

1 INT. TV STUDIO - NIGHT 44. 20.32 (2025)

1

Weeks after the end of Ep.2; it's mid-December 2025.
VIVIENNE ROOK in a dark current affairs-set, facing ALAM
MOHAMED, smart, 30, a hard-edged TV interviewer.

VIV ROOK

Look at the state we're in.
Christmas is ruined, for so many
hard-working families. The
collapse of the banks goes on and
on, now they're saying Hathersage
is in trouble, for God's sake, my
mother's got her life savings in
Hathersage. But they've done it,
haven't they? The banks. They've
left us completely *****

The word BLEEPs and her mouth is PIXELLATED.

ALAM MOHAMED

We've told you before, you really
can't use language like that.

VIV ROOK

You can censor me all you like.
(at camera)
But they swear.
(to camera)
Don't you? All of you? When you
think what the system has done to
us. Don't you swear the roof down?
But what do we do? The rest of us?
Normal people? What do we do?

ALAM MOHAMED

Well you're a Member of Parliament,
you're supposed to have the answer.

All of this INTERCUT with Sc.2-5. The Lyons are in their
various houses, all a little changed, all a bit different.

CUT TO:

2 INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT 44. 20.33 (2025)

2

The house with simple, classy CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS, but it's
dark now, lamp-lit, like for a date. DANIEL with pasta, a
glass of wine, t-shirt & boxers. LAPTOP open. Daniel
watching Sc.1 on his TV, though with an eye on...

CUT TO:

3 INT. VIKTOR'S HOUSE, KIEV - NIGHT 44. 22.34 (2025) 3

VIKTOR on Skype, he's with wine & pasta, facing his LAPTOP. Simple Christmas decorations here, a thin TREE. This set-up is normal for these two now. A relationship via Skype.

CUT TO:

4 INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - NIGHT 44. 20.35 (2025) 4

All living together happily. Plenty of CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS for the kids, a bristling TREE. ROSIE cleaning the kitchen. LEE in a VR HELMET. EDITH & LINCOLN, watching Sc.1 on TV; the Lyons all watching because of Edith, she told them to.

CUT TO:

5 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT 44. 20.36 (2025) 5

Nice, old CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS here. But now it's home for a brand new family. With its own tensions, ticking away. STEPHEN in cycling shorts, part of his new life, at the sink, dipping his BICYCLE WHEEL in water to find a leak. He's harassed, late, fed up, while watching an iPad, Viv, sc.1.

MURIEL tidying up. CELESTE at the table, working on TWO LAPTOPS, Sc.1 on one of them. She's book-keeping, her part-time job now. BETHANY drying the dishes, silent, watching. At some point, RUBY passes through, gets some water, exits.

Sc.2-5, THE FAMILY CONNECTED, as in 2/83-88; they look at the TV, but talk to the air, or towards their Alexa-type device.

Viv, sc.1, continued. (NB, when the family interrupt, extra OOV Viv Rook dialogue can run underneath in ADR.)

VIV ROOK

I think I have. I've got exactly that. Because next year, we face a General Election, and God knows we need to shake it up, don't you think? So I propose. That in order to vote. Every British citizen must take an IQ test.

DANIEL

Whaaat?!

STEPHEN

You can't say that!

ROSIE

Oh she's brilliant!

EDITH

I said you'd like it!

VIV ROOK

If you score above 70, you can
vote. Simple as that.

DANIEL

She is outrageous!

CELESTE

70's quite low, it's not that bad.

ALAM MOHAMED

Are you saying that some people are
too stupid to vote?

VIV ROOK

No.

(right into CAMERA)

That's what you say. Millions of
you. In the pub. At work. At
home. You say, take away the vote.

ROSIE

You say it, Dan! All the time!
That was you and Brexit! Non-stop!

VIKTOR

You say, things are too complicated
and people are not clever enough.

DANIEL

Oh, ty ne dopomahayesh, dyakuyu vam
duzhe.

And they raise a little toast to each other, smiling.

EDITH

And you said it, Steve, I heard
you, you said it last week.

STEPHEN

Oh, right, it's all my fault -
(walking out)
Some of us have got work to do.

And he's gone, Celeste calling after him, peeved.

CELESTE

Excuse me. I'm working.

MURIEL

Yes, but he's doing actual physical
work. Another cup of tea?

CELESTE

No!

Tremors between Celeste and Muriel.

EDITH

Like it or not. She's got a point.
People are thick!

ROSIE

Hold on, would you ban me?

EDITH

Not if you pass the test.

ROSIE

Oh my God, you'd ban me.

CELESTE

Edith, I don't get it, I thought
you were the great anarchist.

EDITH

And that's Vivienne Rook. She's
ripping up democracy, I love it!

DANIEL

Hold on though, this isn't real,
this isn't legal, she's only one
MP, she can't actually do it!

Stephen pops his head back in to the kitchen. Meddling.

STEPHEN

Hey, one more thing about next
year. Dad's birthday. His 70th.

A freeze across the houses.

ROSIE

So?

MURIEL

How is that relevant?

DANIEL

Oh my God, is he 70?

STEPHEN

He's still living in Leicester.
Which isn't far. Just saying!

VIV ROOK

2026. Let the people decide.
(to camera)
But only the clever ones.

And suddenly, the picture goes RIP - !

CUT TO:

6 STOCK FOOTAGE - NIGHT 45. 00.00 (2026) 6

Sc.6-21 ROCK FORWARD, drive, pressure, music, Muse, pushing onwards, fast, hard, the images ripping forward, on, on, on.

Sydney Harbour bridge. The London Eye. Times Square. Fireworks, crowds, celebrations, all spelling out:

2026.

CUT TO:

7 INT. BBC NEWS - NIGHT 46. 22.02 (2026) 7

NEWSREADER to CAMERA.

NEWSREADER

The shock from the banking crisis continues, with Moody's reducing the UK credit rating to A2 -

CUT TO:

8 EXT. LONDON CITY STREET - DAY 47. 13.33 (2026) 8

FEMALE REPORTER to CAMERA, street outside office block.

FEMALE REPORTER

Panic in the city, as Kleinman Ajax has been declared bankrupt. Consequences for the pharmaceutical industry will be enormous -

CUT TO:

9 INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - NIGHT 47. 21.15 (2026) 9

A Chinese takeaway, round at ROSIE'S. STEPHEN, in cycling gear, vexed, with DANIEL, ROSIE and EDITH (kids in bed).

STEPHEN

You can't get the drugs! Ordinary drugs! You can't get them!

CUT TO:

10 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY A. 08.20 (2026) 10

RUBY taking a PILL with WATER. INTERCUT Stephen, Sc.9.

STEPHEN V.O.

Ruby takes clobazam for her
epilepsy, the chemist says we're
out of stock, come back in 6 weeks!

CUT TO:

11 INT. ITN NEWSROOM - NIGHT 47. 22.30 (2026) 11

ITN NEWSREADER to CAMERA. GRAPHICS b/g: French flag.

ITN NEWSREADER

The Emergency Election in France
has seen a 30% swing to the right,
as 31-year-old Mathilde Cartouche
sweeps in to power.

CUT TO:

12 INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - NIGHT 47. 22.31 (2026) 12

DANIEL with STEPHEN, ROSIE, EDITH (Sc.9 CONT.), angry.

DANIEL

We were going to get Viktor into
France - not any more! Now, they
deport anyone without a visa!

CUT TO:

13 INT. VIKTOR'S HOUSE, KIEV - NIGHT 48. 01.15 (2026) 13

VIKTOR only seen within Daniel's laptop, sc.14. All his
terror and anger trapped in the screen, as he rages, raw:

VIKTOR

Shcho ya povynen robyty, vony berut
lyudey, a potim vony znykayut?!
Shcho robyty, yakshcho ya poruch?!

CUT TO:

14 INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT 48. 23.15 (2026) 14

Sc.13, VIKTOR raging on the LAPTOP SCREEN. DANIEL helpless.

CUT TO:

15 INT. MEDIA 24 NEWS - DAY 49. 11.00 (2026) 15

MEDIA 24 NEWSREADER to CAMERA.

MEDIA 24 NEWSREADER
In anticipation of the General
Election, the government has
employed ten thousand datasweepers
to monitor Russian interference -

CUT TO:

16 INT. BETHANY'S MANCHESTER OFFICE - DAY 49. 11.30 (2026) 16

On SCREEN: fast-scrolling RUSSIAN CODE.

BETHANY at work. WORKERS all around her. No cubicles, just a huge workspace, rows of COMPUTERS, CHAIRS. Then Bethany's HAND-PHONE rings (it works in conjunction with her HAND-SET, which says UNKNOWN NUMBER). She puts hand to ear, answers.

BETHANY
Hello?

LIZZIE
Hi there Bethany. I'm Lizzie!

Bethany looks round. LIZZIE MBEKO is right next to her! She's 21, lanky, funny, like Olive Oyl with punky hair.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)
I like your phone.

Lizzie's holding her own hand to her ear - she's HAND-PHONED too. Big daft grin as she opens up her palm to Bethany, a network of sub-dermal WIRES; pale lines under black skin.

Bethany in awe, opens her palm, hello. They're the same!

CUT TO:

17 OMITTED 17

18 INT. BETHANY'S BEDROOM, MURIEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT 50. 21.40 (2026) 18

BETHANY and LIZZIE on the bed. SCREAMING with LAUGHTER at something online. Something rude. Can't speak for laughing.

CUT TO:

18A INT. NETWORK 85 NEWSROOM - NIGHT 51. 18.54 (2026) 18A

NEWSREADER to CAMERA. Humorous item at the end of the news.

NEWSREADER
A life on the ocean wave might be
literally, for life.

STOCK FOOTAGE: SUPERYACHTS, in all their glory. The crew,
the on-board pools, the facilities. Obscene luxury.

NEWSREADER (CONT'D)

With 55 superyachts being built
every year, it's estimated that 600
billionaires now live at sea.
Beyond the law. Beyond taxation.
It's said they could even form
their own government, and become a
floating sovereign state.

CUT TO:

20 INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - NIGHT 51. 18.55 (2026) 20

Sc.18A INTERCUT with ROSIE, EDITH, LEE and LINCOLN, eating sandwiches and a packet of sweets. Staring at the TV.

ROSIE
Bastards.

CUT TO:

21 INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY 52. 08.10 (2026) 21

MUSIC OUT, back into real time, FEBRUARY 2026, as DANIEL comes downstairs, half-dressed. RADIO ADR, the collapse of the banks, etc. Daniel calling to the air:

DANIEL
Link, radio off, call Viktor.

