

# The A Word

**Episode Six**  
**SHOOTING SCRIPT – WITH AMENDMENTS**

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1 EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. ROAD. DAY 21. 07:35.

JOE walks along an empty road. Headphones on. Under his arm is a small plastic duck.

We hear the opening chords of 'In Between Days' by The Cure (TBC). As we come closer we are aware that JOE is singing along to the song in his headphones.

## THE CURE

"Yesterday I got so old  
I felt like I could die  
Yesterday I got so old  
It made me want to cry  
Go on, go on, just walk away  
Go on, go on your choice is made."

The sound of a car horn interrupts. He looks straight ahead and sees DAVID and PAVEL waiting, smiling at him. JOE remains poker faced.

CUT TO:

2 INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 07:50.

PAUL in the gastropub, sleeping, the crack of dawn.

He has clearly been sleeping here all night in his sleeping bag on a camp bed. On the floor next to him is the concrete floor polisher, paint, rags.

The floor is half polished concrete, half timbered. The plaster walls painted. The mezzanine and the staircase up to it are visible but a plastic black and yellow strip bars the way to the stairs.

The bar is in place but the pumps and taps not yet fitted so bottles and wine and glasses, etc.

PAUL stirs as he hears keys in the lock. Looks up, bleary-eyed, and SALLY is entering. She's surprised to see him.

## PAUL

Somebody's keen.

## SALLY

Says the man who's slept here all night.

PAUL stands, in old T shirt and trackie bottoms, taking in his surroundings by the early morning light.

## SALLY (CONT'D)

Are we ready?

PAUL  
(NOTICING A TINY GAP IN  
THE PAINTWORK)  
We will be . . .

There's a tiny patch of plaster that has been missed around a light fitting. PAUL picks up a small tin of emulsion as SALLY checks out the mezzanine. PAUL's phone rings. He ignores it and we . . .

CUT TO:

3 OMITTED

4 EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 21. 07:51.

ALISON is at the door waiting, phone to her ear as JOE is dropped off by DAVID and PAVEL. She raises a hand in greeting and thanks. Her tone is friendly, lighthearted, clearly leaving a message.

ALISON  
(ON PHONE)  
We'll be there as soon as we can  
with flowers so you can't avoid me  
forever! You're going to be  
knackered. I love you!

She heads into the house, letting the waiting JOE do his door thing behind her.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 21. 08:15.

MAURICE, in suit and tie, stands outside Louise's house. He has been standing there a long time. He raises his hand to knock on the door but can't do so.

Paralysed by fear. He turns, and heads back to his car, cursing himself at his own cowardice.

CUT TO:

6 INT. HUGHES HOUSE. HALL. DAY 21. 08:30.

ALISON heading up the stairs.

ALISON  
(SHOUTING)  
I hope you're getting a move on,  
Joe!

CUT TO:

7

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. JOE'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 08:31.

ALISON looks in Joe's room and discovers an empty but clearly slept in bed, his pyjamas neatly stacked.

ALISON

Joe?

CUT TO:

8

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. REBECCA'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 08:32.

Rebecca's room. A bombsite. No Rebecca. But standing in the middle of the debris is JOE, staring, puzzled at her unmade bed.

ALISON

What you doing in here? Come on!  
The sooner you get ready the sooner  
you will see Becky AND your Dad!

She can't help herself, picks up a discarded towel, steers JOE by the hand, but can't help noticing family photos that Rebecca has cut up and turned into a montage. Paul, a younger Joe, a younger Rebecca, a younger Alison . . . and recently added, a photo of Rebecca, Stuart and Baby Ella.

CUT TO:

9

OMITTED

10

OMITTED

10A

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 10:30.

PAUL, dressed in his smart clothes now, stands with SALLY for a few moments taking in the gastropub. This is it. This is the day. Tense as he is, he still allows himself a small smile. He is going to enjoy this just for a moment.

SALLY

Happy?

PAUL

Well, let's not get carried away.

As they both stare up at the finished gastropub, GARY arrives from round the side (having parked up there unseen) and is clearly about to speak. PAUL holds up his hand to stop him.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I know we've got a hundred things  
to do Gary, but just let me have  
this. All right?

GARY  
(WITHOUT BREAKING STRIDE)  
Hundred and one. The potwasher just  
called in sick.

PAUL turns, the moment gone. He looks out towards the Diner  
and sees the awning slowly rising, like the spaceship door in  
Close Encounters . . .

11

EXT. DAFFODIL DINER. DAY 21. 10:34.

PAUL stands by TERRY as, to PAUL's bemusement, TERRY is  
rubbing down the Diner with a cloth.

TERRY  
(OF THE DINER)  
I want her looking her best for her  
special day.

PAUL  
You're not opening today.  
(NODS TOWARDS GASTROPUB)  
You're needed up the hill.

TERRY  
Alison said we were opening. Did  
she not tell you?

PAUL  
No. I'm not exactly on speaking  
terms with her at the moment.

TERRY  
(WORRIED)  
Right. Hopefully, that's nothing  
you want to talk about, is it . . .

PAUL sees Stuart's car pull up, a distance away. STUART,  
REBECCA and BABY ELLA inside.

CUT TO:

12

INT/EXT. STUART'S CAR/THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 10:35.

STUART, looking less smooth than last we saw him, in fact  
looking frazzled, as REBECCA sits in the back talking to her  
half-sister, baby ELLA.

REBECCA  
(WAVING A RATTLY TOY)  
Look at this Ella. Isn't this  
lovely?

STUART

Becky. Just leave her will you. If you ignore her long enough she'll go to sleep. Please. For me. Will you just do that? Yeah?

(UNDER HIS BREATH)

Jesus Christ.

REBECCA's feelings are hurt but she tries not to show it.

STUART (CONT'D)

You'd better get going, eh. Don't want to fall out with your Mum and Dad.

REBECCA

Bit late for that.

REBECCA now leans in on baby ELLA.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

'bye, lovely sister. See you next Saturday! Yes. I will. Yes. I will.

STUART

Rebecca. Love. Next Saturday. It probably isn't great for us. We've got people coming and the boys are having friends for a sleepover.

REBECCA

Oh. Right. Well, all hands on deck then! I get it. I'm more practical than I look!

STUART

The thing is, love. And you'll find this out soon enough when you have kids of your own. Thing is, when you have a young baby in the house . . . It's just, well, if people turn up without warning . . . it can be a bit, you know . . .

REBECCA

"People" Sure, yeah. I get it. I'm "people".

STUART

Don't make it tough for me, Becky. You can see how I'm fixed. Four kids and a 'missus mainlining hormones.

REBECCA

You've got five kids, Dad. Five.

STUART

Come on. You know what I mean.  
I'm not saying don't come. I'm just  
saying . . .

He falls into an uneasy silence.

STUART (CONT'D)

I bet they need you at home, don't  
they? With that brother of yours!

REBECCA

Not really. He's just a kid. A  
normal kid.

REBECCA, as she leaves the car, nicks a toy rubber snake discarded by another of Stuart's kids. PAUL has approached the car unseen by STUART and bangs on the car roof, all false brightness and optimism.

PAUL

Thanks for dropping her off,  
Stuart!

STUART winds down his window.

STUART

(AS SPORTING AS HE CAN  
MAKE IT)

Hiya, Paul. Good luck.

PAUL holds his arms outstretched.

PAUL

Looking good, hey? Fancy a quick  
drink and a bite while you're here?  
All free and gratis for nothing.

STUART

(DRIVING AWAY)

Not really. Bit of a rush . . .

PAUL smiles to himself and turns to find REBECCA has been watching this. He feels a bit sheepish for his triumphalism. PAUL puts his arm around REBECCA who is carrying the toy snake.

PAUL

Can you do me a favour today, love.  
Can you keep an eye on Joe? And if  
he's being . . . you know . . . a  
bit, can you calm him down or maybe  
take him somewhere for a play?

REBECCA

(WALKING OFF)

If he's embarrassing us I'll lock  
him in a cupboard somewhere, sure.

PAUL

That isn't what I'm saying and you know it.

REBECCA

(TURNING)

Why do parents always worry about their kids showing them up when it's them that's the embarrassing ones?

PAUL feels shit about what he has just said as they head inside.

TERRY catches up with them, having closed the Diner.

TERRY

So what do you need me for? Sous chef?

PAUL

Sort of . . .

CUT TO:

13

**INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 11:00.**

TERRY with GARY, next to a sink full of washing up. GARY has prepped stuff at his station. PAUL checking the order.

Through the serving hatch we see NICOLA in the main part of gastropub loading the fridge behind the bar.

GARY is finishing briefing TERRY.

GARY

And never walk backwards in a kitchen. If you're carrying something behind people you always yell, "Backs!"

TERRY

Backs!

GARY

I'm liking it Terry, quick on the uptake. Chief Potwasher in no time.

TERRY

I'm actually a fully qualified barista mate. Online course but even so . . .

TERRY starts cleaning anyway as GARY systematically works his way through the food deliveries.

GARY

(TO PAUL)

You're going to need to ring the supplier about the leaves. I've seen more life in a Pharoah's dick.

ALISON

(APPEARING AT SERVING HATCH)

Remind me why they turned you down for Saturday Kitchen again, Gary?

PAUL turns to see ALISON, all smiles. Him not so. GARY carries on checking the food. ALISON is determinedly cheerful.

