

1 INT. THE CHASE. CLAUDIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

1

Claudie's bedroom and the sound of snoring is broken by an alarm clock ringing. CLAUDIE shoots up in bed. She slams the clock into silence as she registers the time 6.30am. She groans as she remembers what day it is and flops back down, placing the pillow over her head.

1a INT. THE CHASE. ANNA'S BEDROOM - DAY

1a

MATT is still asleep. ANNA sits on the bed watching him. He opens his eyes and smiles self-consciously.

MATT

What?

ANNA

You looked so peaceful, I didn't want to disturb you but the children'll be up soon.

MATT

You want me to go?

ANNA

I don't want you to but.....

MATT silences ANNA with a kiss.

2 INT. SEBASTIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

2

SEBASTIAN lies sleeping. SARAH is up and dressed. She fishes under the bed for her shoes and has to bend down beside SEBASTIAN. He murmurs as if he's about to wake and she holds her breath. It's obvious she doesn't want to wake him. She stares at him guiltily before creeping out and quietly closing the door behind her.

3 INT. THE CHASE. CLAUDIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

3

CLAUDIE, still dressed in her nightwear is ransacking her wardrobe. A pile of discarded clothes are heaped on the bed. Suddenly the pile moves and we realise PAULA is still in bed. She wakes and throws off the clothes.

CLAUDIE

Hey, watch it they're me clothes.

PAULA fights her way to the surface.

PAULA

(Removing her eye mask and bleaching tray from her teeth)
What's happening?

CLAUDIE
Have you forgotten what day it
is?

PAULA
(Realising) Oh, yeah. Five
more minutes.

CLAUDIE
(Irritated) Get up Paula, you
promised to help me.

PAULA
(Groaning) But we've sorted
what you're wearing.

CLAUDIE
I've changed me mind. It's not
me. I'm gonna wear me own
stuff.

PAULA drags herself out of bed. CLAUDIE puts her hand on a
tiger print dress.

PAULA
That's so last season.

CLAUDIE
Tough.

PAULA
Okay, don't listen to a
professional. It's your court
case.

CLAUDIE
(Urgent whisper) Shh! Someone
could be listening.

CLAUDIE puts her ear to the door.

PAULA
I don't know why you don't
tell em. They know about the
pensions anyhow.

CLAUDIE
Cause I don't want to give
them stuck up cows, another
reason to look down their
noses at me.

CLAUDIE yanks the door open as if she'll find someone
kneeling at the keyhole. She looks around suspiciously -
nothing. She hears the postman.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
Post! I'll be back in a sec.

4

INT. THE CHASE. STAIRS/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

4

CLAUDIE speeds down the stairs overtaking a bemused ANNA.

ANNA
Good morning Claudie.

CLAUDIE
Yeah, morning.

CLAUDIE picks up the post. Looking through it her face momentarily breaks into a smile. Poker faced, she turns to ANNA.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
Post. Nothing much, only one
for me, junk mail I spose.

CLAUDIE thrusts the remaining letters into ANNA'S hand and rushes back upstairs, squeezing past DAISY and LUCA on the stairs.

DAISY
Mummy says you shouldn't pass
on the stairs, it's bad luck.

CLAUDIE just smiles and rushes off as the children run down to ANNA, who is reading a letter she has opened.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Can I go to Molly's after
school?

ANNA
(Engrossed) Sorry?

LUCA
I've got PE today.

DAISY
(Impatient) Can I go to
Molly's after school?

ANNA pops the letter back into its envelope. She looks sad.

ANNA (CONT'D)
(Distracted) We'll see.

DAISY
Is anything wrong mummy?

ANNA
No, of course not, but thank
you for asking. (She hugs
Daisy and Luca) Come on you
two, breakfast.

The children run through to the kitchen.

5 **INT. THE CHASE. CLAUDIE'S BEDROOM - DAY**

5

CLAUDIE and PAULA bouncing up and down on the bed with their hands over their mouths to stop them shouting out. They both collapse in a giggling heap on the bed.

PAULA

(Excited whisper) I can't believe it! Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. I've never seen so much dosh.

CLAUDIE

(Smirking) I can't believe that much money is actually in my bank account! People are gonna have to start takin' me seriously now. (Turns to Paula) Can you see why I don't want that pair knowing I'm going to court? I'm as good as them any day.

PAULA

Better, I bet they haven't got this much cash to play with.

CLAUDIE picks up a drab suit, hanging on the back of the door.

CLAUDIE

So I won't be needing to wear this. I'm going to walk into court, head held high. This is me Claudie Williams your worship, and I'll be happy to pay whatever fine you give me.

CLAUDIE discards the suit and hangs up the dress.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)

I'm going to make George proud. He loved me in this dress.

6 **INT. HUBY FARM - DAY**

6

SARAH is drinking a coffee. ADRIAN rushes in the door.

ADRIAN

Thank God you're back. I've been ringing everywhere. Where the hell have you been?

SARAH

(Not ready for this) I needed some time to cool down. I've got to get to work.

ADRIAN

Sarah you just can't walk out
the first time anything goes
wrong.

SARAH

(Hurt) You have no idea how I
feel. It's hard for me Adrian.

ADRIAN

Anna and I made a mistake. We
should have said something to
you, but you weren't
completely honest either.

SARAH

(Sadly) So I'm to blame?

ADRIAN

No one's to blame. As long as
we love each other, we can
sort it out

SARAH

(Guilty) Can we? We've both
said things and done things
that we've....

ADRIAN

(Interrupting) What do you
mean?

SARAH

I don't know. My head's all
over the place. I need some
space....I've got to go.

ADRIAN watches as SARAH obviously confused, picks up her
vet's bag and leaves quickly.

7

INT. THE CHASE. KITCHEN - DAY

7

ANNA is busy getting the kids ready for school. DAISY and
LUCA are eating at the table. JAKE is playing under it and
IMOGEN is in her high chair.

ANNA

Jake, sit up and eat your
cereal.

JAKE/OOV

I don't like it.

ANNA

But you asked me to buy it
specially.

DAISY LUCA
He just wanted the toy. I'll have his.

CLAUDIE and PAULA, now dressed, waltz in, obviously in good spirits.

CLAUDIE
Morning campers.

CLAUDIE picks up IMOGEN and swings her around.

ANNA
I'd be careful, she's just been fed.

CLAUDIE PAULA
A little baby puke, never hurt Keep her away from me.
anyone, did it poppet.

ANNA (CONT'D)
(Tentatively) Claudie, could I ask you a massive favour? Could you possibly pick the children up from school this afternoon? Tom's busy and I'm consulting.

CLAUDIE
Sorry, I'm busy meself this afta.

ANNA
(To Paula) What about you, Paula? I'd be really grateful.

CLAUDIE
(Jumping in) We're all busy, Liam an all.

ANNA
(Obviously put out) Oh, right. A special occasion?

CLAUDIE PAULA
(Trying to play it down) Not Nah.
really

ANNA (CONT'D)
(Pointedly) But you're all too busy to pick up the children?

CLAUDIE
(Trapped) Sorry did you say special occasion. Of course it is. It's our auntie's.....

PAULA
(Pipes up) Hundreth birthday.

ANNA

(Surprised) You have an aunt,
who's a hundred?

CLAUDIE

(Throwing a look at Paula) A
great auntie.....when we say
auntie, we mean like she's an
honoury auntie. (Changing the
subject) Er, anyone want
toast?

8 **INT. SARAH'S CAR - DAY**

8

SARAH pulls into The Chase car park. She's on hands free and we can just hear the tail end of Sebastian's answer phone message.

MESSAGE

Please leave a message after
the tone.

SARAH

(Tentatively) Hi Sebastian,
it's Sarah. Sorry I had to
leave so early. Er, no message
really....just call me when
you get a chance.

The bashed up Land Rover is parked up at The Chase. As SARAH'S attention is back with her parking, she spots the Land Rover and almost loses control of her own car, slamming on her breaks. She sits staring out at the Land Rover.

9 **EXT. THE CHASE. FLASHBACK. (ANNIVERSARY PARTY)**

9

See SARAH stood with ADRIAN in the garden, over by the Pagoda.

GEORGE turns to see SARAH, calls over to her...

GEORGE

Check that Anna's alright
darling, I've got to go to the
police station!

SARAH sees George's Volvo is blocked in.....

SARAH

Take the Land Rover Dad, keys
are in the ignition! Remember
it jumps out of second gear!

But GEORGE is already in the drivers seat.

We close up on SARAH as she watches her father drive the Land Rover out of the drive without stopping, her face crumples as she hears a screech of breaks and an almighty crash and a horn blaring away.

SARAH (CONT'D)
(Screams) Daaad!!!

10 **EXT. THE CHASE. CAR PARK - DAY**

10

Back with SARAH as she gets out of her car, slamming the door.

11 **INT. THE CHASE. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

11

The children are finishing breakfast. LIAM has now joined CLAUDIE and PAULA. SARAH rushes in looking horrified.

SARAH
Anna, what the hell is that
thing doing parked outside?

ANNA
What thing? (Concerned) Are
you all right?

SARAH
(Incredulous) No I'm not. The
Land Rover, it's just stood in
the drive.

LIAM holds up a receipt.

LIAM
Oh yeah this bloke turned up
with a bashed up Land Rover
and asked me to sign for it.

SARAH
(Turns on Liam) Do you know
anything about that vehicle?

LIAM
Yeah, course I do. It's a Land
Rover Defender, two point
five, turbo-diesel.

ANNA
(To the children) Daisy, Luca,
take Jake upstairs and help
him brush his teeth.

DAISY
Can't we stay?

LUCA
He can brush his own teeth.

ANNA (CONT'D)
No arguments.....

The children know ANNA means it and reluctantly leave. ANNA turns to LIAM.

ANNA (CONT'D)
(Urgent whisper) It's the Land Rover our father was killed in.

LIAM
How was I meant to know?

CLAUDIE
You can't blame our Liam.

ANNA
(To Sarah) We got a cheque in the post this morning. They'd agreed to pay the write off value and return the car.

SARAH
(Annoyed) And you didn't try and stop them?

ANNA
I didn't think they meant today.

SARAH
Do I have to do everything! Get on to them, tell them we don't want it.

PAULA
I'll have it. I could do with some cash.

SARAH
(Scathingly) I meant the Land Rover, not the money, idiot.

CLAUDIE
There's no need to talk to Paula like that. Anyway by rights, half that money is mine. He was my husband.

PAULA
You tell her.

SARAH
The Land Rover belonged to the Chase.

CLAUDIE
And half the Chase belongs to me.

ANNA

(Weary) Let's not get into that now.

LIAM

(Seeing an opportunity) I could get rid for ya.

CLAUDIE

(Backing Liam) At a price.

LIAM

Fifty quid and I'll get it towed away for ya.

ANNA

Today?

LIAM

Might be pushing it but I'll have a go.

ANNA

(Distressed) Liam, I mean it. I want that Land Rover gone.

LIAM

Yeah, yeah, no worries.... I'll sort it.

SARAH throws ANNA a scathing look before she strides off. LIAM leaves to check out the Land Rover followed by PAULA and CLAUDIE.

12 **EXT. THE CHASE. CAR PARK - DAY**

12

The Land Rover stands looking ghostly. PAULA and LIAM stand surveying it.