LINK VOICE
Calling Viktor.

OPEN LAPTOP blinks ON, calling Viktor. Ring-ring, ring-ring.

JUMP CUT: Daniel making coffee. Ring-ring, blip, it stops.

DANIEL
Link, try again.

JUMP CUT: Daniel on his feet, eating oats. Ring-ring.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Link, send a text, to Viktor. Hey,
comma, get up you lazy bastard,
full stop. Emoji kiss, emoji wink,
emoji erect penis, send.

JUMP CUT to Daniel, dressed, getting coat, briefcase, etc.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Link, try Viktor one more time.

Ring-ring, Daniel giving up, heading for the front door, when
- *chirp!* A connection being made. Daniel delighted.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Hey, there you are, I was thinking,
I could come to Kiev on the first -

He reaches the laptop, stops. It shows...

CUT TO:

22 INT. VIKTOR'S HOUSE, KIEV - DAY 52. 10.11 (2026) 22

FOOTAGE only inlaid within Daniels's LAPTOP SCREEN. It's
day, but this place is always dark. Cramped, shadowy, like
it's stuck between bigger buildings. But no sign of Viktor.

Sc.21 CONT., Daniel watching the EMPTY SCREEN.

DANIEL
Hey. You there, Vik? Hello?

Sc.22, laptop: SOMEONE passes deep in b/g. Daniel chilled.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Viktor..? Is that you?

Laptop: TWO 30 y/o MEN edge of frame, glancing at the laptop.
POLICE 1 and 2, BLACK SHIRT & CAP of the UKRAINIAN POLICE.

Daniel terrified.

They walk out of shot.

Daniel staring. Mind racing. Heart pounding.

Laptop: b/g, POLICE 2 goes to a bookcase, hauls books out,
throwing them to the floor. POLICE 3 passes through.

Daniel: talk? Not talk? What's best? What's worse?? Then:

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Hello?
(no reply)
I said hello?
(no reply)
Hello, can you hear me?

SUDDENLY, POLICE 1 is in the chair, to CAMERA, big smile.

POLICE 1
Moyi vybachennya, mabut my mohly
prybuty trokhy z nadto pizno.
(MORE)

POLICE 1 (CONT'D)
Druzhyna shvydko staye na nohy. De
ty? Spolucheni Shtaty?

DANIEL
I don't, I'm not... I'm sorry,
but... I can't speak...

POLICE 1
You call? Skype? Here?

DANIEL
Yes.

POLICE 1
Viktor Goraya. You call Viktor
Goraya. Yes?

Daniel trapped. Fuck. Yes? No? Police 1 reads on screen:

POLICE 1 (CONT'D)
Daniel Lione. Is you?

DANIEL
Yes.

POLICE 1
You know Viktor Goraya?

DANIEL
He's my friend. And I'm calling
him. Which I'm allowed to do. I
haven't done anything wrong. And
neither has he, where is he?

POLICE 1
(delighted!)
Okh podyvit'sya, shcho ya znayshov!

He picks up a PHOTO from the table. Daniel & Viktor. Some
house party in the UK, both pissed, wrapped round each other.

POLICE 1 (CONT'D)
Is you! Hello sir! Ya dumayu,
shcho Viktor Goraya tut sydyt'z
vashoyu fotohrafiiyeyu.

Then he holds up a BOX OF TISSUES.

And Daniel has got a BOX OF TISSUES by his laptop too, sweeps
it out of the way, like it's evidence, like he's guilty.

POLICE 1 (CONT'D)
I ty masturbuyesh? You pay him,
Englishman?

DANIEL
No!

POLICE 1
He's your bitch.

And with a grin, he slams the laptop lid down, GONE.

Daniel literally steps back from the laptop. What the hell??

JUMP CUT to Daniel, coat off now, on the phone, FRANTIC.

DANIEL
I don't know but they were the
police, it was the uniform, I've
been out there, they were proper
policemen - I don't know!!

JUMP CUT: Daniel talking to a Ukrainian, bad English.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
I'm looking for Viktor. Viktor
Goraya. Ya shukayu Viktora.

JUMP CUT: Daniel talking to work.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
No, I won't be coming into work.
Sorry, I just can't. No!

JUMP CUT: Daniel talking to a UK official.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
He passed his Rule 35 assessment in
the UK. Well who do I speak to?
Is it the police? Who is it then?

JUMP CUT: Daniel speaking to a Ukrainian, bad English.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You remember? We met? In your
club. I am looking for Claude. He
is a friend of Viktor Goraya.

JUMP CUT: Daniel sitting on the stairs, rocking with rage.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY 52. 09.30 (2026)

23

Daniel on his MOBILE, runs to his car, which is PLUGGED INTO
A LAMPPOST, with an inbuilt CHARGING ATTACHMENT. He wrestles
with the stupid cable, fuck off, fuck off, gaah!, during:

DANIEL
- my name's Daniel Lyons, I work
for Manchester City Council, I just
need some help - oh for God's - !

CUT TO:

24 INT. YVONNE BUKHARI'S OFFICE - DAY 52. 10.45 (2026) 24

YVONNE (Viktor's solicitor from Ep.2) in a small, cramped office, listening to DANIEL, on his feet, wired and wild.

DANIEL

- so the police said, give us his name, but if I do that and they say, who are you, and I say, I'm his boyfriend, what if they pass that on? That's like evidence, so what do I do, I mean, what do I do, I mean really, what do I do?!

CUT TO:

25 INT. STAIRS OUTSIDE YVONNE'S OFFICE - DAY 52. 11.00 (2026) 25

A long, plain, echoey flight of stairs. DANIEL clips down, fast. Almost stumbles. Shattered. Recovers. Keep going.

CUT TO:

26 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE YVONNE'S OFFICE - DAY 52. 11.01 (2026) 26

Rusholme, a bunch of rough shops, all with signs: VISA HELP, MONEY TRANSFERS, INTERNATIONAL CALLS. Daniel charging out, furious. His phone rings.

A number he doesn't know.

Ukrainian!

Oh Christ, shit, fumble, gaah - he answers -

DANIEL

Hello?

VIKTOR V.O.

Pryvit lyubyy khlopchyk. Tse ya.

Daniel felled like a tree.

DANIEL

Oh my God, are you all right?
Where are you? Are you all right?

VIKTOR V.O.

I'm okay. I got away. I'm fine,
I'm fine, I'm with Roman.

And his voice keeps saying things, but Dan's just crying now. Standing there in an ordinary road. Overwhelmed.

CUT TO:

27 OMITTED 27

28 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT 52. 19.30 (2026) 28

SAME NIGHT. DANIEL standing, tense, with coffee. STEPHEN in his COURIER'S OUTFIT, strapping BLACK GAFFA TAPE around his TRAINERS; someone told him that helps them last longer. MURIEL has been cooking, now giving RUBY scrambled eggs, CELESTE busy on her LAPTOPS.

DANIEL

...so it turns out, he's in Odessa.
He literally had two minutes' warning. Ran before the police arrived, left everything behind. Got this bus. Like a clicketty-clacketty little bus thing, no suspension, overland. Nine hours later, Odessa, thank you very much.

STEPHEN

I don't even know where that is.
Is he safe, though, is he okay?

DANIEL

He's got this mate, Roman, he says
Viktor can hide there for a bit.

During this, BETHANY's coming in, gives Daniel a hug.

BETHANY

I'm sorry.

DANIEL

Thanks sweetheart. Hi Lizzie.

LIZZIE's in the doorway, gives a big wave.

LIZZIE

Hellooo!

And Bethany grabs a glass of water, she and Lizzie go.

RUBY

But has he actually broken the law?

DANIEL

Well, no, technically.
Technically, no.
(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

But the Communist Party has applied
to make same sex relationships
illegal - or you can't express
homosexuality, that's the phrase,
you can't express it. They tried
to do that back in 2016. The
Communist Party! Not some bunch of
nutters. The people's party. They
applied again in 2019. And this
year, third time lucky, so yes, any
day now, he's a criminal!

Stephen's MOBILE, bleep!

STEPHEN

Heartbroken, mate, gotta go.

And he hurries out.

RUBY

So what are you going to do?

DANIEL

We've got to get him out. We've
got to get him into a country that
grants asylum. But to do that, he's
got to cross the border.

CELESTE

You mean illegally?

DANIEL

Yup.

MURIEL

How dangerous is that?

DANIEL

Very.

CUT TO:

30

31

32.

32 INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - DAY 53. 08.45 (2026)

32

Daniel Sc.31 on display on an iPad on the FRIDGE, ROSIE stepping in, rushed, fed up, keen to get rid of him.

ROSIE
Oh my God, that's amazing, give him
my love, good luck.

She swipes the iPad off. Turns to face:

EDITH spooning out breakfast for LINCOLN, LEE happy in a VR helmet. (NB, Lincoln is now 7 years old, Lee is 12.)

ROSIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry but I'm running out of
ways to say oh my God.

EDITH
Odessa's by the sea. It's a really
nice place to live.

ROSIE
D'you think he sends Viktor money?

EDITH
I know he does.

Hmm. Then Rosie runs about, grabbing things, rushing.

ROSIE
Right, I'm late, I'm off. It's a
bloody nerve, calling me in at half
term, I bet it's trouble.

EDITH
I was thinking. Lee's spending the
day with his little mate Craig, so
I could take Lincoln out. There's
that Chinese Ceramics thing at the
Whitworth. And then we could go
and see Toy Story: Resurrection.

ROSIE
You know Woody gets burned to
death? Don't give him nightmares.
(kisses Lincoln)
Behave, there's a good boy.
(and for Lee)
And you, metal head, bye bye.

She's off. Edith to Lincoln, who's wide eyed, loves her.

EDITH
What d'you think? Nice little
adventure with your aunty?

CUT TO:

33 OMITTED 33

34 EXT. MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE - DAY 53. 09.50 (2026) 34

EDITH kneeling, tying some ribbons in LINCOLN's hair. He's now in a PINK DRESS, and perfectly happy.

EDITH

There. Gorgeous. Okay? Don't tell your mum, and I'll give you ten quid. Who's a beautiful girl? What d'you want to be called?

LINCOLN

Susie.

EDITH

Okay. Susie. Off we go.

And Edith walks along proudly with Lincoln-in-a-dress.

EDITH (CONT'D)

So if I say the word diamond, you say, 'I want to go to the toilet.' Like, oh what a pretty diamond.

LINCOLN

I want to go to the toilet.

