A TINY BABY lies in an INCUBATOR.

A MAN seen only from behind, sits, head bowed, in a chair beside the incubator. In the background, a WOMAN stands by the door, half turned away from us, half out of focus, head also bowed.

THE WOMAN quietly steps out of the room.

THE MAN continues to watch the BABY.

CLOSE ON THE BABY’S FACE

the sound of its artificial breathing loud.

FADE TO BLACK:

TITLE CARD: BROKEN

EXT. STREET - DAY

Pulling SKUNK, 11 now, as she makes her way home from the local shop carrying a sliced pan and a carton of milk.

She makes her way down several STREETS, crosses a ROAD.

ON A FOOTBRIDGE

she is approached by two 10 year olds on scooters, the BARLOW BROTHERS, who slalom in and out of each other before passing on either side of her. She continues on.

BENEATH THE BRIDGE

the BARLOW BROTHERS come gliding down the RAMP, then come to a stop. They look up to watch -

SKUNK

who is a little over halfway across now.

HENRY BARLOW

nods to his brother, HARRY. HARRY swings a plastic bag filled with a dark substance around in circles, faster and faster, before letting it fly.

It sails up toward SKUNK, then misses her by inches, continuing its trajectory toward -

THE ROAD

on the other side of the BRIDGE, on which it lands and explodes, splashing what looks like shit everywhere.
THE BARLOW BROTHERS

watch SKUNK disappear; then -

HARRY
Lucky.

they turn and glide away.

SKUNK
continues on, completely oblivious to what’s just happened.

EXT. DRUMMOND CLOSE

A cluster of houses arranged in a circle. Outside one of these, RICK BUCKLEY washes his dad’s car.

VOICE
Hi, Rick.

He looks up to see SKUNK standing there.

RICK
Hi, Skunk.

SKUNK
That looks good.

RICK
Uh-huh. You have to do the water, then the suds and then the water again, like, rinse it.

SKUNK
Is it hard?

RICK
It’s really hard. But I like when something’s clean. You see it dirty, then, you wash it, then it’s clean. And then it’s done.

SKUNK
Cool.
(as RICK resumes washing)
See you later, yeah?
RICK
See you later, Skunk.

As SKUNK crosses the close to her own house, she calls -

SKUNK
Hi, Mr Oswald.

to BOB OSWALD, 40s, who responds, vaguely -

BOB
Hello, darling.

as he passes her, heading toward RICK. We follow SKUNK as she continues on. She stops, hearing a shout, and turns to see -

RICK
falling to the ground, BOB then kicking and punching him viciously, over and over and over. When, eventually, he stops, BOB turns and heads back to his own house, in the front garden of which there is a large TRAMPOLINE, and where his three DAUGHTERS, who we’ll meet properly later, ranging in age from 12 to 17, wait for him. He enters. They follow. The door slams shut.

MOMENTS LATER

SKUNK stands over RICK. He is cut, bruised, bleeding.

SKUNK
Are you okay, Rick?

RICK’S POV: SKUNK standing over him.

SKUNK (CONT’D)
Can I help?

Framed in the sunlight, she looks angelic. RICK reaches out a hand. After a hesitation, SKUNK goes to take it, then:

MRS BUCKLEY
Oh, my God, Oh, my God.

MRS BUCKLEY, comes running up. She bumps SKUNK out of the way, calls back toward the house:

MRS BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
Dave?! Dave!
(then, to SKUNK)
Go home, Skunk. Go back into your house. Oh, God ...

SKUNK
It was Mr Oswald.
MRS BUCKLEY
(down on her knees; to
RICK)
... Oh, God. Oh, God, oh, my
baby.
(calling back toward the
house)
Dave!!

LATER

Two POLICEMEN stand at the BUCKLEYS’ front door. It’s
opened by MR BUCKLEY who ushers them in. The door closes.
We see this from -

8
INT. JED’S BEDROOM

where SKUNK and JED (13; her brother), stand watching
THROUGH THE WINDOW.

9
OUTSIDE THE BUCKLEYS’

RICK, his face damaged from the beating, is led by both
POLICEMEN toward the police car. MRS BUCKLEY follows,
frantic, MR BUCKLEY trying to calm her.

SKUNK and JED.
continues to watch as

RICK

is put into the back seat and the police-car pulls away.
MRS BUCKLEY cries in MR BUCKLEY’s arms.

JED
I don’t get it. Why is Rick the
one they arrest?

SKUNK
I don’t know.

10
INT. OSWALD’S HOUSE – SASKIA’S BEDROOM – THE NIGHT BEFORE

SUSAN OSWALD (14) rifles through her big sister’s underwear
drawer, discovering, in the corner, about three pounds in
change. She takes half, pockets it, then, rifling some
more, stops. She reaches in, then holds up

A LOOSE CONDOM

in its foil wrapper. After a moment, we hear:
SASKIA (O.S.)
(calling)
Susan?

SUSAN
Yeah?

SASKIA (CONT’D; O.S)
Are you in my room?

SUSAN stuffs the condom in her pocket.