LIAM

All it needs are the dents knocked out, a bit of filler and a spray job and it'd look like new.

PAULA

(Shivers) Grizzly int it, to think someone croaked inside.

PAULA turns to see that CLAUDIE is standing back just staring at the Land Rover, obviously upset.

13 **INT. CHASE. DRIVEWAY. FLASHBACK (ANNIVERSARY PARTY)**

13

From CLAUDIE'S POV.

CLAUDIE
(Calls to George) Follow me,
don't leave me on me own!!!

Cut back to see GEORGE, heading for his car....

GEORGE
Don't you worry, I'll be
straight down there
honeybunch!!!

14 **EXT. THE CHASE. CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS**

14

PAULA is at CLAUDIE'S side.

PAULA
Claudie are you alright? Liam,
our Claudie's gone a funny
colour.

CLAUDIE moves slowly towards the car, her hand tentatively
outstretched, as if it might bite. She traces the dent in the
drivers side as she imagines her George inside.

LIAM
It would make a great run
around. Are you sure I can't
keep it?

CLAUDIE
(Adamant) No way! I want rid!
Do you hear me Liam, I want
rid!

CLAUDIE shudders and goes back inside. PAULA pulls a face and
follows CLAUDIE.

15 **EXT. THE CHASE. OUTSIDE THE KENNELS - DAY**

15

MATT is just finishing a cigarette before work. He pops a
chewing gum into his mouth. ANNA is carrying a bag out to the
bins.

ANNA
(Surprised) Matt! You're in
early.

MATT
(Obviously pleased to see her)
I couldn't keep away. I wonder
why.

MATT smiles as he moves towards her but ANNA backs off.

MATT (CONT'D)
What's up?

ANNA

Nothing, it's just we need to keep work and us separate.

MATT

Why?

ANNA

I need time to get used to the idea, and there's the children and Tom to think about.

MATT

(Exuberantly) But I want everyone to know.

ANNA

(Smiling) Shh...I'm a married woman.

MATT

(Moving towards her) Not for much longer, if I've got anything to do with it.

ANNA

You're a very naughty man Mr Lowe.

MATT

You bring out the worst in me. Do you know that?

ANNA

(Kissing him) And you bring out the best in me.

ANNA playfully pushes the bag of rubbish at MATT. He takes it and deposits it into the bin and then steals a quick kiss as he disappears into the kennels. ANNA stands for a moment smiling as she remembers last night. LIAM appears round the back with debris from the Land Rover.

LIAM

Who's put a smile on your face?

ANNA

None of your business.
(Changing the subject) So are you looking forward to visiting this aunt of yours?

LIAM

What aunt?

ANNA

How many hundred year old
aunts, have you got?

LIAM

(Confused) Sorry?

ANNA

You're visiting her, this
afternoon.

LIAM

(Penny Drops) Oh, that aunt.

ANNA

(Realising) Tell Claudie she
doesn't have to make excuses
in future. If she doesn't want
to pick the children up, she
only has to say. I can ask
Shirley.

LIAM

No, honest, we're all out this
afternoon.....she's telling
the truth.

ANNA

Nice try Liam, at least you're
loyal, I'll give you that.

ANNA walks back into the house watched by LIAM.

16 **INT. THE CHASE. HALL - CONTINUOUS - MERGED WITH 15**

16

17 **INT. THE CHASE. CLAUDIE'S BEDROOM - DAY**

17

PAULA is doing CLAUDIE'S makeup.

CLAUDIE

Turned me stomach seeing it
like that.

PAULA

You can't dwell on it. Your
George wanted you to be happy
and he's left you the cash to
do it.

CLAUDIE

Well he didn't actually leave
it to me, I made him take out
insurance.

PAULA

Yeah, but he was getting on a bit, so it was only right and it paid off, dint it.....Do you think you should go dark for the court case because I've got a fab new colour with purple low lights.

LIAM knocks and enters, still drying his hands.

LIAM

I think I might have blown it with Anna about this aunt of ours.

CLAUDIE

Liam, that was me alibi for why we're not around this afta.

LIAM

You could have warned me. So have you thought what yer alibi's gonna be when you're not around for the next couple of years.

CLAUDIE

What you on about?

LIAM

You could get put down.

CLAUDIE

(Alarmed) Don't be stupid, I'll only get a fine.

LIAM

I don't want to worry yer Sis, but I know a fella that got sent down for a ten stretch for fraud and it wasn't even Government money.

PAULA

Stop it Liam, you're frightening her, look at the frown lines, her makeup's goin' in creases

LIAM

That's the least of yer worries. I don't think yer realise how serious this is. You're gonna have to pack yer stuff, just in case

PAULA

Good idea, we could do a runner. You've got two hundred and fifty grand. What's stopping us.

LIAM

(Has he heard right) Two hundred and how much?

PAULA

(Excitedly) Now our Claudie's got her insurance payout she'll probably make one of them richest lists!

CLAUDIE

Will you two shut it! (To Liam) Are you being serious about going down for this?

LIAM

Yeah.

CLAUDIE

(Realization) God!!! I was sure I'd just get a fine.

LIAM

Depends on Judge.

CLAUDIE

(Incredulous) But it's my first offence and I paid all the money back and even calculated the interest, cause I'm good with money.

LIAM

Too good.

PAULA

(Reassuring) It won't come to that.....will it?

CLAUDIE

Yer having me on aren't ya. Look, me hand's shaking.

PAULA

Get her a drink Liam, there's some voddy over there.

LIAM pours a drink. PAULA takes it and downs it in one. LIAM snatches the glass and pours another, handing it directly to CLAUDIE.

CLAUDIE

I need to think....what can I do? I'd never last in prison, me.

PAULA

What if a butch guard takes a fancy to yer? Or even another prisoner.

CLAUDIE downs her drink.

LIAM

(To Paula) You're not really helping are ya.

PAULA

You read about stuff like that.

CLAUDIE

Shut up! (Realization) Holy pooh, I feel sick. I was having such a good day with the money going into me bank account. It's that flaming car....it's cursed. I knew it as soon as I saw it.

LIAM

What are you gonna do?

CLAUDIE

What can I do?

PAULA

Leg it!

CLAUDIE

I'm not doing a runner after all I've been through to get here. That's just what them pair want. I'd be playing straight into their hands. (Decisive) George wanted me to stay put, so I'm gonna front up in court and pray that he's looking down on me.

LIAM

(Unconvinced) You'll be alright Sis, and like you said it was yer first offence.

CLAUDIE grabs a ball of cotton wool and starts to vigorously rub her face.

PAULA

What yer doing?

CLAUDIE

I'm getting this crap off me face. Liam, pick up that grey suit I chucked in the corner and hang it up, will ya. Paula, work yer magic. I want to look like butter wouldn't melt.

We fade into the next scene.

18

INT. LEEDS MAGISTRATES COURT. FOYER - DAY

18

CLAUDIE, as we've never seen her before, enters the court building, flanked by PAULA and LIAM. They look like three mannequins escaped from a shop window. CLAUDIE'S hair is pinned at the back and she's wearing the grey suit and sensible shoes. She's having trouble walking as she drags a large suitcase behind her.

CLAUDIE

How do people walk in flat heels?

LIAM

Remember Sis, don't say owt. Leave it all to your brief and remind him to play on the fact that you've been recently widowed. Should go down well with the Judge.

PAULA holds out a jar.

PAULA

Here, chest rub. Stick it under yer eyes. A few tears might come in handy.

CLAUDIE

(Refusing it) I don't need to pretend to cry. I've got bucketfuls of the real stuff.

LIAM

(Seeing Mr Alcott) There's yer brief Claudie. You better get ready.

CLAUDIE

(Shitting it) Sorry?

LIAM

Mr Alcott's waiting.

CLAUDIE
(Terrified) Oh me belly just
slipped...What if I don't come
out?

Out on CLAUDIE looking terrified.

19 **INT. THE CHASE. KITCHEN - DAY**

19

TOM is getting a bottle of milk from the fridge. ANNA enters.

ANNA
(Annoyed) What are you doing,
Tom? You can't just walk in
here and help yourself. You
don't live here anymore.

TOM
(Surprised) Sorry, we er, ran
out of milk. I didn't think...
Are you all right?

ANNA
Yes, why shouldn't I be?

TOM
No reason, it's
just.....forget it.

ANNA
Forget what?

TOM
I thought we were getting
somewhere...you know...that
things between us were
improving.

ANNA
(Unsure) It's difficult at the
moment.

TOM
Why, because Matt's staying on
now?

ANNA
(Defensive) It's got nothing
to do with Matt and if it had,
it wouldn't be any of your
business.

TOM
It is if my children are
involved.

ANNA

Which children are you talking about? Daisy, Luca, Theo?

TOM

(Scrutinizing Anna) You've changed.

ANNA

Yes I suppose I have. Thank God, I've wised up.

TOM

Are you the reason Matt's staying?

ANNA

I don't have to answer that.

TOM

(Staring) You already have. (Beat) He's not good enough for you.

ANNA

And you are?

TOM

Don't do this to me, Anna. For God sake I love you. Remember how good it was between us. Please why can't you give me another chance?

ANNA

I'm sorry Tom.

TOM

(Almost a whisper) I won't give up on us.

TOM leaves with the milk. ANNA can only stare after him.

20 **INT. LEEDS MAGISTRATES COURT. COURTROOM - DAY**

20

We're at the back of the court with LIAM and PAULA as CLAUDIE is led back in.

PAULA

The Judge must be coming back.

LIAM

What do yer reckon?

PAULA

She's going down.

LIAM

She is, int she. Her brief was crap. I thought he'd make more of her being a widow and play the sympathy vote.

PAULA

She didn't even cry once, she should have used me rub.

CLAUDIE looks back at them for reassurance. PAULA and LIAM gives her the thumbs up as if it's all going great.

LIAM

(Fixed smile at Claudie) She's had it.

PAULA

(Scary smile) Poor cow. What we gonna do cause I can't see Anna and Sarah letting us stay on without Claudie.

LIAM

Yeah, I never thought of that.

PAULA

I was really settled there an all. Me business was booming. (Suddenly remembering) What about the money!

LIAM

What money?

PAULA

Our Claudie's. She'll have two hundred and fifty thousand just sitting in her account and we'll be skint with nowhere to live, and we won't be able to touch a penny. Have you got a pen?

LIAM

What do you need a pen for?

PAULA rummages in her bag. She hands LIAM one of two pens.

PAULA

Get practising.

LIAM looks confused until he sees PAULA scribbling out Claudie's signature on the back of an envelope. They are interrupted by the Court Usher.

COURT USHER

All stand.

We are down at the front as the JUDGE returns. The court sit.

JUDGE BENNETT
Claudie Williams will you
please stand.

CLAUDIE stands nervously.

JUDGE BENNETT (CONT'D)
Claudie Williams, you have
pleaded guilty to obtaining by
deception.

CLAUDIE
Yes your.....

CLAUDIE sways slightly. She looks like she's going to faint.
She holds on to stop herself falling. PAULA jumps to her
feet.

PAULA
(Shouting) Claudie! Are you
okay? She's gonna faint. Has
anyone got any smelling salts?