EDITH

I'd love to have a diamond.

LINCOLN

I want to go to the toilet.

They pass a WOMAN - ZIMONA, mid-30s, burly, Asian, dreadlocks - not stopping, but smartly handing Edith a YELLOW-CASED MOBILE, a LANYARD, and a BRIGHT YELLOW STICKING PLASTER. Barely a glance, walk on, opposite ways.

EDITH

Someone please buy me a diamond.

LINCOLN

I want to go to the toilet.

As Edith walks, she rips open the BRIGHT YELLOW PLASTER.

Sticks it to her THUMB. It's not a sticking-plaster, it's more latex-like, sticks to her skin, almost invisible.

CUT TO:

35 INT. WYTEL INDUSTRIES, FOYER - DAY 53. 10.00 (2026) 35

EDITH'S THUMB pressed against a SCANNER.

Bleep! She's let through security. Taking LINCOLN-as-a-girl with her. This is a big, glossy office block, Wytel signage. Smiling FEMALE SECURITY GUARD gives them a folder.

FEMALE SECURITY GUARD
That's your Bring Your Daughter to
Work Activity Pack, aren't you
gorgeous? What's your name?

LINCOLN
Susie.

FEMALE SECURITY GUARD
Welcome to Wytel, Susie!

And off they trot. Edith smiling. Wary, on edge.

CUT TO:

36 INT. WYTEL HOT DESK FLOOR - DAY 53. 10.05 (2026) 36

Hot-desking, a huge space, rows and rows of COMPUTERS & CHAIRS. EDITH leads in LINCOLN-in-a-dress, mutters:

EDITH
Just pretend you're very, very sad.

Greeted by: HOLLY HILL, nice, smiley, smart. She's got three or four little girls sitting round with toys.

HOLLY
Hello, I'm Holly, I'm in charge of
the daughters' playgroup - I've not
seen you before, have I?

EDITH
No, it's all this hotdesking, I
normally work...over there.
(quiet)
This is Susie, she's a bit sad at
the moment because her father...
y'know. Let's not get into it. The
bastard. So be nice to her.

HOLLY
Oh of course I will.
(leans down)
Now then, Susie. We've got some
nice soft play. And crayons. Would
you like some paper and crayons..?

Holly has turned away from Edith. Edith smartly takes out the MOBILE she was given by Zimona, holds it against the nearest unoccupied COMPUTER SCREEN.

The PHONE lights up, says: DOWNLOAD, and rattles from 0% to 100% in two seconds, ping!

Edith's done, grabs the phone, turns to Holly and Lincoln.

EDITH

There now! Susie, I must say, you
look like a right little diamond.

LINCOLN

I want to go to the toilet.

EDITH

Oh, right then, off we go!

And Edith grabs Lincoln's hand, marches off!

CUT TO:

37 INT. WYTEL INDUSTRIES, FOYER - DAY 53. 10.08 (2026) 37

EDITH hurrying LINCOLN-in-a-dress out, nice and steady.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. WYTEL INDUSTRIES - DAY 53. 10.09 (2026) 38

EDITH hurrying LINCOLN-in-a-dress out - not quite breaking into a run - into the street, away, taking off her LANYARD.

EDITH

Well done. Good girl.

And they pass ZIMONA again - Edith barely stopping to hand over the YELLOW-CASED MOBILE. But Zimona's grinning.

ZIMONA

Just like the old days.

EDITH

This is the last time.

ZIMONA

See you next week.

Zimona left behind, as Edith marches on, holding Lincoln's hand, like it never happened. To Lincoln:

EDITH

You suit those ribbons.

LINCOLN

Can I keep them?

EDITH

Don't see why not.

And on they walk, a happy pair.

CUT TO:

38A INT. BECKENDOE DEPOT - DAY 53. 10.15 (2026) 38A *

A big, open depot, or garage. STEPHEN in cycling clothes, wheeling his BICYCLE through. He's being led by ARTHUR, one of 15 Deputy Managers, a big tracksuited fella with an iPad. *

STEPHEN *

I spent a week working for Harpoon's. But, I thought, to be honest, their standards weren't that high. *

(MORE) *

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

They were a bit imprecise. Which
is deadly, in this job. So I
thought, go and work for
Beckondoe's. Best couriers in
town. And I've got a clean driving
licence, I can work on the vans, or
the bike, whatever you want.

ARTHUR

For a start, you're not couriers,
we call you lifestyle enhancers.
Because you make everyone's life
better, d'you get it?

STEPHEN

Yep, works for me!

ARTHUR

Right, it's standard rules, 50
pence per parcel, if any parcel
takes longer than 60 minutes to
deliver you will not be paid, no
holiday, no sick pay, no argument,
you have to pay Beckondoe £1.50 per
day insurance if you're in the van,
£1 if you're on the bike, and the
£1 charge applies even on days off -
(of his iPad)
You're a bit overqualified, aren't
you?

STEPHEN

Oh. Well. I suppose I wasted my
time a little bit.

ARTHUR

You're not the only one. We've got
tons of you, these days. Neil,
over there, he went to Oxford.
Studied astrology. Doesn't help
him cycle any faster, does it?

STEPHEN

No. I don't suppose it does.
Astronomy. But never mind!

ARTHUR

What were you doing before?

STEPHEN

Um. Banking.

ARTHUR

Oh, those bastards.

STEPHEN
I know. Bastards! Look what
they've done to us, eh? I hated
them. Glad to be out!

*
*
*
*

JUMP CUT to Stephen, on his bike, a BIG, FLAT PARCEL strapped
to his back, like someone's wrapped up an oil painting.

*
*

But he'll do it. He won't give up.

*

He wobbles off.

*

CUT TO:

*

39 INT. ROSIE'S SCHOOL KITCHEN - DAY 53. 10.30 (2026)

39 *

Empty, deserted at half term. ROSIE at a counter, already
pissed off, dreads what's coming. Her HEAD TEACHER, BARBARA
HOPKINS, 50, always slightly uncomfortable in an ill-fitting
suit, puts down a PLASTIC WALLET. It's 20 x 15cm, 8 cm deep,
translucent white plastic, BURGER & CHIPS visible inside.

ROSIE
What do I do? Pull the string..?

She pulls a CORD out of the side. (YouTube, "self-heating
Japanese bento box.") It hisses. Steams, through a hole.

ROSIE (CONT'D)
Well you can't let schoolkids have
this! They'll be scarred!

BARBARA
We trust them with knives and
forks, this is much the same.

JUMP CUT (two minutes have passed), Rosie rips open the tab,
a plastic seal going round the lid of the wallet, opens it.

Inside: a flat, pale BURGER, and CHIPS. Rosie prods it.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Not too hot. Not too warm. That's
why they're calling it Goldilocks.

Rosie cautious. Lifts up the burger.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Clean meat. Completely artificial.
Grown in a laboratory. It's so far
removed from the original animal,
they're saying it's fit for vegans.

ROSIE
Grown how? What does it look like?

BARBARA
They're called bolts. Bolts of
meat. Like those things in kebab
shops, but enormous.

ROSIE
Oh well, I love kebabs.

And she chomps down. It tastes *amazing*.

ROSIE (CONT'D)
Damn.

BARBARA
Injected with saltless salt.

ROSIE
Oh my God. It's delicious. That's
bad news. God, it's nice!

JUMP CUT. 10 minutes later. Rosie & Barbara sit with
coffee, grim. Rosie holding one of the plastic wallets.

BARBARA
They haven't cracked salads yet, we
still need staff for that, I did
the sums, we need... Four.

ROSIE
Four people?

BARBARA

I think so.

ROSIE

I've got a staff of 10, who's gonna go? Beverley. But who else?

BARBARA

Rosie, I've got to lose £200,000. It's the same, every time - the banks collapse, the government bails them out, so they take money off us. I'm sorry, but six of the catering staff will have to go.

(beat)

Including all managerial posts.

ROSIE

But that's me. You mean me.

BARBARA

The Goldilocks system doesn't need skills at your level.

ROSIE

I've got two kids.

BARBARA

We need to restructure, so I can give you till Easter. That's plenty of notice. For you to look around and... try other avenues.

Rosie yanks the string on the wallet. Throws it down.

They both stare at it.

It hisses.

It steams.

CUT TO:

40

OMITTED

40

41

EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE - DAY 54. 12.25 (2026)

41

A MINIBUS has arrived, door opens, ROSIE'S STAFF all 'Hiii!', 8 women and jug-eared ginger ERIC. All very hen-night. BEVERLEY with DEELY-BOPPERS. Rosie greeting them.

ROSIE

All right, girls, this is my big farewell! Before I'm replaced by a bolt of vegan meat.

(MORE)

ROSIE (CONT'D)

We've got food and booze and music,
and it didn't cost me a penny, cos
it's my big gay brother's birthday,
he's paying for the whole thing!
You'll like him, Eric!

Cheers, whoops, cat-calls, hugs for Rosie.

WIDER: the whole front-of-house is BUSY. It's a cold, sunny MARCH party, and a much bigger event than the Winter Feast, in DAYTIME, lots of GUESTS. CARS piled in, people walking up from the road. STEPHEN introducing people to CELESTE; 3 MEN and ELAINE, 38, all Mancs, smiling. They've brought BOTTLES, and packs of BEER. Stephen & Celeste too cheery, on edge. In public, their relationship is fraying, a little.

ELAINE

This is really nice of you.

STEPHEN

My brother's idea, he's over there,
that's him, that's Dan, with the
muscles, he's 37 today, he said,
let's have a blowout. And this is
the long-suffering! Celeste, these
are the people from work.

CELESTE

Well that doesn't help, you've got
about five jobs. Which one?

STEPHEN

They're the couriers! Best courier
team in South Manchester, that's
Dan and Aleef and Elaine and Jock.

ELAINE

He works harder than anyone, your
husband, he puts us to shame.

CELESTE

Well I'm doing three jobs myself.
But I bet he didn't mention that.

STEPHEN

We need the money! I'm the Man who
Lost a Million Quid, remember?

CELESTE

How could we forget?

STEPHEN

You could try.

SWING ACROSS to a VAN, where DANIEL is with his neighbour, FRAN BAXTER, unloading Fran's VAN with two of her BAND, hauling out MUSIC EQUIPMENT - speakers, mics. (Part of her storyteller career, musicians were background in 1/55.)

Daniel is on edge, firing on all cylinders, sparking, with an agenda. He's the spine, the tension, throughout.

DANIEL
Brilliant. Brilliant. Great.
We've got a perfect space at the
back. And I want you to play loud!

