, unthinking, spontaneous.

MAURICE

Funny, even . . .

PAUL

Was I here for that day, Maurice?

ALISON gives PAUL and MAURICE a dirty look.

MAGGIE

So there we are. Ping. Maurice makes a joke to mask the fact he is feeling uncomfortable. Pong. Paul returns his serve but can't help revealing his own insecurity by making a joke at Maurice's expense.

MAURICE

As long as you don't ask me why I'm feeling uncomfortable I can go along with this.

MAGGIE

I don't need to. Why wouldn't you feel uncomfortable? You don't know what's going to happen next. You don't know what this lunatic woman is going to say? That's how Joe feels all the time. Under pressure every time anybody asks him anything. Unless it's about his music, food, or his walks.

EDDIE

He's a kid who can't make himself heard in a family of loudmouths. I know that feeling.

NICOLA

I'm not sure you can start equating  
your position with Joe's . . .

EDDIE

Really? You didn't grow up with  
this crowd. Give it six months and  
you will know what I am getting at.

NICOLA

I know what you're getting at. I  
just don't agree with you.

A silence now. REBECCA looks down to check her phone. A few  
awkward glances around the table. MAGGIE points at NICOLA and  
EDDIE.

MAGGIE

This unresolved tension here. It  
doesn't matter what it's about.  
What matters is that they are  
playing it out by arguing about  
Joe. Joe becomes the lightning rod  
for family tension. This in turn  
informs your dealings with him. You  
communicate that anxiety whether  
you mean to or not.

EDDIE

No wonder he wears headphones.

PAUL

He wears headphones because he  
loves music.

MAGGIE

Of course he loves music. Music  
doesn't answer back. Music keeps  
the world at arms length. Calms him  
down when he feels distressed.

PAUL

We're always talking about music  
together, if that's not social I  
don't know what is . . .

MAGGIE

It's lovely that you have music.  
But it isn't communication. For Joe  
it's self preservation. Paul folds  
his arms defensively because he is  
worried about what I'll be saying  
next.

PAUL

I think we're all worried.

MAGGIE

Paul sends another return on the back of defensive humour.

PAUL

I had no idea my game was so predictable.

MAURICE

(BEWILDERED)

Are you going to be giving us a booklet at the end or something, because I'm more of a 'Read the Instructions' type.

MAURICE brandishes his two books.

MAGGIE

No. Rebecca, meanwhile, obsessively checks her phone in the hope that will take her out of here. She doesn't want to be here. And I don't blame her.

REBECCA

(HOPEFUL)

I'll be late for rehearsals. I'm doing the school play.

MAGGIE

(NODS AT POSTER)

Antigone. I noticed.

REBECCA pleased that MAGGIE has noticed.

ALISON

What was our school play, Maggie?

MAGGIE

I don't remember.

REBECCA

Would you mind, Maggie?

MAGGIE

Of course not. If that's okay with your Mum. We can talk some other time . . .

REBECCA virtually runs out of the room. ALISON watches her go with a momentary disappointment.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I know this is tough. But you hired me to help Joe.

A silence, glances round the table.

MAURICE

Not sure how this is helping.

MAGGIE

You need to come up with strategies in which Joe becomes part of the game. But at the moment, the communication in his family.

Spoken. (POINTS AT MAURICE)

Unspoken. (POINTS AT PAUL) It's not stuff you even see yourself. So imagine being Joe. He doesn't understand the message in the first place and doesn't have the tools to respond even if he did. How much easier life is if every conversation turns on rote learned details of pop music.

EDDIE

So if Joe is ever going to communicate we might have to learn how to communicate ourselves.

MAURICE

Where did you read that?

EDDIE

I didn't read it anywhere. I just thought of it.

PAUL

Really. You're the kind of person who buys the books they have by the checkout at the bookshop. 'Buddhism for shallow people.' 'Things the Dalai Lama said on one of his bad days.'

ALISON

This is exactly what Maggie's talking about. This. Right here. Is our problem. We never fucking shut up!

MAGGIE

Alison is absolutely right. Can I be honest?

MAURICE looks alarmed. PAUL falls silent. He isn't sure.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

As a family you don't listen to each other. You leave no space for nuance, or exchange, or doubt.

MAURICE

Is this just me or are you a tough crowd, Maggie?

MAGGIE

Humour is a great defence mechanism. Probably the best. It puts the recipient at an immediate disadvantage. I laugh. You've won. I don't laugh and I'm a stereotypical humourless therapist, borderline lesbian so you've won there too.

MAURICE says nothing, stands.

ALISON

Where are you going?

MAURICE

I can give Joe lifts, take him for walks, but I'm not sure I can do any of this stuff. It's beyond me. And I wouldn't want to mess up anything that you and Maggie were cooking up to help Joe so . . . excuse me and thank you.

ALISON

Before you've even tried?

MAGGIE

Thank you for being so honest.

MAURICE

You too.

MAURICE walks out of the house.

CUT TO:

15

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 10. 10:00.

MAURICE shuts the door behind him. He breathes a sigh of relief and takes in the air and the view. He seems shrunken. Then he has an idea. A certainty grips him. He strides off away from the house with a renewed sense of purpose.

CUT TO:

16

EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 10. 10:15.

MAURICE on Louise's doorstep, ringing the bell. He prepares himself for LOUISE to come to the door and when she does appear he is somewhat thrown by the fact that she is holding a ukulele.

MAURICE

Hi.

LOUISE

You're a day early.

MAURICE

Yes. I wanted to talk to you.

LOUISE

Well, I'm giving a lesson right now.

MAURICE

I just wanted to say that perhaps I was hasty when I said what I said. When I turned you down the other day . . . maybe I should reconsider if you haven't moved on . . .

LOUISE

Are you reconsidering or are you saying you would like to sleep with me? I hate to hurry you but, like I say, I'm giving a lesson right now.

MAURICE

I'm saying, "Yes".

LOUISE

Do you want to wait?

MAURICE steps inside.

CUT TO:

17

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. HALL. DAY 10. 10:17.

MAURICE and LOUISE in the hall.

MAURICE

(NERVOUS JOKE)

Will you be bringing the ukulele?

LOUISE

Not unless you want me to. It's just upstairs. On the left. My bedroom.

MAURICE looks surprised as LOUISE heads back to her teaching room. He takes a long, hard look at the stairs.

CUT TO:

18

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 10. 10:19.

MAURICE stands in this strange, unfamiliar bedroom, staring at the bed. From below we can hear the strains of "I'm Yours" by Jason Mraz on the ukulele. LOUISE and A YOUNG MAN singing . . .

CUT TO:

19

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 10. 10:30.

PAUL parks outside the restaurant. Despite the now official Estate Agent 'For Sale' sign he heads into the restaurant and from inside we hear the inevitable sound of hammering.

CUT TO:

20

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 10. 10:35.

MAGGIE sits watching ALISON with JOE, turning the pages of a book of his favourite photos. JOE is sitting on ALISON's knee. JOE starts to turn the pages obsessively. ALISON is over the top, her responses huge.

ALISON

Look. There's Dad on holiday. Do you remember that? Hey? You do! Of course you do!

JOE turns the page.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Okay. Rebecca's birthday party.  
Look how small you are.

JOE looks but doesn't really look.

ALISON (CONT'D)

No. Don't turn. Have a look.

JOE flicks the book forward. Then again. Then again. Then again. Then chuck's it across the room.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Maybe the book wasn't such a great idea. Hey! Hey? Joe? Joe?

ALISON hides behind the sofa. JOE turns eventually and laughs when she puts her head up.

ALISON (CONT'D)

(COMEDY VOICE)

"Now will you read the book with me? Now will you read the book?"

JOE has found some CD's in a corner and is flicking through them obsessively. ALISON is stranded - sticking her head up from behind the sofa in a foolish pose and not knowing whether to move or not.

ALISON (CONT'D)

(STILL IN FUNNY VOICE)

"This is where I lose the will to live."