JUDGE BENNETT
Order.....are you all right to
continue Mrs Williams?

CLAUDIE
(Unsure) Yes, I spose so.

PAULA
(To Liam) She's good int she.
She always wanted to do
acting.

JUDGE BENNETT
I understand you have asked
for seven other similar
offences to be taken into
account?

CLAUDIE
Sorry? Oh, yes your er
worship,er, your Honour.

JUDGE BENNETT
I have taken your previous
good character into
consideration and recognise
that you have paid back all
the pension money.

CLAUDIE smiles meekly, this is looking a little better. The
JUDGE continues.

JUDGE BENNETT (CONT'D)
(Sternly) However, you were in charge of public funds and were working in a position of trust, which you flagrantly abused.

CLAUDIE
I can explain that your worshipness. I didn't really mean.....

CLAUDIE'S SOLICITOR coughs to attract her attention and gestures for her to shut up, but this is lost on CLAUDIE.

JUDGE BENNETT
(Interrupting) If I may continue. I feel that in this particular case a custodial sentence will serve no real purpose, the prisons are overcrowded as it is.

CLAUDIE
I couldn't agree more your holiness. I mean what purpose would it serve to bang me up....and I wouldn't wanna share.

Her solicitor is now coughing frantically.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
(Distracted) Could someone get Mr Alcott a drink of water?

The JUDGE bangs the gavel.

JUDGE BENNETT
(Irritated) Order!
Mrs Williams, I don't think you realise the seriousness of your situation. You are within a hair's breath of being sent to prison.

CLAUDIE
(Regaining her composure) Oh, er yeah, I was just...sorry your worship.

JUDGE BENNETT
As I was saying. You have abused your position within the community, and it is this court's decision that you make reparation to that community.

I am therefore sentencing you
to a three hundred hour
Community Service Order.

LIAM
(Shouting from the back) Way
to go our Claudie!

PAULA
Whoo whoo whoo!!! (Performs a
dance with her elbows) Go
girl! Go girl!

JUDGE BENNETT
(Bangs the table) Order! I
hope that you, Mrs Williams or
anyone else in this court,
does not look upon this
sentence as a soft option.

CLAUDIE
(Almost curtsying) Not at all
your holiness.

JUDGE BENNETT
The order will be enforced
rigorously in accordance with
National Standards and if the
terms and conditions are not
met, the order will be revoked
and a custodial sentence
imposed. Is that clear?

CLAUDIE
Yes, of course.

JUDGE BENNETT
This court is adjourned.

LIAM whistles as the JUDGE stands to leave. Out on CLAUDIE
who is beaming.

21 **INT. LEEDS MAGISTRATES COURT. FOYER - DAY**

21

LIAM and PAULA are waiting for CLAUDIE as she walks from the
court with MR ALCOTT PAULA rushes up to her.

PAULA
Yer, free! Yer really free!

CLAUDIE
(On a high) Community service,
I still can't believe it.
It'll be a doddle.

LIAM

I wouldn't be so sure. Three hundred hours is a bit heavy. (To Paula) Have you got that pen and paper?

PAULA hands LIAM the pen. The paper with Claudie's signatures, flutters to the floor. CLAUDIE picks it up and stares at it.

PAULA

(Caught) Insurance, just in case you were sent down.

CLAUDIE raises an eyebrow. LIAM is busy working it out.

CLAUDIE

(Can't help but smile) Why you lying thieving little...How long you been practising for? It's better than me own.

LIAM

Just say you work seven hours a day for about three days a week that's.....twenty one. Divide into the three hundred, that's about fourteen weeks....(Stresses) That's over three and a half months.

PAULA

I weren't really gonna do it

CLAUDIE

(Suddenly hearing Liam) Three and a half months? Nah, you've made a mistake.

LIAM

I haven't you know.

CLAUDIE

Flippin heck....what excuse am I gonna give the Bronte sisters.

PAULA

Tell em you've got yourself a job or summat.

LIAM

Or come clean.

CLAUDIE

No way, and you've got to promise me you won't say owt.

CLAUDIE spots her JUDGE walking through the foyer.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)

That's him! That's me Judge. Three hundred hours indeed. I need to have a word with him.

CLAUDIE rushes after him.

LIAM

(To Paula) For goodness sake
stop her before she really
does get banged up.

CLAUDIE trying to keep up with him.

CLAUDIE

Excuse me your worshipness,
er, remember me. I've just
worked out me time and I was
wondering if I made a small
donation to a local charity,
you might consider cutting me
hours.

The JUDGE stops and gives CLAUDIE a withering look. LIAM and
PAULA catch up.

JUDGE BENNETT

Are you offering me a bribe?

CLAUDIE

It's not a bribe as such, just
a sort of compromise. Say ten
grand and two weeks community
service.

LIAM

Claudie!!!

JUDGE BENNETT

(To Liam) I would take her
away from here quickly, before
I'm forced to give her a
custodial sentence.

LIAM

Claudie, home.....now.

LIAM drags CLAUDIE away. A REPORTER rushes up with a camera.

REPORTER

Ms Williams! Ms Williams! This
way Ms Williams.

PAULA seeing the camera is in there.

PAULA

I'm her sister and she had her
hair and nails done at Million
Dollar Beauty Parlour, Chevin
Chase. (Grabbing her hand)
Show him your nails Claudie.

CLAUDIE obliges - A flash and we cut straight into the next scene.

22 **INT. THE CHASE. RECEPTION - LATER THAT AFTERNOON**

22

We come up on a picture of CLAUDIE adorning the front page of Mr Roebottom's, evening paper, as he sits reading it with his DOG nestled under his chair. Afternoon surgery is coming to an end. DEBORAH is manning the desk. PAULA is collecting her own client.

PAULA
(Examining her nails) What
have you been doing with your
nails Carol, all your jewels
have dropped off.

PAULA stops in her tracks as she spots the paper.

PAULA (CONT'D)
Flaming Norah! Er, sorry, If
you could make you're own way
up, you know where it is.

CAROL nods as PAULA checks that DEBORAH is not looking. She approaches MR ROEBOTTOM. MARGARET comes out of the pharmacy.

PAULA (CONT'D)
(Snatching the paper) Sorry,
we can't allow that...some of
our animals are allergic.

MR ROEBOTTOM
(Surprised) To newspapers?

PAULA
You'll be surprised.

MARGARET
(Overhearing) Ooh...can I just
check me horoscope.

Before PAULA can protest, MARGARET grabs the paper.

PAULA
If you want a paper, buy yer
own.

MARGARET
Don't be so mean.

MR ROEBOTTOM
Er, I think you'll find,
that's actually my paper.

DEBORAH calls out.

DEBORAH

Mr Roebottom you can take
Doogle through now.

MR ROEBOTTOM leads his DOG from under the chair. PAULA yanks the paper back from MARGARET.

MARGARET

You're welcome to it. I'm
still waiting for the windfall
it promised me last month.

MARGARET marches off to the link room. MR ROEBOTTOM can only stand and stare.

PAULA

(To Mr Roebottom) You're gonna
miss your turn if you don't
go. You can have it back as
soon as yer finished.

MR ROEBOTTOM makes for the consulting room keeping a wary eye on PAULA.

PAULA (CONT'D)

Smile it might never happen.

PAULA rushes off with the offending paper.

23 **EXT. THE CHASE. CAR PARK - DAY**

23

SARAH, heading out on a visit, has collared LIAM in the car park. He has just fitted the new doors.

SARAH

Is that thing still here?

LIAM

I'm working on it.

SARAH

So I see. I thought we told
you to get rid of it.

LIAM

I'm doing the best I can.

PAULA turns up, but on seeing SARAH she hangs back.

SARAH

I'm warning you Liam. Aren't
you even bothered how it makes
Anna and I feel, having to
walk past it.

LIAM

It'll be gone at end of day,
that's what we agreed.

(Lying) I've er, got someone collecting it.

SARAH
I'm surprised Claudie hasn't said anything but then maybe it doesn't bother her.

LIAM
Of course it does. You don't realise how cut up she is about yer dad.

SARAH
No, because she hides it so well, swanning around, spending his money.

LIAM
That's not fair.

SARAH
No Liam, what's not fair is my father died and now we're saddled with you lot.

SARAH gets in her car and slams the door. She drives off as PAULA rushes up and waves the paper at LIAM.

PAULA
Have you seen this?

LIAM
I warned ya.

PAULA
You better get up the shops and buy every copy you can....
Now Liam!

LIAM
Okay, I'm going....I dunno what's up with everyone round here.

LIAM pulls a face as he prepares to leave.

24

INT. THE CHASE. BEAUTY PARLOUR - LATER

24

CAROL is lying on her couch soaking her cuticles with a flannel over her face. PAULA is fanning a prostrate CLAUDIE.

PAULA
Remember what I tell me clients, Claudie. Any publicity is good publicity.

CLAUDIE

(Urgent whisper) Not when it's supposed to be a secret. I made the flippin front page.

PAULA sees that CAROL is trying to peek.

PAULA

You've probably soaked em long enough now Carol. Your fingertips look like crinkle cut chips. Let me just sort Claudie out and I'll be right with you.

CLAUDIE

How are you gonna sort this?

PAULA

It's only the same as when Danny Boy, dumped me. Me picture was all over the papers.

CLAUDIE

Yer famous footballer boyfriend?

PAULA

You never met him did ya?

CLAUDIE

You never met George. I don't think getting dumped is quite the same, is it Paula?

PAULA

It hurt, and I had to put up with me so called mates, having a laugh at my expense.

CLAUDIE

Spouse.

PAULA

Don't you remember what mam used to say?

CLAUDIE

Was that when she wasn't cursing me.

PAULA

If you don't believe in yourself, no other bugger will.....So what do you care what anybody else thinks.

PAULA becomes aware that CAROL is nodding in agreement. She smiles.

PAULA (CONT'D)
See Carol agrees.

CLAUDIE
(Calmly) Thanks Paula. I feel
heaps better.

Suddenly LIAM crashes in the door with a pile of papers.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
(Manic again) Quick Liam hide
em in the towel cupboard.

As LIAM stuffs the papers in the cupboard, one falls to the floor. PAULA picks it up.

PAULA
(Looking at the picture) Yer
nails look good though. (To
Carol) This is how nails
should look.

CLAUDIE grabs the paper from PAULA'S outstretched hand,
before CAROL has chance to see it.

25 **EXT. LOCAL PARK - NEW DAY.**

25

A furtive CLAUDIE appears from behind the back of a parked minibus. BILL DRAPER, the Probation Service Officer, is addressing a GROUP of six. CLAUDIE, MIRIAM, an eccentric looking lady, and four other dubious characters.

BILL
(To Claudie) As I explained,
we are out and about trying to
make North Oxley a cleaner
place to live. Claudie, your
job will be to empty the dog
litter bins in the surrounding
area. Miriam you're on
dredging. (To others) You lot
are with me.

CLAUDIE
Dog litter? I've heard of cat
litter but not dog.

MIRIAM
He means shit, sweetie.

BILL
You can't miss them they're
bright red in colour.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
Yeah, I've seen them. There's
one at The Chase where I li..

er, like to take my dog a walk.