ALISON (CONT'D)

(TO PAUL)

What shall we talk about first? You sleeping here last night or you ignoring my calls this morning?

PAUL

(UNSMILING)

How about ice and lemon. Always the little things you forget.

ALISON

Gary doesn't mind. Do you Gary? I'm sure he's heard worse.

PAUL rescued by MAURICE putting his head into the kitchen.

MAURICE

Have you any idea what temperature Eddie is keeping the Indian Pale Ale at? One degree either way and it tastes like Tonto's head band.

PAUL heads out with MAURICE.

PAUL

Why don't you ask, Eddie?

CONTINUOUS:

14

#### INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 11:02.

PAUL enters the main area from kitchen with MAURICE. ALISON starts unpacking vases and flowers. NICOLA is doing her best to move the cold beers to the front of the fridge and the warmer ones to the back . . . For reasons not clear JOE is wearing workman's yellow hearing protectors and swinging the toy snake that Rebecca has given him around. As PAUL and MAURICE talk, ALISON crosses and takes JOE's hearing protectors away. MAURICE nods towards the hill outside that EDDIE is coming down.

MAURICE

I would. But he's only just coming down from his call. Must have been important, hey Nicola, to get our Eddie going up a hill.

He looks at NICOLA who shrugs.

PAUL

Well, unless he comes in here with the Ten Commandments then he's due a bollocking.

MAURICE nods towards the black and yellow tape barring the stairs.

MAURICE

Joe's going to be here all the time, is he? You think that's wise. (OF THE TAPED AREA) You're not leaving that like that, are you?

ALISON

You not liking the Hacienda vibe, Dad? We've got a velvet rope. Don't worry. Rebecca? I want three different colours in each vase and a vase on each table. Joe can help you. Yes?

MAURICE

Health and Safety'll have his clackerbag in a noose if it stays like that. (BEAT) This floor is fully intentional, is it? The unfinished look?

PAUL looks at the half and half floor.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

It's not a criticism.

EDDIE

(ENTERING)

It never is.

NICOLA

At last.

EDDIE smiles and mouths, "Sorry".

MAURICE

I just thought it might be a feature. Modern. You know.

EDDIE

I love the way you say "modern" the way other people say "sewage."

(MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(TO PAUL)

I think your floor's come up  
brilliantly, mate. Thematically  
consistent.

MAURICE has gone through the yellow tape and is mounting the stairs to the unfinished mezzanine, checking the workmanship.

PAUL

The theme being, "We need to open  
before we run out of money."

ALISON gives JOE a vase of flowers to carry to a table.

MAURICE

(FROM MEZZANINE)

Joe could get up here no problem.  
Just saying . . .

PAUL

(EXASPERATED)

But he's not up there, is he? You  
are. You come through that,  
Maurice, and we'll bury you where  
you stand. (BEAT) Dead or alive.

At that moment JOE drops the vase just short of the table.

ALISON

Okay. Don't panic. Rebecca. Pan and  
brush. That storage cupboard.

MAURICE says nothing in a way that says everything. He heads down from the mezzanine and hands JOE a silver tray. PAUL heads into the kitchen.

MAURICE

Joe. You just stand there like a  
soldier and when people give you a  
glass bring it over to the bar. . .

JOE stands bolt upright with the tray, puts the toy snake on it.

ALISON

Dad! He doesn't need supervising.  
He's just excited to see Rebecca  
again. He'll be fine.

MAURICE shrugs, "Have it your own way." JOE has rolled the silver tray across the floor on its edge because who wouldn't? ALISON turns to REBECCA as she starts to pick up the pieces from the vase.

ALISON (CONT'D)

I brought you that dress I got you  
that you never wear.

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

Don't look like that. You look  
lovely in it. You can change in the  
loo.

ALISON hands REBECCA a dress in a clothes shop bag and takes the pan and brush from her. REBECCA heads for the toilet. JOE follows her - does the door thing as she goes in.

An anxious glance from ALISON caught by MAURICE. PAUL comes out from the kitchen with a tray of finger food, positive, excited.

PAUL

Here we go. Finger food preview!  
Cod brandade with squid ink  
crackers. Pine nut and cucumber  
granitas.

NICOLA

Delicious.

MAURICE

(DISMISSIVE)

Have you not got anything that's  
actually looked over a fence?

MAURICE takes a glass of beer from the counter. Has a sip.  
Smacks his lips in approval.

EDDIE

You getting it, Dad? The lemony  
tones?

MAURICE

What does it matter to you anyway?  
I thought you were leaving.

NICOLA puts her arm around EDDIE and smiles.

NICOLA

He's changed his mind.

MAURICE

Have you? Good. 'cos this tastes  
better than Debbie Harry's bath  
water. (A CONSPIRATORIAL WINK TO  
NICOLA) 'Parallel Lines' tour.  
Lancaster Town Hall. Don't ask. . .

NICOLA covers her ears as a joke as MAURICE walks away. EDDIE looks concerned. NICOLA catches it. JOE, unnoticed, has gone into the kitchen.

NICOLA

What?

EDDIE

The phone call.

NICOLA

What?

EDDIE

I've been offered the job. In  
Manchester. (BEAT) And I've  
accepted it.

NICOLA

What? Eddie? You've what?

EDDIE

It's exciting. For both of us. It's  
the right thing. I know it. And I  
think deep down you do too.

EDDIE starts to line some more bottles on the bar. NICOLA  
looks bewildered.

CUT TO:

15

**INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 11:06.**

GARY hard at it, as TERRY moves behind him with a pile of  
pots.

TERRY

Backs!

In the middle of this organised chaos, JOE has suddenly  
appeared, watching.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Child!

MAURICE enters, to witness this.

MAURICE

Joe. Come on! What you doing in  
here?

MAURICE crosses to JOE and we . . .

CUT TO:

16

**INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 11:11.**

ALISON is talking to a smartly turned out TOM who's just  
arrived. REBECCA comes out of the toilet wearing a dress she  
would never choose herself - not terrible but just a bit too  
sweet.

ALISON

You see an empty glass, you fill  
it, right?

(TURNING TO REBECCA)

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)  
See. Perfect. You look lovely.  
Aren't I right, Tom?

REBECCA  
(TO TOM)  
Don't say a word.

ALISON turns to find MAURICE and JOE and PAUL standing together.

MAURICE  
You can have a great launch or you can have Joe here. You can't have both. I have to nip out for a bit. Why don't I take Joe with me? Let you get up and running.

ALISON  
He's part of the family. He should be here.

PAUL  
(IMMEDIATE)  
Maurice. That would be great. I never thought he should be here. Thank you.

ALISON accepting this. MAURICE exits with JOE (who's got his headphones and the toy snake). ALISON turns to PAUL and pushes his smile upwards with her fingers.

ALISON  
Hold that look. You won the argument.

ALISON moves off, busy, cheerful, as PAUL lets the smile drop.

CUT TO:

17

EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 21. 12:00.

MAURICE with JOE. He knocks on the door. He has a hand on JOE's shoulder. He has an air of uncertain certainty. As though he is doing an impression of a confident man. Just before the door is answered he leans down and takes JOE's headphones off. JOE has the nicked toy snake that REBECCA gave him. MAURICE has his Louise greeting face ready but is surprised when RALPH answers the door. He takes a moment to adjust.

MAURICE  
Ralph, isn't it? I'm Maurice. This is Joe.

RALPH  
Did Mum know you were coming?

MAURICE

No. I, er . . .

LOUISE appears behind RALPH.

RALPH

That man's here again, Mum.

MAURICE

Louise. This is Joe. Joe. This is Louise.

LOUISE

Hello, Joe. Pleased to meet you.

JOE doesn't really respond, puts his headphones back on, RALPH has gone back inside.

CUT TO:

18

**INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 12:05.**

RALPH makes a blackcurrant drink for JOE. JOE sits at the table, headphones on.

MAURICE

The gastropub is opening today.  
"Soft opening" they call it. When it's not finished, like.

LOUISE

I know.

MAURICE

So thought if you fancy it, and Ralph of course. Plenty to drink.  
Finger food. (HE'S DYING HERE)  
Squid crackers. Pine nuts that have been interfered with . . .

LOUISE

I don't think so . . .

RALPH

There you go, Joe.

MAURICE

Hey, lads. You'll be all right for five minutes, won't you? Two lads together, hey? While Louise and me go and have a chat? Be all right, won't they?

LOUISE

Doesn't sound like me that needs convincing.

RALPH

He wants you to go and talk to him,  
Mum.

RALPH sits down with his drink opposite JOE, gets out his phone and checks it. JOE takes a biscuit. LOUISE looks at MAURICE. She has no choice.

CUT TO:

19

**INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 12:18.**

REBECCA - in the kind of dress that her Mum loves and she hates - is giving out drinks, along with TOM. To REBECCA's horror LUKE has just arrived with his Mum, JANINE. REBECCA stands with her tray and he takes a glass, both of them wishing they were somewhere else.

LUKE

Nice dress.

REBECCA

You're here with your Mum so let's leave the dress out of it.

REBECCA turns to PAUL, eyes closed in horror.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Who invited Luke?

PAUL

His Mum must be on our mailing list.

REBECCA

Nightmare.

She turns to see LUKE fiddling self-consciously with his phone. PAUL sees him drinking alcohol.