She smiles and wishes the ground would swallow her.

CUT TO:

21

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 10. 10:50.**

MAGGIE sits opposite JOE. She has the book of photos. She turns the page. She looks at the photos. MAGGIE's tone is kind but neutral. JOE looks utterly relaxed compared with his earlier demeanour around ALISON.

MAGGIE

Ah. I can see you on holiday. That looks like fun. Where's Rebecca?

JOE points at the picture and MAGGIE hands the book to JOE. He turns the page, barely looks, then hands the book back to MAGGIE. She in turn, turns the page and looks at the photos.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

A jungle cake. That looks absolutely delicious.

MAGGIE hands the book back to JOE. He turns the page, gives a cursory glance at a photo and hands it back to MAGGIE.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(LOOKING AT PHOTO)

It doesn't matter at this stage that one of us is not really looking, it doesn't matter at this stage that one of us is not really saying anything. What matters is setting up an exchange. Ping pong. We don't want to crowd a young man out at this point we just want him to join in. Do you see?

ALISON

I'm in his face all the time, aren't I?

MAGGIE

You are. And that makes him anxious that he doesn't have what it takes to fulfil your overwhelming need.

ALISON  
(LAUGHS)  
A bit harsh.

MAGGIE  
It will be a bit harsh. But I hope  
not for Joe. That's the main thing,  
isn't it?

JOE has walked away. ALISON waits for MAGGIE to crack a smile  
or soften the comment but she doesn't do so.

CUT TO:

21A

EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 10. 11:24.

We look at the outside of Louise's house. Life going on  
outside, people walking by and . . .

CUT TO:

22

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY 10. 11:25.

MAURICE and LOUISE lie side by side in bed.

MAURICE  
It will get better than that. I  
promise.

LOUISE  
What makes you think you get a  
second chance?

A deafening silence.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
That was one of my little jokes,  
Maurice.

MAURICE  
(SERIOUS)  
I only slept with one woman for 35  
years. And since I lost her . . .  
nobody.

LOUISE  
That would explain all that running  
you do.

MAURICE  
So. You know. It's strange, isn't  
it? Must be strange for you too.  
Different body. Different  
geography.

LOUISE

(AMUSED)

Different geography? Maybe you  
should bring a compass next time.

MAURICE

No. What I mean, it's been even  
longer for you, since your husband  
left.

LOUISE

Five years. There has been someone  
since then, Maurice.

MAURICE

Oh. Right. I see.

LOUISE

It didn't work out. We were both on  
the rebound.

MAURICE

I don't need to know.

LOUISE

He was my lodger. A music student.  
We got on very well.

MAURICE

A student?

LOUISE

He'd split up with his girlfriend.  
We spent more time talking about  
whether we should have sex than  
actually having sex.

MAURICE

(RELIEVED)

So nothing happened in the end.

LOUISE

Oh. It happened. But he was so  
young. And demanding. Mid twenties.  
That generation have come of age  
with hard core pornography, you  
see. Very strange expectations of  
what might be enjoyable (MAURICE  
DIES A LITTLE) . . . or desirable .  
. . (MAURICE DIES A LITTLE MORE) Or  
physically possible come to that.

MAURICE gets out of bed. Trying to think of something else.  
Anything else.

CUT TO:

23

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. OFFICE. DAY 10. 13:25.

MAURICE, stunned, his head in the previous conversation, is looking with indifference as EDDIE shows him the growing internet presence of Scott's on his laptop and indicates the sample artwork rebranding the brewery and beer.

EDDIE

Craft beer is booming. Real Ale is over. Okay.

MAURICE

What's the difference.

EDDIE

Nothing in the taste. Everything in the brand. Real ale is goblins and prog rock. Craft beer is social media and punk.

EDDIE pulls up a proposed new web page for the brewery, with re-vamped grunge/textured graphics.

MAURICE

Is this what you wanted to see me about?

EDDIE

We go big online there'll be a spike in demand. We've got to be ready for that. So . . .

(TENTATIVE) we're going to have to convert some of the outbuildings and install a dual purpose conditioning vessel.

MAURICE

Yes. Okay.

EDDIE surprised. He was expecting a fight.

EDDIE

So you're giving me the go ahead for all this?

MAURICE

You're the boss, aren't you?

EDDIE

You don't want time to think it over?

MAURICE

Like I say, you're in charge now.

EDDIE is euphoric. MAURICE exits.

CUT TO:

24

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 17:28.

ALISON is preparing food, but smiling to herself as he overhears MAGGIE working with JOE.

MAGGIE (O.S.)  
Now pick up the apple. (PAUSE) And  
put it in the pan.

As JOE's hand hovers MAGGIE taps his hand and says:

MAGGIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
In the pan. Right in the pan.  
That's it. Now take the zebra.

JOE picks up the toy zebra.

MAGGIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
And put it up your jumper. Right up  
your jumper! As far as it will go.

JOE, laughing.

CUT TO:

25

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 10. 17:29.

MAGGIE is working with JOE, sitting opposite him. A simple game. In front of JOE is a table full of objects - plastic fruit, animals, a CD, a book. And by his side a row of containers, a pan, a cup, a bucket, a tea pot. JOE scanning the objects, engaged.

MAGGIE  
Your turn. Your turn to ask me.

JOE looks at the objects, and points at a toothbrush.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
I can't hear you, Joe, so I don't  
know what to do.

JOE  
Pick up the toothbrush.

MAGGIE  
Oh. OK.

MAGGIE picks up the toothbrush.

CUT TO:

26

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 17:30.

ALISON is listening in as she makes dinner and smiling to herself.

MAGGIE (O.S.)  
I don't know where it should go.

JOE (O.S.)  
Put it in the cup.

MAGGIE (O.S.)  
Okay.

PAUL enters.

PAUL  
Hi.

ALISON puts finger to lips, nods towards the living room.

ALISON  
Have you heard those two? She's got  
him eating out of the palm of her  
hand.

PAUL  
Is that a social skill he's ever  
really going to need?

ALISON  
I think we should get her to come  
and work with Joe three times a  
week. We've found our miracle  
worker.

PAUL  
The real miracle is how we would  
pay for that.

ALISON  
Here's a tip. Not by selling the  
restaurant.

PAUL  
There's already interest. If they  
offer the asking price we're in the  
clear.

ALISON  
And then what? The Diner doesn't  
pay enough. Eddie's doing your old  
job.

PAUL  
Have you any idea how much we've  
spent already?

ALISON  
No. Because you won't ever talk  
about it.

PAUL

We're talking now, aren't we? And I'm not even using humour as a defence mechanism.

MAGGIE enters, already into her stride.

MAGGIE

It's important that you practise speech with him where the response is physical and clear and not abstract or emotional. Do you see how that might help?

PAUL

Sure. Yes. We see.

ALISON

Sit down, Maggie. Sit down. Paul. Open some wine. Or a beer? You look like you might be a craft beer kind of girl.

MAGGIE

Is that a joke?

ALISON

No. I . . .

PAUL

(RESCUING ALISON)

It's me that uses jokes to mask my feelings, remember.

MAGGIE

(UNSMILING)

Nothing for me, thank you. I need to go now.

ALISON

(SURPRISED)

You aren't going to eat with us?

MAGGIE

No, but thank you. I've booked dinner at the Red Lion. I'm seeing an old friend.

ALISON

Oh, really. Who?

MAGGIE

You won't know her. She isn't local.

ALISON

Invite her too! Oh, come on. Come on. You can't just leave us.

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

You need to tell me everything you know about Joe. We need to talk about our plans!

MAGGIE

I'm sorry. But I've already made other arrangements. I'll see you both in the morning. 'bye, Joe!

MAGGIE shakes ALISON and PAUL's hand and exits. PAUL looks at ALISON, slightly puzzled.

CUT TO:

27

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 10. 18:01.

ALISON, PAUL, REBECCA and JOE sit round and eat. REBECCA has the playscript out on the table.