BILL

That's the area I want you to cover. Twenty four bins in all.

CLAUDIE

(Horrified) I can't do that area, no way someone will see me.

BILL

I'm sorry but that's your designated route.

CLAUDIE

Can't someone else do it.

MIRIAM

We've already got our jobs. You're the newbe and newbe's always start on the shit bins.

BILL

(Interrupting) Yes Miriam, thank you. I think Claudie gets the picture. I'll be checking up on you, so no slacking. Oh, and while I think of it, all mobile phones must be left in the minibus.

CLAUDIE

Why don't you chop off me hands and have done with it.

BILL

(Smiles) That's a little drastic.

BILL (CONT'D)

Miriam, you can collect them while I sort out Claudie.

BILL furnishes CLAUDIE with a wheelie bin to push, rubber gloves and a litter picker. MIRIAM holds her hand out and CLAUDIE reluctantly hands over her phone. BILL gestures for the OTHERS to follow and they walk off leaving CLAUDIE staring after them.

LIAM is outside The Chase. He's obviously just had the Land Rover sprayed and is removing the masking tape. He collects it up and walks inside The Chase grounds to dump it.

CLAUDIE, woolly hat pulled down over her head, sporting a high-vis jacket, leggings and high heels, surreptitiously pushes her wheelie bin along the same road towards The Chase. She's acting very strange as she tries to hide from any oncoming vehicles or passers-by, in case she's recognised. She passes the Land Rover, but no Liam. She ventures towards The Chase gates.

27 **EXT. THE CHASE. GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS**

27

CLAUDIE pops her head around the gate of the Chase and sees LIAM walking to the outhouse with the old masking tape etc. She puts her head down and endeavours to get closer to him, to attract his attention. She moves from tree to tree.

 CLAUDIE
Pss.....Liam.

LIAM doesn't hear but STAN bounds over to her excitedly.

 CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
Get off me you soppy thing.
Pss, Liam.

LIAM finally looks over.

 LIAM
(Smiling) Claudie! What yer
doing?

 CLAUDIE
(Almost hysterical) What the
flaming heck does it look
like. They want me to empty
all the flippin dog pooh bins
in the area, including The
Chase.

LIAM laughs.

 CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
It 'int funny. I feel sick, an
someone's bound to see me. I
don't deserve this. I need you
and Paula to help.

 LIAM
Paula's working and I'm trying
to get the Land Rover
finished.

 CLAUDIE
Tough, you both owe me. You're
living with me rent free, it's
the least you can do.(Urgent)
There's no way I'm doing this
on me own. Go and fetch Paula.
You've got five minutes!

CLAUDIE watches LIAM disappear inside. Suddenly she hears a voice.

CLARE

Stan? Is that you, come here
boy.

CLAUDIE ducks as she sees CLARE approaching. STAN is still sniffing around her.

CLAUDIE

Clear off you daft mutt,
before she spots me.

CLAUDIE realises that STAN is interested in the contents of her wheelie bin. Pulling a face she puts her hand in and takes out a small bag and throws it into the bushes. STAN scampers after it. CLARE catches up with him.

CLARE

(Bending down to him) What are
you doing out here on your
own. You should be on a lead.

CLAUDIE can't help grimacing as CLARE allows STAN to lick her face.

28 **INT. THE CHASE. RECEPTION - PHARMACY/ PUB - DAY**

28

Reception is busy. LIAM walks through to fetch PAULA. TOM is collecting some drugs from the Pharmacy. His phone rings. TOM checks the caller and his demeanour changes as he realises it's Fiona. CUT BETWEEN TWO LOCATIONS FOR THIS SCENE

TOM

(Cautiously) Hi Fiona, is
there a problem?

FIONA is in the bar.

FIONA

No, I just thought how nice it
would be to have dinner
together tonight. You, me and
Theo.

TOM

(Wary) Yeah, er I'm just not
certain what time I'll be
finished.

FIONA

(To the point) I'd hoped that
now you're aware of the little
situation we're in
together...you might want to
spend some more time with Theo
and me.

TOM'S aware he's got to play FIONA'S game for now - at least until he's fully formulated his plan.

TOM
I do, it's just....

FIONA
(Interrupting) And we should tell him the truth about you being his dad.

TOM
(Taken aback) What!!!
(thinking on his feet) Don't you er, think maybe he's a bit young to be taking this on board.

FIONA
(Resolute) I think it's time.

TOM
Can't we talk about this later?

FIONA
(Ignoring Tom's concerns) Say about seven then. Is that okay with you?

TOM
(Trapped) Er, okay, I'll try and work something out.

FIONA
(Adamant) Make sure you do Tom.

FIONA closes her phone. FRANK enters.

FRANK
I'm going in to town, do you need anything?

FIONA
(Pleased) That was Tom, he's having dinner with us tonight.

FRANK
Is he? It's good he's making an effort for Theo.

FIONA
It is isn't it. I'm going to cook something really special.

FIONA (CONT'D)

Oh and dad, Tom says it's okay
if you give me his keys, so I
can make a start.

FIONA smiles in anticipation. We are back with TOM as he walks through reception looking perturbed. DEBORAH answers the phone as LIAM and PAULA rush past the desk in their haste to help CLAUDIE with the bins.

PAULA

(To Deborah) Summat's come up,
so I'll be gone about an hour.
I'll put a note on the door,
but if any punters are
waiting, can ya keep em happy
for me?

DEBORAH

The Chase Veterinary practice,
Deborah speaking.....Yes, well
you've certainly come to the
right place.

DEBORAH

(Into the phone) Sorry, could
you hold just a minute.

LIAM

Come on Sis.....

RICK passes through reception from consulting room two,
carrying an x-ray

PAULA

(To Deborah) I owe you one
thanks, Debs.

LIAM

Will you get a move on.

DEBORAH

(Shouting after Paula) I'm not
here for your benefit young
lady, and the names
Deb..o..rah. (Back to her
call) I'm so sorry about
that.....

RICK calls to TOM.

RICK

Have you got a minute Tom, to
take a look at this?

TOM gestures for RICK to go through.

29 **INT. THE CHASE. CONSULTING ROOM 1 - CONTINUOUS**

29

RICK sticks an x-ray on the light box.

RICK

It's an unmated turtle.

As TOM studies it we can see the shadow of eggs.

TOM

It's fascinating.

RICK
I've given her a calcium and
oxytocin injection.

TOM
I've seen it before, unmated
turtles, developing eggs.
Owners don't realise that they
need a nesting place otherwise
the turtles tend to retain
them. If she doesn't expel
them you'll have to operate.
What do you think?

TOM becomes aware that RICK isn't listening as RICK stands
staring at the x-ray.

TOM (CONT'D)
Is everything alright Rick?

RICK
Sorry, miles away....so I'll
have to operate.

RICK notices TOM smiling.

RICK (CONT'D)
You just said that...thanks
mate.

RICK takes the x-ray down and is about to leave, he turns.

RICK (CONT'D)
(Sighs, needing someone to
talk to) Actually, it's Clare.
I'm trying to do the right
thing by her but I'm being
pulled from all directions.

TOM
(Sympathetic) I know the
feeling.

RICK
It's just that now we can
actually be together, I don't
know....it's like she's not as
interested anymore...I can't
explain it.

TOM
Maybe she misses the secrecy,
the excitement.

RICK

No, Clare's not like that. I know it must be hard for her... what with Harriet and Deborah.

TOM

Deborah's never going to make it easy for you.

RICK

We both know that, but I thought when Deborah and I separated it meant Clare and I had a chance, it was our time...

TOM

If only it were that simple.

RICK

(Irritated) Yes but it should be. We've got nothing stopping us getting on with our lives.

As if on cue DEBORAH knocks the door and enters.

DEBORAH

I've got the Zoo on the phone, they need a veterinary surgeon, licensed and trained to use a dart gun.

TOM

I am....but it's been a while.

RICK

Sounds interesting.

We follow TOM through to the phone.

30 **INT. THE CHASE. RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS**

30

TOM picks up the phone, followed by DEBORAH and RICK.

TOM

Can I help.....Yes I am.....A lion cub....Er, yes....I can get there in say, forty minutes. Yes, I know it....right so I'll see you then.

TOM puts the receiver down.

TOM (CONT'D)
(Nervously excited) They need me to examine a cub so I'm going to have to dart the mother.

RICK
Do you want me to come and assist?

DEBORAH
You could have taken the call, Richard if you had bothered to listen to me and completed the appropriate training. I told you, you should.....

RICK
(Incensed after her interruption) For Christ sake Deborah....it's actually none of your business anymore.

DEBORAH glares at RICK. TOM looks exhilarated.

TOM
I need to dig out the dart gun. Er, Deborah, can you organise cover for me?

DEBORAH
Of course. Sarah's out on a call but I'm sure Richard won't mind stepping in.

TOM rushes off leaving RICK looking irked. DEBORAH throws him a look - serves you right.

31 **EXT. THE CHASE - DAY**

31

CLAUDIE is lurking in the grounds as PAULA and LIAM approach.

PAULA
(Producing her protective gear) I wouldn't clean shit for just anyone you know.

CLAUDIE
I'm not just anyone though, am I, and I've just almost got caught.....(Seeing Paula) What yer doing?

CLAUDIE and LIAM can only stare as PAULA dons veterinary gloves almost up to her shoulders and then produces a pair of surgical tongs.

PAULA
I was a brownie remember.

CLAUDIE
For all of a week.

PAULA
Yeah, but you never forget.

PAULA tentatively approaches the first bin.

PAULA (CONT'D)
Come on then, I haven't got
all day.

CLAUDIE
Don't just stand watching
Paula, Liam, go and empty the
bins down the road.

Out on LIAM reluctantly walking off.

32 **INT. THE CHASE - LINK ROOM - DAY**

32

TOM is cleaning his dart gun. ANNA dressed in her surgical gown comes in from surgery to change.

ANNA
What are you doing?

TOM
I just got a call from the
zoo. They're desperate for a
licensed vet to dart a lion.

ANNA
Really, what's wrong with it?

TOM
There's a problem with the
cub, it's limping and they
suspect a fracture. We need to
take it from the mother.

ANNA
(Staring at the gun) I'd
forgotten you still had the
dart gun.

TOM
It's been a while, I'm
actually quite nervous.

ANNA
(Teasing) Want me to go
instead?

TOM
(Holding out the gun) If you
really want to....I don't
mind.

ANNA
(Appreciating his sacrifice)
No Tom, you go. You always
wanted to be the big game vet.

TOM
Yeah there was a time we
thought this'd be routine. We
were going to change the
world.

TOM and ANNA share a moment.

TOM (CONT'D)
I better go...

ANNA watches as TOM leaves.

33 **INT. THE CHASE. RECEPTION - DAY**

33

DEBORAH is dealing with the TURTLE owner, MR RICHARDS.

DEBORAH
We're going to keep your
turtle overnight, Mr Richards,
so we'll have to sort your
bill in the morning.

One of Paula's irate clients, MS PARTRIDGE is not pleased at
being kept waiting. MARGARET and CLARE are obviously amused.

MS PARTRIDGE
I'm not used to being kept
waiting. I've got another
appointment at two o'clock.

DEBORAH
(Annoyed but the consummate
professional) I can only
apologise Ms Partridge. Would
you just mind waiting a
second.

