

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - EARLY EVENING

MARTIN, a denim clad, 24 year old, hides his bike behind a wheelie bin. He flattens his hair then squirts mint breath freshener in his mouth.

MARTIN

She likes it when I smell - minty.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

A fairy wind chime "tings" near his head. A side eye glance:

MARTIN

What is it with middle aged women and fairies?

He shows us a front door key with a fairy keyring on it.

MARTIN

She's fairy daft.

He unlocks the front door, one eye brow raised.

MARTIN

She's asked me to come early tonight.

He catches his reflection on the front door glass.

MARTIN

Well...A week's a long time to be waiting on this bad boy, eh?

(kicks his trainers off)

I'm totally up for it. It's not like work.

He lifts his trainers from the mat and starts to head inside.

MARTIN

(about the trainers)

One week I dragged fox shit right through.

(ashamed)

She had to get it professionally cleaned.

(beat)

I didn't take any money that night.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A pristine hallway. Martin points out a framed photo, mouthing, **THAT'S HER;** gives us - a thumbs up.

MARTIN

Nice eyes, eh?

(sincere)

...Like a camel.

There's a pile of cash on the table; discreetly he puts it in his pocket. Then his mobile phone rings. A **VERY DISTINCT RINGTONE**. It's a text from his mates.

MARTIN
 (laughing at the text)
 Ash and Yoda wonderin' where I am. They're
 at it. They totally know!
 (texting back, a peacock)
I'M BUSY.

INT. MARTIN'S BEDROOM

A flash of Martin's face up close. A wall of muffled voices / sounds hits us then disappears just as quick.

INT. PRISTINE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He beckons us into the living room. The place is familiar to him.

MARTIN
 ... Watch this.

He points to a cylinder speaker - ALEXA.

MARTIN
 (about Alexa)
 Left it here a few weeks ago to keep her
 company... she's renamed her Patsy.
 (mortified by the name)
 I know. Don't. But... makes her laugh.
 (craning in)
 Patsy? Play something sexy.

ALEXA / PATSY lights up on the table, blasting out **YOU REALLY GOT ME** by The Kinks.

MARTIN
 Good choice Pat.

Martin shimmies over to the couch and undoes a few buttons on his shirt. He sits back. Arms splayed. Thinks he's in a Tarrantino film.

MARTIN
 I'd never done anything like this before. I
 swear! Just happened.
 (gets comfy on the sofa)
 I turn up, as usual, to deliver her mini
 mushroom pizza and chicken pakora...

The music is distracting him from telling us his story.

MARTIN
 Patsy? STOP.

The music stops. He leans in, keen to tell us.

MARTIN
 Where was I? Aye, the mushroom pizza... and
 I could feel her looking at me, sizing me
 up... then she invites me in, sayin' she has
 a *proposition* for me.

He notices Prosecco opened on the table, 2 glasses. Odd, but he's chuffed with the gesture. He'll get some later.

MARTIN

"It won't take long", she says. Her voice was shakin' man. Tears in her eyes.

He glances upstairs, a tiny glimmer of fondness towards her.

MARTIN

So, there I am waiting for her to tell me, and all I'm thinkin' is, please hurry up man, cos these two chicken Jalfrezes' I need to deliver by half past 8, are pure burnin' my thighs.

He shifts to the edge of the sofa - telling us in confidence.

MARTIN

Eventually, she comes out with it. "I want you. For two hours a week. I'll pay you".

Martin spots heated rollers on the coffee table, a bottle of nail polish, an expensive shopping bag lying empty. Again, odd? He ignores it.

MARTIN

The first night I turned up I felt a bit dirty, no goin' to lie, but... she made it easy.

He goes to each area of the room where things happened.

MARTIN

We had some food, here. Then I did my whole egg in a glass using three matches trick, here. Then, we watched a bit of telly on the couch, here.

He walks to the door to suggest they moved to the bedroom.

MARTIN

Then... I went up the road. That was it. (beat) HA! Gotcha! You thought I went upstairs and had me some... (raises his eyebrows-suggesting sex) ...for cash didn't you?

He leads us to a photo on the wall. He goes in close, examining her face.

MARTIN

Nah! She's not like that. (pointing at the picture) An' she's no a loner. Look! Hunners of pals.

He's lost for a tiny second in the photo - touches her face.

CUT TO: A WOMAN'S HAND RESTING ON HIS, A BOX SET FLICKERING IN THE BACKGROUND.