REBECCA

Miss Wallace says if Creon doesn't know his lines by tomorrow morning she is going to recast. Can you imagine?

PAUL

Well, I practically know the part. And I've got the legs for a toga.

REBECCA

It's modern dress.

ALISON

Maggie's putting a programme together. We all need to do our bit.

REBECCA

And, Mum. You forgot to put the cheque in the envelope for the tickets.

REBECCA brandishes the tickets.

ALISON

Maggie thinks drama would be good for Joe.

PAUL

That's a thought. Yes. (TO JOE)  
Hey, Mozart! Would you like to do acting?

JOE

Let me see. I don't think so, "No".

PAUL starts to tickle JOE.

PAUL

Well, I think so, "Yes"!

ALISON

Rebecca. Could you find out if your Saturday drama class has any spaces?

REBECCA

(SLIGHTLY PISSED OFF)

Can't you do that?

ALISON

Well, you're there every Saturday so I think it's easier if you do. I don't ask you to do much so just do this one thing, would you?

REBECCA carries on eating in silence. JOE has slipped away from the table and turned the radio on.

PAUL

Hey! Big man! Turn that down!

JOE ignores him, carries on listening. REBECCA looks down at her food and we . . .

CUT TO:

27A

EXT. HUGHES & SCOTT HOUSES. NIGHT 10. 19:07.

REBECCA crosses from the Hughes house over to the Scott house.

CUT TO:

28

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 10. 19:25.

Close up on REBECCA as she speaks her lines.

REBECCA

"What more do you want? Kill me, and have done with it."

NICOLA

"Nothing more than your death. That'll be enough."

NICOLA is reading in with REBECCA, they are sitting side by side on the floor. EDDIE enters carrying ice cream and wafers.

REBECCA

"Then what are you waiting for?..."

EDDIE

Ice cream, ladies. If only Creon had offered Antigone ice cream. Why didn't he think of that. She's a girl, for God's sake!

REBECCA laughs and takes the ice cream.

NICOLA

Eddie likes to demonstrate his liberalism by ironic sexist remarks.

REBECCA

Mum said they called you the Ice Cream King when you were growing up?

EDDIE

It was the only job her and your Granddad trusted me with . . .

NICOLA

(TO REBECCA)

You might want to think about how you feel about your own brother and put some of that into it . . .

REBECCA

(DOUBTFUL)

Right.

NICOLA

How serious is it with your boyfriend? That might help too.

EDDIE

You don't have to answer that, Rebecca.

REBECCA

(LAUGHS, HALF EMBARRASSED,  
HALF SURPRISED)

What?

EDDIE

(AMUSED)

Nicola doesn't do small talk.

ALISON knocks and enters.

ALISON

So. This is where you ran off to. Very cosy.

REBECCA

Nicola knows the play. I told you. Twice.

(MORE)

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
(TO NICOLA) Thanks for helping me.  
I've got to meet a friend.

ALISON  
On a school night? Really?

REBECCA  
(BUSINESSLIKE)  
It's about school work.

ALISON  
Oh. Okay. Don't be late.

REBECCA exits. ALISON doesn't see she has driven her out.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Teenage strop.

NICOLA  
I think she just wanted to get away  
from you and your house for a  
while.

ALISON  
Right. Well. Thank you Nicola for  
telling it like it is.

NICOLA  
Is her boyfriend nice?

ALISON  
She hasn't got a boyfriend.

NICOLA looks puzzled.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
Thanks for coming this morning.  
Hope you aren't feeling too bruised  
after Maggie's session.

NICOLA  
Not at all. It's her job. I think  
she is right to locate the  
unresolved tension in the whole  
family and not just in Joe.

ALISON doesn't quite get this.

ALISON  
Sure. Yes. Well, some of the family  
anyway.

ALISON smiles. She clearly means them. EDDIE and NICOLA  
exchange a glance and we . . .

CUT TO:

29

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 10. 20:18.

EDDIE and NICOLA tidy the plates away, load the dishwasher, etc. A silence building between them that needs punctuating. When EDDIE talks it is more in a tone of amusement than hurt.

EDDIE

So shall we call it Michael? Our "unresolved tension"?

NICOLA

I don't think we can lay all our unresolved tension at Michael's door. Can we?

EDDIE

Be nice to park it somewhere.

NICOLA

Are you serious?

EDDIE

Do we need to talk about this right now?

NICOLA

You brought it up.

EDDIE

When people say, "Do we need to talk about this right now?" It generally means they don't want to.

NICOLA

So how do we resolve the tension?

EDDIE

We could try the ancient art of sexual intercourse.

NICOLA

Do you really think that would help?

EDDIE

It's got to be worth a try.

NICOLA smiles, they start to kiss . . . tentative . . . and then start to become more passionate and we . . .

CUT TO:

30

INT/EXT. MAGGIE'S CAR/CONISTON. SQUARE (STEPS). NIGHT 10. 20:24.

MAGGIE, in her car, eating a home made sandwich and drinking coffee from a flask.

She can't help noticing REBECCA sitting on the steps she is parked opposite, kissing LUKE, while TOM lies on a higher step, checking his phone.

CUT TO:

31

**EXT. CONISTON. SQUARE (STEPS). NIGHT 10. 20:25.**

REBECCA looks past her boyfriend as they kiss and spots MAGGIE in her car. REBECCA breaks off. MAGGIE, embarrassed, looks away, starts up the car and drives on . . .

LUKE

What?

REBECCA

Nothing.

TOM

(TURNING)

She's just realised that she still loves Sam Smith.

LUKE

Sam Smith is gay.

TOM

But Rebecca thinks she can turn him . . . she leaned in on me at a party once and it got very messy.

They kiss again.

TOM (CONT'D)

Talk to yourself.

REBECCA laughs as she is kissing. She can't stop herself.

REBECCA

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

LUKE

Can you lose the commentary, Tom?

TOM

I could. But then Rebecca would discover how dull you truly are.

LUKE

(GIVING UP)

Come on. Let's go for chips.

TOM

(HEADING OFF)

And so another evening ends in self abuse and trans fats.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

And that isn't a minority group in  
case you were wondering . . .

CUT TO:

32

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. JOE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 10. 21:35.

ALISON walks in and gazes at the sleeping JOE. A look of complete adoration. Slowly she eases the headphones out of his hands.

CUT TO:

33

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 10. 21:45.

PAUL in bed already. ALISON comes in.

ALISON

He's fast asleep. She's worn him out.

PAUL

Excellent. Let's seize the moment.

ALISON

If Maggie agrees three times a week then I think we can manage the rest between all of us.

PAUL opens his arms. ALISON climbs into bed, laughing. They kiss. PAUL puts his hand on her breast.

PAUL

Ping. The male makes a clumsy display of affection.

ALISON kisses him.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Pong. The female returns the male's sexual interest.

ALISON

Stop it.

PAUL

Ping. She chastises him. Pong. He rather likes it. It makes him aroused. Ping. It makes her aroused. Pong.

ALISON

I mean it. Stop making fun.

PAUL

Okay. Okay.

PAUL nuzzles ALISON's neck.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Ping. He serves again and she returns.

ALISON

Stop.

PAUL

I will. I promise.

ALISON

No. I can hear Rebecca practising her lines.

PAUL

So we'll have to be very quiet.

PAUL and ALISON kiss.

ALISON

I'm not really feeling it with Antigone next door.

PAUL

Is it me or are your knock-back lines getting that bit classier?

ALISON laughs, they kiss again, she sneaks out of bed.

CUT TO:

34

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. REBECCA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 10. 21:48.

REBECCA is doing her lines but doing them by video call into her laptop. LUKE is playing CREON by return.

LUKE

(ON SCREEN, AS CREON)

"You are quite mistaken. None of the Thebans anywhere in the city thinks as you do."

REBECCA

(AS ANTIGONE)

"They all do! But they keep their mouths shut when you're here!"

ALISON pops her head round the door. She cannot see LUKE on the screen.