MARGARET
(Whispers) With a name like
that, she should be seeing a
vet.

DEBORAH gives MR RICHARDS, a card.

DEBORAH

It's probably best to phone
first thing to check on the
best time to collect her.

MR RICHARDS

Thanks luv.

MR RICHARDS leaves.

DEBORAH

(To Ms Partridge) I'm sorry
but it's no good complaining
to me I work for The Chase
Veterinary practice. I've got
nothing to do with the *beauty*
side.

MARGARET

Is this where things start
getting *ugly*?

CLARE

(Laughing) Margaret....

PAULA rushes in, out of breath.

PAULA

Sorry folks I had an
emergency.

DEBORAH

A broken finger nail perhaps.

PAULA

It must be so lonely up there
on your high horse, Debs.

DEBORAH is somewhat taken aback. She sees CLARE and MARGARET
laughing.

DEBORAH

Haven't you two got work to
do?

TOM walks through.

TOM

I'll be as quick as I can
Deborah.

DEBORAH

No problem. Richard is happy
to cover.

CLARE heads off towards the Link Room. MARGARET grabs her
arm.

MARGARET

I don't know how your Rick put
up with her for all those
years.

CLARE

God knows. He's not really my
Rick though is he?

MARGARET

I hope you're not letting her
come between the pair of you.
You're made for each other.

CLARE

(Not convinced) Do you think
so?

MARGARET

What's up? You haven't fell
out.

CLARE

Sort of. It's just....It's not
like I thought it would be.

MARGARET

Nothin ever is lovey. You have
to work at it.

CLARE

I know but it feels like I'm
doing all the work. I'm trying
to make allowances for Debs
and Harriet and yet Rick's the
one acting all possessive. It
shouldn't be this hard.

MARGARET

Ahh.....I wish I could wave a
magic wand for you, make the
wicked witch over there,
disappear.

CLARE

So do I Mags, and maybe you
could arrange a happy ever
after, while you're at it.

MARGARET follows CLARE into the Link Room.

34

EXT. LOCAL PARK - DAY

34

CLAUDIE makes her way back to the minibus, smiling with self-satisfaction, she pushes her wheelie bin towards BILL who is talking to MIRIAM.

CLAUDIE

That's me done for the day. If
you sign me sheet Bill, I'll
be off.

BILL

Sorry?

CLAUDIE

I've emptied all the bins and
in record time, I bet.

BILL

Good, we're just about to have
lunch and then you can partner
Miriam, dredging the river.

CLAUDIE

You what? But I've done me
stint.

BILL

You were given three hundred
hours, Claudie. That means you
have to work for the full
three hundred. You've got at
least another four ahead of
you today.

CLAUDIE

Flippin heck, what do you
want, blood!

35 **EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY**

35

CLAUDIE and MIRIAM pulling on overalls and waders, supervised
by BILL.

BILL

It isn't too deep on this
stretch of the river so I'll
be able to leave you to work
on your own, while I supervise
the others further up.

MIRIAM

Such faith in us Bill.

BILL

I just hope Claudie will show
the same enthusiasm that she
displayed this morning.

CLAUDIE

Fat chance of that. I'm on a
go slow.

BILL

Don't be like that I have high hopes for you.

BILL smiles as he walks away.

MIRIAM

He's not that bad really.

CLAUDIE

I just can't believe what they expect us to do.

MIRIAM

We are repaying our debt to society.

CLAUDIE

Why, what did you do?

MIRIAM

It was a case of amnesia, it came on after a visit to the local supermarket. I somehow forgot to pay.

CLAUDIE

Is that all.

MIRIAM

Amnesia has a terrible habit of creeping up on me at regular intervals.

CLAUDIE

(Smiling) I see.

MIRIAM

What about you. What abhorrent act have you performed?

CLAUDIE

I cashed in some money that didn't belong to me.

MIRIAM

And the original recipient?

CLAUDIE

No longer with us.

MIRIAM

Then obviously no longer in need.

CLAUDIE

Yeah, you're right. It's just a pity the Judge didn't see it like that. (Picks up a net) So what are we supposed to be doing?

MIRIAM

Cleansing our souls.

CLAUDIE

Sorry?

MIRIAM

We're cleaning the crap out of the water.

CLAUDIE

Oh, right.

36 **EXT. THE CHASE. STREET - DAY**

36

LIAM is polishing the now finished Land Rover as Montgomery's Huntsman, RON, walks towards The Chase with his DOG. He stops to look at the Land Rover.

LIAM

It's for sale. I'm open to offers. Fancy a test drive?

RON

(Gesturing to his dog) I'm here for the dog, not to buy a motor.

LIAM

Yeah, but you have to grab the opportunities when they present themselves.

RON

(Looks at Liam as if he's nuts) Yeah...whatever.

LIAM shrugs as RON walks past.

37 **EXT. MONTGOMERY ESTATE. STABLES - DAY**

37

SEBASTIAN walks through to the stables. AMY, the stable girl is cleaning some tack.

SEBASTIAN

Amy, can you saddle my horse. I'll get a ride in before dinner.

At that moment ADRIAN pulls up in his 4x4. SEBASTIAN looks awkward.

ADRIAN
(Getting out of his car) Can,
I have a quick word Seb?

SEBASTIAN
Er, I was just going for a
ride.

ADRIAN
It won't take long. It's about
Sarah.

SEBASTIAN
I was afraid you were going to
say that, look old chap.....

ADRIAN
I know you feel responsible.

SEBASTIAN
Well I.....

Sebastian's phone indicates a text message. SEBASTIAN
gestures to ADRIAN, he better check it - anything to divert
ADRIAN'S questioning. However when he opens it he sees it's
from SARAH. We read - *Ring me. We need to talk. S* SEBASTIAN
snaps his phone shut.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
(Awkwardly) Er, sorry about
that.

ADRIAN
I was just trying to explain.
Don't beat yourself up about
it. It's all my fault. I
should have told her I knew.

SEBASTIAN
(Off the hook) Well, I did
think you would have discussed
it....so I

ADRIAN
(Interrupting) She didn't come
home the other night.

SEBASTIAN
(Feigning surprise) Maybe she
stayed at The Chase.

ADRIAN
No, she's not talking to Anna
either.

SEBASTIAN
But she's home now?

ADRIAN

Sort of but she's still
furious with me.

SEBASTIAN

Just give her some time and
she'll come round.

SEBASTIAN almost feels guilty as he sees how worried ADRIAN
looks..

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

God you look awful. I suppose
I've got time for a quick
drink with a mate.(Calling to
Amy) Forget my horse, Amy,
I've changed my mind.

ADRIAN

Thanks Sebastian, I really
appreciate this.

Out on SEBASTIAN as he smiles coolly.

38 **EXT. THE CHASE. STREET - DAY**

38

LIAM is revving the engine of the Land Rover. RON comes out
with his DOG who is now wearing a protective collar. LIAM
jumps out.

RON

So! How many miles has it
done?

LIAM

Ninety nine. What would you
say to three thousand?

RON

Phh! Forget it.

LIAM

Negotiable of course. She goes
like a dream. Just have a test
drive, you know you want to.
Even if you not interested
it'll save you a walk home.

LIAM gestures to the DOG.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Poor dog needs a lift by the
look of it.

RON

Go on then, but I'm not
promising owt.

LIAM punches the air in anticipation of a sale as RON puts his DOG inside the Land Rover.

39 **EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY**

39

CLAUDIE and MIRIAM are knee deep in the water.

CLAUDIE
There's fish an all sorts
swimming around me feet.

MIRIAM
Take heart, it means that
nature is battling hard
against environmental
destruction.

CLAUDIE
(Suddenly) Bloody hell! What's
that?

MIRIAM
What?

CLAUDIE
In the weeds. Something big an
slimy, it looks like a giant
slug.

MIRIAM
I doubt that very much.

MIRIAM wades over to investigate.

MIRIAM (CONT'D)
I do believe it's an otter,
not that I've seem many close
up. It looks as if it's
trapped in a fishing line.
Come and give me a hand
Claudie.

CLAUDIE
What if it bites?

MIRIAM
Then you'll bleed sweetie, but
at least the poor thing will
be out of imminent danger.

CLAUDIE
Hang on a minute.

CLAUDIE puts on her gloves.

MIRIAM
I'll hold it still while you
try and untangle the line.

CLAUDIE

Urgh, don't let it scratch me.

CLAUDIE and MIRIAM untangle the OTTER. MIRIAM picks it up.

MIRIAM

I think it's bleeding,
probably from a hook.

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

Oh bless its little cotton
socks, we need to get it seen
by a vet, before it goes into
shock.

CLAUDIE

What shall I do, fetch Bill?

MIRIAM

He could be anywhere.

CLAUDIE

(Pointedly) If I had me
mobile.

MIRIAM

Go and flag down a car, get
someone to ring for you.

CLAUDIE walks off.

40 **INT. THE CHASE. RECEPTION - DAY**

40

The Chase is noisy and busy with vet and beauty CLIENTS.
DEBORAH is manning the desk. MARGARET and CLARE stand around
obviously waiting. MATT rushes in.

MATT

(Excited) They're here.
(Loudly) Right everyone, can
we clear reception.

The CLIENTS stare bewildered.

DEBORAH

(To Matt) Honestly! (Taking
Charge) Sorry, what Matt means
is that we are carrying a wild
animal through and we need you
to vacate the reception area.

Nobody moves.

MATT

(Loudly) We're bringing a lion cub through and your pets may react to his scent, so it's best if you clear reception.

DEBORAH ushers CLIENTS into the hallway.

DEBORAH

If you'll just move into the hallway for a moment. This way please.....

MATT rushes back outside and returns with TOM and SIMONE the handler from the Zoo, carrying the LION CUB in a cage. Various heads appear, to watch and maybe gasps and ooh's from some CLIENTS. The sound of dogs barking at the scent and maybe a warning cry from a domestic cat. TOM is beaming.

MARGARET

(Can't help smiling) It's official, we're working in a flamin zoo.

41 **EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY**

41

CLAUDIE runs to the road. She sees a car approaching and waves it down. As it slows she realises that it's FRANK.

FRANK

(Winding down his window)
Claudie?

CLAUDIE

(Caught) Shi..Frank. I'm sorry but do you think you can help? We er, I...found an otter, it's hurt and we need to get a vet.

FRANK

(Surprised) An otter? I'll ring Anna then.

CLAUDIE

No, not The Chase....can't you think of somewhere else.

FRANK

(Bemused) Don't be daft, Claudie, The Chase is closest. Where is it?

CLAUDIE

(Resigned) Just down the bank here.

CLAUDIE walks back muttering to herself.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)
Of all the flaming gin joints
in all the flaming....

42 **INT. THE CHASE. CONSULTING ROOM 2 - DAY**

42

CLARE, RICK and MARGARET, have come to see the CUB in its cage. TOM with SIMONE the handler and MATT stand back.

TOM
(Addressing them all) I've
given him a pain killing
injection and brought him back
to x-ray.

RICK
He doesn't appear to be
displaying any stressful
behaviour, despite being in a
cage.

TOM
I know, I'm surprised.

RICK
And his body posture seems non
aggressive.