SUSAN
No.

11 OMITTED

12 INT. SUSAN’S BEDROOM

SUSAN, lying on her bed, removes the condom from its wrapper. She smells it. Ugh. Unrolls it. Holds it up. Stares at it with distaste. PAUSE. She gets up off the bed and exits frame. We PUSH IN on the foil wrapper which she has forgotten.

CUT TO:

THE TOILET

The condom drops in. The toilet flushes.

13 INT. HALLWAY - THE FOLLOWING DAY

SUSAN, entering from outside, is intercepted by BOB, who is coming down the stairs.

BOB
Susan ...

She stops. He holds up the condom wrapper.

BOB (CONT’D)
... What the fuck is this?

14 INT. SITTING ROOM

Susan’s sisters, SASKIA (17) and SUNRISE (12) are dancing along to a dance instructional DVD on their large plasma-screen TV.

They look up as SUSAN storms in, pursued by BOB.
BOB
... Who’ve you been having sex with?!

SUSAN
I haven’t. I didn’t even know what it was!

BOB
Bullshit! Where did you get it?!

SUSAN
I stole it.

BOB
Bullshit! Stole it from who?

SUSAN
I ...

BOB
Jesus ...!

SUSAN glances at SASKIA, who gives her a forbidding look.

BOB (CONT’D)
... I taught you all. I mean, didn’t I teach you?

SUNRISE
What?

BOB
About keeping your fucking legs shut!
    (to SUSAN)
Give me his name.

SUSAN
Daddy ...

BOB
GIVE ME HIS FUCKING NAME!!!
    (no answer)
Fair enough.

He picks up the plasma screen and holds it above his head.

SUSAN         SASKIA
DAD ...!!!     DAD ...!!!

SUNRISE
    (to SUSAN)
WILL YOU GIVE HIM HIS FUCKING NAME, YOU STUPID FUCKING TWAT!!!
HOLD on SUSAN.

CUT TO:

RICK

standing by his father’s car with his bucket and cloth, gazing at -

SUSAN (O.S.)
The hell are you looking at?

OMITTED

SUSAN

who is bouncing up and down on the trampoline. As RICK snaps out of his reverie -

SUSAN (CONT’D)
... Dirty fucking perve!

she leaps down and goes into her house. RICK stands there, perplexed.

INT. SITTING ROOM - RESUME

Back to SUSAN and BOB, who is now in shock.

BOB
Rick Buckley?!  
(SILENCE; then)
He forced himself on you, didn’t he!

SUSAN
No, we ...

BOB
Jesus Christ ...!  
(takes her in his arms)
... The animal!

SUSAN
Dad ...

BOB’s eyes stray to the window. Seeing RICK:

BOB
... The dirty retarded fucking animal!
EXT. DRUMMOND CLOSE - EARLIER THAT MORNING

PULLING BOB as he heads across the close.

SKUNK (O.S.)

Hi, Mr Oswald.

He looks, sees her -

BOB

Hello, darling.

continues on toward RICK and punches him hard in the face.

EXT. OSWALD’S HOUSE - DAY

BOB opens his front door to two POLICEMEN.

POLICEMAN 1

Mr Oswald?

BOB

I want to report a rape.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

SUSAN OSWALD lies on an examination table in a hospital gown. The female police-surgeon, DOCTOR MORTIMER probes between her legs.

DOCTOR MORTIMER

Just another minute ...

(SILENCE; then)

All right.

(straightens up; taking off her gloves)

You can put your clothes back on.

LATER

POLICEMAN 1 & 2 and BOB have now joined SUSAN and DOCTOR MORTIMER. BOB is angry.

DOCTOR

Mr Oswald ...

BOB

This fucking ... rapist needs to be put behind bars ...

DOCTOR MORTIMER

Mr Oswald ...

BOB

... Christ!
... Your daughter has not been raped.

What the fuck are you talking about?!

... Your daughter’s a virgin, Mr Oswald.

(BEAT)
She has never had intercourse.

Well, of course she has; she ...

SUSAN
Dad ...

... she ...

SUSAN
Dad, she’s right!

Everyone turns to look at SUSAN. She’s crying.

SUSAN (CONT’D)
It never happened, I ...

Bob

SUSAN
... I only said we did it because you wouldn’t believe what I told you, and because I didn’t want ...

BOB
(tenderly)
Susan ...

SUSAN
... I didn’t want you to smash up the telly!

BOB
... Susan ...

He gets down on one knee in front of her, hands on her elbows.

BOB (CONT’D)
... you don’t have to be afraid, you hear me?
POLICEMAN 2
Mr Oswald ...

BOB
Shut up.
(to SUSAN)
... Of them, of him ... You don’t have to be afraid.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

POLICEMAN 1 and 2 wait as RICK gets dressed. After a moment:

POLICEMAN 1
Do you want to press charges, Mr Buckley?
(off RICK’s look)
Against Mr Oswald.

RICK
I wanna go home.

POLICEMAN 1
(to POLICEMAN 2)
His mum and dad outside?