ALISON

Time to wrap it up now, love. Big week for you this week.

REBECCA

Okay. Goodnight.

ALISON exits. REBECCA smiles conspiratorially at the laptop screen, blows a kiss and giggles.

CUT TO:

35

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. UPSTAIRS HALL. NIGHT 10. 21:49.

ALISON stands outside Rebecca's door for a moment, hears her giggling.

REBECCA (O.S.)

(WHISPER)

Goodnight.

ALISON smiles to herself and returns to bed, but not before looking in on JOE yet again.

CUT TO:

36

EXT. HUGHES & SCOTT HOUSES. DAY 11. 07:45.

Morning. EDDIE and NICOLA on the doorstep. Loved up. NICOLA is checking in her rucksack.

NICOLA

Have I got everything. Yes. I've got everything.

EDDIE

Don't let Dr. Graves bully you. He thinks of himself as a "local character" with all the true horror that implies. And this . . .

EDDIE hands NICOLA a sandwich box. NICOLA smiles, looks surprised. As they kiss MAURICE arrives at ALISON's front door, fresh from a jog. They stop.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Morning.

MAURICE

Don't let me interrupt.

ALISON opens the door with JOE who nips out and waits for MAURICE to go inside before waiting to do the "door thing". ALISON, sensing NICOLA watching, feels obliged to make an excuse.

ALISON

He's tired.

ALISON goes inside, followed by JOE.

She and EDDIE kiss again. She backs away, smiles. EDDIE waves, feeling pleased with himself.

CUT TO:

37

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 11. 08:35.

ALISON and MAURICE sit with a coffee. JOE playing music somewhere in the house, REBECCA occasionally seen at the doorway walking back and forth, rehearsing her lines.

ALISON

Maggie is brilliant for him. Don't you think?

MAURICE

I think if she's what you think Joe needs then I think the world of her.

ALISON

Good.

MAURICE

Is she what Joe needs?

ALISON shuts the kitchen door as REBECCA walks past rehearsing her lines.

ALISON

I'm sure of it. You know why? I don't even like her. I didn't want her to be good for Joe. But she is. I can see that. She's the one.

MAURICE

Right.

ALISON

Never mind her just assessing Joe. I think we should pay her to come three times a week to work with him and help us deal with Joe.

MAURICE

She won't come cheap.

ALISON

That's what Paul says. That's why he's adamant about selling the restaurant.

MAURICE

He doesn't have to sell the restaurant to pay for Joe. The money is there. In my account. Your Mum's life insurance.

ALISON

Dad. That's lovely but I can't take that.

MAURICE

I can't think of a better use for it. If it isn't there for things like this then it isn't worth having. Nobody needs to go selling any restaurants.

ALISON

Thank you.

MAURICE

You take care of Maggie, I'll take care of Paul.

ALISON

Don't undermine him.

MAURICE

When did I ever undermine anybody?

MAURICE smiles. He means this.

CUT TO:

38

EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 11. 10:52.

MAGGIE sits with croissant and coffee, laptop open. PAUL is at the Diner window talking to TERRY.

TERRY

Any interest?

TERRY nods up to the restaurant with the still prominent For Sale sign . . .

PAUL

The Estate Agent just rang. Got someone coming this morning.

TERRY

How much are you asking?

PAUL

A quid more than I owe the bank would be nice.

TERRY

Still . . . it was nice when it lasted. The Dream. Living it. And all that.

PAUL ignores TERRY as he walks across to MAGGIE's table.

PAUL

Catching up on old times?

PAUL indicates the view before them.

MAGGIE

No. Just needed a good internet signal.

PAUL

You've got Alison to thank for that. She fixed up wi-fi for the Restaurant. She thinks of everything.

MAGGIE

Yes.

PAUL nods. Understands he should stay quiet but he can't help himself.

PAUL

That was quite a battering you gave us yesterday.

MAGGIE shuts her laptop and looks at PAUL.

MAGGIE

I didn't do it for effect. I did it so you can help Joe.

PAUL

I know. Okay. I get that. Just. . . do you think we're really doing that badly?

MAGGIE

No. I can see that you get on with him. I can see that you make Joe happy.

PAUL

(FLATTERED)

With my jokes. Which you don't like.

MAGGIE doesn't smile.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I'm just doing what any Dad would do.

MAGGIE

So it's understandable if you overcompensate a bit.

PAUL not flattered now but distracted by the arrival of a car at the Restaurant. An ESTATE AGENT gets out and heads into the building.

PAUL

Well. That's Dads for you. Sorry,  
I've got to get up the hill . . .

PAUL stands but MAGGIE starts to talk.

MAGGIE

I was working with a family once. And I said I thought that at family meal times it would be a good idea to let the child - Alfie - serve the food up. At the table. It was a way of getting the child to socialise without feeling the pressure. And the Dad said, "Well, that sounds like a good idea but unfortunately I'm always up a ladder at family meal times." I asked him why and he said, "Alfie won't eat his food unless I'm up a ladder outside the house."

PAUL

That's insane.

MAGGIE

Yes. And this family were clever, sane people. But their son's anxiety and their anxiety had created this situation where the Dad being up a ladder at mealtimes seemed a small price to pay to keep their boy happy.

PAUL

Why are you telling me this?

MAGGIE

You are doing fine with Joe. He loves you and he likes you. Relax. You don't need to be the one outside on the ladder.

PAUL nods, turns this over, but is now further distracted by the unmistakable figure of MAURICE. PAUL looks puzzled and even angry.

CUT TO:

PAUL enters to find MAURICE talking to the Estate Agent.

MAURICE

Has the vendor got figures for the  
flooring costs and second fix  
electrics?

PAUL

Maurice! It's lovely of you to drop  
by but I've got a potential buyer  
dropping in so if you . . .

The ESTATE AGENT looks confused.

MAURICE

I know. It's me. I'm the potential  
buyer.

Big smile from MAURICE. Out on PAUL, flummoxed.

CUT TO:

40

**INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 11. 11:10.**

PAUL sits opposite MAURICE on an old pub table in the centre  
of the shell of the restaurant. The ESTATE AGENT feigns  
interest in electrics and plasterboard.

PAUL

This is nonsense, Maurice, and you  
know it. You're wasting your time.

MAURICE

Why? If I buy it you can still run  
it.

PAUL

The costs are too high to finish  
the job.

MAURICE

Do you think you can run a  
restaurant or not?

PAUL

It's different now . . . with Joe .  
. . it's just not the time to be  
risking all this . . . now we'll be  
taking on Maggie and . . .

MAURICE

I'll take care of that. You just  
worry about this place.

PAUL nods, apparently calm, then turns to MAURICE, furious.

PAUL

What if I want to take care of Joe,  
hey? His Dad. My own son!

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

You and Alison! Unbelievable! Get Michael in. Get Maggie in! Take him out of school! Put him back in school! Go private! Takeover! Takeover! Takeover!

MAURICE nods, calmly.

MAURICE

With all due respect . . .

PAUL

Fuck "all due respect."

MAURICE

(PRESSING ON REGARDLESS)

I think Joe's welfare is more important than your ego.

PAUL

It's not about my ego! It's about the fact that I have something to say! I have some ideas! I am not going to be the one outside the house up a ladder every tea time!

MAURICE

(BEMUSED)

What?

PAUL

Don't even know why you're here. I know you can't really afford this place.

MAURICE

I'll sell the brewery.

PAUL

Pull the other one.

MAURICE

Why not? The business plan for this place is sound. You worked for me from the age of 16 till six months ago. So, you know, we both know what we'd be getting into. It will just be like it always was. I know you dreamed of running your own place but don't kick yourself to death if management's not for you.

PAUL looks at MAURICE, out-manoeuvered. MAURICE stands, turning to the ESTATE AGENT as he exits.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

I'll be in touch.

Stay on PAUL for a few beats. Then he stands up and throws the table over.

PAUL

That bastard! That fucking bastard!

PAUL rushes out, past the now startled and confused ESTATE AGENT.