MARGARET
(Proudly) Can you imagine if
George Williams could see a
lion cub in his very own
practice.

CLARE
I could take him home with me.

RICK looks sadly at CLARE.

RICK
Lucky lion cub....

CLARE half smiles at RICK. ANNA comes through.

ANNA
(Seeing the cub) Oh, he's
so....beautiful. What symptoms
is he displaying?

SIMONE
We noticed him limping since
early this morning.

RICK
Could the mother have stepped
on him?

SIMONE

That's a possibility.

ANNA

Well if you need to operate,
I'd be happy to assist.

CLARE

Have you worked with big cats
before, Anna?

ANNA

(Smiling) Tom and I did a
stint in our gap year, didn't
we.

TOM

Yes, many moons ago. Anyway,
we'll know more when we've x-
rayed him.

CLARE

Will he need to be sedated?

ANNA

Not if we can help it.

TOM

We don't want to if we can get
away with it.

TOM and ANNA smile. They're in their element. MATT is looking
on, obviously left out.

RICK

How did the darting go?

SIMONE

(Cutting in) Actually, he got
her in one. We were very
impressed.

TOM can't help but smile.

MARGARET

Check out Indiana Jones, here.

ANNA

I need to get going, I've had
a call out. Make sure you wait
for me Tom.

TOM smiles as ANNA rushes off. MATT looks tense.

SIMONE

Can I just warn everyone.
Please make sure you always
stand at a safe distance from
the cage.

MARGARET

I don't think we need telling
twice, as cuddly as he looks.

TOM

(Beaming) Right everybody,
let's get on with it and give
him some space.

They all troop out leaving TOM mesmerised by the CUB.

43

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

43

CLAUDIE joins MIRIAM.

MIRIAM

Did you get help?

CLAUDIE

(Despondent) Yeah, you could
say that.

MIRIAM

What's wrong?

CLAUDIE

I flag a car down and it's
only Frank, someone I know and
now he's gonna call Anna to
come out.

MIRIAM

Who's Anna?

CLAUDIE

(Rambling to herself) And then
Anna will tell Sarah and
before you know it, the whole
flaming lot of em will find
out.

MIRIAM

I see...you've been keeping it
a secret.

CLAUDIE

Well, I'm not going to
broadcast it, am I.

MIRIAM

I better disappear
then.(Gesturing to Claudie's
overalls) And I think you
should ditch the designer
gear.

44 **EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY**

44

CLAUDIE has removed her overalls as she and FRANK sit waiting for ANNA. FRANK is holding the otter.

CLAUDIE
So I just thought it might be
good to do some voluntary
work.

FRANK
(Smiling) That you don't want
Anna to know about.

CLAUDIE
I don't like to flaunt me good
deeds.

FRANK
Of course not. So you chose
clearing rivers?

CLAUDIE
Someone's got to do it.

FRANK
Yeah, especially when ordered
by the court.

CLAUDIE
(He knows) Ohh, you... Spose
you'll tell everyone.

FRANK
Of course not, but why the big
secret?

CLAUDIE
I'm embarrassed.

FRANK
It wouldn't bother Anna or
Sarah, would it?

CLAUDIE
Oh believe me Frank, it would.
They think their dad married
beneath him and this just
proves it to them.

FRANK
Anna's not like that.

CLAUDIE
She pretends she's not but I
can see the way she looks down
her nose at me.

FRANK

So what are we going to tell
her about the otter?

CLAUDIE

I'll think of summat.

FRANK smiles at CLAUDIE.

45

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

45

ANNA is examining the OTTER on the bank.

CLAUDIE

Yeah so me and Frank were
having a picnic and I looked
over and there it was, wasn't
it Frank?

FRANK nods. ANNA carefully checks the OTTER'S wound.

ANNA

It's got a slight shoulder
wound caused by a fishing
hook. It's not too serious but
it could have been, if it was
left much longer.

CLAUDIE

So it's gonna be alright?

ANNA

I think so. The problem is the
fishermen who ditch their
lines without thinking. Otters
are such playful animals and
love to roll around on the
grass. She's a real beauty

FRANK

It's a she?

ANNA

Yes, and she's very lucky.
It's just a superficial wound.
(Opening her case) I'll give
her a shot of long acting
penicillin, to be on the safe
side but the best thing we can
do is release her straight
back.

FRANK and CLAUDIE exchange a smile of relief. ANNA gives the
OTTER the injection.

CLAUDIE

(Sincerely) Thanks Anna, your
dad would be proud of you.

A moment between them both. FRANK look on proudly.

ANNA

I've got to get straight back
but it might be wise to just
keep an eye on her, make sure
she swims off okay.

CLAUDIE

Yeah, of course. You'll stay
won't you Frank?

FRANK

I'd be honoured.

As ANNA packs away she can't help but wonder what the hell's
going on between these two?

46

EXT. MONGOMERY'S - DAY

46

Huntsman RON, is driving the Land Rover through the grounds,
music playing. AMY is exercising one of William's horses,
watched by SEBASTIAN. They are sharing a joke. RON waves at
them both but as he turns the car, the steering fails. RON
desperately tries to regain control but the car careers
forward towards the HORSE. SEBASTIAN makes a grab for the
reins but it's too late as the HORSE rears. RON slams on the
breaks, and as the Land Rover screeches to a halt, inches
from the group, the HORSE bolts across the fields.

SEBASTIAN

Ron! What the hell are you
playing at!

RON

I'm sorry, the ruddy steering
wheel locked.

SEBASTIAN

Are you all right AMY?

AMY

Yes, but what about Nero?

SEBASTIAN runs for his car followed by RON and AMY.

47

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

47

FRANK and CLAUDIE sit by the river watching the OTTER as she
sniffs around.

CLAUDIE

Thanks for not saying anything
to Anna.

FRANK

That's okay.

CLAUDIE
Do you think she believed me?

FRANK
I don't know about that, but I
bet she's wondering about us
picnicking together.

CLAUDIE
(Smiles) I hadn't thought of
that.

FRANK smiles. A comfortable moment. The OTTER almost
approaches them. FRANK gestures to stay still.

FRANK
It's beautiful here.

CLAUDIE looks around her.

CLAUDIE
It is int it. So peaceful.

48 **EXT. FIELD - DAY**

48

In contrast, NERO is galloping across a field followed by
Sebastian's car. He eventually comes to a halt in a clearing.
SEBASTIAN stops the car and he, RON and AMY get out and
tentatively approach NERO.

AMY
Okay boy, come on let's get
you back home.

SEBASTIAN
(Wincing at the sight of the
leg) He's injured, look at his
leg. Ron you take my car.

AMY and SEBASTIAN lead NERO out.

49 **EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY**

49

CLAUDIE and FRANK watch as the OTTER runs down to the water.

CLAUDIE
She doesn't seem in a hurry to
leave here.

FRANK
She's just like another young
lady I know.

CLAUDIE
Are you talking about me?

FRANK
I might be.

CLAUDIE

I admit it, I love living around here. It's the first proper home I've ever had. I just wish the Brontes, weren't so against me.

FRANK

You can't really blame them. The Chase has been their home for as long as I can remember.

CLAUDIE

They've never accepted that George could love someone like me.

FRANK

I don't think it's that.

CLAUDIE

If you'd have seen the state he was in, when we met. He'd forgotten how to smile. I made him laugh.

FRANK

Maybe that's the problem. You've forced Anna and Sarah to face up to the fact, George was so unhappy, and they were too caught up in their own lives to even notice.

CLAUDIE

Do you think so?

FRANK

They're not bad girls.

CLAUDIE

That Sarah's got a gob on her.

FRANK

(Smiling) No match for you though, eh.

CLAUDIE

I can't believe she's actually his daughter. I'd have put money on it being Anna.

FRANK

(Intrigued) Would you? That's interesting.

CLAUDIE

Anna's gentle like George.
(Smiles) George could make you
feel special. I couldn't
believe it when he asked me
out, I thought I wer' out of
his league.

FRANK

He always got what he went
after, did George. I suppose I
was jealous of him.
(Reflective) Ended up he had
everything, everything I
wanted.

CLAUDIE

(Surprised) George did?

FRANK

(Remembering) Yeah.

CLAUDIE

What do you mean?

FRANK

(Said too much) You know, a
good marriage, a family.

CLAUDIE

You had Shirley and Fiona.

FRANK

You're right and look at the
pigs ear I made of that.
(Looking around) Hey, where's
the otter gone?

CLAUDIE

She must have swam off, while
we were gassing.

FRANK

Come on then love, I'll buy
you a drink to celebrate her
freedom.

CLAUDIE

I should wait for Miriam. Nah,
they've probably packed up and
gone home by now.

FRANK pulls CLAUDIE up from the grass. A moment as they smile
at each other.

50 **INT. THE CHASE. CONSULTING ROOM 2 - DAY**

50

SIMONE and TOM are in with the CUB, looking at the x-ray. ANNA enters.

ANNA

What have you got?

TOM

I was just saying to Simone,
It's a dislocated hip. Look
the femoral head is positioned
above the acetabulum.

ANNA

(Studying the x-ray) I can't
see any fractures.

TOM

No, but we're still going to
have a job to get it back into
the right position.

ANNA

So you'll need to
anaesthetise.

SIMONE

That's such a shame.

TOM

Yes I know.

TOM (CONT'D)

Let me just have another look.

TOM gestures to SIMONE to hold the CUB steady.

TOM (CONT'D)

Simone, If you could hold him
while I have a feel of the
back leg and if I just pull it
slightly toward me.....did you
hear that?

ANNA

(Amazed) Has it gone back in?

TOM

(Smiling) It felt like it.
Hang on let me just feel....
It feels firmly seated, and
it's in the correct position.

ANNA

That's amazing.

SIMONE

(Impressed) Congratulations!

TOM
I'll need to take another x-ray.

ANNA
(Maybe manipulating herself) I think you've done it Tom.

ANNA smiles and stares intently at a very satisfied TOM, as she recognises the man she married. Their eyes meet and as if TOM is reading her mind he smiles back and they connect. Spontaneously they hug. A very comfortable moment that feels so right. ANNA shivers as she realises how easily she could forgive him, but it's just too late.

ANNA (CONT'D)
(Pulling away) Em, I better get back to it.

ANNA makes to leave and then turns.

ANNA (CONT'D)
You did a great job. You should be proud of yourself.

TOM smiles sadly.

TOM
I got lucky. I've done nothing to be proud of.

ANNA leaves.

51 **INT. THE BLACK BULL PUBLIC HOUSE - DAY**

51

LIAM is sitting with CLAUDIE. Counting his money.

LIAM
Two thousand five hundred smackaroonies and it's all thanks to you, Claudie.

CLAUDIE
I'm just glad you got rid of the bloomin thing.

LIAM
I've made over two grand for a few hours work (Shouting over to Frank) Get the drinks in Frank, I'm buying.

LIAM beams with pleasure.

52 **EXT. THE CHASE - DAY**

52

BILL DRAPER pulls up in his car, outside The Chase. He gets out and surveys the building. He is obviously impressed. He re-checks the address with his notes and enters reception.

53 **INT. THE CHASE. RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS**

53

DEBORAH is on the phone. TOM walks over to the desk with a prescription.