OMITTED

INT. MR BUCKLEY’S CAR - MOVING

Moments later. C.U: RICK in the back seat.

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S.)
They should all be put in a home

MR BUCKLEY (O.S.)
They should.

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S.)
... And him in jail. You okay, Darling?

This to RICK, who doesn’t respond.

MRS BUCKLEY (CONT’D; O.S)
Bloody animals.

MR BUCKLEY (O.S.)
Still ...
(BEAT)
At least it resolved itself pretty quickly. Eh ...?
INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Following Skunk’s father, ARCHIE, 50, into -

THE LIVING ROOM

where SKUNK sits at the table eating her breakfast. ARCHIE is searching for something.

ARCHIE
Where the hell did I ...?

SKUNK
Microwave, dad.

ARCHIE
(grabs a folder off the top of the microwave)
You tested your levels yet?

SKUNK
Uh-huh.

ARCHIE
We in the zone?

SKUNK
Mm-hm.

ARCHIE
Good girl. See you later, Kasia.

This to their Polish au-pair, who is making herself a cup of coffee. As he goes:

KASIA
It’s Tuesday, Archie.

ARCHIE
Shit! Can I pay you tonight?
(she sighs; as he goes)
I won’t forget. I promise.

We follow him as he hurries back into -

THE HALLWAY
where he meets a not yet awake JED who is on his way to the kitchen.

ARCHIE
Who’s the early riser today?

JED
What time is it?

ARCHIE
Ten past eight.

JED
You’re joking! I thought it was, like, eleven or something.

JED turns back. ARCHIE blocks his way.

ARCHIE
What are you doing?

JED
Going back up.

ARCHIE
No, you’re not. Go in and get your breakfast.

JED sighs, turns back again and we follow him into -

THE KITCHEN

where SKUNK is calling:

SKUNK
Bye, dad!

ARCHIE (O.S.)
Bye, love.

We hear the front door closing. JED sits down at the table, glances at KASIA who now has her back to the room, reaches out to a cigarette packet lying there, steals one, pockets it just as KASIA turns to put his breakfast down.

JED
Scrambled egg?

KASIA
Uh-huh.

JED
Don’t we have cereal?

KASIA (looks at him)
We have scrambled egg.
JED sighs, starts eating. KASIA opens her cigarette packet. Stops. Looks slightly confused.

SKUNK
What?

KASIA
Nothing.

He puts one in her mouth; then, grabbing her lighter, collecting her coffee:

KASIA(CONT’D)
I’ll be out the back.

She goes. SKUNK gives JED a disapproving look.

24A  EXT. ALLEY - DAY

SKUNK walks, JED pushes along on his SKATEBOARD.

SKUNK
... Just saying.

JED
What?

SKUNK
Just saying, cancer and all.

JED
What about it?

SKUNK
You’ll catch it.

JED
Well ... you make your choices, don’t you.

SKUNK
What?!

JED
You make your choices.

SKUNK
What does that mean?

JED
Well ...
  (BEAT)
... It means you make your choices, doesn’t it.

He skates faster. SKUNK runs to keep up.
A weeded over area behind DRUMMOND CLOSE. A series of shots show rusted old trucks lying about, cars, a speedboat, and finally, A CARAVAN, outside of which JED sits in an old armchair, an unlit cigarette in his mouth. SKUNK is inside. During the following, she will appear in the doorway every so often and throw something out.

SKUNK
It’s gonna be great ...

JED
Uh-huh.

SKUNK
... I mean, isn’t it? Clean it up. Fix it up ...

(BEAT)
A secret room ...

JED strikes a match, but it blows out.

JED
Come on!

He takes out another match.

SKUNK
... Well, not a room. A camp ...

This time, he succeeds in getting the cigarette lit.

JED
More like it!

SKUNK
... a base ...

JED exhales smoke, looks at the tip of his cigarette.

JED
A lair.

SKUNK
What?

JED
Nothing.

SKUNK
Exactly. A lair.

(taking her phone out)

Take my picture.

JED
What?
SKUNK
Take my picture in front of it.

JED
Christ!

He gets up, takes her phone. SKUNK poses. He takes her picture.

26 OMITTED

26B OMITTED

27 INT. CUNNINGHAM KITCHEN - EVENING

SKUNK, JED AND KASIA, all at the table, wait for ARCHIE, who has just arrived in and is taking off his coat, to join them dinner. SKUNK has her feet up on the table.

ARCHIE
... we’re all performing to target, so what does he do? Lays off two accounts clerks and now we have to do our own bloody invoicing ... Do I look like an accountant?

KASIA
No.
(to SKUNK)
Legs.

ARCHIE
“No.” Exactly ...

ARCHIE sits as SKUNK takes her feet down.

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
... I’m a bloody solicitor. I mean, what’s the point in doing good work if you’re gonna be screwed for it, you know?

SKUNK
How come Mr Oswald doesn’t work?

ARCHIE
I dunno, love. Probably too busy fiddling benefits.

SKUNK
Why don’t you do that?
‘Cos I prefer to contribute to society, ‘stead of leeching off it. Doesn’t even have a mortgage to pay ...