FRAN
I can do loud. We did Glastonbury,
and Ralph McTell complained.

DANIEL
(secretive)
We're okay, aren't we? It's gonna
work, isn't it?

FRAN
I hope so. Fingers crossed!

And they hug. Keepers of a secret.

CUT TO:

42 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, GARDEN - DAY 54. 12.30 (2026) 42

BETHANY and LIZZIE putting out CHAIRS, little TRESTLE TABLES.
A couple of GAZEBOs this time, some HEATERS. But all nice
and informal; there's going to be an extra 40 guests or so.

EDITH passing by, carrying PLATES.

BETHANY
Oh Lizzie, this is my Aunty Edith -
the one who works for those
charities, Lizzie did that research
for you? On Wytel Industries.

EDITH
Oh yeah, thanks Lizzie, it really
helped, thank you. It was just
this... fundraising thing.

LIZZIE
They're going bust now, Wytel, did
you hear? Some big scandal.

EDITH
Is that right? Actually. Forgot
that thing. See you later.

Edith hurries back the way she came. On a mission.

JUMP CUTS with DANIEL. Shaking hands with YVONNE BUKHARI.

DANIEL
Oh it's so good of you to come.

YVONNE

I've driven past this house, I
always wondered what it was like.

JUMP CUT, Daniel shaking hands with a WOMAN.

DANIEL

Viktor says hello, and thank you!

JUMP CUT, shaking hands with a MAN.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Oh my God, the work you did with
that petition was amazing.

CUT TO:

43 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY 54. 12.40 (2026) 43

DANIEL, EXT. GARDEN, going to MAN 2. Seen from a DISTANCE.

ROSIE and MURIEL watching, as they make SALADS in the
KITCHEN. Behind them, Rosie's GIRLS & ERIC have been put to
work, buttering ROLLS and chopping CABBAGE into COLESLAW.

ROSIE

Dan's going a bit nuts, isn't he?

MURIEL

Just a little bit.

ROSIE

His head's gonna go Hong Sha if he
doesn't calm down. That's what
they say now, Hong Sha, kaboom!

Muriel turns to the table, where CELESTE is getting drinks.

MURIEL

D'you remember, when Hong Sha went
off? We all said, oh, the whole
world has changed now, things will
never be the same. Hardly gets
mentioned any more.

CELESTE

Well. Except. The consequences of
that ruined my entire life.

MURIEL

I know darling.
(cutting her dead)
You want lots of pepper, Eric.
Coleslaw is all about the pepper.

Celeste fuming, leaves, Muriel going back to Rosie, as:

BEVERLEY

You only brought us here to work!

ROSIE

Correct. Get on with it.

EDITH pops in, from the interior hallway, holding her MOBILE.

EDITH

Gran, why does my signal keep cutting out?

MURIEL

Oh, go on to Signor 2. That works. For some reason.

EDITH

Thank you!

And Edith heads back into the hall. Muriel curious.

MURIEL

So what's this new job of hers?

ROSIE

Charity stuff. Like she used to help them out in the field, now she does it in the city. She goes into boardrooms and asks them for money.

MURIEL

Just seems a bit calm for Edith. She was always chaining herself to fences and burning things down. I'm strangely disappointed.

Rosie & Muriel see LINCOLN run past OUTSIDE, in his RIBBONS.

MURIEL (CONT'D)

Lincoln likes those little ribbons.

ROSIE

I walked in, he had them on, I said are you happy, he said yes. That's not a problem, is it?

MURIEL

He looks very pretty.

And they give each other a nice smile.

CUT TO:

44 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - DAY 54. 12.45 (2026) 44
EDITH hidden away, on the stairs. Watching, on her MOBILE:
CUT TO:

45 INT. POINT FIVE NEWSROOM - DAY 54. 12.46 (2026) 45
EXPERT talking to NEWSREADER. NEWS GRAPHICS: Wytel LOGO.

EXPERT
I doubt that Wytel knew what they
were doing, but the leaked document
spells it out: Wytel supplied
equipment to MBJM, who sent it to
Damascus. Where it was used to
build Syria's concentration camps.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. WYTEL INDUSTRIES - DAY 54. 12.47 (2026) 46
INTERCUT with Sc.45. NEWS FOOTAGE of sullen WORKERS, leaving
Wytel with clear-your-desk BOXES. Amongst them, HOLLY HILL.
INTERCUT Edith, sc.44: poor Holly but... Tough. Gotcha.
Sc.45 CONT., NEWSREADER to CAMERA. Graphic: No.10.

NEWSREADER

And to return to the headlines.
The Prime Minister has confirmed
the date of the General Election as
Thursday the 7th of May.

CUT TO:

47 INT. TV STUDIO - DAY 54. 12.48 (2026) 47

On Edith's phone, Sc.44. VIVIANNE ROOK, to OOV interviewer.

VIV ROOK

I am delighted. At last. Let the
fight begin!

But just a GLIMPSE. Sc.44, Edith snaps her phone, OFF.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, GARDEN - DAY 54. 13.20 (2026) 48

JUMP CUT, half an hour later. FRAN'S BAND have set up an
area with SPEAKERS, MICS, two GUITARISTS testing the sound
system, that outdoor acoustic live beat thrumming under:

ROSIE, MURIEL, GIRLS & ERIC arriving at STEPHEN'S BARBECUE.
STEPHEN on a bigger scale this year, TWO BIG BARBECUES.

STEPHEN

Food's up, beefburgers, hot dogs,
proper sausages, veggie burgers
over here, and that's the latest
thing, an orange burger, they make
it out of orange peel, it's nice!

JUMP CUT GUESTS getting food, chat, spreading out, sitting.
DANIEL still going from person to person, 'Happy birthday!'

CUT TO CELESTE & RUBY, with food. Studying, a distance away:

BETHANY & LIZZIE, heading away, across the grass.

RUBY

Those two. You don't think..?

CELESTE

Do you?

RUBY

I dunno.

CELESTE

No, I think Beth's just being 14.
She was never 14. It's a bit of a
crush, that's all. However...

A gossipy-eye-roll-glance at, a distance the other way:

EDITH & FRAN BAXTER. They've met before, laughing, a hug.

RUBY

Oh my God, I thought so too.

CELESTE

I've never known, with Edith.

RUBY

Trust me. Definitely. All those years at sea.

And with that in the air, Celeste glances across, to see:

STEPHEN and ELAINE.

Just talking. That's all.

Celeste watches. Stephen's laugh.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. MURIEL'S GARDEN, QUIET CORNER - DAY 54. 13.30 (2026) 49

Quiet spot. Others distant. BETHANY & LIZZIE with food, a bottle of wine. Secretive, like a teenage crush, or lovers.

LIZZIE

I tried telling my mum. She doesn't understand. I mean, she won't understand, she refuses.

BETHANY

My mum and dad, they're like, haven't you grown out of that yet? I said mum, you should look online, you should see Richard Allbright!

LIZZIE

He's got a wafer! In his head!

BETHANY

He can print his thoughts!

LIZZIE

Oh my God. How far would you go, Beth? To be transhuman?

Both quieter now, staring. So intimate.

BETHANY

It's like. Sometimes, I think. My lungs fill up with air, it goes in and out like some sort of bellows, and it feels so... thick. We could be so much better than this.

LIZZIE

We could be free.

BETHANY

We could be flying. We should be... wavelengths. In the air.

LIZZIE

How much money have you got?

BETHANY

Why?

LIZZIE

Tell me. How much?

BETHANY

My dad gave me 10,000 for my 18th. Even when we lost everything, he said, that's yours, hold on to it.

LIZZIE

Cos I did it, Beth. I contacted that woman. I spoke to her. I actually spoke to her. And she said we'd be perfect.

BETHANY

Oh my God.

LIZZIE

You could pay for us both.

BETHANY

Would you do it?

LIZZIE

Would you?

Thrilled, needing each other, they reach out. Hold hands.

CUT TO:

50 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, GARDEN - NIGHT 54. 18.00 (2026) 50

The party at NIGHT, now. A few FLAMBEAUX staked into the earth. FULL VOLUME now, FRAN'S BAND and her BACKING SINGERS giving it everything; their performance space framed by ropes of lightbulbs-on-strings. FAMILY & GUESTS nicely pissed, dancing, laughing, or chatting and clapping along.

FRAN sings African gospel-folk-rock, a rocked-up version of Mama Tembu's Wedding (search Soweto Gospel Choir Mama Tembu).

ROSIE and GIRLS & ERIC dance with LINCOLN.

STEPHEN dances with RUBY and CELESTE.

LEE sits in his VR HELMET, oblivious to it all.

YVONNE BUKHARI is pissed and giving it some.

MURIEL and EDITH dance with ELAINE.

BETHANY & LIZZIE sit on the edges, giggling, secretive.

JUMP CUT, suddenly NO MUSIC, but CHEERS, DANIEL on the MIC. He's wired, excited, about to explain why.

DANIEL

Thank you. Thank you! Isn't she amazing? Fran Baxter, everyone!

(cheers)

Couple of things. Happy birthday to me, obviously, don't sing! Not yet! Hold on. I'm 25 today.

(laughs & whoops)

But first of all, I want to say. Thank you. On behalf of someone who can't be here today. Viktor Goraya.

Toasts, 'to Viktor.' ROSIE to EDITH, muttering.

ROSIE

Oh here we go.

DANIEL

So many of you. Well, everyone. You've all been so kind.

EDITH

He means you.

ROSIE

I'm the best.

DANIEL

And I know we've had months of worry. And petitions.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)
And you've all written letters and
things, you've been amazing. But
he was trapped. In a country.
That denies his existence.
(pause)
Until Thursday night.

What?! Silence, now. Only Fran and Yvonne knew this.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Cos on Thursday night. Viktor left
Odessa. And went to Ternopil. At
midnight. He got into a lorry.

On CU Daniel - INTERCUT FAST GLIMPSES of -

CUT TO:

51 EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT B. 00.00 (2026) 51

FAST, SOUNDLESS images.

VIKTOR, with nothing more than a DUFFLE BAG, leaps into a
LORRY full of BOXES OF CLOTHES. SIX OTHERS with him. All
terrified. Hiding.

CUT TO:

52 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, GARDEN - NIGHT 54. 18.20 (2026) 52

DANIEL
And they crossed the border at
Krakovets. Successfully!
(Fran starts the cheers,
some people whoop)
Got into Poland. Ten hours.

CUT TO:

53 EXT. MOTORWAY, POLAND - NIGHT B. 22.15 (2026) 53

The LORRY. HEADLIGHTS slicing through the night.