PAUL

(WITH RELISH)

Luke. Sorry, son. You're underage.  
Got my licence to think of. I'll get you some squash.

LUKE puts his drink down. Looks a bit bewildered and heads for the exit. REBECCA watches him go, looks at PAUL, daggers.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What?

REBECCA gives PAUL the tray of drinks and follows LUKE out.

CUT TO:

20

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 12:20.

LUKE strides away full of adolescent fury. REBECCA comes chasing after him.

REBECCA

Luke! Stop!

LUKE

(TURNING)

I only came to see you. I didn't want to come to some poncey restaurant in the first place!

REBECCA

It's a gastropub. Not a restaurant.  
Why did you want to see me?

LUKE hands her a piece of A4 with writing on it.

LUKE

I wrote this. For you. (WALKING AWAY) You probably won't be seeing me much anymore.

LUKE carries on walking, texting as he goes. REBECCA slowly unfolds the poem and starts to read. And as she does so she starts to smile . . .

CUT TO:

21

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 12:25.

MAURICE and LOUISE sit side by side.

MAURICE

You were right.

LOUISE

About what?

MAURICE

About Joe. And your lad. You were right.

LOUISE

Oh. Well. Yes. I know that already.

MAURICE

But I'm saying it now. And having lads who are a bit . . . bit different. Well, grandson in my case. Well . . . so we've got that in common for starters.

LOUISE

Maurice. You're a lovely man.

MAURICE

Well, I wouldn't go that far . . .

LOUISE

No.

MAURICE

I know I can go in a bit two footed from time to time. And I'm not saying we're going to be cavorting on the side of Derwent Water - not without a flask and knee bandages at any rate but I wouldn't mind, you know, knocking around with you

. . .

LOUISE

When was the last time you asked a woman out, Maurice?

MAURICE

I didn't really ask Sandra out. We found ourselves snogging at a club when the lights came up.

LOUISE

Ah, yes, you can't beat musical tongues.

MAURICE

(TRYING TO LIGHTEN THINGS UP)

Like an arranged marriage but with a glitter ball. (BEAT) Is that offensive to Muslims? I don't know what you can and (can't say these days) . . .

LOUISE

(INTERRUPTING)

The thing is I can't be doing with strong emotion, Maurice.

MAURICE

Right.

LOUISE

Got enough of my own. And you strike me as a man who feels everything strongly. Even if you're not sure what it is you're feeling.

MAURICE

So are you saying, "Yes" or "No"? Are we on or not?

LOUISE looks at MAURICE, disbelieving.

LOUISE

Maurice. I've just said, "No" in as many ways as I can (think of and) -

RALPH (O.S.)

Mum! Mum!

LOUISE gets up and heads into the kitchen. MAURICE, suddenly tense, follows her.

CONTINUOUS:

22

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 12:28.

MAURICE enters and finds LOUISE and RALPH and no sign of JOE.

RALPH

He was in the garden. And then Joe wasn't.

MAURICE looks at the open back door and heads out into the garden. We go with him.

LOUISE (O.S.)

When was this, Ralph? When did it happen? When did he go outside?

RALPH (O.S.)

I don't know. I made him another drink.

CONTINUOUS:

23

EXT. LOUISE'S GARDEN. DAY 21. 12:29.

MAURICE looks in the empty garden. The gate open at the end.

MAURICE

Joe! Joe! Joe!

He goes to the end of the garden and looks out at the road. Nothing. The street is completely deserted. He races on . . . .

CUT TO:

24

EXT. CONISTON ROAD/LAKE PATH. DAY 21. 12:32.

MAURICE running down a road. An open gate. He turns, looks inside a garden. Nothing.

MAURICE

Joe! Joe!

He runs on again. A road splits. He has no idea which fork to take. Goes along the lake path.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Joe!

MAURICE sees a couple of hikers walking towards him.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Have you seen a little lad? Coming along here? Have you seen him?

The HIKERS shake their heads, "No". MAURICE turns, doubles back.

CUT TO:

25

EXT. CONISTON PATH. DAY 21. 12:35.

A different empty path. An empty landscape.

MAURICE

Joe!

MAURICE stares out, tries to get his bearings, tries to work out where JOE would have gone. And the more he looks, the more impossible it seems to be able to guess.

CUT TO:

26

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 12:40.

LOUISE is standing opposite RALPH. MAURICE races back inside, urgent, terrified, intimidating, up in RALPH's face.

MAURICE

Where did he go? Which way did he go?

RALPH

He went outside.

MAURICE

(FRANTIC)

I know he fucking went outside.  
Where did he go when he went outside!

LOUISE

Maurice! Stop shouting at the lad.  
You're scaring him.

MAURICE

I'll scare him if he's done anything to Joe.

LOUISE

You what! Get out! Don't talk to my son like that!

MAURICE calms down a beat, trying to calm her down because he needs so badly to talk to RALPH.

MAURICE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Son. Can you just remember what happened?

RALPH

He went into the garden.

MAURICE

And where were you?

RALPH

Making him a drink. In here.

MAURICE

And you went out and he'd gone! You didn't see anything? Hear anything.

LOUISE

Just calm down. Think about it. Joe goes wandering off. You said so yourself. Now, will he have gone home?

MAURICE

Not from here. I wouldn't have thought so.

LOUISE

What about back to the gastropub?

MAURICE

You're right. He was enjoying himself. I'll drive back to the gastropub. Bet that's where he is.

LOUISE

So why don't you just ring Alison and ask her?

MAURICE

'cos he'll be there, won't he. And if he's not there he'll be on the road and she'll worry and they've got enough to worry about. So I'll find him, you know, and no harm done.

MAURICE trying to convince himself more than LOUISE. He dashes out into the car.

CUT TO:

27

**EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 12:45.**

Round a corner of the gastropub, in a secluded spot, REBECCA shows NICOLA the poem that Luke has written. She is excited as NICOLA reads it.

REBECCA  
(EXCITED)  
It's good, isn't it?

NICOLA  
It's very good. Yes. And it was  
very good when Simon Armitage wrote  
it.

REBECCA  
What? No. Luke wrote it.

NICOLA  
Luke wrote it out, Rebecca. That  
isn't the same as writing it.

REBECCA  
No way.

REBECCA takes the poem, reads a bit with a proprietorial glow  
. . . the poem MUST be about her.

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
"But said some things and never  
meant them -  
sweet nothings anybody could have  
mentioned . . ."

Without looking at the sheet of paper, NICOLA continues, word perfect.

NICOLA  
"And left unsaid some things he  
should have spoken,  
about the heart, where it hurt  
exactly, and how often." (BEAT)  
Someone gave that poem to me too  
once.

REBECCA  
(DEFLATED)  
Oh. Right. Eddie?

NICOLA  
No. Not Eddie.

REBECCA absorbs this, looks down at the poem.

REBECCA

Come to think of it, I'm not even  
sure this is his handwriting.

CUT TO:

28

**INT/EXT. MAURICE'S CAR/LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. DAY 21. 12:47.**

MAURICE is driving along the lake road. Looking around.  
Anxious now. Talking to himself.

MAURICE

Come on, Joe. Come on. Next corner.  
Next corner . . .

MAURICE travels round a bend in the road and all he sees is another empty landscape ahead. He steadies himself, deep breaths, drives on . . . stares at his phone on the seat beside him. No. He isn't going to ring. He is going to find Joe.

CUT TO:

29

**INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 12:50.**

Busy and full. There are people standing round drinking, others at the table working their way through sample menus . . . TOM, NICOLA, PAUL circulating with drinks, etc, then PAUL notices REBECCA on her phone. EDDIE behind bar.

REBECCA

(INTO PHONE)

Just so you know. I know you didn't write that poem. It's fake. Like you! Like when I pretended to come. As fake as that! Enjoy the rest of your life!

PAUL arrives, his anxiety making him more fierce than intended.

PAUL

You can't be on your phone! Not in here! All right.

REBECCA

(HANDING HIM THE PHONE)

I won't need it ever again anyway.

REBECCA takes a tray from the bar and starts to circulate. PAUL looks at her. Sorry again.

PAUL

Rebecca, I didn't mean . . .

He looks slightly bewildered, stressed. He frowns as he notices a PUNTER leaving some food. ALISON appears beside him.

ALISON

You are allowed to enjoy this, you know.

PAUL

(SERIOUS)

I'll enjoy it when we start taking money.

ALISON

Outside. For one minute only.

PAUL

I can't spare a minute. I can't spare a second.

ALISON leans in very close to him, cups the back of his neck with her hand as though to pull him in for a kiss.

ALISON

I can say it in here. Or I can say it outside. But I'm going to say it either way . . .

ALISON looks at PAUL. She means it.

CUT TO:

30

**EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 12:53.**

As PAUL steps outside ALISON grabs him and kisses him, passionately this time.

ALISON

There. Now. You and me are in the middle of thirty shades of crap right now.

PAUL

I won't argue with that.

ALISON

And I lied to you about the morning after pill and you lied to me about how having Joe really made you feel. And I hurt you and you hurt me. I know that much . . .

PAUL

(GRIM)

As pep talks go this is (right up there) . . .

ALISON

(INTERRUPTING)

Shut up before I kiss you again. I love you Paul Hughes. And you love me. And maybe if I hadn't talked you out of that tattoo you wanted done at Blackpool that time then I wouldn't have to say any of this outloud. I could have just pointed to that mermaid with our names written on her breasts and you'd have known what I meant.