SKUNK
Why not?

ARCHIE
Because of where his house is.

SKUNK
What do you mean?

ARCHIE
(to KASIA)
You tell her, will you?
(to himself)
Get some bloody food in my mouth.

As ARCHIE eats:

KASIA
They have to rent that house out cheap, Skunk.

SKUNK
Why?

JED
Because only a idiot would buy a place that near a scrapyard.

SKUNK
We’re near it.

KATYA
Exactly.

ARCHIE
(looks up; BEAT)
“Exactly” what?

INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A NEEDLE pricks SKUNK’s finger, drawing blood.

HER FINGER
presses down on a TEST STRIP, leaving a blood-deposit.
is put into the meter on a MACHINE, which gives a numerical reading.

SKUNK
sits in bed, writing this number into a log-book. She closes it, stares into space a moment. Looks over to see ARCHIE standing in her doorway.

    ARCHIE
    Hi, Darling.
        (coming in)
    How are your levels?
    
    SKUNK
    Good.

    ARCHIE (CONT’D)
    And how was your day?

No answer. He sits down on her bed. Waits.

    SKUNK
    He really hit him hard, dad.

    ARCHIE
    So I heard.
        (PAUSE)
    Do you want to talk about it?
    
    SKUNK
    No.

    ARCHIE
    Do you want me to stay with you til you’re asleep?
    
    SKUNK
    That’s okay.

    ARCHIE
    All right.
        (SILENCE)
    Well. Goodnight, love.
    
    SKUNK
    ‘Night, dad.

He kisses her, goes. HOLD on SKUNK.
SKUNK has cleaned it out and has a cute little living area set up. She and JED sit on built in chairs. After a moment:

JED
You know what’d make it better? A telly ...

SKUNK
Right.

JED
... a blu-ray player ...

SKUNK
Yeah, well you can’t have everything, Jed.

JED
No, I’m just saying.

SKUNK
I got you the ashtray, didn’t I?

Which is on the arm of his chair.

JED
That’s what I’m saying, Skunk. It’s brilliant.

She looks around; then, proudly:

SKUNK
It’s the best ... ever.

JED lights a cigarette. Takes a pull, exhales. Then:

JED
Be great if we never had to go back, wouldn’t it?

SKUNK
What? To school?

JED
Yeah.

SKUNK
I dunno. I’m kind of looking forward to going it, actually.

JED
Why? Oh, of course ...
(nods to himself)
... first year!
SKUNK

What?

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

SKUNK is trying to brush her teeth. JED stands behind her.

JED

... the older kids get hold of the first year kids and flush their heads down the toilet.

SKUNK

I heard about that!

JED

... which is only the start.

SKUNK

And what do the teachers do?

JED

They allow it, Skunk. It’s tradition.

SKUNK

(BEAT)

I don’t wanna go.

JED

You got no choice. It’s just something you’ve got to get used to, Skunk. Besides...

The doorbell rings. They listen. We hear footsteps in the downstairs hallway, then the front door opening, then:

ARCHIE (O.S.)

Dave!

MR BUCKLEY (O.S.)

Hello, Archie.

SKUNK and JED look at each other, then whisper simultaneously:

SKUNK

Mr Buckley?

JED

Mr Buckley?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ARCHIE and MR BUCKLEY sit in armchairs. Each has a glass of whiskey in front of him.

ARCHIE

Have you called Dr Carter?
MR BUCKLEY
Yes. But he says he can’t act in any way unless he becomes an actual physical threat to us.

ARCHIE
And what about Rick seeing someone else?

MR BUCKLEY
Well, see, this is what I’m saying. He won’t come out of his bedroom, Archie. Doris sits outside his door all day, trying to talk to him. Nothing! “Go away. I’m fine.” That’s it; that’s all you bloody get!

(takes a drink of whiskey. PAUSE; then)
I’m really sorry to just drop in on you like this, Archie, out of the blue, it’s ...

ARCHIE
Hey ...

MR BUCKLEY
... I just thought, “Archie! He’s a solicitor ...”

ARCHIE
Right. So, what, do you want to make this a legal thing, Dave?

MR BUCKLEY
No, no, no. Are you joking? I’m just saying, I thought you’d be a good listener ...

ARCHIE
Ah.

MR BUCKLEY
... Which you are. No, no. Bloody legal action? Forget it. I want nothing more to do with that bastard.

ARCHIE
Oswald.

MR BUCKLEY
Yes.

ARCHIE
Why not?
MR BUCKLEY
‘Cos I’m scared of him, Archie.
Why else ...?

INT. HALLWAY
SKUNK, on the stairs, listens through the slightly open doorway.

MR BUCKLEY (O.S; CONT’D)
... I’m just really bloody scared of him.

MRS BUCKLEY (V.O.)
Rick ...?

INT. RICK’S BEDROOM - DAY
RICK sits on the edge of his bed, staring at the wall. From outside the door, MRS BUCKLEY continues:

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S; CONT’D)
... Do you remember that time we were up at the lakes and you went under the water ...?