CUT TO:

41

**INT/EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 11. 11:15.**

MAGGIE is packing up her laptop and leaving the Diner.

From the POV of TERRY who is serving MAURICE, we see PAUL come out of the Restaurant and pull at the 'For Sale' sign, before knocking it down with a lump hammer.

TERRY nods towards this as he passes MAURICE his coffee.

TERRY

I think he's overdue a camomile tea.

MAURICE looks up.

MAURICE

Two bag job by the looks of things.

MAURICE smiles to himself as he takes his coffee. "Job Done".

CUT TO:

41A

**EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 11. 14:15.**

JOE is outside the house, swinging back and forth on the gate.

CUT TO:

42

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 11. 14:20.**

MAGGIE starts to pack her papers away. ALISON is looking puzzled.

MAGGIE

Sorry. No. That won't be happening.

ALISON

How do you mean? "No"? Do you mean, "Yes"?

MAGGIE

I came here to write a plan and recommend someone local to help you with it. But it won't be me.

ALISON

(SMILES)

So. When can you start? Three mornings a week.

MAGGIE

(SMILES)

Alison. I'm very sorry but I can't work with Joe on a regular basis. You knew that all along.

ALISON

No, no, no. You don't get away that easily. You are brilliant for Joe and I will not take "No" for an answer.

MAGGIE

I know you find that hard but you're going to have to. There are people with the same expertise. . .

ALISON

Please. Maggie. Name your price.

MAGGIE

I have a life. And a job. In Manchester. I am sorry. Joe is a lovely boy but I am not the only person who can help him.

MAGGIE exits, and ALISON goes after her.

CUT TO:

43

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 11. 14:25.

ALISON stands by MAGGIE's car as MAGGIE says "Goodbye" to JOE.

MAGGIE

(SHAKING JOE'S HAND)

Lovely to meet you, Joe. Bye now.

JOE shakes MAGGIE's hand. As MAGGIE turns, ALISON is blocking her route to her car.

ALISON

If I have to lie down in the road in front of the car then I will. You, Maggie, are going to work with Joe.

ALISON pulls at MAGGIE's arm and MAGGIE shrugs her away.

MAGGIE

You can't always have what you want, Alison. Not even you!

ALISON

(STILL NOT GETTING IT)  
Is that a "maybe"? Come on . . .

MAGGIE

(SNAPPING)

You are blind to everybody's needs but your own! You are a bully, Alison. You bullied me at school and you are bullying me now. Well, too bad. I will send through my report. I will help you find someone local. But I won't be bullied by you again.

MAGGIE gets into the car and drives away. ALISON watches her go, shocked. JOE watches the car disappear.

CUT TO:

44

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 11. 18:05.

ALISON is serving up pasta with REBECCA - stealing glances at her Antigone script - PAUL and JOE at the table. JOE is the still point in all this.

ALISON

Was I really a bully? Is that possible?

PAUL glances at REBECCA and shares a smile.

ALISON (CONT'D)

It's not a joking matter, Paul.

PAUL

I'm the one who uses humour as a defence mechanism, remember?

ALISON

Now you're using "humour as a defence mechanism" as humour as a defence mechanism.

PAUL

And you're bullying me. So maybe Maggie had a point.

ALISON

You think?

PAUL

No. (KIND) You're not a bully.

REBECCA

Not now maybe. At school you might have been and not known it . . .

ALISON

She was a big, strange girl. I remember that. But we were all strange. And insecure. Teenagers.

REBECCA

Mum. You're always telling us that you were voted "Miss Wordsworth High" two years on the run.

ALISON

That was a joke thing, just something the boys did. Nothing official. Three years on the run since you mention it.

REBECCA

So you must have been a bit more secure than Maggie, then? Good looking, slim . . .

ALISON puts her arm round REBECCA.

ALISON

Aw, thank you lovely, but I was not a bully.

PAUL

And anyone who says otherwise gets a Chinese burn.

ALISON serves up the pasta.

CUT TO:

45

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 11. 22:32.

ALISON in bed next to PAUL. She doesn't say anything but she is clearly wide awake. PAUL puts his arm around her.

PAUL

Listen. Kids pull all sorts of stunts when they're young. You're with the "in" crowd, then you're suddenly not. You all talk about wanking away at cub camp and then back at school the same boys are suddenly ripping the piss out of you and calling you 'Wanker Hughes'. For example . . .

ALISON

I suspect that one is more of a boy  
thing. (BEAT) You haven't said it  
was impossible I was a bully.

PAUL

It's impossible that you are a  
bully.

PAUL kisses her. She kisses him and then kisses his neck, his chest.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Or manipulative in any shape or  
form.

ALISON carries on moving down his body.

ALISON

Am I blind to the needs of others?

PAUL

Not right now.

ALISON stops. Breaks out of the sexual trance and comes up  
abruptly from under the sheets.

ALISON

You know what. We'll find another  
Maggie.

ALISON leaves PAUL adrift, reaches for her glasses and  
notebook. PAUL wonders what's happened. He gazes down at his  
cock and then across at ALISON.

PAUL

If Maggie was here she'd say I have  
serious abandonment issues.

ALISON ignores PAUL and picks up a book that Maggie has left  
for them.

CUT TO:

46

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 12. 08:05.

ALISON is getting JOE's breakfast ready. JOE is at the table  
but with music playing loudly on the ipod dock and singing  
'Pulp' Disco 2000.

JOE

(SINGING)

"Let's all meet up in the Year  
2000,  
Won't it be strange when we're all  
fully grown.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

Be there 2 o'clock by the fountain  
down the road."

ALISON reaches for the cereal.

ALISON

Okay, Joe. Music off, then  
breakfast.

JOE

(NOT TURNING MUSIC OFF)

"Your house was very small, with  
woodchip on the wall, when I came  
round to call, you didn't notice me  
at all."

ALISON pulls the ipod out of the dock.

ALISON

Well, I am noticing you right now.  
Do you remember those games you  
played with Maggie? Yeah? Will that  
be fun?

REBECCA enters. In the moment, JOE takes the chance to get  
the ipod attached to headphones and headphones on.

REBECCA

Is this Day One?

ALISON

What are you talking about?

REBECCA

The new regime. The Joe plan.

ALISON

I've always done stuff like this  
with him.

REBECCA

No, you haven't. And you're talking  
in your patient voice. Which means  
you're about to blow. Have you got  
thirty pounds?

ALISON

What?

REBECCA

Six tickets for the play. Right?  
You didn't put a cheque in the  
envelope.

ALISON notices JOE has the headphones on.

ALISON

No, you don't, Joe. Headphones off.

ALISON gently removes JOE's headphones and puts the cereal in front of him.

REBECCA

And I'm not allowed to do this but  
I am going to put reserve notices  
on the front row seats. Okay? Mum?  
Are you listening?

JOE has reached for the dish and is digging in to his cereal, headphones somehow back on before ALISON can react.

ALISON

No. Joe. That's not the deal!

ALISON snatches the bowl back, JOE struggles, the cereal spills a bit. JOE looks at ALISON and then JOE turns the bowl upside down and lets all the cereal fall on the floor.

JOE then gently removes his own headphones. ALISON thinks maybe this is a result . . .

JOE

Pulp. Disco 2000. Single. 1995.

JOE snaps the headphones back in place. ALISON, depressed, starts to mop up the cereal. REBECCA pours JOE some more.

REBECCA

The money? For the tickets?

ALISON

For God's sake! Take the cash out  
of my coat pocket. All right!

ALISON stands to see JOE tucking into a huge bowl of cereal and staring at REBECCA as she speaks her lines straight at him.

REBECCA

(AS ANTIGONE)

"Rock petrified her by inches, and  
she died. Her story is mine. Today  
I shall share her rocky bed."

JOE bursts out laughing. ALISON should be pleased but she feels faintly jealous of this sibling ease.

ALISON

Did you have to let him have such a  
big bowl?

