'Human beings cannot bear very much reality' - TS Eliot.

FADE IN:

1 INT. SPORTS/EVENTS HALL BACKSTAGE - DAY/NIGHT. DAY 5

MIM and FRAN creep along the backstage corridor of the arena. Mim is looking ‘inconspicuous’ in a mackintosh and dark glasses, Fran is looking anxious amidst the no entry signs. They reach double doors. Mim takes off the glasses.

MIM
Be ready.

Unfastening her mackintosh, Mim slips inside.

Fran hovers by the doors. We/she hears inside: EVENT MUSIC: BBC TEST MATCH SONG-SOUL LIMBO/GRANDSTAND THEME followed by the HORRIFIED GASP OF AN AUDIENCE - then a CHEER

Mim bursts back through the doors, naked underneath a foil space-blanket.

MIM (CONT’D)
Go, go, go!

Fran and Mim run away down the corridor.

2 EXT. SPORTS HALL - DAY/NIGHT. DAY 5

MIM and FRAN hide down the back of the hall. MIM, still in SPACE BLANKET makes a tick in her BUCKET LIST NOTEBOOK.

MIM
Well I always wanted to do that. Streak at a major sporting event.

FRAN looks at her.

FRAN
It was Crufts, mum.
(beat)
You ran naked across Heelwork to Music.

MIM
And they loved it.

Out on a chorus of DOG HOWLS.

OPENING CREDITS: BUCKET
EXT. PAT’S HOUSE DRIVEWAY – NIGHT. DAY 5

FRAN takes bags from the boot. MIM is cheerfully humming ‘Here Comes The Bride’ or similar.

FRAN
Why are you so excited?

MIM
It’s a special occasion.

FRAN
But you don’t believe in marriage.

Mim laughs, ‘of course not’.

MIM
No, I am a bird of paradise not to be caged by the tricks and traps of convention-

FRAN
Or responsibility.

MIM
But other people’s weddings can be life affirming.

FRAN
Can they?

MIM
Free food, free booze, free lovin’ if you’re lucky.

Fran grimaces, puts the bag back in the boot.

FRAN
I’m not keen on parties. Can’t we just send apologies and see Stonehenge instead?

MIM
You’re such a foji (said fo-jee).

Fran mutters her necessary correction.

FRAN
It’s fogey. And since when does a love of English Heritage make me a-

MIM
Foji, dear. A fearer of joining in.

FRAN
Oh. But Mum-
MIM
But Franny. This could be the last wedding I ever go to. At this rate, I’ll be going down the aisle before you.
(pause for drama)
In a wooden box.

Fran sighs, picks up the bag. They walk to the door.

FRAN
Mum, are you going to tell Pat that you’re, y’know, going to die.

MIM
No. And you mustn’t either. It’s Gemma’s wedding. It’s not about me.

FRAN
Very noble of you.

Fran rings the bell.

MIM
You know how Pat likes everything to be just-so.

FRAN
Perfect, ordered, calm.

MIM
Exactly. And that’s why she needs me here.
(beat)
I’m going to raise hell!

Before Fran can express her concern, PAT opens the door.

FRAN
We’re here!

PAT
Get stuffing.

INT. PAT’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. DAY 5

Amidst the clutter of night-before-the-wedding prep, FRAN and MIM stuff sugared almonds into organza bags like slaves.

PAT
12 to a bag, no more no less.

A NSE NERVOUS NANA passes a pile of ORGANZA BAGS. Pat is all smiles but steely, iron fist velvet glove etc.
PAT (CONT’D)
The seam isn’t straight Val. I think you’d better do it again.

NSE NANA returns to sit with 2 or 3 other LADIES at sewing machines in Pat’s pre-wedding sweatshop.

PAT (CONT’D)
Organza first, then linens. We’re building the fairy tale, ladies, one favour bag at a time.

MIM
Sounds like a busy night, Pat.

PAT
Night? This is the culmination of months, dare I say a lifetime’s, work for Gemma’s special day. Yes it’s exhausting. But what mother wouldn’t dedicate herself to her only child’s happiness?

Fran turns to look at Mim, who has stopped working to flick through a wedding magazine and eat the almonds.

FRAN
Lots of people coming Pat?