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING
MRS BUCKLEY, wearing a dressing gown and looking a little strung-out, sits on a chair outside RICK’s bedroom.

MRS BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
... Five years old and your father ran so fast across those stones to get you, and then he got you ...
(Beat)
... He saved you.
(Beat)
And we had to go to the A & E, you remember? Not for you, you were fine, but for him, because he’d cut his feet up running over the stones.
(Pause)
And, then ...

The doorbell rings.

INT. BUCKLEY’S HALLWAY
MRS BUCKLEY opens the door, revealing SKUNK.
SKUNK
Hi, Mrs Buckley. Is Rick in?

MRS BUCKLEY
Why?

SKUNK
I dunno. I thought he might like
to play or something?

MRS BUCKLEY
He’s ill. He can’t see you,
Skunk.

SKUNK
Okay. Well ...

MRS BUCKLEY
Bye-bye now, love.

She closes the door. BEAT. SKUNK walks away.

INT. RICK’S BEDROOM

RICK stands at the window, watching SKUNK head back to her
house. From outside the door, we hear:

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S.)
That was Skunk, Rick ...
(PAUSE)
... She wanted to see how you
were ...
(PAUSE)
... Isn’t that nice?

RICK continues to watch SKUNK’s departure.

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S; CONT’D)
... Anyway, then we bought you a
matchbox tank for being so brave
and you tried to give it to your
dad, you remember? So good, you
were ...! So generous ...! I
mean, what five year old in the
world would do that ...?!

INT. OSWALDS’ HOUSE

Pulling BOB down the HALLWAY to the front door, which he
opens revealing –

ARCHIE.

BOB
Hello, Archie.
ARCHIE
Bob.

BOB
What can I do for you?

ARCHIE
I was wondering if we could have a chat.

BOB
A chat?

ARCHIE
Yeah.

BOB
Absolutely.

He folds his arms and waits.

ARCHIE
Well ...

(sighs; BEAT)

... I’m aware that things have been tough for you since Barbara passed away; for you, for the girls, and, I suppose I just wanted to say, what, with all that’s been happening lately, that if, you know, you ever need to talk ...

BOB
Talk?!

ARCHIE
... about ... Yeah, about ...

BOB
Fuck off, Archie, will you?

ARCHIE
All right. All right. Well, to ask you, then, if you could ask your girls to give the Buckleys a break.

(BEAT)

They’re having a pretty hard time of it at the moment.

BOB
Are they?

ARCHIE
Yes.
BOB
That’s really awful!
(PAUSE)
When’s the last time you cried, Archie?

ARCHIE
Cried?

BOB
Yeah.

ARCHIE
I don’t know. Why?

BOB
Cos the next time you will is the next time you criticise my girls in a ...

ARCHIE
Bob ...

BOB
Hang on. ... in any fucking way whatsoever. All right? They’re out of bounds. And if Buckley can’t even take a little friendly fucking ribbing, then he’s a more pathetic prick than I thought.
Now, I’m having my dinner, so if you don’t mind fucking off, mate? Thanks.

He slams the door. HOLD on ARCHIE.

INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Once again, we see -

THE NEEDLE
pricking SKUNK’s finger, drawing blood.

HER FINGER
pressing down on the TEST STRIP, leaving a blood-deposit.

THE TEST STRIP
being put into the meter. The numerical reading.

SKUNK
in bed, writing this number into a log-book. As she does - Kasia
pops her head into the room -

KASIA
Close your curtains, Skunk.

and is gone. SKUNK closes the log-book, goes to the curtains, but, before she can close them, she sees, across the square -

RICK
standing in his window again, looking directly at her.

SKUNK
raises her hand, smiles.

RICK
backs away from his window and disappears out of sight.

FADE TO BLACK:

Sound of a DOORBELL RINGING, then KASIA’S VOICE calling:

KASIA’S VOICE
It’s Mi-ike!

INT. HALLWAY
KASIA opens the front door and MIKE KIERNAN (30s) enters.

MIKE
Hi.

KASIA
Hi.

They look at each other a moment, then kiss tentatively.

MIKE
I’m sorry.

SKUNK (O.S.)
Gross.

SKUNK and JED are standing down the hall.

MIKE
Hey, guys.

JED
What did you bring us?
There are sweets, crisps and drinks on the table, around which sit SKUNK, JED, KASIA and MIKE, playing a board game. KASIA has surreptitiously moved her piece forward.

MIKE
(to KASIA)
No, no. Put it back. Put it back. D’you see what she’s doing?!

JED
Kasia!

KASIA
(guilty)
What?!

JED
We saw you.

MIKE
Come on. Put it back and go again, please.

She sighs. Obeys.

MIKE (CONT’D)
That’s it. There are rules for a reason, isn’t that right, Jed?

JED
If you say so.

SKUNK
Mike? When you’re a teacher, will you still, like, bring us treats and stuff?

MIKE
No. That’ll all have to end, Skunk.

SKUNK
Really?

MIKE
Yeah, I mean, the relationship between student and teacher, by nature ...