REBECCA shrugs and carries on with her breakfast. ALISON exits.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Five minutes, Joe.

JOE looks up at REBECCA and, in a fair impression of REBECCA's tone.

JOE

"Today I shall share her rocky bed."

REBECCA

(AMUSED)

Say that again.

JOE

"Is there room on the broom for a frog like me?"

REBECCA taps JOE on the head.

REBECCA

You're a genius.

REBECCA exits and JOE blows a raspberry as she exits.

CUT TO:

47

**INT. MAYBROOK MEDICAL CENTRE. NURSE'S ROOM. DAY 12. 12:10.**

NICOLA sits alone, opens her sandwich box, looks at the neatly cut sandwiches, the granola bar, the nectarine. She lifts the sandwich to find a picture of "Dr. Nick" from The Simpsons. She smiles to herself. DR. GRAVES opens the door.

DR. GRAVES

The schools want someone to go and talk about the measles jab. I'd like you to do it.

NICOLA

Oh. Right. Thank you.

DR. GRAVES

I'm not flattering you. I just don't want to do it myself. How's your nephew? ADHD, wasn't it?

NICOLA

Autism Spectrum.

DR. GRAVES

Right. That must be another boy. I write a lot of letters. Mainly for parents trying to get into the better secondary schools.

NICOLA

This isn't tactical autism. It's real.

DR. GRAVES

(UNIMPRESSED)

Sure. Don't forget to give out the leaflets when you do the jab talk.

DR. GRAVES dumps a pile of handouts to NICOLA and exits.

CUT TO:

48

INT. MAYBROOK MEDICAL CENTRE. RECEPTION AREA. DAY 12. 12:12.

DR. GRAVES walks back to his consulting room and we find MAURICE sitting waiting in the Doctor's Surgery, looking uncomfortable. Another LOCAL PERSON comes in and sits opposite. They nod "Hello".

CUT TO:

49

INT. MAYBROOK MEDICAL CENTRE. CONSULTING ROOM. DAY 12. 12:20.

MAURICE sitting opposite DR. GRAVES. MAURICE is looking as though he has just confessed to a heinous crime and the DOCTOR is looking matter-of-factly and reaching for his laptop.

DR. GRAVES

Viagra. Yes. I'll write you out a prescription. Don't look like you've failed. Plenty of men your age have erectile dysfunction.

MAURICE

I don't have erectile dysfunction.  
I just need . . .

DR. GRAVES

Hey. I'm not here to judge.

MAURICE

Is that it?

DR. GRAVES

Unless it's me that you're planning on sleeping with then yes, that's it.

MAURICE

You don't want to check my health or anything?

DR. GRAVES

Maurice. I see you running up the side of a mountain every morning. I think your health is probably better than mine.

MAURICE

It's not a mountain. It's a fell.  
Are there side effects?

DR. GRAVES

Some people complain of headaches.  
But sometimes a headache is a small  
price to pay. Depending on the  
woman. Or man.

DR. GRAVES hands the prescription to MAURICE.

DR. GRAVES (CONT'D)

Does your daughter-in-law think  
she's settling in here?

MAURICE

(THROWN)

What?

DR. GRAVES

Her job here. Has she said  
anything?

MAURICE

Is this the right time or place to  
be talking about my daughter-in-  
law's job?

DR. GRAVES

I think she's made a good start.

MAURICE

Good.

DR. GRAVES

Don't forget to tell her.

MAURICE

I'm hardly likely to.

MAURICE gets up to leave and we . . .

CUT TO:

50

INT. MAYBROOK MEDICAL CENTRE. RECEPTION AREA. DAY 12. 12:25.

MAURICE comes out of the consulting room just as NICOLA is  
coming from her clinic in her Nurses' Uniform.

NICOLA

Mrs. Brownlow? (BEAT) Hello,  
Maurice.

MAURICE

Hello. Hello, there . . .

NICOLA  
(SMILING)  
Nicola . . .

MAURICE realises he is blushing and scurries away, feeling foolish and exposed.

CUT TO:

51 (SCENE 51 OMITTED)

52 INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. OFFICE. DAY 12. 12:45.

EDDIE with MAURICE. EDDIE angry and devastated.

EDDIE  
Cancel it? What? I thought you said to go ahead. You said it was a good idea. I've already started work on it!

MAURICE  
We can't afford any changes right now.

EDDIE  
The rebranding and the rebuilding go hand in hand. I've already started spending money. With your blessing!

MAURICE  
Just get on with running the business, Edwin.

EDDIE  
Don't call me Edwin. Do you want to see the figures? I can show you the figures. (BEAT) Is this about Joe?

MAURICE  
Why would it be about Joe?

EDDIE  
If you want to save money because you need it for Joe then I'm okay with that.

MAURICE  
If you're okay with it then why say it?

EDDIE  
Is it about Joe?

MAURICE walks out of the office onto the brewhouse floor. EDDIE follows.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

You said we could afford to do it two days ago. Is there something else I should know? About the finances of this place?

MAURICE

Yes. There is. We make beer. We sell beer. People drink beer. They feel good. They fall over. They want more. We make more beer . . . now go and Twitter that for size.

MAURICE exits, leaving EDDIE pissed off. As he leaves the phone rings. EDDIE answers.

CUT TO:

53

INT/EXT. ALISON'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT. ROADS. DAY 12. 12:47.

ALISON on speakerphone.

ALISON

Hi, Eddie. I've had to go to Manchester. Paul's not picking up. I've been trying to get hold of Maya for hours. Is David working there today? Has he got a landline number for her? Would you mind asking him?

CUT TO:

54

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. BREWHOUSE. DAY 12. 12:48.

EDDIE on the phone to ALISON.

EDDIE

What am I? Directory Enquiries? Do you think this is a hobby? Does the whole family just think it's a hobby I'm doing here?

EDDIE hangs up the phone.

CUT TO:

55

INT/EXT. ALISON'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT. ROADS. DAY 12. 12:49.

ALISON looks at the phone, puzzled. Drives on.

CUT TO:

56

INT. SCOTT'S BREWERY. REST ROOM. DAY 12. 12:50.

PAVEL and DAVID are eating their lunch as they watch EDDIE return to the office. They speak in Polish. . .

PAVEL  
Nikt nie chce byc Eddie w tej rodzinie.

SUBTITLE  
Nobody wants to be Eddie in that family.

DAVID  
No, nawet sam Eddie.

SUBTITLE (CONT'D)  
Not even Eddie.

CUT TO:

57

INT. IRWELL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. RECEPTION. DAY 12. 14:10.

ALISON is standing at a desk in the hospital, opposite an unsmiling, motherly RECEPTIONIST with a strong Mancunian accent.

HOSPITAL RECEPTIONIST  
How it works, love, is this. You go and see your GP. He refers you to us by letter or email. You then get a letter from us at your home address asking you to phone the appointments line to make an appointment. The appointments line - which is in Newcastle - then informs us and we write you a letter to say a time and day for you to come in. It's quite straightforward.

ALISON  
I don't need an appointment.

HOSPITAL RECEPTIONIST  
You do if you want to see Ms. White.

ALISON  
I just need you to tell her that I'm here and that I need five minutes of her time.

HOSPITAL RECEPTIONIST  
See - the problem is all these people have got appointments.

ALISON  
Could you just give her this note?

ALISON hands a note over to the RECEPTIONIST.

CUT TO:

58

INT. IRWELL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. RECEPTION. MONTAGE. DAY 12.  
14:20.

ALISON sits and waits in the reception area which is full of PARENTS and CHILDREN with disabilities. She checks her phone for messages.

CUT TO:

59

INT. IRWELL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. RECEPTION. MONTAGE. DAY 12.  
14:45.

ALISON still waiting. She checks her watch.

CUT TO:

60

INT. IRWELL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. RECEPTION. DAY 12. 15:05.

ALISON sees MAGGIE at her door as she waits for a MOTHER and CHILD to go into her Consulting Room. ALISON stands.

ALISON

Maggie?