CUT TO:

54 OMITTED 54

55 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, GARDEN - NIGHT 54. 18.21 (2026) 55

DANIEL
Down through Germany. Still too
dangerous. Stopped near Stuttgart.
To get from that lorry. Into
another lorry. Thanks Yvonne.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. GERMAN ALLEYWAY - DAY C. 11.30 (2026) 56

Deserted alley, in some industrial area. VIKTOR and the
OTHERS run from one LORRY, to ANOTHER, fast, like rats.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, GARDEN - NIGHT 54. 18.22 (2026) 57

DANIEL
And from there. Through France.
(boos)
I know. Onwards. Down to Spain.

The band, still in position behind Daniel, gives a kerrang on
the guitar, like Letterman's band accompanying his monologue.

And the LYONS FAMILY are listening in amazement.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
(to the band)
Thank you.
(to the crowd)
And he crossed the border, he did
it, he got there!
(kerrang! Cheers!)
And that's today! He surrendered
himself to the Spanish authorities.
He got arrested.
(Oh! No! Boo!)
But that's the plan! Socialist
Spain! They arrest him, he applies
for asylum, they won't deport him,
and that's what I'm saying! HE DID
IT! He's there, he's SAFE!

Cheers now! Huge! Wild! All a bit drunk and glad of good
news in a pissed-off world. ROSIE crying despite herself.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
And I know this for a fact.
Because... here he is!

And he lifts up his phone.

Viktor's smiling face!

CUT TO:

58 INT. VIKTOR'S ROOM, DETENTION CENTRE - NIGHT 54. 19.22 (2025~~8~~)

Plain little room. VIKTOR to SMARTPHONE CAMERA, waving!

CUT TO:

59 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, GARDEN - NIGHT 54. 18.23 (2026) 59

And the place goes fucking NUTS!

The band starts playing. FRAN and SINGERS sing with joy. EVERYONE clapping, cheering, dancing. DANIEL runs, holds up his phone to STEPHEN, EDITH, ROSIE, CELESTE, MURIEL, all converging, BETHANY, RUBY, LEE, LINCOLN, and YVONNE too.

ROSIE hoists up Lincoln, to the phone. A little boy in ribbons, waving at a man in a Spanish Detention Centre.

WIDE SHOT: the whole place jumping, dancing, rocking!

CUT TO:

60 STOCK FOOTAGE - DAY 55. 10.00 (2026) 60

AN AEROPLANE landing in MADRID.

CUT TO:

61 OMITTED 61

62 OMITTED 62

63 INT. SPANISH DETENTION CENTRE - DAY 55. 10.45 (2026) 63

Plain, white, unadorned, functional building. DANIEL having his DUFFLE BAG searched by SPANISH POLICEMAN.

JUMP CUT, DANIEL at a glass partition, unsmiling SPANISH POLICEWOMAN facing him. Daniel speaks into his iPhone.

DANIEL
My name is Daniel Lyons, I have
booked the conjugal suite.

IPHONE
Mi nombre es Daniel Lyons, he
reservado la suite conyugal.

CUT TO:

64 INT. CONJUGAL SUITE, DETENTION CENTRE - DAY 55. 11.00 (2026) 64

DANIEL waiting on a chair, awkward.

It's the plainest room. White. Bare. A chair, a desk, and
a MATTRESS on the floor. In fairness, it's a double.

Clink of keys, the DOOR opens, and there's VIKTOR, with a
SPANISH GUARD, who beats a hasty retreat, locking the door.

DANIEL
There you are.

VIKTOR
Hey.

DANIEL
Look at this room.

And they go into the biggest hug. Then forehead to forehead:

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Hello.

VIKTOR
Hi.

And they hug again. Not snogging, no sex, not yet, it's
deeper than that. Holding each other. Happy.

CUT TO:

65 INT. ELAINE'S BEDSIT - DAY 55. 13.50 (2026)

65

STEPHEN sits on the bed, after sex with ELAINE.

STEPHEN
So what they've done now, is this.
Beckondoe won't let me drive across
Manchester, because of the
congestion charge. So I have to
pick things up from the depot on my
bike. Large or small, doesn't
matter, I've got to carry it on my
bike.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Out of the congestion zone, to a designated Beckondoe car park, full of Beckondoe vans - cos I'm not allowed to use my own van, even if I had one, in case I build up my own business, in my spare time, so I can only use Beckondoe vans - and I get allocated a van and go. To deliver the parcel. Leaving my bike God-knows-where cos I'm not allowed to put it in the van. For £7.60 an hour. Except I only get £3.90, because I'm new so I'm classified as an apprentice.

He's climbing into his biking gear. She's on the other side of the bed, dressing. ELAINE PARRIS is late 30s, shrewd, cynical. She's better than her circumstances, a simple, brown Fallowfield bedsit, but life has dumped her here. It's the fourth time they've met like this. Sex, not an affair.

ELAINE

So what are the five jobs? Celeste said you had five.

STEPHEN

Oh, don't use her name, not here. That's not fair.

ELAINE

Delivery, courier, hospitality, pizza, and..?

STEPHEN

Drug tests. I'm a guinea pig.

ELAINE

And what does she do?

STEPHEN

Book keeping. She once had a staff of 25, now she does the budget for local primary schools. And she never complains. That pisses me off. I wish she'd complain. But no. I get this... monument.

She gives him a quick kiss, stands, grabbing stuff.

ELAINE

That house is enormous. Your Gran's. You could sell it, have a hundred thousand each, you could all sail through the recession.

STEPHEN

Houses don't shift, these days, no one's got money to spend.

ELAINE

You could try. The Man Who Lost a Million Quid. I lost 20,000, which might be nothing to you, but it's left me stuck in this place. Know when you're lucky, Steve.

STEPHEN

Did you register this address? For the election?

ELAINE

No, I never got round to it.

STEPHEN

But... now you can't vote!

ELAINE

What does it matter?

From that point on, he thinks less of her. Of his phone:

STEPHEN

Missed a call.

ELAINE

It's the wife!

STEPHEN

Stop it. Where's 0116?

ELAINE

Leicester, I think.

She goes into her little BATHROOM. Brushes her teeth.

Stephen goes to VOICEMAIL.

Listens.

Puzzled.

What's this about..?

Oh.

He just sits there, listening.

And everything falls away.

CUT TO:

But he seems lost in thought. A bit watery, somehow.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. BECKONDOE DEPOT - DAY 55. 14.40 (2026) 67

A BIG WAREHOUSE in the city. STEPHEN at a window. Signing out for THREE PARCELS. Two ordinary-sized, they can fit into his rucksack, but one's long, a narrow 3ft-long BOX.

CUT TO:

68 EXT. MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE - DAY 55. 14.55 (2026) 68

STEPHEN cycles along. RUCKSACK full. Balancing the long 3ft PARCEL across his lap, while he wobbles on the bike.

And all the time, he stares ahead. Not quite himself.

And now he's slowing down.

Slower and slower as the weight gets heavier.

And then he stops. A bit tearful.

To his MOBILE:

STEPHEN
Signor, family link, override, not
Muriel, not Celeste. Thanks, call.

CUT TO:

69 OMITTED 69

70 OMITTED 70

71 OMITTED 71

72 OMITTED 72

73 OMITTED 73

74 INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - DAY 55. 15.32 (2026) 74

ROSIE sorting out wet washing. Ring ring...

LINK VOICE
Family link, Stephen calling.

ROSIE
Okay, hello! Funny time of day.

CUT TO:

75 EXT. ROSIE'S ESTATE - DAY 55. 15.32 (2026) 75

EDITH taking off her PAINT-SPRAY MASK because she's in her BOILER-SUIT, on the concrete, making PLACARDS, 'Free the 1!'

EDITH
Hey, can it wait? I'm a little bit busy, is it important?

CUT TO:

76 INT. SPANISH HOTEL - DAY 55. 16.32 (2026) 76

DANIEL in a small, ordinary, HOTEL. He's answering Stephen's call, talking to the air, using his MOBILE on speakerphone.

WINDOW VIEW (FX SHOT?): Madrid rooftops stretching away.

DANIEL
Hola, este Danielo, en Madrid, hasta la vista, paella, si si si.

Sc.68-76 INTERCUTTING now.

STEPHEN
Okay so, I didn't want to wait, so, are the kids there, Rosie?

ROSIE
No, why? What is it?

STEPHEN
So, I got a call, and. Dad's dead.

DANIEL
No way.

All: wow. Pause.

ROSIE
Are you kidding?

STEPHEN

Seriously. It's for real. No, I made it up, I thought it would be funny. No, he's dead, he's gone. It took two days, gone, she said.

EDITH

Who did? Jacqueline?

STEPHEN

Yeah. She phoned me.

DANIEL

Oh my God. He's only 69. We never got to his birthday.

EDITH

So what happened?

STEPHEN

He was hit by a bike.

On CU Stephen, imagining this -

CUT TO:

77

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY D. 12.15 (2026)

77

- just a blur - a glimpse -

A RIDEREE bike, like Deliveroo, Uber Eats, that massive FOOD BOX on the back - whizzes past, RIDER calls back, cheery -

RIDER

Sorry!

CONT. SC.68-76 INTERCUTTING.

STEPHEN

I mean a bicycle. She said, he was hit by a Rideree bike.

DANIEL

A bike? Killed him?

ROSIE

Stephen, are you kidding us?

STEPHEN

The bike didn't kill him, the bike knocked him over. And he had a scratch on his hand. That was all. This is what Jacqueline said. He was fine, he had a scratch, but that turned into blood poisoning.

EDITH

Oh my God, sepsis.

STEPHEN

Yeah, and they tried all the antibiotics. But they don't work any more. A scratch on his hand.

DANIEL

He was hit by a bike?!

STEPHEN

So he went to hospital. One o'clock this afternoon. Organ failure, and... Gone.

ROSIE

What was it delivering, the bike?

DANIEL

Rosie!

ROSIE

I want to know!

EDITH

Actually, I'd like to know. Was he killed by a chicken vindaloo?

DANIEL

You lot are horrible.

ROSIE

He was horrible, Danny. *He was.*

DANIEL

For God's sake, he slept with someone else and left us, it's not the worst crime in the world.

ROSIE

And then he had a whole second family. With Jacqueline. Did he ever bother with us?!

DANIEL

And that's why, Rosie! Cos that's how you spoke to him. Every time. You can't hate someone, and then expect him to visit, can you?