PAT
Everyone said yes. Gemma’s fiance Paul has a big family of course but we got all the Rotary – and a CBE.

MIM
Lots of prezzies then.

PAT
We don’t think about that. (sudden worry) What did you get?

MIM
Well, I was going to name a star-

PAT
Oh? How thoughtful.

MIM
After myself.

Fran smiles at Pat.

FRAN
Don’t worry, we got something off the gift list. Unusual to request a loo seat but-
PAT
It’s mahogany, Fran. Oh and I meant
to ask, what happened with your
little promotion?

FRAN
I’m taking some time off work
actually. Spending it with mum.

PAT
Really?

FRAN
Mim pulls out her BUCKET LIST NOTEBOOK.

MIM
I told you about my bucket list on
my birthday Pat.

PAT
Did you? Every brain cell is on the
wedding I’m afraid.

MIM
We’re going to do it all. Swim with
sharks, ride a Harley down Route
66. How’s that for mother-daughter
bonding?

Pat smiles, hint of patronizing.

PAT
Sounds very lively. I took Gemma
shoe shopping with high tea at the
Ritz.

FRAN
Oh wow. I’d love that Mum, tea at
the Ritz?

MIM
I’m barred.

Pat folds her napkins perfectly.

PAT
Well with all your plans, I’m
surprised you made the detour.

MIM
Oh no Pat, there’s plenty I can do
at a wedding with my bucket...

Pat smiles back, strangely unprovoked. PHONE RING. Pat snaps
off an earring to answer, gets up.

PAT
The caterers!
(to phone)
(MORE)
PAT (CONT'D)
Hello. Are you chewing? If one of my amuse bouche is missing, there’ll be merry hell...

MIM
Don’t forget, mine’s a halal meal Pat.

Mim sniggers as Pat’s goes. Fran casts a disapproving look.

FRAN
Okay, what are you planning?
(off Mim’s look)
‘Raise hell’, ‘plenty I can do at a wedding with my bucket’. What is on your list exactly?

Mim fllcks the pages of her notebook.

MIM
Well now, when the vicar asks for any known impediment I’m going to give him one.

FRAN
Please don’t.

MIM
I won’t really stop the wedding, what I’m waiting for is the reception.

FRAN
Why?

MIM
I didn’t get to do all my tricks at Pat’s wedding, so this is the perfect occasion. A room full of tables seating the great and good.

FRAN
Whatever it is, don’t do it.

MIM
I may be a little out of practice, but it’s all about the wrist action and the sudden surprise-

Fran grabs her wrists, to stop her gesturing as Pat returns.

FRAN
I forbid you.

PAT
Crisis averted! 28 pounds of smoked salmon has been liberated from the back up freezer.
FRAN
Can I stuff any more for you Pat?

Mim mouths ‘creep’ at her, flicks through her MAGAZINE.

MIM
This sounds good, whale humping in Iceland.

PAT
Did I say, fiance Paul has booked the most magnificent honeymoon. European tour. 5 star.

MIM
What d’you think, Franny, next up on our road trip?

FRAN
Europe? Well yeah I’d love that.

Mim, mouthful of almonds, holds up a MAGAZINE.

MIM
Or surgical safari to South Africa, see a giraffe, get your buzzies hoiked. Two for one.

Fran ignores her, she hands Pat a pile of stuffed bags.

FRAN
There you are Pat.

PAT
I think you’ve earned a little drink.
(stops Mim)
Uh-uh. Not you. Finish your favours. Go on Fran, go join the girls in the kitchen-

FRAN
No, really, I’m fine here-

PAT
Now don’t be shy, they’ll all be very happy to see you.

FRAN enters to a CHORUS OF CHEERS THAT TURN INTO DISAPPOINTED GROANS.

BRONA
We thought you were the stripper.
BRONA and BETH (30s/40s married mums off the leash) have turned a kitchen counter into a cocktail station.

BETH

We’re just teasing, Gemma.

*GEMMA brings Fran over to join them. She’s nervous.*

GEMMA

Fran. You’ve not met Brona and Beth have you? They’re my first cousins. But like big sisters really.

BRONA

Old maids of honour.

GEMMA

This is Fran, my second cousin. She’s like the olden days.

