

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

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 suppose 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 worshipfulness. 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 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, leggins 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.

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 an  
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. 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

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 DEBORAH  
brazilian but it's totally up I'm not accusing you of  
to you. Do you want to come anything.  
up?

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.

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

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 nosy 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.

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 you're 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.



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**