PAUL smiles, melts a little.

PAUL

Okay.

ALISON fixes him with her gaze.

ALISON

We can sort this out. All right. We can sort anything out. You and me. Do you believe me?

PAUL

Yes. I believe you. (BEAT) But that doesn't mean it's sorted out.

ALISON

No. I know that. But for now. For today. Buck your ideas up and get back in there with a smile. Because we're going to make this work. The restaurant. Me. You. Joe. Rebecca. All of it. Because we always have and we always will. All right?

PAUL

(ACCEPTING)

Yes. Thanks.

ALISON

Now get back in there and make the speech of your life.

PAUL

Speech? There aren't going to be any speeches.

ALISON is already on her way inside.

CUT TO:

31

INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 12:55.

PAUL follows ALISON back in. EDDIE is returning glasses to the bar. NICOLA is waiting. He tries to busy himself but she isn't having it.

NICOLA

I don't think there's an appropriate moment to discuss this.

EDDIE

Maybe not. But there's an inappropriate moment - and it's now.

NICOLA

I'm late.

EDDIE

Why would you want to stay here?  
You haven't even got a proper job.  
And all I get is heartache and  
(earache) -

NICOLA

(INTERRUPTING)

I'm late.

EDDIE

For what? I thought I was the one who was late.

NICOLA

I wish I hadn't started this now.  
My period's late.

EDDIE

Your period's never late. That's one of the reasons I fell in love with you.

NICOLA

I know. I think I might be pregnant. That's why I don't want to move.

EDDIE can barely process this. ALISON taps a spoon on the side of a glass.

ALISON

Can we have a bit of quiet please,  
Ladies and Gentlemen. While mein host says a few words!

CUT TO:

32

INT/EXT. MAURICE'S CAR/ROAD TO GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 12:57.

MAURICE, driving at speed, looking around either side of the road for signs of Joe, his heart really sinking now.

CUT TO:

33

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 12:59.

MAURICE parks his car and runs towards the gastropub. He can hear PAUL making a speech from outside. He rushes inside. . .

PAUL (O.S.)

I told my wife - Alison - I wasn't going to make any speeches. But for those of you who know Alison you won't be surprised to see me standing up here right now doing just that.

Some laughter.

CONTINUOUS:

34

INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 13:00.

MAURICE enters. PAUL is standing on a chair. He looks around, more frantically now, for signs of Joe. ALISON notices him looking around the room, something troubling but not enough yet.

PAUL

I started off with a book called, 'How to start and run your own Gastropub' and here we are, nine months later - with a kitchen, twenty tables - a launch and I still haven't read that bloody book.

ALISON

It shows!

MAURICE side by side with REBECCA now, who is smiling and watching PAUL make his speech.

MAURICE

Have you seen Joe?

REBECCA

(PUZZLED)

I thought he was with you.

MAURICE makes his way towards ALISON. As PAUL carries on, MAURICE is talking to ALISON.

PAUL

So thank you for coming. And if you had a good time and think the food is top then go and tell your mates and if you aren't having a good time and think the food's shit then, it's free, so you know, keep quiet about it.

PAUL raises his glass.

PAUL (CONT'D)

"The Fellside!"

"The Fellside!" PAUL turns to smile at ALISON but she is locked looking at MAURICE in dismay and horror. She looks across at PAUL and he knows something is very wrong indeed .

..

CUT TO:

35

EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 21. 13:40.

A police car parked outside Louise's house. A couple of NEIGHBOURS stand and stare.

CUT TO:

36

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 13:45.

RALPH and LOUISE sit in silence with a young female PC - PC PLEVIN - who also sits at the table sipping tea and making notes. In the garden, a couple of POLICE OFFICERS can be seen searching. RALPH looks terrified.

CUT TO:

37

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 21. 13:50.

EDDIE and NICOLA park and rush towards the Hughes house where a PC LAING is waiting for them. EDDIE unlocks the door and they go inside and we . . .

CUT TO:

38

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 13:52.

EDDIE looks in the kitchen.

BOB (O.S.)

We've got four officers on foot and  
four patrol cars looking in parks .

• •

CUT TO:

39

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. JOE'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 13:54.

NICOLA looks under Joe's bed.

BOB (O.S.)

. . . and streets within a half  
mile radius of where he went  
missing.

CUT TO:

40

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. REBECCA'S ROOM. DAY 21. 13:55.

EDDIE looks quickly around REBECCA's room.

BOB (O.S.)

First thing you need to know is  
that most . . .

CUT TO:

41

EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DAY 21. 13:56.

EDDIE and NICOLA pick their way through the debris in the  
outbuilding at the end of the house . . .

BOB (O.S.)

. . . five year olds are found  
close by where they are missing.

CUT TO:

41A

EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 13:57.

Two police cars are parked up outside and small groups of  
people hanging about, some arriving, not quite knowing what  
to do but wanting to do something . . .

CUT TO:

42

INT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 13:58.

BOB HERD is sitting at a table, taking details of Joe from  
ALISON, PAUL and REBECCA. MAURICE pacing, slightly unhinged  
by a combination of worry and guilt. A UNIFORMED OFFICER  
taking notes but BOB also recording it on a mobile.

Another table has been commandeered as another UNIFORMED OFFICER is starting to take the names and addresses of some of the EX-LAUNCH ATTENDEES including LINDA and JANINE.

PAUL

Can we just get out there and look!  
What's the point of this? Half  
these people want to be out looking  
for him. What's the hold up?

BOB

Trust me. The last thing we need is  
a posse of well meaning publics  
getting in the way. That's why I've  
got my lad trying to get some  
ground rules in place.

BOB nods towards the OFFICER taking names and phone numbers of volunteers, and giving out a contact number to each of them.

ALISON

(GETTING UP)

I'm going. I've heard enough.

BOB

(PRESSING ON)

Hang on. Alison.

MAURICE

Please, love!

BOB

Let's wait till we hear from your  
home, okay? If he's not there we  
can scale up and sharpish. Believe  
me.

MAURICE

He'll have gone home, won't he?  
'course he will. I bet you.

A glance from ALISON. She sees MAURICE's desperation but she feels no sympathy, instead showing BOB a photo on her phone.

ALISON

This is the most recent one. Took  
it last week.

BOB

(GLANCING AT PHOTO)

Thanks. Let's get that printed off.  
We know what he was wearing.  
Headphones likely as well. Medical  
conditions. You and Maurice both  
said he had a bit of a problem?

Nobody answers for a little too long.

BOB (CONT'D)  
With his hearing?

PAUL looks at ALISON. BOB'S phone goes.

BOB (CONT'D)  
(INTO PHONE)  
Hello? Yes. Yes. Just use a couple  
of 'Hobby Bobbies' to search  
garages and that near the house,  
yes . . .

BOB drifts out of earshot.

PAUL  
We have to tell them, love, you do  
know that.

ALISON  
What did Bob Herd just say? He's  
most likely gone home.

PAUL  
He didn't say that.

ALISON  
If we tell everyone about Joe's  
problems now and then it turns out  
he was at home all along. Just  
think about that. How is that going  
to be for him? The autistic kid who  
went missing for the rest of his  
life.

REBECCA  
Mum's right. I don't want him being  
the village freak.

PAUL  
Maurice? Surely you agree with me?

MAURICE, unusually tentative, catches a searing glance from  
ALISON.

MAURICE  
I don't know.

PAUL  
You don't know? You always know.

ALISON  
Just like you knew he'd be safe  
with Ralph.

MAURICE reels a little but before he can reply BOB returns to  
the table.

BOB

So you say he does do a bit of  
wandering off on his own?

ALISON

Not wandering off exactly. He just  
goes for a walk every morning. Near  
the house.

BOB

Oh his own. At five years old.

PAUL

We knew where he was.

BOB

And where was that?

The phone rings, BOB takes it.

BOB (CONT'D)

Sorry. Guys. Right. Thanks. Yes.  
Yes.

He turns to the family.

BOB (CONT'D)

Joe's not at the house. They've  
searched the gardens and the  
outbuildings and nearby farm  
buildings. We'll step up our  
operation so you need to give the  
volunteers all the details you can.  
It's always better coming from Mum  
and Dad.

PAUL

I'll do that.

ALISON

No. I will. I will.

Out on ALISON, a new resolve.

CUT TO:

43

**EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. DAY 21. 14:10.**

ALISON is standing on the steps of the gastropub. Various VOLUNTEERS and also, by now, PAUL, PAVEL, DAVID, TERRY, GARY. About 20 in all, but including LINDA and other MOTHERS.

MAURICE circulates with hastily printed A4 sheets - a photo of Joe, basic description, contact numbers: "5 years old. Red coat. Headphones on. Went missing from (TBC ADDRESS), Coniston at lunchtime TODAY!"

Will be walking and carrying a toy. Could be on any roads or tracks leading out of town! Please call (TBC NUMBERS) with any sightings or information."

ALISON

For those of you who don't know Joe  
he's . . . well, he's a bit  
different from other five year  
olds.

She catches herself looking at LINDA.

ALISON (CONT'D)

He doesn't always do what you think  
a kid his age might do.

MAURICE looks back at ALISON.

BOB

(ENCOURAGING)  
Tell them a bit more about that,  
Alison.