FRAN

Think she means I like the olden days.

GEMMA

It’s kinda both though isn’t it?

Brona and Beth pass out shot glasses.

BRONA

Come and have a shot to catch up. To your last night of freedom, Gem–Gem.

BETH

And my first out night in like literally ten zillion years!

BRONA

Bottoms up, girls.

Beth and Brona cackle, down shots, then lean in to Gemma.

BETH

Seriously though Gemma, you do not want to get pregnant for at least a year. Because that. Is. It.

BRONA

Life over. Hit me.

Beth fills all the shot glasses. Gemma giggles nervously.

GEMMA

But you do love your kids though?
BETH & BRONA
(quickfire)
Course I love them/my whole world/I would kill for my kids/kill.

Fran looks over at nervous Gemma - is she okay?

FRAN
How are you doing Gemma? Nervous?

GEMMA
Yes. But Mum got me a book and we’re doing the night before part now, cos it’s the night before.

Gemma holds up a book - ‘HOW TO DO A WEDDING BY THE BOOK’. Beth takes the book pretends to read it.

BETH
Time for games to relax you.

She smiles at Brona who chucks the book aside.

BRONA
Drinking games, to relax you more!
I have never? *
(pours shots) *
I have never – had a foursome? *
Drink!

Beth and Brona slam their shots. Beth looks to the bottle.

BETH
We’re gonna need a bigger booze.

INT. PAT’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT. DAY 5

PAT and MIM are at either end of a newly sewn table cloth.

MIM
But it’s my party trick, whipping it off in one go.

Pat speaks calmly as one might to a child-guest.

PAT
Put it down please. No-one’s interested.

MIM
Your husband might be. He was always excited by what I could tug. Where is he?

Pat won’t be riled.
PAT
Over the road. All of the menfolk are staying in a separate house tonight.

MIM
Shame. He’d love this.

Mim pulls a tablecloth off a table, with a flourish. Pat barely raises an eyebrow from her sewing.

MIM (CONT’D)
Now, for the tricky part.

She re-lays the table cloth and puts a BAG OF SUGARED ALMONDS and an UGLY LLADRO statuette on it. She lifts the corners of the cloth like a matador, Pat sighs and, gently, stops her.

PAT
I know what you’re trying to do.
I shall not be riled. Now, ribbons, bags, tie.

But Mim grabs TWO ALMONDS and holds them up like nipples.

MIM
Psst, Val, look -
(tweaks the ‘nipples’)
Pat, Pat, you might need to turn the heating up. Brrr. Look.

Pat doesn’t look up. Mim flicks the almonds away, what next?

INT. PAT’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT. DAY 5

After much raucous screeching, GEMMA, BRONA and BETH all drink. Fran doesn’t. They all look at her, incredulous.

BRONA
WHAT? You have never had sex in a windmill?

BETH
A wind tunnel? A Wind sock?

GEMMA
Wait, you haven’t touched your shots all game. OMG Fran, have you never?

They look at each other with shocked gasps.

FRAN
Go on, get it out, laughter, judgement, can’t say anything my mother hasn’t.
After a thoughtful beat, Brona and Beth raise their glasses.

BRONA
That is actually awesome.

FRAN
Okay, she’s never said that.

BETH
You must be a special soul, Fran.

BRONA
Wish I’d waited.
(wistful sigh)
I could be living the dream now,
curating my own gallery in Denmark.
But I defined myself by my
sexuality, ran out of choices.

BETH
And you never get it back. It’s a
precious sacred part of you.

Gemma looks confused.

GEMMA
I thought it went if you just rode
a horse.

BRONA
Integrity and self respect. Body
and mind - impenetrable cocoon.

BETH
That was the title of her A Level
art piece.

They put arms round Fran, a drunken sorority.

FRAN
It’s not that I don’t want to-

BRONA
You’ll know when the time’s right.

BETH
Don’t waste it. Don’t give it away
because they take it for granted
and then they ruin it. Ruin. It.

Beth looks at Gemma who pales.

GEMMA
But you did it with your husbands
before you got married, right?
BETH & BRONA
Oh yeah/first date/straight away/and his friends.

BRONA
But here’s to Franny, true to her *fucking self. Love it.