MAGGIE shuts the door behind her. ALISON sits down again, feeling slightly self-conscious.

CUT TO:

61

EXT. MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL. DAY 12. 15:15.

MAYA waits in the school playground to pick up JOE. She waits patiently as all the OTHER CHILDREN come out first and then, last of all, JOE, waiting to do the "door thing".

CUT TO:

62

EXT. CONISTON. ZEBRA CROSSING NEAR MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL.  
DAY 12. 15:25.

MAYA and JOE walk together. They come to the crossing, RALPH the Lollipop man seeing the kids across. MAYA reaches for JOE's hand but he refuses to hold it.

MAYA

You hold my hand to cross the road,  
Joe.

JOE folds his arms.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Okay. We can just touch hands if  
you want.

JOE looks at MAYA for a moment. Considering this.

CUT TO:

63

**EXT. CONISTON. ZEBRA CROSSING NEAR MILLCROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL.**  
**DAY 12. 15:27.**

JOE and MAYA cross the road together, touching the tips of their index fingers. This gets one or two strange looks but neither of them seems to care.

CUT TO:

63A

**INT. IRWELL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. RECEPTION. DAY 12. 16:30.**

ALISON still waiting on her own. Fewer CHILDREN waiting. Time has passed.

CUT TO:

64

**EXT. CONISTON. PARK. DAY 12. 16:35.**

JOE is high up a tree, looking out on to the OTHER CHILDREN on the playground. We pull out to reveal MAYA also up the tree, on the branch below, also looking out but keeping an eye on JOE. Occasionally he looks down and smiles to himself.

We see OTHER MOTHERS on the playground looking over at this spectacle with disapproval.

CUT TO:

65

**INT. IRWELL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. MAIN ENTRANCE. DAY 12.**  
**17:48.**

ALISON has collared MAGGIE who is trying to leave, businesslike.

ALISON

I just wanted to see you for ten minutes.

MAGGIE

You aren't going to change my mind, Alison.

ALISON

I'm not here to change your mind.  
I'm here to apologise.

MAGGIE hesitates, ALISON knows she has her.

ALISON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for trying to bully you into working with Joe. And I'm begging you to think again.

MAGGIE

(SMILES)

Oh. I see.

ALISON

I realise that we can probably reach some compromise. Maybe you could oversee somebody and just come once a month. A fortnight perhaps. I can't do it on my own. I try to do what you do with Joe but it doesn't work.

MAGGIE

(LAUGHS)

For a moment I thought you were going to apologise to me for bullying me at school.

ALISON

I would. But I honestly don't remember. But if I did. Of course I apologise for that.

MAGGIE

I love that modern way of apologising. If I gave offence I apologise. That isn't an apology. That's saying the problem is yours, not mine . . .

ALISON

Well. From where I'm standing. (BEAT) We were teenagers! We all had our own stuff to deal with. I was probably just as insecure as you.

MAGGIE

I am sure that is true. But you chose to exercise that insecurity by refusing to sit next to me, making jokes about me . . . I knew I was the weird kid, Alison. The best I could hope for was to be ignored. And you didn't even give me that.

ALISON

I don't know what to say. Of course I am sorry. But I don't remember it that way. It was a long time ago. If that was happening to Rebecca .

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

. . . (HORRIFIED AT THE THOUGHT) I  
don't know what I can do now to put  
that right other than to keep  
saying I'm sorry.

MAGGIE

(DRY)

You could pay for my years of  
therapy I suppose.

ALISON

Well, if you hadn't discovered  
therapy then maybe you wouldn't be  
doing the job you are doing now.  
(BEAT) That was a joke by the way.  
And I know what you think about  
humour as a defence mechanism and  
you're dead right. I'm begging you,  
Maggie. You opened something up in  
Joe.

MAGGIE

It's a technique. An approach. I'm  
a trained therapist. Not Jesus.

ALISON

It's you he responded to. Please. I  
will do anything to help my child.

MAGGIE

That is what all parents say. And  
it's true. But that doesn't make it  
any less trite. But do you see it's  
about you again. Not your child.  
"I" will do anything to help "my"  
child.

ALISON

Are you refusing to take on Joe to  
get back at me. Is that what's  
going on here?

MAGGIE

Are my needs and my life here more  
important to me than your needs?  
Yes. I'm afraid they are. That  
doesn't make me a bad person. That  
makes me a rational person. But I  
would never punish a child by  
denying my professional help and  
advice no matter how I felt about  
their parents. I will send through  
my report, my recommendations and  
my suggestions for local people in  
the area. For Joe. Because I can  
see how many problems he is facing.

ALISON

Okay. You know what? I think you're enjoying this.

MAGGIE

Alison. My advice to you. Get some therapy.

MAGGIE looks at ALISON. It is clear she means that ALISON is one of those biggest problems.

ALISON

You know what. Fuck you, Maggie!

ALISON turns and heads out.

CUT TO:

66 **(SCENE 66 OMITTED - INCORPORATED INTO SCENE 65)**

67 **INT/EXT. ALISON'S CAR/IRWELL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. CAR PARK.**  
**DAY 12. 17:51.**

ALISON strides across the car park and gets into the car. She bangs her hands on the driving wheel in a fit of desperation and anger. Finally she calms down. Checks her phone messages.

ALISON

Oh. Shit.

And now she remembers . . .

CUT TO:

67A **INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. DAY 12. 17:53.**

A table is set up by REBECCA and TOM and photocopied programmes put in a pile on the table by the cash box. REBECCA checks her phone.

CUT TO:

67B **INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. DAY 12. 17:57.**

REBECCA putting out the home made reserved signs on the front row of seats. A BOY practises training the stage lights. REBECCA checks her phone.

CUT TO:

68

INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. BACKSTAGE. DAY 12. 18:00.

REBECCA checking her phone again for messages. But nothing. She is having her make up put on by TOM.

TOM

Stay still or you'll end up looking like Liz McDonald.

REBECCA

(CHECKS HER MESSAGES,  
FRUSTRATED)

Aargh!

TOM

That Hollywood Agent a "no show?"

REBECCA

Very funny.

TOM steps back to admire his make up work.

TOM

Look at you. If those eyebrows don't say "Young woman who wants to bury her brother within the city walls in defiance of her Uncle and under threat of death" then I don't know what does.

But REBECCA is ignoring TOM and is listening to her phone again.

CUT TO:

69

INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. NIGHT 12. 18:32.

PAUL is busy painting PVA on to fresh plaster.

SALLY at table poring over the plans.

PAUL's phone starts to ring. They look at it.

Both have turned to the phone and wait for it to ring out.

SALLY

Do you want to get that?

PAUL

I've got to get this wall done so it dries overnight. They're fitting a fuse board tomorrow, don't want them doing it in wet plaster.

They both sit and watch the phone until it stops ringing. PAUL turns his attention back to the plastering and as he does so the phone starts ringing again.

CUT TO:

70

**INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. NIGHT 12. 18:50.**

EDDIE, NICOLA, MAYA and JOE sit side by side with more 'RESERVED' seats beside them on the front row. They are early but the hall is slowly filling behind them.

NICOLA

For the first time today I felt like it might be okay here. The job. You know. It's helping.

EDDIE

That's a coincidence. For the first time today I thought this is never going to work.

NICOLA

That's unfortunate.

EDDIE

Thank you for your heartfelt sympathy.

(TURNING AROUND)

And here he comes. Unfather Christmas.

NICOLA turns to see MAURICE looking for his seat, making his way to the front, alarmed to see LOUISE sitting over the aisle from him with RALPH beside her. She nods in greeting. He gives a strained smile. EDDIE is on his phone.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(ON PHONE)

Alison? You've got ten minutes.

We've saved seats at the front.

Maya is going to sit with Joe.

We're not sure it's his thing. Is it like Pingu at all?

CUT TO:

71

**INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT 12.**  
**18:59.**

REBECCA as ANTIGONE with LUKE as CREON. TOM peering out of the gap in the curtains to check on the audience.