ALISON

Well. He might not want to talk if  
you do find him. And he might . . .  
he will be wearing headphones so  
shouting his name . . . it'll be  
worth a try but even if he isn't  
wearing headphones. . . . he tends  
to be a bit dreamy so . . . he  
might have gone off anywhere. He  
likes trees and . . . He isn't  
great with people talking to him  
directly so he, you know, he isn't  
going to just come running if he  
sees you.

PAUL

He loves pop music. A lot. So. So  
any music you have. On your phones.  
Car stereos. iPods and all that . .  
. He feels safe with music.

BOB

What Alison and Paul are trying to  
tell you is that he's on the, he's  
got autism. Is that right? He's  
autistic.

ALISON

(STARING AHEAD)

Yes. Joe is on the autism spectrum.

LINDA

And what does that mean, exactly,  
Alison? You know, in terms of  
helping to find him?

MAURICE

You can put stuff you've seen on  
telly out of your head. It's  
nothing like that . . .

ALISON

It means a lot of things. But the  
main thing is that it means he  
might not know that he's lost, or  
in danger. That's the difference .  
. . That's the real difference.

ALISON looks as though she is about to break.

BOB

(BIG VOICE)

Groups of two or more, people. We  
don't want to waste time looking  
for you as well!

In the background we see TWO VOLUNTEERS cross to ALISON and PAUL as they are leaving and start to ask them questions. People start to divvy up areas on a map that has been pinned to the side of the gastropub - co-ordinating areas covered.

BOB joins MAURICE by his car. MAURICE has got his boots out and is putting them on, tucking his smart trousers into his hiking socks.

BOB (CONT'D)

How long were you in the living  
room with Louise?

MAURICE

I don't know. Ten minutes. Fifteen  
minutes.

BOB

(DOUBTFUL)

Maurice. Joe's missing. So if you  
were upstairs shagging for half an  
hour and you're too embarrassed to  
say then you'd better get over  
that.

MAURICE

For God's sake. We were in the  
front room. Why would I lie?

BOB

Did Ralph seem overfamiliar with  
Joe, at all, when you saw them  
together.

MAURICE looks at BOB for a beat. He knows what BOB is implying.

MAURICE

What's this about? That stuff on the bus from years back? We both know that was all bollocks. You told me it was.

BOB

It was. But there's a child missing now. So nothing's off the table.

MAURICE

Hang on. Ralph did nothing wrong then and he's done nothing wrong now.

BOB

Joe ran off.

MAURICE

Ralph wouldn't hurt a fly.

BOB

You know that, do you?

MAURICE

Just a feeling you get about people. And I trust my feelings.

BOB

Trust your feelings enough to bet Joe's life on them?

MAURICE starts to strides off alone. PAUL sees him go.

PAUL

Maurice! Where you going? Two or more together. You can't just go shooting off on your own.

MAURICE

I know these hills backwards. You lot can all go off singing into the wind. I lost him. I'll find him.

PAUL

Alison doesn't really think that, Maurice.

MAURICE

Doesn't she. Well, I do.

MAURICE heads away on foot.

CUT TO:

44

**EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. HILLSIDE. DAY 21. 14:20.**

MAURICE is working his way up a hill, determined, half running, half walking. As he gets to the top of the hill he looks down at the wilderness below.

MAURICE

Joe! Joe! Joe!

He looks down at his feet. He sees a ringpull. He smiles to himself. It is the sort of thing JOE would have noticed. He picks up the ringpull and puts it in his pocket.

Then he stops. In the middle of the empty landscape. And the enormity of what he might have done in leaving Joe alone threatens to overwhelm him. He slaps at his forehead with both hands.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!

He pulls himself together and marches on, determined, suddenly starting to sing a song as though it is a marching song.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

(SINGING)

"Lost your love of life?  
Too much apple pie!  
Oh have you lost your love of life?  
Too much apple pie!  
And now Harry's walked away with  
Johnny's wife."

He strides on, more determined than ever . . .

CUT TO:

45

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. HALL/LIVING ROOM/STUDY. DAY 21. 14:30.**

PAUL and ALISON in the hall. REBECCA can be seen typing into her laptop in the study. PC LAING is visible in the kitchen, at the table, notebook out, talking to someone on his radio (his dialogue in background). . .

PC LAING

Are all the civilians clear on the dedicated phone line? I've had a couple calling me . . .

PAUL is heading towards REBECCA as ALISON is heading upstairs, not knowing what to check and where.

ALISON

Call me if you hear anything.  
Anything at all.

PAUL  
Of course I will.

PAUL joins REBECCA.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Can we just get moving?

REBECCA  
I'm saying he's autistic because  
people don't understand if you just  
say he's on the spectrum.

PAUL  
Has autism? "Has autism" would be  
better. People would know what that  
meant.

She has the page open on her Messenger site and there is just a moment's hesitation where she sees a whole string of conversation that LUKE and DAN have posted.

INSERT: LUKE: She is such a slut. DAN: Dirty slut. My favourite. LUKE: Hi, Becky. DAN: Hi, Dirty Slut. Do you have a porn name?

PAUL (CONT'D)  
What's that about?

REBECCA  
(CLOSING DOWN THE THREAD)  
Boys being stupid is what that is.

REBECCA shuts the laptop and is good to go in one beat. As they start to head out . . .

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
I just hope he understands why we  
did this when he's 16. Once on the  
internet always on the internet.

PAUL  
Yes. Exactly. Like that stuff Luke  
and his mate were writing about  
you?

REBECCA  
I wasn't talking about that, it's  
just banter, Dad.

PAUL  
Every bully's excuse since the  
beginning of time. It's not just  
banter. The little shit! I'll kick  
him from here to Barrow in Furness.

REBECCA  
This isn't helping find Joe, is it?

PAUL

You're worth a hundred of him! Just remember that. He's a piece of shit you need to scrape off your shoe!

REBECCA, stunned by Paul's vehemence, follows him out the door.

CUT TO:

46

OMITTED

47

INT/EXT. EDDIE & NICOLA'S CAR/CONISTON ROAD. DAY 21. 14:35.

EDDIE and NICOLA in the car together, driving slowly around the town, both looking down side roads, etc.

EDDIE

So. How late is late?

NICOLA

A week.

EDDIE

So not that late.

NICOLA

No. And I've not done a test.

EDDIE

And why the big secret? Why keep it from me?

NICOLA

Because I needed to prepare myself for the result. Either way.

EDDIE turns this over.

NICOLA (CONT'D)

What do you think?

EDDIE

Not really the right time to talk about it, is it?

NICOLA

No. (A HALF SMILE) And when Joe is found safe and well I'm sure you can come up with another excuse not to talk, hey?

NICOLA glances at EDDIE - he doesn't respond. They drive on and we . . .

CUT TO:

48

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 14:40.

RALPH, LOUISE and BOB sit around a kitchen table.

LOUISE

You've got nothing to be scared of.  
The police just want to talk to you  
so you can help them find Joe.

RALPH

I know. But I don't want to talk to  
the police.

LOUISE

It won't be like last time.

RALPH

It won't. I know Kung Fu.

LOUISE

(SMILES)

Oh, Ralph, you can't go hitting  
policemen, love.

RALPH

It's self-defence.

BOB smiles.

BOB

Ralph. How long have we known each  
other, pal? You and me.

RALPH looks at his watch as BOB sits down.

RALPH

I don't know where he is.

BOB

Who?

RALPH

Joe. Little Joe.

BOB

But you were here. In the kitchen.  
When he went?

RALPH

I was, yes.

LOUISE

You need to tell the truth, Ralph.

RALPH

I always tell the truth. He went  
out to play. And I made us a drink.

LOUISE

And he'd gone.

RALPH

I told him to stay in the garden.

LOUISE

I know you did, love, I know.

RALPH

I'm telling the truth.

LOUISE

I know, love. And Bob does too.

Don't you, Bob?

BOB answers his mobile. LOUISE strokes RALPH's hand and watches BOB on the phone and we . . .

CUT TO:

49

EXT. BROUGHTON. PETROL STATION. DAY 21. 14:43.

TWO POLICEMEN break into a disused, graffiti strewn petrol station.

CUT TO:

50

INT. BROUGHTON. PETROL STATION. DAY 21. 14:44.

The TWO POLICEMEN step into what was the garage and shine their torches around the empty shell of the room.

CUT TO:

51

EXT. GARDENS. DAY 21. 14:45.

LINDA and ANOTHER MOTHER search their way through back gardens.

CUT TO:

52

EXT. WOODLAND. DAY 21. 14:46.

Two POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS work their way through the woodland.

CUT TO:

53

OMITTED

54

OMITTED

55

**EXT. HILLSIDE BEHIND GASTROPUB. DAY 21. 15:00.**

PAUL on a hillside up behind The Fellside.

PAUL  
Joe! Joe! Joe!

He gets his phone out and starts to play a track from his music library - the opening of 'The Story of the Blues' by Wah! And now PAUL is half shouting/half singing along.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
"Here in my pocket I've got the  
story of the blues,  
Try to believe me cos' it could be  
front page news . . ."

PAUL stands alone, on the hillside, holding his phone up in the air. The real track bleeds into the following . . .

CUT TO:

56

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. STUDY. DAY 21. 15:05.**

ALISON checking the internet for responses (NB we don't see the screen). Pacing.