FRAN
Thanks guys. But it’s Gemma’s day.

BETH
You know it!

Brona picks up her phone.

BRONA
Get your coats, girls. Taxi’s here. *
I say taxi, it’s just my husband in *the Prius. Dick.

INT. PAT’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/HALLWAY - NIGHT. DAY 5

8

BRONA, BETH, GEMMA and FRAN , pop their heads in.

BETH
Just popping out Aunty Pat.

PAT looks up from her sewing.

PAT
Not too long girls, early night remember.

BRONA
Yeah, just going for a quiet *Italian.

A pile of sugared almonds moves, MIM sits up (she had buried herself underneath). Pat merely shakes her head.

MIM
Sounds good. How quiet is he, this Italian?

BETH
There’s only room for four in the car. And now we’ve got lil Franny.

Fran beams, included. The girls mutter about the pub and quiz machines as they leave. Mim cannot believe it.

MIM
You’re going out and I’m staying in?
PAT
Plenty to keep you out of trouble
here, Mim, don’t you worry.

Pat smirks and chucks a pile of napkins at her.

INT. PAT’S HOUSE - KITCHEN/HALLWAY - DAY. DAY 6

FRAN sits at a beautifully laid table. PAT busying around.
BETH and BRONA enter, fist bump Fran.

BRONA
Breakfast of champions. This brain
box cleaned out the quiz machine.

BETH
Triv-tastic, what was it you knew?

FRAN
Plantagenet kings, capitals of
Europe, oxbow lake formation.

PAT
Where’s Gemma?

BETH
Just on the loo, Aunty Pat.

BRONA
(whisper aside)
Chucking up into it.

BETH AND BRONA
She’ll be fine.

PAT
Help yourself to breakfast girls.
I have 400 vol-au-vents arriving
and a skin tight schedule to keep.
Fran, please, would you-

She clicks her fingers for Fran to pass her IPAD.

FRAN
Very strong spreadsheet work here.

PAT
Yes. Fail to plan and you -

FRAN/PAT
Plan to fail!

PAT
It’s Gemma’s day, no time for
unknown unknowns.
FRAN
Ah yes. Any sign of my Mum?

PAT
She’s in disgrace. She tried to break in to the men’s house last night.

FRAN
Oh no.

PAT
The cat flap wasn’t big enough, thankfully.

FRAN
I’m sorry, Pat. I apologise for everything my mother has done. And might do.

PAT
No need to do that Fran. There are no problems today.

Pat moves across to snip at large bunches of RED FLOWERS.

FRAN
They’re lovely. Bright.

PAT
Yes, I wanted a splash of red. Gemma’s wedding colours are muted.

FRAN
That’s going to be quite a bouquet.

PAT
These are for table centre-pieces.

FRAN
Sort of decoy bouquets then, like Saddam Hussein’s many lookalikes.

PAT
It’s good you have a sense of humour, isn’t it?

A worried looking GEMMA enters, bleating-

GEMMA
Where’s Dad?

PAT
Out of the way. Daddy’s doing 9 holes with the vicar. Now your bouquet, Fran-?

She gestures for her to pass the RED BOUQUET.
FRAN
Woah. What’s in this, weights?

PAT
Yes. Gemma’s wearing a strapless so we’ve been toning for weeks. Go on, show Fran.

Gemma reluctantly uses the bouquet for a triceps extension.

FRAN
You’ve really thought of everything, Pat.

PAT
Got to be perfect!

Fran looks at them all.

FRAN
You are. All of you, you’re so welcoming and functional.
(rueful sigh)
Maybe if you’d been my mum Pat, I’d be the head of HR and getting married now.

MIM stomps in. She heard and she’s cross.

MIM
Well, well, well this is cosy.

FRAN
Oh Mum I-

MIM
I heard you. So Perfect Pat can flip a kipper and sew a napkin - but can she do this- Ta-dah!

She pulls off the tablecloth. CRASH, CLATTER, SMASH. Breakfast crockery, glasses, cereals everywhere.

MIM (CONT’D)
What am I getting wrong?

Pat starts to sweep up with a bright, slightly crazed, smile.

PAT
You can’t upset me. You can’t upset me. It’s Gemma’s day!