TOM

We're a hit! We're a hit! Rumours of a transfer to Barrow In Furness!

REBECCA

Did you see my Mum and Dad?

TOM

All I saw was my public, darling.

TOM exits.

LUKE

Good luck.

REBECCA

And you.

LUKE

And if anybody mentions an opening  
night party, say, "No".

REBECCA

No. Really?

LUKE

My Mum and Dad are away for the  
night. We can . . .

REBECCA smiles but is a little thrown by this, a half smile  
and the DRAMA TEACHER is giving them the nod as REBECCA as  
ANTIGONE and ELLA as ISMENE take their first positions.

CUT TO:

72

INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. NIGHT 12. 19:00.

The curtain opens to find REBECCA on stage with ELLA. We look  
down at the audience and she marks MAURICE, EDDIE, NICOLA,  
MAYA with JOE in headphones and the two empty seats next to  
them still with reserved signs on them.

REBECCA

(AS ANTIGONE)

Ismene listen. The same blood flows  
in both our veins, doesn't it, my  
sister, the blood of Oedipus.

At the worst possible moment PAUL enters and sneaks into his  
seat, disturbing others, almost putting REBECCA off her  
stride.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

(AS ANTIGONE)

And suffering, which was his  
destiny, is our punishment too. . .

CUT TO:

73

INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. NIGHT 12. 19:35.

REBECCA is doing her big exchange with LUKE as CREON. JOE is on EDDIE's knee now and wriggling free and, when he finally manages it, lying on the floor.

LUKE

(AS CREON)

You are quite mistaken. None of the Thebans anywhere in the city thinks as you do.

REBECCA

(AS ANTIGONE)

They all do! But they keep their mouths shut when you're here!

CUT TO:

74

INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. NIGHT 12. 20:25.

REBECCA being led away to her death as Antigone. JOE, on the spare seat, is bent over watching the action between his legs. A lot of the audience nearby are now watching JOE rather than the onstage action. A glance from REBECCA onstage indicates she is aware of this.

REBECCA

(AS ANTIGONE)

I am the last of the royal blood, a daughter of kings. And I die *his* victim, Unjustly, for upholding justice and the humanity of humankind.

CUT TO:

75

INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. NIGHT 12. 20:30.

The end of the play. The CAST take a bow. Everybody applauds, including JOE, although he is also jumping up and down and gripping the front of the stage.

The cast take another bow, PAUL overcompensating by standing as REBECCA comes forward. This shames MAURICE, EDDIE and MAYA into doing the same, NICOLA stays seated despite a couple of sideways looks from EDDIE. At that moment ALISON can be seen just entering at the back of the hall and mouthing, 'Sorry' to REBECCA who looks away . . .

JOE has now scrambled on to the stage and is holding REBECCA's hand and bowing . . .

CUT TO:

76

INT. WORDSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL. HALL. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT 12.  
20:35.

REBECCA and LUKE kiss passionately.

LUKE

You are going to come round later,  
aren't you?

REBECCA

My family want to celebrate my  
brilliance, so, sorry, you know . . .

.

LUKE

So make an excuse.

He kisses her as TOM comes down the corridor.

TOM

Get a room, Ladies. It's what  
Sophocles would have wanted.

They pull apart and we . . .

CUT TO:

77

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 12. 20:55.

MAURICE is pouring drinks. In the corner JOE has found a way to get a mini DVD player out and is engrossed in a DVD (TBC).

There is a huge Chinese takeaway spread out on the table. ALISON has cornered REBECCA but she isn't giving anything back.

ALISON

I will be there tomorrow night.  
Wild horses couldn't keep me away.

REBECCA

Great.

ALISON

Is this about Joe? Your Dad said he  
was a bit of a nightmare.

REBECCA

(OUTRAGED)

No! It isn't about Joe! It's about  
you! You could have been there and  
you weren't. And that's really  
shit, Mum.

REBECCA looks at the floor and blinks away her tears.

ALISON

Love. Listen. I had to go and see Maggie. About Joe. It couldn't wait. I thought you'd be grown up enough to understand that.

REBECCA can't quite believe that she is somehow getting the blame for not being understanding. She's about to reply but PAUL has overheard and . . .

PAUL

You went to see Maggie? When did we decide this?

MAURICE raises a glass.

MAURICE

Not every day you discover your granddaughter is EVEN more talented than you already thought she was.

REBECCA smiles weakly as NICOLA crosses to REBECCA.

NICOLA

You were brilliant. Pained. Angry. But not stupid angry like you can be in real life.

REBECCA nods but doesn't reply, still upset.

EDDIE

(LAUGHING)

Rebecca. A tip. Don't ask Nicola unless you want the unvarnished truth!

EDDIE and NICOLA move away.

REBECCA, abandoned, is lost in reading her texts again, JOE next to her, her hand absentmindedly tapping his hand as part of a game while she reads a text.

INSERT: "Where are you?"

REBECCA, smiling to herself, will steer JOE towards the food and slip out of the kitchen having lifted a bottle of prosecco.

PAUL is following ALISON down the food, both helping themselves. MAURICE meanwhile finds himself next to NICOLA, looking insecure.

PAUL

MAURICE

What did you say to her? Am I Job going okay?  
allowed to know.

ALISON

What does it matter? She's not coming back.

NICOLA

Oh. Yes. The joys of being a Practice Nurse.

PAUL

And you made sure of that, I'm sure.

MAURICE

Do you get access to everybody's medical records.

ALISON

I swallowed my pride to talk to her. But she's got this bloody bullying thing going and I couldn't change her mind.

NICOLA

I suppose so. As long as I'm still working there. Why? What do you want to know. (SMILES) I made a joke, Maurice.

But MAURICE just looks uneasy.

PAUL

No matter how hard you banged her head on the desk. I can't believe you went to see her without telling me.

We start to hear JOE's music bleeding into the conversation. And we see this more and more from JOE's POV. The song - 'Rip it Up' by Orange Juice.

ORANGE JUICE

"When I first saw you something stirred within me,  
You were standing sultry in the rain."

ALISON

What would have been the point of telling you?

MAURICE

So you are thinking of leaving already?

PAUL

There doesn't have to be a point. I'm his Dad. I won't have you running this thing as though he's all yours to change . . .

NICOLA

I'm a G.P. Maurice. I'm overqualified. Like Eddie.

MAURICE

Not sure Eddie is overqualified for anything.

NICOLA

Well, you keep talking like that and you make sure he feels that way.

ALISON

Anyone would think you thought I was a bully.

PAUL

No. Not exactly.

As the voices are raised music starts to emerge and as the POV becomes JOE's the music starts to get louder, JOE singing along.

ALISON

Not exactly! Well, maybe our boy  
needs a bully out there fighting  
his corner.

JOE

(SINGING)

"Rip it up and start again.  
Rip it up and start again."

PAUL

I will not be the one outside up a  
ladder!

ALISON

What?

MAURICE

He keeps saying that.

PAUL

Joe needs a champion. That's not  
the same thing as a bully.

ALISON

So I am a bully!

PAUL

Yes! Yes! You are!

JOE

(SINGING)

"I said rip it up and rip it up,  
rip it up and rip it up, rip it up  
and start again."

MAURICE pops a champagne cork.

MAURICE

Can we just pipe down and toast  
Rebecca?

PAUL

Sure. If you can tell me where she  
is?

CUT TO:

78

**EXT. LUKE'S HOUSE. NIGHT 12. 21:00.**

REBECCA on LUKE's doorstep, clutching the nicked prosecco. LUKE opens the doors, smiles. REBECCA steps inside and we...

CUT TO:

79

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 12. 21:01.**

PAUL looks at ALISON, ALISON looks at PAUL.

JOE

Rip It Up by Orange Juice. Written  
by Edwyn Stephen Collins. 1982.

MAURICE looks around at a bunch of alienated adults, JOE puts his headphones back on . . .

END OF EPISODE