ROSIE

Oh nice one, Danny. Now you love him, now he's dead. Cut the link!

Click, she's gone.

EDITH
That was a bit hard, Dan.

STEPHEN
What a mess.

EDITH
Hey. I'm sorry.

STEPHEN
Me too.

DANIEL
And me.

Stephen cries a little.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You okay?

STEPHEN
No.

CUT TO:

78 INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - DAY 55. 15.45 (2026) 78

DOOR OPENS, EDITH arriving home, knowing she'll find...
ROSIE crying her eyes out.
EDITH goes to her, and holds her.

CUT TO:

78A INT. ROSIE'S FLAT - DAY 55. 15.55 (2026) 78A *

TEN MINUTES LATER. ROSIE now calm. Sitting with EDITH, both
with a beer. Calm, contemplative. NB, this isn't the first
time Rosie's said all this; she tries it out, over the years. *

ROSIE *

I'm right, though. Cos look at it *

from my point of view. Mum and dad *

had Stephen. Fine. They had you. *

Fine. They had Daniel, they had a *

great big gay baby, and they were *

still fine. Then they had me. And *

dad buggered off. So if that's not *

my fault, what is it? *

EDITH *

Well it's not your *fault* - *

ROSIE
- I don't mean fault. I just mean.
There I was. And off he went.

EDITH
But maybe it was just bad timing,
that's when he met Jacqueline. It
just happened to be then.

ROSIE
"Jacqueline." I'll never forget
that. "Don't call me Jackie -"

ROSIE & EDITH
"- my name is Jacqueline."

ROSIE
But she just proves my point. Cos
he wasn't a wanderer. He stayed
with Jacqueline, they had a son and
everything, he was faithful. So
the only time he wasn't. Was when
I came along. And I think that's
because he couldn't cope.

EDITH
I dunno. Maybe.

ROSIE
Definitely. He was just too much
of a coward.

EDITH
I wish I'd asked him. But I never
had anything to say to him, really.
Whenever I saw him, I'd just sit
there and think, 'What shall I
say?'

ROSIE
I had lots to say. Too late now.

EDITH
His loss.

ROSIE
Oh that's the truth.

EDITH
Like I've always said, Rosie.
Shame on him.

Rosie lifts her beer bottle.

ROSIE
Shame on our father's head.

EDITH
For shame.

*
*

And they toast him, clink.

*

CUT TO:

*

79 INT. BBC NEWS - DAY 56. 07.03 (2026)

79 *

NEWSREADER to CAMERA.

NEWSREADER
And as the polls open, it's being
called the most unpredictable
General Election in living memory.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. POLLING STATION 1 - DAY 56. 07.04 (2026)

80

BLUE ROSETTES as a high-ranking CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE
enters. A wave for the cameras, cheers from SUPPORTERS.

CUT TO:

81 EXT. POLLING STATION 2 - DAY 56. 07.05 (2026) 81

RED ROSETTES as a high-ranking LABOUR CANDIDATE enters. A wave for the cameras, cheers from SUPPORTERS.

CUT TO:

82 INT. FOUR STAR LIVE! STUDIO - DAY 56. 12.00 (2026) 82

VIV ROOK

I think I'm a little bit tipsy!

She's hooting, with her MATES, and WINE. JULIE PEASGOOD is there. And five FOUR STAR CANDIDATES, all relaxed.

This is Viv's studio. Her channel. Bright video. This Morning-type set, video windows with an artificial view. Sofas. Now they're on the KITCHEN SET, Viv on a tall stool, with nibbles and wine. More fun than any other politician.

VIV ROOK (CONT'D)

I haven't even voted yet! I'll be squiffy. I'll tick the wrong box!

CUT TO:

83 INT. BBC NEWS - DAY 56. 12.05 (2026) 83

NEWSREADER

Vivienne Rook has refused to appear on any terrestrial channel. She's turned down every interview and every debate, restricting herself to her own channel, Four Star Live.

CUT TO:

84 INT. FOUR STAR LIVE! STUDIO - DAY 56. 12.10 (2026) 84

INTERCUT with Sc.85-87, as everyone votes.

JUMP CUTS, as Four Star Live! weaponises itself. As well as the clean footage, shots should be Snap-chatted, Boomerang'd, freeze framed with filters, cartoons, arrows added. EG, when the STOOGE asks his question below, surround his head with question marks. Four Star using every trick in the book.

On the SOFAS. VIV with JULIE PEASGOOD, who's being solemn.

JULIE PEASGOOD

But Viv. Campaigning isn't allowed on Election Day.

VIV ROOK

This isn't a campaign! This is my
channel. This is my home.

JUMP CUT back to Sc.82, VIV (not drunk at all) holding up her
wine glass, suddenly passionate. And her acolytes agreeing.

VIV ROOK (CONT'D)

But this is British wine. For
British people. It needs tax
breaks, and subsidised transport -

STOOGIE

But where will the money come from,
Viv? You can't raise taxes.

VIV ROOK

I'll tell you where the money comes
from. I'll impose a tariff on
wines from abroad, let them pay!

JUMP CUT to sofa area, VIV upset, cradling a CRYING MUM.

VIV ROOK (CONT'D)

He didn't die for nothing. He died
for us. And I'm telling you.

(to CAMERA, tearful)

Shame. Shame on every politician
who has ever let our soldiers down.

JUMP CUT TO VIV badly-dancing with LEE FROM STEPS. He's
teaching her the dance routine to Tragedy, she's hooting.

LEE LATCHFORD

That's it Viv! Hands either side
of your face. You've got it!

JUMP CUT TO VIV & CANDIDATES at the kitchen counter, furious.

VIV ROOK

False facts. Every day. D'you
know where you can find the truth?
Right here. The Four Star Channel.
God help us, we're the only ones!

CUT TO:

85

INT. ROSIE'S POLLING STATION - DAY 56. 12.12 (2026)

85

VOTES INTERCUT with Sc.84.

TIGHT ON ROSIE in her booth, going to vote.

She puts her X on VIVIENNE ROOK, 4-STAR PARTY.

CUT TO EDITH, with her vote.

She draws a line across the page, spoils the vote.

CUT TO:

86 INT. STEPHEN'S POLLING STATION - DAY 56. 12.14 (2026) 86

VOTES INTERCUT with Sc.84.

Different ward. TIGHT on STEPHEN, his vote.

For his first time, an X next to CAROLINE SHELTON, LABOUR.

CUT TO CELESTE.

Votes X for ASH PARACHA, CONSERVATIVE.

CUT TO MURIEL.

On whim, she votes X for MICHAEL DOLAN, FOUR-STAR.

CUT TO:

87 INT. DANIEL'S POLLING STATION - DAY 56. 13.02 (2026) 87

VOTES INTERCUT with Sc.84.

Different ward. TIGHT on DANIEL, his vote.

His secret: an X next to ALAN HAINES, CONSERVATIVE.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. DANIEL'S POLLING STATION - DAY 56. 13.05 (2025) 88

INTERCUT of Sc.84-87 ends. DANIEL leaves the station - a suburban PRIMARY SCHOOL - and gets into a nice, gleaming BLACK CAR, driven by STEPHEN, EDITH in the passenger seat, ROSIE in the back. Only now does it become clear, they're all DRESSED IN BLACK. They're going to the funeral.

STEPHEN

All done? You left-wing hippy.

DANIEL

(of the car)

This is nice. Like the old days.

STEPHEN

It's a hundred quid if I get it back by midnight.

EDITH

I love it, us lot in one car, we never do this! I should've brought sweets. Leicester, here we come!

ROSIE

I'm just making sure he's dead.

And off they go.

CUT TO:

89

EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE - DAY 56. 15.15 (2026)

89

SAME DAY. CELESTE and MURIEL, not dressed in black, saying goodbye to BETHANY, who's shoving a HOLDALL into LIZZIE'S LITTLE CAR, Lizzie standing by the driver's door, all smiles.

CELESTE

Now you did vote, you two?

BETHANY

Did it by post, last week, no one goes and does it by hand any more.

MURIEL

Don't forget your passports.

CELESTE

They're going to Scotland!

MURIEL

If your lot get into power,
Scotland could be divorced by
midnight, they'll be stranded.

(kiss for Bethany)

Now go and have a lovely time.
Celebrate! It's your Grandad's
funeral, this is a very fine day.

CELESTE

Don't listen to her, go and have
fun. Edinburgh is beautiful.

BETHANY

Bye then.

CELESTE

See you next week.

CUT TO INT. CAR, Bethany and Lizzie getting in, excited.

BETHANY

Oh my God. They believed us.

LIZZIE

They'll understand. When they see
it. Ten days' time, they'll be
like, oh my God that's infinite.

(to the satnav)

Destination: Liverpool. Imperial
B&B, Shiel Road, L6. Thank you!

And off they go.

CUT TO:

90 INT. GLEN SIDE CREMATORIUM - DAY 56. 16.30 (2026) 90

A COFFIN being carried in.

VINCENT JOHN LYONS, 1956 - 2026.

It's the crematorium in Leicester. The place is half-full, not a bad turn out. Amazing Grace playing softly. Walking behind the coffin: JACQUELINE LYONS, 70, smart, brisk, thin, with Jacqueline & Vincent's son, STEVEN LYONS, 30.

On the back row: STEPHEN, DANIEL, ROSIE, EDITH. Odd day, all a bit jittery. But that makes them badly-behaved too.

Steven lingers to say hello. A bit hushed:

STEVEN
Hey there. Hello. Thanks for
coming. Stephen.

STEPHEN
Steven.

STEVEN
Killed by a bike.

STEPHEN
Shocking.

STEVEN
Come for a drink, after, you're
very welcome, all of you.
(to Edith)
I saw you on TV. With the bomb.
See you later. Stephen.

STEPHEN
Steven.

Steven trots down the aisle to join his mother.

ROSIE
I still maintain. It's not legal
to give two sons the same name.

STEPHEN
He's Steven with a V.

DANIEL
Jacqueline chose Steven with a V,
after her dad, you know that.

ROSIE
"Jacqueline."

STEPHEN
He doesn't feel like a brother.

ROSIE
Half brother. If that. What does
he do these days?

DANIEL
He's a pharmacist.

STEPHEN
With a V.

DANIEL
He's a varmacist.

They're giggling, but then, reading the order of service:

EDITH
Oh my God. This isn't a
crematorium.

ROSIE
What d'you mean?

EDITH
This place, it isn't a crematorium.
It's an aquatorium. They don't
burn him. He gets dissolved.

All smiles drop, appalled.