ASIDE: Fran pulls Mim off into the hallway.

FRAN
What are you doing?
MIM  
My party trick. Yes, it needs work—

FRAN  
That’s what you’re planning? I thought it was some unspeakable behaviour at the reception.

Mim tuts, affronted. Then after a beat—

MIM  
Obviously that too. Weddings are the place for sexy fun.

FRAN  
No. They’re not. This is a nice day for a normal family. Pat’s gone to a lot of effort to show her beloved daughter just how much she cares.

MIM  
You’re my beloved daughter. I care.

She takes Fran’s face in her hands. From the vice like grip—

FRAN  
Okay Mum. Sorry.

Mim nods and stares at her, it’s love, it’s scrutiny, then—

MIM  
Time for a wax I think.

And Fran wriggles free, turns to call out to Pat.

FRAN  
What else can I do, Pat? I’m all yours.

10 INT. PAT’S HOUSE – CONSERVATORY – DAY. DAY 6

Beauty stations are womanned by BRONA and BETH. FRAN enters, MIM turns round, revealing her face striped like a tiger with shades of make-up.

MIM  
It’s called contouring!

BETH  
Just need to blend it in a bit.

GEMMA enters, anxious BRONA pops open a bottle of prosecco.

BRONA  
Here she is. Bubbles for the princess. It’s five o’clock somewhere right.
FRAN
Singapore.

BRONA/BETH
Legend!

MIM
Tell you what is legendary, the perm I gave your mother for her wedding. Would you like one Gemma?

Gemma looks like she’s going to cry.

GEMMA
No thanks.

BETH
Got your extensions upstairs, hun.

BRONA
Franster you can finish the tan yeah? You done Beth?

BETH
I did what I could.

Beth leads Mim out. As Brona follows, she chucks a spraycan.

10A LATER: Gemma stands on a pouffe in a star pose, drying out. Fran rubs her ankles, blending the bronzer tan in.

FRAN
I must say Gem, I wasn’t expecting to enjoy any of this but last night was so fun.

Gemma makes a little snifflle.

FRAN (CONT’D)
And who knew pampering was so enjoyable a pastime? Such a great big day ahead.

Gemma start to quietly weep.

FRAN (CONT’D)
And it doesn’t stop there does it? You’ve got your amazing European honeymoon. Lucky. All those sights and historic monuments-

And Gemma bursts into SOBS. Fran looks up.

FRAN (CONT’D)
Oh Gemma? What is it?

GEMMA
I- don’t- want- to- do- it!
FRAN
What? No, come on, just nerves. Shall I get your Mum?

GEMMA
Nooooooooo!

FRAN
Okay, okay.

GEMMA
You’ve got to help me Fran.

FRAN
Me? Well I – What about your fiance Paul. Maybe you should talk to him?

GEMMA
It’s bad luck!(sob) Fran you’ve got to help me pleasssssee.

Fran sits down - head in hand like ‘The Thinker’ only with her forefinger over her top lip - ruminating.

INT. PAT’S HOUSE – KITCHEN/ HALLWAY – DAY. DAY 6

MIM is dressed in her wedding outfit, studying a TABLE PLAN that is propped up.

PAT’S morning-outfit-heels click across the floor. She picks up Mim’s dangerous looking feather accessory from the table and tuts. Mim turns to her.

MIM
Pat, who am I sitting with? Can’t seem to find my name.

PAT
No. Well. That’s because it’s not there.

MIM
What?

Avoiding eye contact, Pat strokes the feather accessory.

PAT
Didn’t you read your invitation? You’re coming to the evening do.

Mim staggers backwards in disbelief.

MIM
Evening do?!

PAT
That’s right.
Mim snatches back the feather from Pat’s hands.

MIM
Don’t you finger my fascinator and say ‘that’s right’.

PAT
It’s all been arranged-

MIM
But you made us stuff favours, you made us help-

Pat struggles to maintain calm in the face of the fury.

PAT
Yes, you’re family. But some very important people are coming today-

MIM
So that’s why you’ve been unrile-able. Smug you had relegated me to the - evening do. Well-

Mim pushes the table plan easel over, scattering pins etc.

PAT
This is precisely what I didn’t want. A scene.