DEBORAH

Tom, it's the Zoo again.

TOM takes the call.

TOM

Tom Bedford...Thanks we were rather pleased ourselves
.....sorry, could you repeat that.....
(Looks around to check who's listening) Are you serious....what can I say. Of course, yes....I'll er give it some thought.

TOM replaces the receiver deep in thought.

DEBORAH

(Noticing) Is there a problem?

TOM

(Preoccupied) Sorry? Oh no...they're er, really pleased.

DEBORAH is about to enquire further but the phone rings again. TOM leaves looking almost liberated - this could be his escape from Fiona. PAULA collects her CLIENT, LINSAY. BILL approaches the desk and DEBORAH gestures for him to wait a moment.

DEBORAH

(In the phone) I'm sorry but if you posted it Tuesday it would have arrived by now.

PAULA

I really recommend the full brazilian but it's totally up to you. Do you want to come up?

DEBORAH

I'm not accusing you of anything.

BILL stares at PAULA obviously recognising a family resemblance. PAULA throws him a dirty look.

PAULA
Do you want a picture?

DEBORAH
No, I'll be speaking to your
supervisor if it's not here
tomorrow.

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
(To Bill) I'm sorry about
that, can I help?

BILL
I'm looking for Claudie
Williams.

DEBORAH
Can I ask what's it in
connection with?

PAULA stops in her tracks at the mention of Claudie's name.

PAULA
I'm Claudie's sister. Can I
help?(To Deborah) Are you
still nosing?

DEBORAH
I never nose, as you put it.
I'm simply doing my job.

PAULA
(Irritated) Well I'm here now.

DEBORAH turns with an air of disdain.

BILL
I'm Bill, I'm her.....

PAULA
(Interrupting) Er, we can't
speak here, could you wait a
sec while I just show me
client upstairs.

BILL nods. PAULA gestures for LINSAY to follow. ANNA walks
through to reception.

DEBORAH
(Determined to nose) Oh, Anna
this gentleman is looking for
Claudie Williams (To Bill)
This is Anna, she's er, Mrs
Williams...step daughter.

PAULA
(One eye on Bill) If yer could
make your way upstairs.

BILL
(Thinking he's talking to
family) I was just concerned
about Claudie when she wasn't
at the river, after finding
the otter.

PAULA
You'll need to get undressed
and pop up on the table with
yer undies off. Just drape a
towel over yourself.

ANNA

It was me who actually treated
the otter but I left Claudie
at the river bank.

The phone rings but DEBORAH is too busy being nosey to answer
it until ANNA throw her a look. DEBORAH reluctantly picks up
the receiver.

BILL

I must have missed her, it's
just that we insist that
everyone on community service
reports back at the end of the
day, to be signed off.

DEBORAH

The Chase veterinary practice,
Deborah speaking.

ANNA (CONT'D)

(Obviously surprised) Do you?
I never realised....

ANNA tries to hide her surprise. PAULA stands frozen, she's
obviously overheard. DEBORAH calls across to ANNA

DEBORAH

Anna, I'm sorry to interrupt
but there's been an accident
at The Montgomery's with one of
their horses. They need an
emergency visit.

ANNA

(Irritated at the
interruption) Sarah's out on
call, try her mobile.

PAULA shoots BILL a look as she rushes past and out of the
door.

53a **INT. THE CHASE. BEAUTY PARLOUR - DAY**

53a

LINSAY is lying on the couch with just a towel covering her
modesty. She hears a noise outside the door, which is
slightly ajar.

LINSAY

(Craning her neck) Hello! Is
there anybody there?

54 **INT. THE BLACK BULL PUBLIC HOUSE - DAY**

54

LIAM is playing pool. FRANK hands CLAUDIE a drink just as
PAULA arrives.

PAULA

(Animated whisper) Can I have
a quick word, about you know
what.

FRANK tactfully moves away.

PAULA (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry Claudie. I don't
know how to tell you.

CLAUDIE
Tell me what?

PAULA
Bill Draper has been to The
Chase and he's told Anna yer
doing Community Service.

CLAUDIE
(Gutted) Flippin heck, that's
ruined everything. After all
me flamin hard work to keep it
secret.

PAULA
(Upset) It wasn't my fault?

CLAUDIE
I didn't say it wer.

PAULA
Yeah, but I should have
stopped him. I'm so sorry
Claudie, cause you've always
been there for me.

CLAUDIE
(Surprised) It's okay, we'll
sort summat out.

PAULA
Same as you sorted those
bullies out at Brownies, cause
we couldn't afford the
uniform.

CLAUDIE
(Gently) What's brought this
on Paula?

PAULA
I just wanted to tell you how
grateful I am, for everything
you've done for me. The
business, everything.

CLAUDIE
Ahh, I'm proud of you Paula.
You're the one with the
certificates. Nobody does a
back,sack and crack, like you.

A tender moment and then PAULA suddenly jumps up.

PAULA

Shit....e! I've only gone and
left a client lying on the
table with no undies on.

CLAUDIE can only smile as PAULA rushes off. FRANK joins
CLAUDIE.

FRANK

Is she okay?

CLAUDIE

Anna has found out about me
Community Service, she'll tell
Sarah. What am I gonna do?
They are gonna be unbearable
to live with.

FRANK

It was bound to come out. Just
come clean, that's all you can
do. They'll respect you for
it.

CLAUDIE

I can't see that somehow. I
can just imagine the snide
comments.

FRANK

You might be surprised.
They're not ogres. Just front
up to them, and make like you
don't know, they know.

CLAUDIE smiles warmly at FRANK.

CLAUDIE

Thanks Frank.

FRANK

I've done nowt.

CLAUDIE

But you have. I haven't had
anyone to talk to properly
since..well, my George.

FRANK

You're welcome love, my door
is always open.

AMY and SEBASTIAN are in with NERO. SARAH arrives determined
to ignore SEBASTIAN.

SARAH
(Curt) Hi, Amy.

SEBASTIAN
(Guarded) Sarah, I'm so glad you came out. I haven't been able to contact William.

SARAH
Let's see what we've got here then, Amy.

SARAH examines NERO'S leg.

SARAH (CONT'D)
It's nasty. It looks like he has lacerated the superficial tendon flexor tendon. I'll have to sedate him. How did it happen Amy?

AMY looks questioningly at SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN
Ron lost control of his Land Rover and Nero bolted.

SARAH
(To Amy) Can you hold him for me, while I prepare the syringe.

Out on SEBASTIAN feeling the cold shoulder.

56 **INT. THE CHASE. CONSULTING ROOM 2 - DAY**

56

TOM, ANNA and SIMONE are looking at another x-ray. The LION CUB is back in its cage.

TOM
It looks as if it's gone back perfectly. (To Anna) do you think I should use an ehmer sling?

ANNA
On a domestic animal I'd say yes, but this is very different. If it stays back in position there should be no need to immobilise.

TOM
Lets see how he fares overnight.

ANNA

(Excited) So we're keeping him here?

TOM

Yes, we should know by the morning and we can't really afford to put the mother through the trauma of darting her again.

Out on TOM and ANNA - a team.

57 **INT. MONTGOMERY STABLES - DAY**

57

NERO has been sedated. SARAH has applied a large support bandage.

SARAH

(Professional) All I can do is stem the bleed and keep the injury stable. I'd like to refer him to an equine surgery hospital, I was thinking maybe Liverpool.

SEBASTIAN

I suppose racing is going to be out of the question with an injury like this?

SARAH

I can't say. We're not going to know until after surgery but it looks unlikely.

AMY

I'm so sorry Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN

It's not your fault Amy. Why don't you take a break, you must be done in after all the excitement. I'll let you know when I get in touch with William.

AMY

Thank you.

AMY leaves.

SEBASTIAN

I get the feeling you're ignoring me?

SARAH

Me ignoring you! Why haven't you returned my calls?

SEBASTIAN

I meant to but I've been really confused since you left the other morning and then Adrian came to see me earlier.

SARAH

You didn't say anything, did you?

SEBASTIAN

Of course not. Why would I do that?

SARAH

Just for the record Sebastian, I don't feel particularly proud of myself, but it happened and we can't ignore it.

SEBASTIAN

But he's my best friend. I think we should cool it.

SARAH

Sorry?

SEBASTIAN

The other night was wonderful, don't get me wrong. You're a beautiful woman Sarah and I was honoured to be there for you, but I can't do that to Adrian, I just can't.

SARAH

(Incredulous) You can't do that to Adrian? I'm sorry but I think you've got this completely wrong.

SEBASTIAN

Sarah, come on. We're both as guilty as hell. I think we should just try and forget about it.

SARAH

Yes, absolutely. I couldn't agree with you more.

SEBASTIAN

Really?

SARAH

So I'll er.....arrange for the
horse to be transported and
then I'll get out of your
hair.

SEBASTIAN

Don't be like that Sarah.

SARAH

My bill will be in the post.

SARAH strides off, hurt to the quick.

58 **INT. THE CHASE. KITCHEN - DAY**

58

ANNA is in the kitchen preparing vegetables. DAISY is drawing
a picture of a lion, crayons strewn across the table.

ANNA

(Looking over Daisy's
shoulder) That's very good.
You're going to have to clear
away soon, for tea.

DAISY

I've drawn a female lion,
because they do all the
hunting don't they?

ANNA

Yes, they do.

DAISY

What do the male lions do?

ANNA

(Smiling) That's a very good
question Daisy.

SARAH bursts in obviously upset. DAISY smiles and holds up
her picture.

DAISY

Auntie Sarah, look what I've
drawn.

SARAH

(Not interested) Very nice
Daisy, can you give me a
minute, I need to speak to
your mum.

DAISY looks disappointed.

ANNA
(Gently) Go and show Luca and
Jake, I'm sure they'll like
your picture.

DAISY shoots SARAH a disapproving look, and runs off.

SARAH
(Realising) I'm sorry....

ANNA
(Taken aback) Don't take it
out on the children.

SARAH visibly backs down.

ANNA (CONT'D)
How long are you going to
punish me for? Adrian and I
were only doing what we
thought was right.

SARAH
I know, but it doesn't help

ANNA
Adrian phoned me.

SARAH
(Can't help herself) Really,
plotting again?

ANNA
He was concerned. He still
wants to know where you stayed
the other night.

SARAH
What did you tell him?

ANNA
The truth, I didn't know.

SARAH
You could have covered for me.

ANNA
Why, where were you?

SARAH
It's none of your business.

ANNA
Please don't be like this with
me Sarah, can't we just put it
behind us.

SARAH
It's easy for you.

An awkward silence as ANNA clears away the vegetable peelings. Both girls want to forgive each other but can't find the right words.

ANNA
(Breaking the silence) I think
Claudie's doing Community
Service.

SARAH
(Surprised) Since when?

ANNA
I don't know, but her
probation officer came looking
for her today

SARAH
Oh my God. (Can't help
laughing) That's the best
thing I've heard all day.

ANNA
Can you imagine her, picking
litter in those heels.

SARAH
I would love to be a fly on
the wall.

ANNA
(Feels like old times) I'm
sorry, Sarah...I promise I
will never betray your trust
again.

SARAH
(Miserable) I felt so alone.