JED
But, you won’t be our teacher.

MIKE
You never know...
KASIA
Mike.

JED
Mm.

SKUNK
"By nature" is what?

MIKE
... is adversarial.

SKUNK
What does that mean?

MIKE
It means that it’ll be my job to see you as, I suppose, the enemy, someone worthy only of my distrust ...

SKUNK
Uh-huh.

MIKE
... my contempt ...

JED
He’s full of shit.

KASIA
Mike?

MIKE
I’m not.

(continuing; to SKUNK)
... And you’ll begin to see me that way as well.
Who’s go is it?

KASIA
Yours.

SKUNK
I won’t ever see you that way, Mike.

JED
(picking up the dice)
That’s because you’re in love with him.

SKUNK
(blushing)
No, I’m not.
KASIA
In my experience, Jed, the person who brings up the subject of love is, more often than not, the person who’s in love.

MIKE
Really?

SKUNK
Exactly! Who’re you in love with, Jed?

JED
(also blushing)
Shut up.

KASIA
You’re blushing, Jed.

JED
Shut up! Are you two in love?

KASIA
Me and Mike? Of course.

JED
Then, why aren’t you married yet ...?

He throws the dice, begins moving his piece; half to himself:

JED (CONT’D)
... That’s the question.

OMITTED

EXT. STREET - DAY

SKUNK walks, JED skateboards.

JED
... Also, sometimes, as they pass, the older kids’ll punch you ...

SKUNK
What?!

JED
... in the stomach. Or spit on you.

SKUNK
Why would they spit on me ...?!
A boy ploughs through them on a bicycle. This is DILLON (13), a skinny urchin type. In trying to avoid them, he loses control and falls.

**JED**
Shit! You all right, mate?

**DILLON**
Look at what you made me do ...

**JED**
Me?!

**DILLON**
... Idiot!

**JED**
Listen: It’s not our fault you can’t ride your bike.

**DILLON**
(getting up)
It’s not my bike.

**SKUNK**
Whose it is?

**DILLON**
I dunno. I nicked it from the outside the one-stop, didn’t I?
Check this out, you ready?

He cycles in circles a moment, then tries to pop a wheelie. The front wheel rises about an inch off the ground. SKUNK laughs. JED shakes his head.

**JED**
That’s a travesty.

**DILLON**
Hang on, hang on. All right, you ready?

He tries again, this time doing a good, high one, which last several seconds. But, when the wheel touches down, the handlebars twist and he is flung over them.

**JED**
Thieving little bastards, I’ll kill you!

**BURLY MAN** (CONT’D)
... Thieving little bastards, I’ll kill you!
JED
Run.

He runs, picking up his skateboard as he passes it.

BURLY MAN
I’ll kill you!

SKUNK
Come on.

She helps DILLON up. They run.

BURLY MAN
I’ll bloody kill you ...!

When he arrives at his bike, he comes to a stop. Then -

BURLY MAN (CONT’D)
... Twats!

SPLAT! He is hit on the shoulder by a plastic bag full of SHIT which, on impact, splashes all over him. He stops, stunned.

The BARLOW BROTHERS, who we met at the beginning, glide past on their scooters behind him, laughing.

He touches his face -

BURLY MAN
What the fuck ...?!

looks at the shit on his fingers.

BURLY MAN
Uuuuuuugh, what the fuck ...?!

EXT. HIDDEN PATHWAY

Just off the street. SKUNK, JED and DILLON come running down it. As they come to a stop, breathless, scared, exhilarated:

JED
Shit. That was like, proper danger, wasn’t it ...?

SKUNK
Yeah.

JED
... Like real adrenaline shit!

Having regained his breath, he takes out a cigarette, puts it in his mouth.
DILLON
Oh, mate ...!

JED
What?

DILLON
Cigarettes are a death warrant.

JED
Well ... You make your choices, don’t you.

JED lights up. DILLON looks at him. Then, nodding sagely:

DILLON
I suppose you do.

SKUNK
We have X-box.

DILLON
Yeah? What games you got?

45  EXT. ALLEY

SKUNK, JED and DILLON walk.

JED
So, who do you live with, then?

DILLON
My Auntie.

SKUNK
Where’s your dad?

DILLON
He’s dead.

SKUNK
Dead?!

DILLON
He was killed in a fire along with my mum ...

SKUNK
Oh, no.

DILLON
... and my sister. I don’t give a shit. I was only five or six at the time ...

JED
Wow!
As the three emerge from the ALLEY:

SKUNK
Our mum ran away with an accountant from Manchester.

DILLON
Yeah? So, are you a lesbian?

SKUNK
No!

DILLON
You look like a lesbian.

SKUNK
What does a lesbian look like?

DILLON
(shrugs)
Kind of ugly.

Before SKUNK can react, all three stop, seeing -

TWO POLICE CARS
outside the BUCKLEY house. Two POLICEMEN confer with an upset MRS BUCKLEY. Several NEIGHBOURS also stand about, watching.

SKUNK, JED AND DILLON

pass on the other side of the close, watching as another two POLICEMEN come out of Buckley’s house with RICK between them, hands cuffed behind his back.