MIM
Scene? I’m the life and soul.

Mim upturns a box of table confetti, kicks off. Pat snaps.

PAT
You’re a liability! After the way you behaved at my wedding, we had to disinfect the dancefloor!

MIM
You put me in the corner, no one puts Mim in the corner.

Mim tries to wreak more havoc but Pat grabs Mim’s arm, forces her into a corner, holds the feather fascinator to her neck like a knife, hissing: like a prison bitch-fight.

PAT
Of course you’re jealous.

MIM
Of this fairy tale bullshit?

PAT
Of my beautiful life and family, compared to your car crash. Yes, it’s embarrassing. For all of us. (MORE)
But it’s Fran I feel sorry for.
  (in for the kill)
Just as well that poor creature
will never marry. Who would walk
her down the aisle, eh Mim?

MIM
  (choked, desperate)
I was a single mother!

PAT
  And that was no one’s fault but
your own.

She lets Mim go. Mim scuttles off, meets FRAN in the hallway.

FRAN
  Everything okay?

MIM
  Everything’s fine.
  Except your face.

Fran has a MOUSTACHE/GOATEE smear from the BRONZER.

FRAN
  Pat? We might have a problem.

PAT
  Here. And if that doesn’t work try
swarfega.

She points her to a mirror with a wet wipe, then sorts cake
toppers. Fran dabs at the perma-tan tache, cautiously...

FRAN
  Actually, it’s Gemma. She’s
  a bit upset.

PAT
  What am I supposed to do about
  that? I’ve a cake to box up.

FRAN
  Mm. I think, maybe, she doesn’t
  want to go through with it-

PAT
  Too late for that now.

FRAN
  Mm. Can’t you do something-

PAT
  I’ve done everything! Everything!
  Everything is planned and perfect,
do you understand?
FRAN

Yes but-

With the cake topper bride and groom in one hand, and crushed flowers in the other Pat resembles Godzilla as she rages.

PAT

If you think I’ll waste ten gallons of parfait and embarrass myself turning away the county’s finest you are wrong. Gemma might be upset, it might be her future, but this is MY DAY.

On Fran: wow.

INT. PAT’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY. DAY 6

Empty house. MIM and FRAN alone amongst the wedding detritus Mim in her fascinator, having a Miss Havisham moment of sulky bitterness. Fran paces, ruminating with her perma-tan tache.

FRAN

I was having such a good time.

MIM

Gone to shit now. Humiliating.  
(disgust)  
Evening do.

FRAN

But they didn’t humiliate me, they didn’t make me feel like a weirdo.

MIM

Who’s ever done that?

Fran bites her tongue. Again. Presses on.

FRAN

Those women, they respected me for being true to myself.  

MIM

Bloody hell Fran, write a torch song why don’t you?

FRAN

So it doesn’t seem right that Gemma’s so unhappy.

MIM

I’m unhappy, missing out on the perfect occasion.
FRAN
Come on Mum, you said you didn’t believe in all this fairy tale bullshit.

MIM
Well no, if you want a happy ending, go get a massage.
(swipes a lladro)
I’m taking this.

Mim puts it in her BAG, packing up. But Fran ponders.

FRAN
I think she’s been dreading this wedding for ages.

MIM
Pat’s been planning it for longer.

FRAN
I wish we could do something.

MIM
I already put prawns in her curtains. But perhaps-

* An idea hits. Mim pulls out her BUCKET LIST NOTEBOOK.

FRAN
What?

MIM
At least I can get one bucket dream out of this shit-wreck. Look-

FRAN
Eat sushi off a naked sumo?

MIM
Stop a wedding with an impediment!

FRAN
Woah. That’s quite a big thing.

MIM
I’m dying! I want to do big things. And Gemma doesn’t want to get married, so it’s win-win.

FRAN
Maybe we could text Gemma, or have a quiet word outside.

Mim implores Fran.
MIM
Fran. So, I didn’t give you
domestic bliss, okay I could have
baked more cookies, remembered the
odd birthday-

FRAN
Even one would have been nice.

MIM
But I gave you freedom didn’t I?
Don’t deny it. To yourself, to me,
or to Gemma.

Fran is stirred, she reaches for her car keys.