ANNA
Ohh, come here.

ANNA holds her arms out. The girls hug.

SARAH
(Muffled) I've done something
really stupid Anna.

Before ANNA can respond they are interrupted by CLAUDIE entering.

CLAUDIE
I'm glad you're both here
I need to tell you summat.

SARAH

Really.

CLAUDIE

(Awkwardly) You know all about the mix up with the pensions.

SARAH

(On the nose) You mean the ones you fraudulently cashed.

CLAUDIE

(Stung) Yeah, well I was in court last week and was given community service. I've been too embarrassed to tell ya.

SARAH

So you obviously managed to con the Judge into letting you go free.

CLAUDIE

Paying it all back went in me favour.

SARAH

You mean dad, paying it back with the money you got from re-mortgaging this house.

CLAUDIE

(Upset) Please....I'm trying to explain to you.

ANNA dries her hands and sits next to CLAUDIE.

ANNA

Lets give her a chance Sarah.
(Pointedly) Everyone deserves a chance.

CLAUDIE

Anyhow, I've been given three hundred hours community service.

SARAH

Quite right too.

CLAUDIE

You really don't like me, do you Sarah?

SARAH

At last! The penny drops.

ANNA

Sarah...please.

CLAUDIE

What have I ever done to you,
except make your dad happy.

SARAH can only tut.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)

The sad thing is, I was
foolish enough to think
eventually we could be
friends. We've all lost
George, sorry your dad and we
all loved him, didn't we. You
do believe I loved him don't
ya?

An awkward silence.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)

Well think what you want. I
did , I do. He was the kindest
most generous man I ever met.
And when he used to talk about
you two, his face would light
up, full of pride and I
couldn't wait to meet his
wonderful girls.

SARAH and ANNA exchange uncomfortable looks.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)

I knew you'd think I was too
young for him, but he said you
wouldn't care how old I was,
as long as I made him happy.

ANNA

(Agreeing) You did make him
happy.

CLAUDIE

Yes I did, but you both made
it perfectly obvious that you
didn't think I was good enough
for yer dad.

ANNA

I'm sorry Claudie

CLAUDIE

He was a gentleman.

SARAH

Yes, he was.

CLAUDIE

So how do you think he'd feel about all the bickering? He'd want us to help each other get over losing him. And I'm finding it really hard at times. Especially now. He was with me you know.

ANNA

(Confused) What do you mean?

CLAUDIE

In the courtroom. There I was, standing in front of a stuck up Judge who didn't know me from Adam, deciding whether I deserved another chance or not. But yer dad came through for me.

ANNA

(Ashamed) Why didn't you tell us you were in court?

CLAUDIE

So you could have come and had a good gloat?

ANNA

No, we would have liked to have been there to support you.

CLAUDIE

Are you being serious, can you put your hand on your heart and say that?

SARAH

(Still holding back) We're all going through it one way and another.

CLAUDIE

I know you needed him when you lost the baby. I just wish that maybe I could have helped a bit more....

SARAH

(Too painful) That's all dealt with now.

ANNA stares at SARAH, realising this is far from the truth.

ANNA

Maybe if we made more of an effort to pull together.

CLAUDIE

Yer dad would like that.

SARAH

I suppose we could try.

They are interrupted by LIAM rushing in.

LIAM

Claudie, I think we've got a problem. That Montgomery bloke's asking for me and he doesn't look very happy.

The door knocks sharply and SARAH answers it to WILLIAM, who comes crashing in.

WILLIAM

I'm sorry to encroach on your private time but I need to speak to Liam about the Land Rover. Have you heard what happened?

LIAM

No, what?

WILLIAM

(Accusingly) He sold the Land Rover to Ron and it ran out of control and almost cost him his life and injured an expensive horse.

SARAH/ANNA/CLAUDIE

Liam!!!

SARAH

How could you?

ANNA

I thought you were scrapping it?

CLAUDIE

My God Liam you could have killed someone.

LIAM

It wasn't my fault.

WILLIAM

I'm afraid it was. Don't you know It's against the law not to disclose the fact that a vehicle has been in a serious accident.

LIAM

It was sound.

WILLIAM

So sound that the steering
column sheared.

CLAUDIE

Liam! I told you that flaming
car was cursed.

WILLIAM

(Furious) Can you actually
comprehend what you have done?

LIAM

I sold that motor in good
faith.

WILLIAM

Faith being the operative
word. What did you do, cross
your fingers and pray?

LIAM

What do yer want me to do?

WILLIAM

You could reimburse Ron for a
start.

LIAM

No problem.

LIAM takes a wad of notes from his pocket and thrusts it at
WILLIAM.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Here. (To Claudie) Claudie,
I've spent fifty, can you lend
me?

CLAUDIE begrudgingly takes the money from her purse.

WILLIAM

That's something I suppose.

LIAM

It was an accident.

WILLIAM

I'm sorry but that's no
excuse. I have no option, but
to notify the police and I'll
be pressing charges.

LIAM turns to CLAUDIE.

LIAM

(Terrified) The police?

WILLIAM

I don't think you realise how expensive an animal like that is.

CLAUDIE

How about Twenty thousand.

WILLIAM

Oh please....

SARAH

(Disdain) And the rest.

CLAUDIE (CONT'D)

Fifty then.

ANNA

You can't afford that.

SARAH

Where would you get fifty thousand pounds from?

WILLIAM

I'm sorry Claudie but I'm not really prepared to do business like this. Come to me with a sensible offer and I'll think about it.

WILLIAM smiles sadly at ANNA and SARAH and takes his leave.

LIAM

Claudie, what we gonna do?
I'll be back inside if he calls the police.

CLAUDIE runs after WILLIAM.

59 **INT. THE CHASE RECEPTION - DAY**

59

CLAUDIE catches up with WILLIAM at reception. LIAM follows with the others.

CLAUDIE

I'll give you one hundred thousand pounds cash, if you promise not to go to the police.

WILLIAM

Where are you going to get that kind of money from?

CLAUDIE

(Trying to regain some pride)
I'll get it to you before the end of the week.

WILLIAM

In that case, it's a deal.

WILLIAM shakes CLAUDIE'S hand. LIAM is almost shaking as CLAUDIE makes for the stairs, watched by ANNA and SARAH.

LIAM
(Shocked) I'm so sorry
Claudie, that's almost half
your insurance money.

SARAH
What's this another secret
you've been keeping from us?

CLAUDIE turns on SARAH.

CLAUDIE
You knew about it - it's yer
dad's insurance money. It's
finally come through and if I
can help my little brother
then I'm glad, cause at least
I know what family means,
unlike some I can mention. (To
Liam) Don't worry Liam, I
won't miss it, it was blood
money anyway.

CLAUDIE, head held high, pushes her way past a surprised ANNA
and SARAH.

60 **EXT. THE CHASE. KENNELS - NIGHT**

60

The kennel is bathed in a warm glow as TOM, DAISY, LUCA and
JAKE, crouch down in front of the lion cub's cage. ANNA joins
them.

JAKE
He's just like Simba.

DAISY
No, this is a real lion cub.

JAKE
So is Simba, tell her daddy.

LUCA
Is he vicious?

TOM
He's a wild animal so he has
to be able to protect himself.

TOM looks up and spots ANNA. She smiles warmly at him. In the
background we notice MATT is standing watching this cosy
scene.

LUCA
Where was he born?

TOM
He was born in a zoo, but
Lions originate from Africa.

DAISY

Our teacher said you shouldn't
keep animals in a zoo, it's
cruel.

TOM

In a perfect world all animals
would roam free but I'm afraid
life's not like that.

ANNA intervenes.

ANNA

Come on you lot, it's late.
Time for bed.

The children protest. MATT looks sad as he turns and leaves.

TOM

Shh!!! Do what you're told and
if you're good you can see him
tomorrow before school.

JAKE

I'm going to sleep straight
away, so morning comes
quicker.

TOM smile as ANNA and the children creep out quietly.

61 **INT. THE BLACK BULL PUBLIC HOUSE. TOM'S ROOM - NIGHT**

61

FIONA sits waiting in Tom's room. The table is set for three.
Three home made place mats stand, one by each plate. They
read Mummy, Theo and Daddy. THEO lies asleep on the settee.
FIONA looks agitated. She presses her phone and we can hear a
muffled message.

MESSAGE

Please leave a message after
the tone.

FIONA

Tom it's Fiona, Theo and I are
waiting for you. (Menacingly)
Where the hell are you???

FIONA is visibly upset as she kneels by THEO, stroking his
hair.

FIONA (CONT'D)

Don't worry Theo, Daddy will
be home soon.

On cue the door opens but it's RICK.

FIONA (CONT'D)
(Shooting up smiling, but then disappointed) Oh! Hi.....

RICK
Sorry, Tom didn't say.....

FIONA
(Abruptly) He wanted to have dinner with us. Have you seen him?

RICK
(Cautiously as he surveys the table set for three) I er, think he's still working.

FIONA
Of course he is, an emergency I expect.

RICK
Er, yes. I'll er make myself scarce.

RICK almost backs out as FIONA stands looking agitated.

62 **EXT. THE CHASE. KENNELS - NIGHT**

62

TOM crouches checking on the CUB, listening to Fiona's message on his mobile.

FIONA VO
Theo and I are waiting for you. (Menacingly) Where the hell are you???

TOM is almost caught out as ANNA returns. He pockets his phone. ANNA stands by TOM'S side, staring at the CUB.

TOM
It's not too late for us to do what we always wanted to. Gestures for Anna to crouch with him) Come and look.

ANNA
He's just so.....

TOM silences her. A moment as both ANNA and TOM are lost in the magic and romance of such a beautiful animal. Still crouching, ANNA sways a little, losing her balance. TOM puts his arm around her to steady her and she smiles - it feels so natural.

TOM
(Whispers) I love you Anna.

For a moment ANNA melts and then she stands awkwardly.

ANNA

Don't Tom.....I better get
back to the children.

TOM

(Tentatively) I had a phone
call tonight, from the zoo.
They wanted to know if I was
interested in a job.

ANNA

(Surprised) At the Zoo?

TOM

No, Botswana. Cross-border
conservation. It's a fantastic
opportunity.

ANNA

So you've said yes?

TOM

I said I'd think about it.

ANNA

Right.

TOM

If I take the job, they want
me to start next month.

ANNA

For how long?

TOM

It's a years contract.

ANNA

(Sarcastic) Wonderful!

TOM

I don't think you understand
what I'm trying to say.

ANNA

I understand all right. You've
got some romantic notion in
your head and you're running
off to fulfil it.

TOM

(Grabs Anna) I'm not running
off. I'm asking you to come
with me, Anna.

TOM (CONT'D)
(Urgent) We could get away
from here, make a fresh start.
You saw the children tonight,
they'd love it.

ANNA
Are you serious?

TOM
I've never been more serious
in my life.

ANNA
(Anna stares at him, tears
trickling down her face) Why
are you doing this Tom?

TOM
(Surprised) Doing what?

ANNA
Making me choose.

TOM
Choose what? Between me and
the children, or some kid who
doesn't know if he wants to be
a nurse or a pop star....is it
such a hard choice?

ANNA rushes off. Out on TOM left staring down at the LION
CUB.

END OF EPISODE