SUNRISE AND SASKIA OSWALD

bounce on their trampoline, calling:

SASKIA
Get the straightjacket!

SUNRISE
Lock him up!

SASKIA
Put him in a padded fucking cell, the psycho.

SUNRISE
Cut his knob off!

SASKIA
Feed it to him!
SUNRISE
 His donkey’s fucking knob! EE-ORR
 ...! EE-ORR ...!

They laugh. SUSAN, who stands in front of the trampoline, only smiles distractedly.

THE POLICEMEN

put RICK into the back of the car.

SKUNK, JED AND DILLON

are now outside the CUNNINGHAM house, still watching as an AMBULANCE arrives and pulls up outside the BUCKLEY’s. The police car pulls away. Inside -

RICK

watches SKUNK as they pass.

SKUNK

misses him because her attention has now been taken by -

MR. BUCKLEY

who has just come out of his house, supported by a POLICEMAN, his arm in a makeshift sling, blood all over his shirt.

JED  
Oh, my God!

DILLON  
It’s nothing.

JED  
What?

DILLON  
It’s non-life threatening.

SKUNK  
Look at the blood!

VOICE  
Inside, come on.

SKUNK and JED turn to see KASIA at their front door.

JED  
Is Rick gone mental?

KASIA  
Shut up and get inside. This kind of thing isn’t for ...

(MORE)
KASIA (cont’d)
(to DILLON)
Where are you going?

JED
He’s coming in to play X-Box.

KASIA
No, he’s not.
(to DILLON)
Bye-bye now, sonny. Off you go back to your halting-site.

DILLON
I’m no pikey!

JED
That’s racist, Kasia.
(to DILLON)
Sorry, mate. She’s Polish.

JED follows KASIA inside. SKUNK remains. After a moment:

SKUNK
Bye.

DILLON
You don’t look like a lesbian.

SKUNK
No? So, why’d you say I did?

DILLON
I don’t know.

SKUNK
‘Cos I’m ugly?

DILLON
You’re not. You’re really pretty.

SKUNK
Am I?

DILLON
(PAUSE; then)
Nah, you’re ugly. See ya!

He goes. She watches him a moment, then:

KASIA (O.S.)
Skunk!!!

She turns, goes inside.

ARCHIE (V.O.)
So, what happened?
INT. CUNNINGHAM’S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ARCHIE sits with MR BUCKLEY, who has his arm in a sling. Again, they have whiskeys in front of them. After a moment:

MR BUCKLEY
Well, Doris and I, we’d been, um ...
... (sighs, then)
... Well, we’d been fighting ...

ARCHIE
Uh-huh.

MR BUCKLEY
... I mean, really fighting. I was so bloody angry with her ...

INT. BUCKLEY’S KITCHEN - DAY

MR and MRS BUCKLEY, who is still in her dressing-gown.

MRS BUCKLEY
Dave ...!!!

MR BUCKLEY
... don’t know whether you’re coming or going, look at you! When did you last have a shower ...?!?

MRS BUCKLEY
My son is sick!

MR BUCKLEY
... And sitting outside his bedroom door all day’s gonna help? It’s that kind of babying has him ...

MRS BUCKLEY
“Babying?!?”

MR BUCKLEY
... has him the way he is! That’s right. If you left him alone for a minute, Doris ...

MRS BUCKLEY
No!

MR BUCKLEY
... just gave him a break, then ...
...!
MRS BUCKLEY
He needs to know I’m here for him, Dave!!!

SILENCE. Then, shoving past her:

MR BUCKLEY
I’ll show you what he needs!

MRS BUCKLEY
Dave, please ...

47B  INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING

MR BUCKLEY comes up the last few stairs and arrives at RICK’s door. He throws his shoulder against it.

MR BUCKLEY
Open the door, Rick!

MRS BUCKLEY
Dave!

MR BUCKLEY
(shoulders it again)
Open the door, Rick!

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S.)
Stop it, Dave!

MR BUCKLEY
(shoulders it again)
I’m coming in, Rick!

One more time and the door breaks inward, MR BUCKLEY’s momentum carrying him into the room toward RICK who stabs him through the arm with the KITCHEN KNIFE before retreating, dropping it, horrified at what he’s just done. HOLD.

48  INT. BUCKLEY HALLWAY

MR BUCKLEY sits on the stairs, his arm being tended to by a MEDIC. A POLICEMAN hovers.

POLICEMAN 1
Do you want to press charges, Mr Buckley?

MR BUCKLEY
Now, why the hell would I want to press charges ...?!
C.U RICK: sitting in the back.

MR BUCKLEY (V.O; CONT’D)
... He’s my bloody son!

RESUME ARCHIE and MR BUCKLEY, who continues:

MR BUCKLEY
... I asked the doctor they had, how long they could keep him, and he said indefinitely?

ARCHIE
Right.

MR BUCKLEY
Is that true?

ARCHIE
If someone is sectioned, then yes, I’m afraid they have the right to hold him until as long as they see fit.