MARTIN

... She's got loads of folk to do stuff with, but no-one to just - touch...

CUT TO: MARTIN RESTING HIS HEAD ON THE NAPE OF A WOMAN'S NECK. TWIRLING A LOCK OF HER HAIR BETWEEN HIS FINGERS - UTTERLY CONTENT. (HIS FINGER NAILS ARE BITTEN TO THE CORE).

MARTIN
Human contact man, you can't buy it.
(correcting himself)
Well, y'can, evidently, but - some folk
can't afford it. If it was me I'd make it
free on the NHS.

He thinks about that idea for a second, then fills us in some more.

MARTIN
That first night man, I hugged her
goodbye...

MARTIN
Her knees buckled. She was so grateful. So
was I - for the extra cash. You don't make
much delivering curries.

Martin checks his watch, then goes to the window to see if there's any
sign of her; nothing. He fills the *waiting time* with facts.

MARTIN
I was reading about this guy in Japan who
hires a dog for an hour to stroke on his
lunch break.

IMAGE OF A MAN HUNCHED OVER A DOG, STROKING IT.

MARTIN
And there's a woman in Times Square who
hands out free hugs.

IMAGE OF A WOMEN IN NEW YORK WITH A BILLBOARD OFFERING FREE HUGS.

MARTIN
An old dear my mum knows goes to the
hairdressers twice a week just to have her
head touched.

AN IMAGE OF ELDERLY WOMEN IN THE HAIRDRESSERS SMILING IN BLISS.

MARTIN
So. I'm not her call boy. I'm her - someone
to just... BE with boy.

The **RINGTONE** goes again. Martin pulls out his phone.

MARTIN
(reading allowed)
IN OBLIVION. WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU!

Texting back. They're getting annoying now.

MARTIN
I'm still recoverin' from last night.

INT. MARTINS BEDROOM (OBLIVION) - NIGHT BEFORE

A close up of martin's face, he could be drunk / stoned / knackered. Muffled voices come at him. His eyes close the open.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

MARTIN
(texting back)
GET. A. LIFE.

He heads to the fire place full of ornament fairies and begins a role play.

MARTIN
(mimicking Claire)
Babes, was thinking we could cosy up and watch Midsomer Murders again.

Martin (as the HE fairy) casually responds.

MARTIN
I'm up for that! I was goin' to cook us somethin' nice. What d'you fancy?
(as the she fairy now)
You choose. I'm not fussed.

He continues to mutter make believe. For the first time he's not performing to the camera and absolutely oblivious to us. He moves the fairies together to make a pair and as he positions them he notices a card with his name on it.

MARTIN
(smiling / curious)
That's a first.

He takes the card and goes to pour a Prosecco, he's going to savor this, but only a dribble comes out of the bottle. He's drawn to the rollers again, the nail polish, the shopping bag. He rummages inside it, pulling out clothes tags. He freezes, putting two and two together.

MARTIN
(to ALEXA / PATSY)
What's in Claire's diary tonight?

ALEXA / PATSY (V.O.)
Dinner for two. Bar 61. In progress.

MARTIN
[IN]Patsy STOP!

Martin tears open the card. In bold, on the front, reads, **THANK YOU!**

MARTIN
(reading from card)
*... So sorry to let you go. Thank you. X X.
P.S. Remember to take Patsy and leave the key.*

Martin glances around the room. Head spinning.

MARTIN
(genuinely worried)
Who's goin' to pick out the cherry Haribo for her? Who's goin' to rub circles in the palm of her hand watchin' shite telly?
(devastated)

Who's goin' to stare at my arms when I'm
doing up my laces... ?

The two ornament fairies stare back at him. Gloating.

MARTIN

Why'd she not just tell me to my face? I
mean, I knew the score, I knew I was just a -

It hits him suddenly. A slap to the face.

MARTIN

(quiet)
... A service.

INT. MARTIN'S BEDROOM (OBLIVION) - AN HOUR LATER

A close up of Martins face. Alone. The computer game OBLIVION's flashing on the screen. **Muffled voices chatter over the headphones** lying at his feet. Martin's on a games chat room. ASH and YODA are cartoon emoticons with no faces or voice.

He grabs his headphones; his eyes filled with despair taking in his empty sparse room. He wipes his nose on his hoodie sleeve, pulls himself together. He lifts up the headphones, carefully placing them back on his head, shutting the outside world noise out completely. Underwater silence.

Lying next to him is the fairy key ring, a stolen memento.

THE END.