CUT TO:

57

**EXT. STREET NEAR LOUISE'S HOUSE. DAY 21. 15:10.**

A POLICEMAN breaks into a shed at the back of a garden, looks inside, nothing.

CUT TO:

58

**INT/EXT. BREWERY VAN/WASTEWATER. ROAD. DAY 21. 15:20.**

DAVID and PAVEL's van drives slowly along the side of the lake, windows down, playing music on the stereo.

ARCTIC MONKEYS  
"Now then Mardy Bum, I see your  
frown and it's like looking down  
the barrel of a gun and it goes  
off."

CUT TO:

59

**EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. FELLSIDE. DAY 21. 15:30.**

On top of a hill, REBECCA and TOM have set up a bluetooth beatbox. REBECCA turns on her iPod touch and sets it to play: Paloma Faith 'Upside Down'. They sing/shout along.

PALOMA/TOM/REBECCA

"Angels watching over me, with  
smiles upon their face,  
Cause I have made it through this  
far in an unforgiving place."

TOM

Joe! Joe! Joe!

REBECCA/PALOMA

"It feels sometimes this hill's too  
steep for a girl like me to climb,  
But I must knock those thoughts  
right down I'll do it in my own  
time."

They look out into the growing darkness shouting, "Joe!" as PALOMA plays on in the background.

CUT TO:

60

**EXT. LAKE DISTRICT. ROADSIDE. DAY 21. 15:40.**

The valley, the layby. EDDIE has his car doors open. He sticks a CD in the car, playing his CD at full volume. 'Going Underground' by The Jam to which he sings along as loud as he can . . . NICOLA strides up the hillside ahead of him.

NICOLA

Joe. Come on, Joe! Joe!

THE JAM

"Some people might say my life is  
in a rut  
But I'm quite happy with what I got  
People might say that I should  
strive for more  
But I'm so happy I can't see the  
point . . ."

EDDIE scans the sky - the light's beginning to fade.

EDDIE

Joe! Joe! Come on, feller! Joe!

He returns to the car and turns up the volume and The Jam plays out at the empty sky.

THE JAM

"Something's happening here today  
A show of strength with your boy's  
brigade  
And I'm so happy and you're so  
kind. . ."

CUT TO:

61

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY 21. 15:50.

ALISON checks her phone. Checks the laptop again (we don't see the screen). Paces. She can't stand still but moving around doesn't seem to help either.

CUT TO:

62

EXT. PINE FOREST. DAY 21. 16:00.

MAURICE in the pine forest opposite the gastropub - singing.

MAURICE

"If I could read your mind, love,  
What a tale your thoughts could  
tell,  
Just like a paperback novel,  
The kind the drugstores sell."  
Joe! Joe! Joe! Come on, lad! Joe!

MAURICE looks around him at the nest of trees. He feels tortured with guilt.

CUT TO:

63

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY 21. 16:10.

ALISON opens JOE's reading folder and pulls the contents out. Her eyes linger on a painting. She stares down at it as though seeing it for the first time.

INSERT: A picture entitled 'My Family.' Four figures. All the same size. Heads and Legs.

And a teacher has labelled them 'Mum', 'Dad', 'Rebecca', 'Me' . . . and if the teacher hadn't labelled them you wouldn't have a fucking clue but 'Rebecca', 'Me' and 'Dad' all have big smiles and 'Mum' is frowning and sad.

Something about how bad the painting is starts to break ALISON's heart. She has to move and heads out of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

64

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. JOE'S BEDROOM. DAY 21. 16:13.

PC LAING searches Joe's bedroom. He has already laid out some of Joe's immaculate unplayed-with toys on the bed as he searches the room. He is laying a small plastic gnome on the bed as ALISON - suddenly adrenalin charged - enters - and suddenly she's furious.

ALISON

Why are you doing that? What is it  
you think you'll find?

PC LAING

Anything Joe might have hidden or left behind.

ALISON

It's getting dark for God's sake!  
Why aren't you out there looking for him?

PC LAING

There are other units on the way.  
And we might find something in here that's important.

ALISON

Well, if you aren't going to go out looking for him then I am.

ALISON heads outside.

CUT TO:

65

**EXT. HUGHES HOUSE. DUSK 21. 16:15.**

Dusk:

ALISON has opened the front door. She holds up the iPod dock - it blasts out The Human League 'Don't You Want Me' (TBC) into the fading light. Occasionally she shouts over it.

ALISON

Joe! Joe!

She stops shouting and listens to the music for a few moments and it threatens to overwhelm her.

She turns and sees someone approaching on foot - it's MAURICE, alone. A moment's hope.

ALISON (CONT'D)

What is it? What've you heard? Have they found him?

MAURICE

Nothing yet. I just thought you might need somebody with you. Half the town are out there searching. And . . . and there was something I've got to tell you.

CUT TO:

66

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 21. 16:25.**

MAURICE with ALISON.

MAURICE

What do you . . . what do you make  
of Ralph?

ALISON

Ralph? He's the lollipop man. I see  
him every day. Why are you asking  
me about Ralph?

MAURICE

I don't know. He was the last  
person to see Joe and . . .

ALISON

And he's Downs. So that makes him  
suspicious, does it?

MAURICE

No. Not at all. Just something Bob  
Herd mentioned - well reminded me  
of really. Something or nothing I'm  
sure, but if I didn't tell you and  
you heard the rumours from someone  
else . . .

ALISON

Rumours! What rumours! What? What's  
Ralph supposed to have done?

MAURICE

Years back a couple of bullies said  
he was touching a girl's leg on the  
bus. And he was interviewed by the  
police. There was nothing in it.  
The lads admitted they were lying.  
To wind Ralph up. Pair of scumbags.

ALISON

So you just told me that Ralph got  
falsely accused of something he  
hadn't done a long time ago. What  
am I supposed to do with that? Why  
would . . . why are you telling me  
that?

MAURICE

Because, God forbid, if anything  
happened to Joe . . .

ALISON

Because, God forbid, you might just  
feel a bit guilty that Joe went  
missing on your watch.

MAURICE

No "might just" about it.

ALISON

Ralph can't speak up for himself, Dad. You might want to think about that!

MAURICE

I've thought of nothing else.

ALISON gets up, restless, looks at MAURICE.

ALISON

You stay here. They need someone here in case Joe comes home.

MAURICE

Where are you going?

ALISON exits.

CUT TO:

67

EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. NIGHT 21. 16:40.

ALISON walks towards Louise's house. There is a police car parked outside. She knocks on the door. LOUISE opens it.

CUT TO:

68

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. HALL. NIGHT 21. 16:41.

As ALISON comes into the hall, PC PLEVIN comes down the stairs with a battered laptop. It is clearly Ralph's - covered in stickers etc. LOUISE gives Plevin a contemptuous glance. Both women know what the computer check implies.

PC PLEVIN

Just a precaution at this stage.

ALISON and LOUISE head for the kitchen.

CUT TO:

69

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 21. 16:42.

LOUISE and ALISON stand by the open door, looking out into the dark. RALPH is sitting at the kitchen table with his head in his hands.

ALISON

It's stupid. I thought if I saw the place then I'd know where he went. By magic or something.

LOUISE  
(TOUCHING ALISON'S HAND)  
I get that.

ALISON turns and sees RALPH sitting at the kitchen table with his head in his hands.

ALISON  
Ralph? You know you're not in trouble, don't you. Not with me, and not with Joe's Dad.

RALPH looks up at ALISON.

ALISON (CONT'D)  
But if you remember anything.  
Anything Joe said. Anything you said?

LOUISE  
Ralph?

ALISON sits down opposite RALPH.

ALISON  
I don't like Inspector Herd much, do you?

RALPH  
No. I don't like him.

ALISON  
Is there anything that happened, Ralph? Not on purpose. Were you playing a game? Maybe? Got a bit mixed up?

LOUISE  
Alison. He hasn't done anything to Joe. He didn't do anything to Joe. He's honest. Too honest if anything. So I know you needed to talk to him and I get that. Really. But that's enough.

ALISON nods and moves away. She drops her voice to LOUISE. RALPH doesn't move, he drops his head on to his folded arms.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
As one Mum to another. I'm telling you. He's had enough.

ALISON  
I've got to ask you this. Somebody said there'd been a misunderstanding a few years back. Ralph was on a bus and some lads .  
• •

LOUISE

My God. That bastard Bob Herd told you that, did he? A misunderstanding?

RALPH can't stand it anymore and gets up and leaves.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

That boy was bullied. Lied about. He was the victim. Did Bob Herd tell you that?

ALISON

I'm sorry. But I've got to find Joe. I feel like I'm the only one who can find him.

LOUISE

Well, stop wasting your time here talking to Ralph when he doesn't know anything.

ALISON looks at RALPH and looks back at LOUISE.

CUT TO:

70

EXT. PARK. NIGHT 21. 16:43.

VOLUNTEERS with torches, flanked by POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS, search through the woodland on the edge of a park.

CUT TO:

71

EXT. LAKE DISTRICT ROAD. NIGHT 21. 16:45.

EDDIE is walking alone along a stretch of road. The enormity of this task in the dark is starting to hit home . . .

CUT TO:

72

EXT. FOOTBALL PARTY LAKESIDE. NIGHT 21. 16:50.

PAUL is walking around the edge of the lake, holding up his phone and shouting. The phone is playing 'What Do I Get' by Buzzcocks. PAUL is singing along - top of his voice.