CUT TO:

91 EXT. DOCKS, LIVERPOOL - DAY 56. 16.45 (2026) 91

BETHANY and LIZZIE walk along a cold, wind-whipped dock.

They hand their PASSPORTS to an efficient young SLOVAKIAN
WOMAN with a clipboard. As she checks them, hands them back:

SLOVAKIAN WOMAN
Bethany Bisme-Lyons. Thank you.
Lizzie Mbeko. Thank you. If you'd
like to get on board, we'll take
you across, soon as we're ready.

Bethany & Lizzie trot down some steps, to the water. Both
have lost their smiles, now. They're scared, but determined.

They get on board a MOTORIZED DINGHY, big enough for 6, TWO
OTHER PEOPLE already on board, in their 20s. All quiet,
introspective. The DINGHY piloted by a broad SLOVAKIAN MAN.

Bethany and Lizzie settle in. Huddle, freezing.

Slovakian woman gets on board, calls out:

SLOVAKIAN WOMAN (CONT'D)
To je vsetko, to je vsetko, co mame
dnes, mozeme ist.

The man fires up the ENGINE.

They head off, across the river.

In the distance (FX SHOT?): AN OCEAN LINER. Sizeable, but not vast, roughly the size of the SS Canberra. Old, greying, no longer in a commercial fleet.

The dinghy heads towards it.

Bethany and Lizzie hold hands, scared. But getting an intense thrill from their own bravery, too.

CUT TO:

92 INT. GLEN SIDE CREMATORIUM - DAY 56. 16.50 (2026) 92

CONGREGATION singing The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, Is Ended.

JACQUELINE and STEVEN upset.

But at the back, STEPHEN, DANIEL, ROSIE and EDITH mutter.
Two empty rows in front of them, so they're free to whisper.
They sing a little, but listen to each other, really.

EDITH
It's called alkaline hydrolysis.
Better for the environment.

ROSIE
They were always green, his side of
the family. Uncle Ted was buried
in wicker. On a slope.

DANIEL
So what do they do?

EDITH
Put the body in a big tube.

And the coffin begins to sink.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Fill it with water. Heat it up.

ROSIE
They boil him?

DANIEL

Oh my God.

ROSIE

Boil in the bag. Like sous-vide.

STEPHEN

Is it worse than burning? I mean,
it is, I know, but why?

DANIEL

The eyes.

EDITH

You dissolve. Then you get rinsed.

The coffin disappearing. Edith's words solemn, a eulogy.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Then they pour you out. Into a
tub. You get flushed. Down the
drain. Out to sea. The end.

And the coffin is gone.

CUT TO:

93 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY 56. 16.55 (2026) 93

KITCHEN. MURIEL on a LAPTOP, online.

She's looked up Glen Side Crematorium. Alkaline hydrolysis.

She gets up.

Goes to the TOILET.

Flushes it.

Watches the water swirl away.

Grim satisfaction:

MURIEL

Goodbye Vince.

CUT TO:

94 INT. LEICESTER PUB - DAY 56. 17.45 (2026) 94

Ordinary place, not modernised. FUNERAL GUESTS, with a
modest BUFFET, COFFEE. JACQUELINE & STEVEN at a distance.
STEPHEN coming from the bar with DRINKS (he's driving, Coke).

STEPHEN

Tell you what, Jacqueline's true to form, no money behind the bar. Any word from the polls?

DANIEL

They're not allowed to say until ten o'clock. Low turnout, though.

ROSIE

You see? It's like Viv Rook says. People are too thick.

STEPHEN

So. Steven with a V told me. Dad didn't just work for that security firm. When he was 55, he put some money in. Like two thousand quid. But like shares. And they sold the company three years ago, he got a payout. £75,000.

ROSIE

And we get none of that?

STEPHEN

Nothing.
(raises his glass)
Here's to Vince.

All, 'To Vince, to dad.'

STEVEN heading over, with a stack of little BOXES. Dark-red fake leather, hinged lid, like a jewellery box, 10cm x 5.

STEVEN

Hey, you lot, famalam. Stephen.

STEPHEN

Steven. We were just toasting him.

STEVEN

That's a nice little motor out front, Stephen.

STEPHEN

It is, Steven. I like it.

STEVEN

Two point two litres?

STEPHEN

Yup.

A SLY GLANCE between Daniel, Edith, Rosie. Ah! That's why Stephen hired such a nice car.

STEVEN

You were always very smart. Now
you've all got one of these...

Behind Steven, UNDERTAKER STAFF in black are handing out
little boxes to everyone. As he gives each of them one:

STEVEN (CONT'D)

It's just something to remember him
by. We should meet up sometime.
Go for dinner. That'd be nice.
(to Edith)
You were amazing with that bomb,
Edith, are you all right now?

EDITH

Not really, no, I'm poisoned.

STEVEN

Well, it's a thing, isn't it? See
you in a bit. Stephen.

STEPHEN

Steven.

And he goes, as they all open their boxes.

On navy velveteen: A SMALL TEST TUBE.

They take it out. It's full of WATER. Pale brown.

ROSIE

Oh my God.

DANIEL

Daddy.

STEPHEN

Oh that's weird. Isn't that weird?

ROSIE

Is that all that's left..?

DANIEL

He looks like tea. Weak tea. Is
that what we are in the end? Tea?

STEPHEN

It's just like scattering the
ashes, I suppose.

EDITH

Can't do this with ashes.

She unstoppers the tube, *pop!*

EDITH (CONT'D)

Cheers.

Knocks it back!

ROSIE
Edith!

DANIEL
You can't do that!

STEPHEN
It's acid!

EDITH
It's alkali. Bleh.

ROSIE
What's he taste like?

EDITH
Soap.

ROSIE
Soap?!

EDITH
Like antiseptic gel.

DANIEL
I can't believe you did that.

EDITH
He's my DNA. We are as one.

And Edith looks across the pub.

Jacqueline is staring. Hostile. She saw Edith do it.

Edith just raises her test-tube, defiant. Cheers.

Jacqueline turns away. And then out of the blue:

ROSIE
Why didn't you come home for mum's funeral?

EDITH
Oh don't do that.

ROSIE
But why not?

EDITH
I was stuck, I was in Canada.

ROSIE
But you could've come home.

EDITH
I didn't want to.

ROSIE

Why not?

EDITH

Because it was her funeral.

Silence. And suddenly, simply, dressed in black, in a pub in Leicester, they are immensely sad. Each of them haunted.

ROSIE

I keep wondering. Whether she'd be proud of me.

EDITH

Of course she would.

ROSIE

No job. Another kid without his dad. I don't know if she would. Cos she was tough, Edith. She wasn't just nice. She was tough.

DANIEL

I wonder. If she'd think I was mad. With Viktor.

EDITH

I think she'd be ashamed. Some of the things I've done.

ROSIE

You never do anything wrong.

EDITH

Oh, trust me.

STEPHEN

She'd kill me. If she knew. She would kill me. All that stuff they say about them looking down on you. I hope they don't.

And Rosie sobs.

Edith puts her arm around her.

Rosie leans in to Edith, reaches out for Daniel's hand.

Daniel takes it, reaches his other hand to hold Stephen's.

All crying, a bit. For their mum, their dad, themselves.

CUT TO:

95 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT 56. 19.00 (2026) 95

CELESTE working on 2 LAPTOPS at once, doing accounts. MURIEL having a good clean of glasses, plates, from the hospitality business. Low buzz of NEWS ADR, the election, etc.

Celeste's MOBILE rings, it says BETHANY. She's delighted.

CELESTE
Oh, Signor, open on link, hello
darling! How is it? Hoots mon!
(silence)
Bethany? Can you hear me?
(a sob)
Beth? You all right?

Bethany just a voice. Crying. Distraught.

BETHANY V.O.
Mum? Can you help me? Please?

Celeste & Muriel HORRIFIED, Celeste grabs her mobile which cuts off the link, audible on handset only.

CELESTE
What is it, sweetheart? What's
wrong? I'm here. What is it?

BETHANY V.O.
I'm sorry.

CELESTE
Are you all right? Are you hurt?
Whatever it is. I will fix it. I
promise you. Now tell me.

CUT TO:

96 EXT. MURIEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT 56. 19.02 (2026) 96

Panic. CELESTE running to her car. MURIEL following. RUBY in b/g, frozen, scared, stays in the doorway.

CELESTE
She's in Liverpool! Not Scotland,
she's in bloody Liverpool!

MURIEL
But what for, what's she done?

CELESTE
She won't say. God knows.

MURIEL
I'll call Stephen.

Celeste stops. Holds Muriel's hands. Desperate

CELESTE

No. Please. Muriel. Don't.

And Muriel agrees. Kind to Celeste, for once:

MURIEL

Go.

Celeste runs, gets into the car, slams the door, BANG!

SCREECH of wheels. Car races off.

Muriel left behind. Ruby still in the doorway.

CUT TO:

97

EXT. MOTORWAY - NIGHT 56. 19.15 (2026)

97

CELESTE driving through the dark. On speakerphone.

CELESTE

Just tell me what's happened.

BETHANY V.O.

I can't.

CELESTE

Why not?

BETHANY V.O.

You'll hate me.

CELESTE

Oh I could never hate you. Never.

CUT TO:

98

EXT. SHIEL ROAD, LIVERPOOL - NIGHT 56. 20.08 (2026)

98

Rough area. Terraced housing. CELESTE gets out.

Opposite the IMPERIAL B&B. Cheap boarding house. She hurries over. Not knowing. Filled with dread.

She rings.

The door is pulled open, and there is BETHANY - crying, a mess, but FINE. Throws herself at mum. Hugs her. Sobbing.

CUT TO:

99

INT. IMPERIAL B&B, LIVERPOOL - NIGHT 56. 20.09 (2026)

99

It's cramped, narrow inside. BETHANY leading CELESTE up the stairs, the LANDLADY, Scouse, caring, worried, calling up.

LANDLADY

They won't tell me. All I've heard
is crying. I did try, I said, let
me in, but they wouldn't.

As they march up the stairs:

CELESTE

But what are you doing in
Liverpool? Why did you lie?

BETHANY

It's the only place they do it.

CELESTE

Do what?

BETHANY

The operation.

CELESTE

...what operation..?

CUT TO:

100 INT. BEDROOM, IMPERIAL B&B, LIVERPOOL - NIGHT 56. 20.10 100
(2026)

BETHANY opens the door. Leads CELESTE in. Hushed.

It's small. Brown. Twin beds.

On one bed: LIZZIE. Sitting up, knees up, like she can hide,
somehow. A DRESSING over her LEFT EYE.