MIM (CONT’D)
So come on Franny, get us to the
church in time to ruin everything!

EXT. QUIET COUNTRY ROAD/ CAR - DAY. DAY 6
The CAR drives down a quiet road in a thrilling dash.
The car slows down, sputters a bit, and then stops.
FRAN gets out, runs down the road, then also stops.

FRAN
I don’t know where I’m going.

INT. STATIONARY CAR - DAY/NIGHT. DAY 6
MIM bangs her fists on a window - Graduate style.

MIM
GEMMA!

She sits back, revealing it was the windscreen. FRAN and Mim
are stuck in their broken down car.

FRAN
It’s too late.

MIM
Oh well.

Mim shrugs, opens up the travel sweets.

FRAN
Oh well? Didn’t you always say
marriage was a life sentence?

MIM
She only needs to serve half of it
and then she’ll get the duplex.
Fran shakes her head, incredulous at Mim’s volte-face.

    FRAN
    You know I heard what Pat said. She has no right to judge you, she’s the monster. And you know what?

    MIM
    What?

    FRAN
    I get it Mum. You never married, you don’t believe in the tricks and traps of convention. Fair enough.

Mim sucks on her sweet.

    MIM
    That’s not why.
    (beat)
    I never married because of you.

    FRAN
    What?

    MIM
    Oh I had offers. Everyone from Cliff Richard to the Aga Khan but, it wouldn’t have been right, with you here. No, you’re my longest relationship, dear.

Fran is struck by this revelation. She takes a sweet.

    FRAN
    Have you ever been in love Mum?

    MIM
    Yes.
    But it doesn’t last.
    Unlike herpes.

Fran grimaces, checks her watch.

    FRAN
    How long did the AA say they’d be?

    MIM
    What? Thought you were calling them—

On Fran: ugh...

LATER: It’s darker, colder, Mim wears her bra as headscarf.

    MIM (CONT’D)
    See I don’t give a fuck about appearances.
That’s lucky.

Mim turns to Fran.

You know, we’re not all that different you and I.

Really?

Well, I’m not a pedantic virgin-

And I don’t wear my bra on my head-

But we’re not fakes. We’re true to ourselves.

Yeah.

Fran nods, Mim gives her a maternal knee squeeze.

So don’t worry. It’ll happen for you, Franny.

Love? Or herpes.

Never too late for either.

Great news.

ORANGE LIGHTS of an AA van off-screen.

What I’m saying is, I get it too. You are who you are.

She pats Fran’s knee and gets out. Fran has a moment to reflect on the affirmation.

Mim returns. Wearing a HI-VIS VEST with TWO OILY HANDPRINTS across her bosom/waving a pair of Y-FRONTS/pulling hair from her teeth.

And I am who I am.
EXT/INT. RECEPTION VENUE ESTABLISHER - NIGHT. DAY 6

A sign outside: GEMMA & PAUL’S RECEPTION THIS WAY.

INT. RECEPTION VENUE - NIGHT. DAY 6

Tired, dishevelled FRAN and MIM arrive at the reception.

Tables with dirty plates, drained glasses and sad spent party poppers show the party is nearly over. DISCO LIGHTS and MUTED SOUND from the next room off-screen. NSE NANAS hover.

MIM
Bollocks we’ve missed the buffet.

FRAN
What’s wrong with Pat?

PAT sits alone at an abandoned table. She has the haunted look of a PTSD victim.

PAT’S TABLE: Mim joins her. She sounds like a broken woman.

PAT
You made it then. It went perfectly of course. All of it.

MIM
I’m glad.

PAT
Just as planned. My life’s work. It’s done. She’s married.

MIM
So why the misery mouth?

Pat turns to her, genuine anguish, rising panic.

PAT
What am I supposed to do now?!

MIM
Maybe if you’d been a ‘liability’ and fucked your daughter up like me Pat, you too would have a companion for life.

Pat collapses onto the table.

PAT
I have nothing to live for.

MIM
I don’t know. Why not start nagging for grandchildren? I hear newlyweds love that.
Pat sits up, a new motivation.

PAT
Grandchildren?!

MIM
Start calling on the honeymoon.

PAT
Yes. Yes!

Pat pulls her PHONE from her PURSE.