BUZZCOCKS/PAUL

(ON PHONE)

"I just want a lover like any other, What do I get?  
I only want a friend who will stay till the end, What do I get?"

He hears a voice, behind him, ALISON. He turns to see ALISON crossing towards him.

ALISON

Paul?

PAUL

I just thought . . . you know.  
Places we'd been . . .

ALISON

I know. I know. So did I.

She stares out at the lake, distraught.

ALISON (CONT'D)

I was looking at his things. And I  
was looking at his pictures and his  
writing and his terrible, terrible  
colouring in . . . and I thought if  
we find him . . .

PAUL

When we find him. "When". Not "If".

ALISON

If we find him I don't want to  
change anything about him anymore.  
I want Joe. As he is. I don't want  
to change anything about him.

PAUL

We'll find him.

ALISON

What was the last thing you said to  
him?

PAUL

Don't do this, Alison. Not now.

ALISON

I'm trying to remember what the  
last thing I said to him was, you  
know.

PAUL

Alison.

ALISON

I think I was a bit short with him.  
I just want him back. Our lovely  
little boy. I just want him back  
like he was. I just want him back .

. . .

ALISON starts to cry, PAUL holds her.

PAUL

Come on. Come on. It'll be all right. I promise it will be all right and we'll find him.

ALISON, clings on to him, wants desperately to believe him. The phone goes. And both of them jump out of their skin. PAUL answers it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(INTO PHONE)

Hello?

CUT TO:

73

EXT. WASTWATER. LAKES ROAD. NIGHT 21. 17:00.

A police car is parked by a wall and training its lights on a tree against a dry stone wall. BOB is standing by the tree, NICOLA and EDDIE with him. PAUL and ALISON park and rush over to join the others.

BOB

This must have been where he was coming every morning. With the stuff he found. Our guys missed it on the first sweep. Your sister-in-law found it.

Inside the hollow tree or a hole in the dry stone wall are some of Joe's "collection". Windmills, wind chimes, garden gnomes, etc. ALISON is transfixed, then sees the toy snake that Rebecca has given Joe earlier in the day.

ALISON

That's new. He only had this today.  
He's been here.

BOB

Are you sure, Alison. Loads of these toys around . . .

ALISON

He wouldn't normally go for something like this. It was because Rebecca gave him it. This morning. And she'd been away. And he'd missed her.

ALISON closes her eyes to shut out the nightmare.

BOB

Right. Okay.

PAUL

So what happens now?

BOB

We focus on this area. Now. We focus all our resources here.

ALISON

What fucking resources? I've seen about three coppers! When you see this stuff on the news there's hundreds. Where is everybody!

BOB

With it being so close to the water and with him being missing for over an hour we're getting the underwater team down . . .

ALISON and PAUL both stare out at the grim dark waters of Wastwater and the steep hills above them. The nightmare just got worse.

CUT TO:

74

EXT/INT. HILLSIDE ROAD/DAN'S CAR. NIGHT 21. 17:05.

TOM and REBECCA walk down off the hillside on to a roadside. We can hear music playing, some rap, loud speakers. They look across and we see their faces drop. REBECCA crosses the road with TOM and we pull out to reveal LUKE and DAN in Dan's car. His speakers at full volume, both drinking from cans.

LUKE looks at REBECCA and turns down the volume immediately.

REBECCA

What are you doing?

LUKE

What everybody's doing. We're trying to help find your brother. We saw on your Facebook that he was missing.

REBECCA

Yeah. You've been very busy online, haven't you? My Dad was well impressed.

REBECCA looks at LUKE who looks away.

DAN

Is there a reward?

TOM

Yes. A brain. I'd go for it if I were you.

REBECCA

(FURIOUS)

You're just parked! Like this? What use is that? And he doesn't even like this kind of music.

LUKE

All right. All right. Sista! We'll drive.

REBECCA

Can you give us a lift?

DAN

No.

REBECCA and TOM watch as DAN speeds away.

TOM

The sort of prick who gives pricks a bad name.

CUT TO:

75

**INT/EXT. DAN'S CAR/ROAD - BUS STOP. NIGHT 21. 17:07.**

DAN and LUKE drive along the road, playing the music loud, LUKE looking a bit sheepish.

LUKE

Shall we turn back and get them?

DAN

Don't know how you put up with her so long, you know what I mean. Her mouth's the only reason I'm not making a move there myself.

LUKE

(SUBDUED)

She's all right.

DAN

In the dark maybe. (BEAT) If you're deaf.

LUKE

Just shut up, will you.

DAN

It's not as though, like, I mean, like once you've boned her, it's like, right, what've you got to talk about?

LUKE looks at DAN, nodding his head aimlessly to the music. LUKE hates DAN more than any other human being at that moment.

LUKE  
Anything really. Anything at all.

And as LUKE is looking at DAN they drive past a granite stone bus stop, one of those Lake District ones where the sheep catch the bus. And sitting there, coat buttoned up, headphones on - JOE.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
Stop! Stop! Stop!

DAN stops the car. LUKE gets out of the car and runs back to the bus shelter. And JOE looks up, unsmiling.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
Joe! Are you all right. Joe?

JOE looks straight ahead then at LUKE, a little puzzled. Self contained.

CUT TO:

76 OMITTED

77 EXT. THE FELLSIDE GASTRO PUB. NIGHT 21. 17:30.

PAUL, ALISON at the gastropub. Watching as two police cars make their way into the car park.

The crowd of helpers, including GARY, TERRY, NICOLA, EDDIE and MAURICE. And, on the edge of the action, LOUISE with RALPH.

The car parks and POLICEMEN get out of the front and out of the back LUKE and REBECCA and JOE.

TOM and DAN get out of the car behind.

All of them walk in a group, JOE at the front. LUKE and JOE are suddenly side by side, but not holding hands. ALISON rushes towards JOE and JOE takes a step towards her as though nothing has happened.

ALISON  
Joe. My boy. My boy. Come here, let me look at you, let me just look at you!

ALISON hugs JOE and kisses him all over, laughing and crying with delight. JOE looks amused rather than upset. ALISON pulls him away from her and gazes at his face.

JOE

My boy.

She hugs him again, by now PAUL and REBECCA and others have reached them. PAUL kisses him too.

PAUL

Top lad. Top lad. You're my top lad. What are you?

JOE

A top lad.

BOB

We'll get the Doc by to check him out but he seems fine. Can't tell us anything but as far as we can make out no worse than cold and hungry.

PAUL

Where did you find him?

LUKE

At a bus stop.

PAUL crouches down to JOE.

PAUL

(LAUGHING, DELIGHTED)

A bus stop? Where were you going Mozart, hey? Where were you going?

JOE doesn't react. MAURICE steps forward, delighted and relieved.

MAURICE

Bloody hell! Big Feller! How did you get that far! Hey? You must have Granddad's lungs! Hey?

MAURICE closes his eyes as he embraces JOE and looks at ALISON who smiles and puts a half forgiving/half comforting arm on his.

PAUL holds out his hand to LUKE, shakes it. LUKE nods, all modesty and "shucks" and PAUL then pulls him close, holding his hand for a little too long and a little too tightly.

PAUL

(SMILING)

You and me can talk again.

LUKE

(SMILING THROUGH ALARM)

How do you mean?

PAUL

Just don't go thinking finding Joe makes you a good person. It just makes you a twat who did a good thing.

PAUL turns and walks away, as he does so we can see LUKE wringing his hand slightly, clearly that grip hurt. ALISON looks back at LUKE, then puts her arm around PAUL.

ALISON

What was that about?

PAUL

Just a bit of old school parenting.

ALISON looks puzzled as they head for their cars. REBECCA looks back at LUKE then puts her arm around her Dad, a half smile to herself.

MAURICE turns to see RALPH and LOUISE walking away from the crowd of helpers. He takes a few steps after them but LOUISE looks back and offers no encouragement.

CUT TO:

78

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 21. 18:15.

MAURICE, PAUL, ALISON, REBECCA, NICOLA and EDDIE sit around the kitchen table. JOE is in one corner, headphones on. ALISON is on the floor beside him, stroking his hair. Coffee on the go. MAURICE and PAUL on the scotch. They are knackered, but wrung out, and what bit isn't wrung out is euphoric. Silence. And a feeling they have been silent for a while.

MAURICE

Good job we found Joe when we did.  
I think Bob Herd was about to go  
home for his guitar.

PAUL, NICOLA and REBECCA laugh. The others smile.

ALISON

(TO REBECCA)

I blame you by the way. All that time hanging round bus stops.  
Giving him ideas . . .

REBECCA

It was brilliant, though, wasn't it. That he thought of going to a bus stop?

PAUL

On the wrong side of the road.

ALISON

You can't have everything.

EDDIE

How do you know he was on the wrong side of the road? He might have just been trying to run away from this mad house.

PAUL

Fair point.

EDDIE glances at MAURICE surprised and catches an amused shrug from PAUL.

NICOLA

He wasn't running away though, was he? He was just walking. We all decided he was running away but in his head he was just walking. We're imposing our narrative on his inner state that we have no way of knowing anything about.

MAURICE

Does anyone else feel like they just walked into a cryptic crossword?

PAUL

That's what you get for trying to raise the tone, Nicola.

Uneasy laughter. NICOLA, as ever, not quite getting the mood, but ALISON gets up from the floor and exits to the hall.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What did everybody sing?