BETHANY

It's only my mum.

LIZZIE

You promised me.

CELESTE

It's okay. I'm here now, you've
got nothing to worry about, so what
happened to your eye? Lizzie? Can
you tell me?

Celeste sits by Lizzie. Bethany sits as far away as she can.

LIZZIE

It's gone wrong. But we can fix
it. We just need to find them.

CELESTE

Let me see. Let me see your eye.

Lizzie scared.

But lifts off the bandage.

Her eye is bruised, puffy, raw. But... okay.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
Okay. That's not too bad.
(gives a funny wave)
Hello Lizzie.

LIZZIE
(laughs a little)
Hello.

CELESTE
So what have you had done? You
daft things. You haven't had a
facelift, have you? At your age.

Celeste leans in close.

Lizzie's eyelids are puffy, but Celeste can see the eyeball.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
It's okay. There's a lot of
swelling. But that'll calm down.

But then suddenly, awfully:

Lizzie's eye goes zzt, zzt, zzt. Swivels left, right, left,
right, out of control, too fast, with an awful little zzt
noise. Celeste horrified to the core of her soul.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
What..?

LIZZIE
I can't control it.

CELESTE
What are you doing?

LIZZIE
It won't say still.

Zzt, zzt, zzt.

CELESTE
Lizzie stop it, what are you doing?

LIZZIE
I can't see.

CELESTE
What is that..?

And she looks closer.

EXTREME CU, the eye is ARTIFICIAL. Metal. The lens going zzt, zzt, zzt, the iris opening and closing.

CELESTE (CONT'D)

...what have you done?

BETHANY

It's a camera.

CELESTE

...what?

BETHANY

They promised us. They said we could see. Digital vision.

CELESTE

But. That's not her eye, what happened to her eye, where is it?

BETHANY

They took it out.

CELESTE

Who did?

BETHANY

The people on the boat.

CELESTE

What boat..?

BETHANY

They said to me, you're next. But I couldn't. I was too scared.

LIZZIE

I can't see. With this eye. It's supposed to integrate, I'm supposed to see the output in my head, but I can't, my eyesight is over *there* -

She indicates her LAPTOP, on the other twin bed; Celeste hadn't even noticed it before, but now realises...

She, Celeste, is appearing on the LAPTOP SCREEN. The picture is Lizzie's POV, the POV of her left eye. The image of Celeste judders and zooms as the eye goes zzt, zzt, zzt.

Celeste looks at the laptop.

At Lizzie.

At Bethany.

They are in hell.

Zzt, zzt, zzt.

CUT TO:

101 INT. A&E, HOSPITAL, LIVERPOOL - NIGHT 56. 22.10 (2026) 101

LIZZIE on a bed in a CUBICLE, with a PROPER DRESSING on her eye. Calm now, quiet. Holding hands with BETHANY.

Pull out, FOLLOW CELESTE down the corridor, to the NURSES' STATION, with DR ETO; 30, female, brisk.

CELESTE

Her mother's on her way. God help.

DR ETO

It's been going on for decades.
Cruise ships arrive at the docks.
Specially adapted as hospitals.
Run by Russians, Slovaks, Romanians.
And people go on board for cheap operations. It was facelifts in the 90s. Gender reassignment in the 2000s. Now they've discovered transhumans.

CELESTE

But they're breaking the law?

DR ETO

This lot are. They're butchers.
But you try finding them.

CELESTE

It's a great big ship!

DR ETO

I mean, try finding the owners.
Try suing them. There's a chain of ownership bouncing round and round the world, till you end up with no one. And the ship sails on.

CELESTE

And. Her eye..? Her real eye?

DR ETO

Gone. Junked.

Celeste staggered. Horrified.

DR ETO (CONT'D)

If you had \$500,000. They say, there are grafts now, to integrate the lens with your optical nerve. But not for kids like that. In Liverpool.

(MORE)

DR ETO (CONT'D)
Somewhere, there's a golden world
where these things are possible.
But it's never here, is it?

CUT TO:

102 EXT. HOSPITAL, LIVERPOOL - NIGHT 56. 22.19 (2026) 102

Dark, cold. CELESTE stands outside.

Her MOBILE's ready at: STEPHEN. It's time to tell him.

But she hesitates.

She leans against the wall. Deep in thought. Remembers:

CUT TO:

103 INT. MURIEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY E. 08.20 (2026) 103

CELESTE'S FLASHBACK. WEEKS AGO.

She's in the kitchen, alone, determined, moving fast, to get this done. She's got an ENVELOPE from America, rips it open.

A BRIGHT YELLOW STICKING PLASTER.

The same as the one used by Edith in Sc.34. Celeste pulls it open. Fast, alert, looking round, mustn't be caught.

She puts the plaster on her THUMB.

In the corner: Stephen's BIKE, RUCKSACK. And his MOBILE. The cheap phone old enough to still work off THUMBPRINTS.

She goes to it. Puts her thumb on the HOME BUTTON.

It opens. Celeste goes to MESSAGES, scrolls through.

Finds Elaine.

Celeste reads.

Stephen: *See you tomorrow, OK? X*

Elaine: *Fuck me like u did last week and I'll buy the pizza x*

Celeste stands there.

A noise.

She locks the phone, puts it back, pulls the latex-layer off her thumb, goes back to her chair with the TWO LAPTOPS.

STEPHEN hurries in, grabbing his phone, rucksack, bike.

STEPHEN
See you tonight, yeah?

CELESTE
Yep.

He goes.

And she just sits there. Because that's all she can do, stuck like this, living in her husband's family's house, with no money and two kids. She'll have to swallow it. For now.

CUT TO:

104 EXT. HOSPITAL, LIVERPOOL - NIGHT 56. 22.20 92026) 104

COMING BACK to CELESTE, deep in thought.

BETHANY appears, at a distance, timid.

BETHANY
Did you tell him?

CELESTE
You gave away ten thousand pounds.
And your dad works every hour.

But then Celeste puts the phone away.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
What the hell. He can wait.
(tearful)
Thank God you were scared. It
saved you, Beth. It saved you.

She goes to Bethany, and they cling to each other.

CUT TO:

105 EXT. ROAD/INT. CAR - NIGHT 56. 22.21 (2026) 105

STEPHEN'S smart, gleaming black CAR pulls up at TRAFFIC LIGHTS. They're back in Manchester; as before, STEPHEN at the wheel, EDITH in the PASSENGER SEAT, DANIEL and ROSIE sitting in the BACK. All subdued.

STEPHEN
Hey. It's gone ten.

He's got a DASHBOARD TV, switches it on.

All leaning in, to see, ON SCREEN:

CUT TO:

106 INT. BBC ELECTION STUDIO - NIGHT 56. 22.21 (2026) 106
ON SCREEN, Sc.105. DERMOT O'LEARY to CAMERA. Excited!

DERMOT O'LEARY
If the exit polls are correct, this
is an extraordinary result. We're
saying, 288 seats for the
Conservatives. 287 seats for
Labour. And an astonishing 15
seats for Vivienne Rook's Four Star
Party. That's 15 seats! Leaving
the balance of power in the United
Kingdom firmly in the hands of
Vivienne Rook.

CUT TO:

107 INT. MUNICIPAL HALL - NIGHT 56. 22.22 (2026) 107
ON SCREEN in Sc.105. FOUR STAR VOTERS going wild! VIVIENNE
ROOK has arrived early - she's captured the CAMERAS and
JOURNALISTS on GROUND LEVEL. Ferocious in victory.

VIV ROOK
I will not form a pact with the
Tories. I will not form a pact
with Labour. Instead! For every
vote in the House of Commons, they
can come to me. They. Can come.
To me. And I will decide!

HUGE CHEERS! Wild, out of control! Which snaps OFF -

CUT TO:

108 EXT. ROAD/INT. CAR - NIGHT 56. 22.23 (2026) 108
STEPHEN turns it off. The car quiet, exhausted.

DANIEL
Happy now, Rosie?

ROSIE
Yes.

But she looks scared.

STEPHEN
New world.

They sit there in silence.

And then...

A BICYCLE pulls up alongside, a RIDEREE BIKE. Purple livery.

The RIDER's young, black, in cycling gear. BIG FOOD BOX on the back. He's on the car's right side, about to turn right. The Lyons clock him. CU on Stephen, and...

FLASHBACK, sc.77, the Rideree bike, the cry of 'Sorry!'

The lights go GREEN.

The Rideree bike turns right, down a SUBURBAN STREET.

Stephen's about to drive STRAIGHT AHEAD.

But he thinks

He looks at Edith.

She holds his stare. Knows what he's thinking. And she's darker than any of them. Her look says, fuck it. Yeah.

And suddenly, Stephen spins the wheel.

Turns right.

Following the bike.

DANIEL

What are you doing?

He looks at Rosie. Rosie is doubtful, but realising.

They are following the Rideree bike.

And they know what's going to happen. The two in the back reduced to kids, the older ones in charge. Stephen, with his rubbish jobs and his lousy affair; Edith with her secrets and radiation; Rosie with her redundancy and two kids; Daniel with a lover banned from this country. Viv Rook's country.

The bike goes down the street.

The gleaming black car follows.

The bike stops.

The car stops a distance back. Headlights glaring.

The rider uses his PROP STAND to leave the bike standing on the kerb, goes to the food box, gets out CARTONS OF CHINESE.

The car just waits.

The four inside watching him.

The rider goes to a house. Rings the doorbell.

Stephen revs the engine. Backs up a little, to get a good approach. Then he drives forward. It's a wide enough road for him to drive slowly in an arc, heading for the pavement.

Heading for the bike.

He drives over the bike.

Nice and slowly.

The metal buckles. The box goes *pop!*

The rider looks round. Goes mad.

RIDER

Hey! What are you doing?!

Stephen says calm, reverses.

All in the car stay fixed, solemn. If they look at the rider at all, he is nothing to them, just a man behind glass.

Stephen drives over the bike again.

Nice and slowly.

Buckle, snap, crack.

RIDER (CONT'D)

That's my bike! That's my bike!

Ohh man! That's my bike!!

And he keeps on shouting. A MAN comes out of the house, to get his Chinese, stands there, astonished. Stephen calmly reverses a little, one more time, drives over the bike again.

Then he makes a bigger reverse, fast. Back into the road. Straightening up to drive forward.

He drives away.

The rider left yelling after them.

On Stephen, Edith, Daniel and Rosie Lyons. Staring out at the road, and the night. A new world ahead.

END OF EPISODE THREE