MIM
Set a notification thingy.

PAT
I could get an ovulation app, time
my calls precisely.

Pat and Mim’s rapprochement begins.

ACROSS THE ROOM: Fran picks at the buffet when GEMMA enters, drunk, excited, bounds over to her.

GEMMA
Fran!

She hugs her, then sees the bronzer tache as she pulls back.

GEMMA (CONT’D)
Woah! Wait is that why you’ve never, you’re transitionaling?

FRAN
What? No it’s your fake tan.

GEMMA
Oh! Sorry! But you know it’s fine whatever cos Paul and I have decided to be very open minded– if you are a she-male.

FRAN
No, really–

But Gemma hugs her again, then sways drunkenly.

GEMMA
And I really need to thank you Fran.

FRAN
Thank me? We nearly stopped your wed- (thinks again) Thank me?!
GEMMA
Yes. You told me to talk to my fiance Paul. Sorry, HUSBAND!
(screams again, drunk)
I’m MARRIED!
(deadly serious, drunk)
But I took your advice right, told him just how unhappy I was.

Fran looks confused.

FRAN
But if you were unhappy...?

GEMMA
About the honeymoon!

FRAN
What?

Gemma leans in, explaining it like it was a death sentence.

GEMMA
I couldn’t do it. A boring trip around Europe. I was dreading it. I hate old things. No offence.

FRAN
None taken.

GEMMA
Soooo, now we’re going on a two week all-in to the MALDIVES, like NORMAL people! Woo-hoo!

FRAN
Congratulations. I’m really happy for you, Gem.

Gem hugs Fran again.

GEMMA
Wait. I wanna give you something, Franny. Lemme get rid of this. Fuck these weights, right?
(shouts)
Oi!!

BETH and BRONA appear as summoned, see the bouquet, push Gemma into position, whistle for GUESTS to come through.

BETH
All the single ladies!

BRONA
Bouquet time, girls.

As they herd the group, they nudge Fran.
We saved this bit for you, Franny.

With a whoop/grunt of effort Gemma launches the WEIGHTED BOUQUET across the room!

It’s heading straight for MIM, now on her feet, excited to catch. PAT sees, she cannot have this. She leaps up.

MIM
Never too late!

PAT
Not her! NOoooooooo.

Pat dives in front of Mim and the bouquet SMACKS her in the face. She falls to the floor with a SCREAM. Gemma turns -

GEMMA
Mum?!

The GIRLS/NSE NANAS form a circle around floored Pat.

BETH
She’s down.

BRONA
She’s a sprayer.

PAT
My nose! My Aquascutum!

Mim retreats. Pat, clutching a blood soaked napkin over her nose, is helped to her feet by Beth and Brona. They are also sprayed with blood. They lead her out.

BETH
Easy now Aunty Pat.

BRONA
Head back, careful.

Blood spattered but buoyant, Gemma bounds back to Fran, with an ENVELOPE and an open BOTTLE OF FIZZ.

GEMMA
For you.

FRAN
The Europe trip? Wow! Gemma, I don’t know what to say. Thank you.

GEMMA
FRAN
Amazing.

GEMMA
Who are you gonna take?

FRAN
My mum.

GEMMA
Aw. Yeah. Course.

Fran gestures to the BLOOD SPATTER on her white dress.

FRAN
I hope that comes out.

Gemma cackles, she got her own back on her mother after all.

GEMMA
Mum wanted ‘a splash of red’.

She swigs straight from a BOTTLE.

ACROSS THE ROOM: Mim, alone idly plays with the tablecloth. Then she gets an idea...

She gets up, tugs and... IT WORKS! Wow. But - no one saw.

Fran comes over.

MIM
I did it Franny!

FRAN
Did what?

MIM
What do you mean, what? The tablecloth trick. My life’s ambition!

FRAN
Yeah. Mum, look a grand tour of Europe, That’s something real for the bucket list, huh?

Mim doesn’t care.

MIM
Fuck you. Just because no one saw, doesn’t mean it didn’t happen.

FRAN
Sure. I believe you Mum.

MIM
Only one thing left for it then - I’m going to streak again.
Fran bundles Mim up in the tablecloth to stop her.

END OF EPISODE 3.