MAURICE

What? I'm not telling you that.

REBECCA

Not a fair question.

PAUL

Come on. When you'd run out of Joe songs. What did you sing?

MAURICE

I might have dipped into my Sinatra repertoire at a particularly low point.

EDDIE

Christ. No wonder he was waiting for a bus to Kendal.

ALISON appears at the door in her coat.

ALISON

Can you put him to bed, love. I  
just need go and see someone.

PAUL slightly surprised but he thinks he gets it.

PAUL

Yeah. Yeah, sure. Sure.

ALISON leaves, people a little puzzled, uneasy. Silence  
again. They all find themselves staring at JOE.

CUT TO:

79

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 21. 18:20.

NICOLA and EDDIE enter from outside. NICOLA turns and takes  
his hands in hers.

NICOLA

(GENTLE)

Love. False alarm, by the way.  
(BEAT) My period started.

EDDIE

(BLANK)

Oh. Right.

NICOLA

Bit of a relief to be honest, hey?

EDDIE

Yeah.

NICOLA

You are relieved, aren't you?

EDDIE

Yes. I am. Sort of.

EDDIE lets go of her hands and heads for the kitchen.

NICOLA

You didn't want to start a family  
right now? Did you?

NICOLA waits, rooted to the spot for a moment, and then  
follows him into the kitchen.

CONTINUOUS:

80

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 21. 18:21.

EDDIE emptying the dishwasher. NICOLA stands watching him for a few moments.

NICOLA

As displacement activities go, the dishwasher is a bit finite.

EDDIE

What I've got to say. There's just no way to say it.

NICOLA

I think most philosophers would take you up on that since you clearly have already thought it in language.

EDDIE

It's not funny.

NICOLA

I know it's not funny. It's horrible. What you're doing right now. It's horrible.

EDDIE

Not as horrible as what I'm thinking.

EDDIE moves past her back into the living room.

CUT TO:

81

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 21. 18:24.

EDDIE sits with NICOLA.

NICOLA

I know it wasn't planned. I know it's scary.

EDDIE

I'm not scared, not of Fatherhood, at any rate.

NICOLA

Oh.

EDDIE

I'm scared of what I thought. When you told me.

NICOLA

Like what?

EDDIE

I thought, for a moment I thought . . . the very first thought I had when you told me? "Am I the Father?"

NICOLA

What? Who else could be the Father?

EDDIE

The dates. When you went to see Michael. In Manchester. The dates. It would fit. You know.

NICOLA

Michael? You don't believe that, do you?

EDDIE

No. I don't. If I'm being rational. I don't. But that little doubt. That terrible, terrible idea . . . it sweeps everything else away. It blocks out everything that's good about us. It kills everything.

NICOLA

(STILL REELING)

When would this have happened? How . . . would . . . I have slept with Michael. Why would you think that about me after all we've done . . .

EDDIE

I don't want to be that kind of man. And I am. I don't want to be in that kind of relationship.

NICOLA stares at EDDIE, he can't hold her gaze for long.

CUT TO:

82

EXT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. NIGHT 21. 18:30.

ALISON prepares herself and rings LOUISE's bell. She waits. LOUISE opens the door.

CUT TO:

83

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 21. 18:35.

LOUISE sits. RALPH eyes ALISON warily and then gets up and leaves.

ALISON

I'm sorry that you had to go through that. I'm sorry that Ralph had to go through that.

LOUISE

I'd have done the same. But that doesn't stop me hating you all for doing it.

ALISON

Right.

LOUISE

It's been a long day you know . . .

ALISON

I hope my Dad brings Joe around again. Get to know you better. And Ralph. He'll always be welcome.

LOUISE

Yes. 'cos the village idiots have to stick together, hey?

ALISON

That isn't what I meant . . .

LOUISE

The angry villagers might not come to the door with pitchforks and torches anymore but well . . . check out his Facebook page. It's a delight.

ALISON

People will forget . . .

LOUISE

Yes. But he won't. And I won't. You've got a child that's different. So it's always going to be there. You've got a child that's different, Alison, so you know what I'm talking about.

Out on ALISON, she does.

CUT TO:

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 21. 19:30.**

JOE is lying on the bed asleep with his headphones on. ALISON and PAUL watch him, arms around each other.

ALISON

I just looked at Ralph and all I could think was what if that was Joe sitting there with a broken heart? What if that was Joe wondering what he'd done wrong? What if that was Joe who spent his life being told to trust the world and just found out that it didn't trust him back?

PAUL

We're just going to have to surround him with a family that loves him so much he won't ever feel anything but loved.

ALISON

(SMILES)

He's already got more family than any child should be asked to cope with . . .

They lie in silence.

ALISON (CONT'D)

You know what I said . . . about not wanting to change him.

PAUL

Yeah?

ALISON

I meant it when I said it. But I don't think I think it now.

PAUL smiles at her. She smiles back.

PAUL

I promised God if he was safe I'd go to Church for a year. Am I allowed to break that one as well?

ALISON

No.

PAUL kisses ALISON. They lie either side of JOE. ALISON reaches for JOE's headphones. PAUL stops her.

PAUL

Maybe you can just mean it for a bit longer, hey?

ALISON smiles, gives in. Leaves the headphones where they are. They both stare at JOE, never wanting to look away from him again.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
It feels like grief, doesn't it.

ALISON  
What?

PAUL  
Well, that's the nearest I've had to this feeling. Knowing there's a boy in there that we could have had. And we didn't.

ALISON doesn't reply.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Feels like grief to me, anyway.

ALISON  
When he was missing. I hated the world. I hated the world without him so much . . .

PAUL and ALISON lie down either side of JOE on the bed now and embrace.

CUT TO:

85

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 21. 19:35.

EDDIE has a suitcase packed. He shoves some more things in. NICOLA, distraught.

NICOLA  
Eddie. This is insane!

EDDIE  
Everybody wants me to be strong and decisive! Well here it is. This is me being strong and decisive.

NICOLA  
I think you're confusing strong and decisive with stupid and impulsive.

EDDIE stops, turns.

EDDIE  
When I fell in love with you it was because you said things like that. And now it's things like that just drive me up the fucking wall!

NICOLA  
That can be a pattern in relationships that are going through problems.

EDDIE

And that too! You are always on the outside commentating on our marriage. It never feels like you're actually inside it. Here. With me.

NICOLA

Don't do this. If you want to move we'll move.

EDDIE

Do you really think that's all this is about? God. You must think I'm a bigger loser than I do.

EDDIE picks up his suitcase and exits, slamming the door. NICOLA shuts her eyes. The door opens and EDDIE grabs his coat off the hook. Even his big exit doesn't quite work.

CUT TO:

86

**INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 21. 19:40.**

PAUL and ALISON are lying either side of a sleeping JOE. ALISON looks up and sees REBECCA looking in on them from the open door.

REBECCA

Can I join in?

ALISON

(SMILES)

Course you can, baby, course you can.

ALISON beckons her over. REBECCA climbs on the bed behind ALISON and puts her arms around her. All four close their eyes. Somewhere, in JOE's headphones, we can hear Ron Sexsmith, 'Secret Heart'. The music swells and grows beyond the headphones and . . .

RON SEXSMITH

"Secret Heart, what are you made of?

What are you so afraid of?

Could it be three simple words..."

CUT TO:

87

**INT/EXT. EDDIE'S CAR/ROADS. NIGHT 21. 19:41.**

EDDIE drives, staring straight ahead.

RON SEXSMITH (SINGS)  
"Or the fear of being overheard?  
What's wrong?  
Let her in on your secret, heart."

CUT TO:

88

INT. SCOTT HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 21. 19:42.

NICOLA stares at the walls, still disbelieving what has happened here.

RON SEXSMITH (SINGS)  
"Secret heart, why so mysterious?  
Why so sacred, why so serious?"

CUT TO:

89

INT. LOUISE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT 21. 19:43.

RALPH has his head down on the table. LOUISE has her hand resting on his shoulders.

RON SEXSMITH (SINGS)  
"Maybe you're just acting tough  
Maybe you're just not man enough,  
what's wrong?"

CUT TO:

90

EXT. BUS STOP. NIGHT 21. 19:44.

MAURICE is back running with his head torch on. Mad and driven. But maybe not so mad and driven as he stops at the bus stop that JOE was found at and stares at it, almost offering what? A prayer of thanks, a word with Sandra, . . . for reasons he can't explain he leaves his head torch on the bus shelter seat, still on, shining brightly as he runs off into the darkness . . .

RON SEXSMITH (SINGS)  
"Let her in on your secret heart.  
This very secret you're trying to  
conceal  
Is the very same one you're dying  
to reveal  
Go tell her, how you feel . . ."

CUT TO:

91

INT. HUGHES HOUSE. BEDROOM. NIGHT 21. 19:45.

As the instrumental break goes on we move back above PAUL, ALISON, JOE and REBECCA. All eyes shut now.

Then JOE opens his eyes. Looks straight into the camera and us. And sings, loud and confident.

JOE  
(SINGING)  
"Secret heart, come out and share  
it  
This loneliness, few can bear it."

JOE stops singing, keeps his eyes open, the music goes on but he doesn't sing along, staring right into the camera. Around him his family sleep. Out on his impenetrable and unflinching gaze.

END OF EPISODE  
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