MR BUCKLEY
I see.

ARCHIE
I’m sorry, Dave.

SKUNK looks out her window at -

MR BUCKLEY
as he makes his way back to his house. He gets to the front door and goes in.

SKUNK looks up to -

RICK’S BEDROOM WINDOW

It’s dark. Empty.

FADE TO BLACK:
SKUNK, JED, KASIA and MIKE sit around the table making paper airplanes of different colours and types from a paper airplane-making book. There are quite a few already made on the table.

SKUNK
But, what’s it like?

MIKE
I don’t know, Skunk.

SKUNK
Is it like “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest?”

JED
“Mmm! Juicy Fruit!”

MIKE
You saw that?

JED
Me and Skunk one night Kasia fell asleep on the couch.

MIKE
Was she drinking?
(to KASIA)
I’m joking.

SKUNK
They cut a part of his brain out.

MIKE
Who?

SKUNK
McMurphy.

JED
“Mmm! Juicy Fruit!”

KASIA
Jed!

MIKE
That’s not gonna happen to Rick.

SKUNK
Are you sure?

MIKE
Yeah.

SKUNK
How do you know?
MIKE
‘Cos it’s not. That kind of thing isn’t done anymore.
Now, come on, are we ready to see if these things fly or what?

DISSOLVE TO:

52B  EXT. BACK GARDEN

Paper airplane after paper airplane flies through the air.
Various shots of MIKE, SKUNK, JED, KASIA throwing more.
SKUNK throws the occasional surreptitious admiring glance at MIKE. An idyllic feel is sustained throughout until, again, we -

DISSOLVE TO:

53  INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She’s asleep. We hear muted shouting. She wakes.

54  OMITTED

55  INT. HALLWAY

As MIKE come out of the kitchen, followed by KASIA:

MIKE
Yeah, well, I’m fucking sick of it, too.

KASIA
Of what?

MIKE
Of it all. The pushing ...

KASIA
Oh, fuck off!

MIKE
... the fucking obsessing! I am fucking off, and good fucking luck in the future finding someone willing to, to capitulate to your ...

KASIA
Someone who isn’t a child?
MIKE
That’s right. ... to your psychotic fucking demands, ‘cos it isn’t gonna be me.
(grabbing his jacket; to himself)
No way.
(putting it on; to himself)
No fucking way, Jose.

KASIA
So, that’s it ...?!

MIKE
That’s right.

KASIA
... You’re gone?! Jesus, well, have a good fucking life ... asshole!

MIKE
(opening the front door)
You have a good life ...

KASIA
Fuck you.

MIKE
... You crazy fucking bitch, you!

He goes, slamming the door behind him. KASIA bursts into tears. She looks up to see SKUNK and JED on the stairs.

JED
Have you and Mike split up?

KASIA
(BEAT)
Go to bed.

She goes back into the kitchen. Slams the door. HOLD on SKUNK and JED.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

ARCHIE and KASIA sit across from one another, a half-finished bottle of wine on the table. KASIA is crying.
KASIA
... Asshole.
  (BEAT)
I mean, why the hell are you with a person unless you plan to stay with that person, you know?

ARCHIE
Mm.

KASIA
Asshole!
  (BEAT)
Fucking Coward! And the things he said, you know what he called me, Archie?

ARCHIE
What?

KASIA
A crazy fucking bitch!

BEAT. ARCHIE nods solemnly. BEAT.

KASIA
Fuck you!

ARCHIE
(smiling)
Sorry.

KASIA smiles in spite of herself. Then, after a moment:

KASIA
Just so ...
  (sighs)
... worn out with it, Archie, you know?

ARCHIE
Mm.

They sit there in SILENCE. Then:

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
You could sue him.

KASIA
Oh, yeah? For what?

ARCHIE
I dunno. Dereliction of pre-marital duty?

KASIA
Very funny. What about just for being a dick? A ...
ARCHIE
Yeah, we could get him for that.

KASIA
... a lazy, a selfish dick, because that’s the problem, Archie. He values his freedom far too much, his comforts.

ARCHIE
Most men do, Kasia.

KASIA
(BEAT)
Mm.

ARCHIE
We need that push, you know?

KASIA
I’ve been pushing for four years, though, Archie. I’m sick of waiting for him. I’m thirty-six years old, you know? Thirty six and counting and I can’t wait any more ...

ARCHIE
All right.

KASIA
I can’t. I just can’t.

She stares down at the table. ARCHIE watches her.

59 EXT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - DAY

DILLON stands at the front door, which opens ON THE CUT, revealing SKUNK.

SKUNK
What are you doing here?

DILLON
Thought I’d knock around.

SKUNK
Jed’s out.

DILLON nods. HOLD.

60 EXT. APPROACHING THE SCRAPYARD

SKUNK and DILLON, who is carrying a packet of NIK-NAKS.
SKUNK
I think she wanted him to get married ...

DILLON
Right.

SKUNK
... Or buy a house ... Or have a baby, maybe ...
(PAUSE)
I would’ve married him.

DILLON
Yeah?
(seeing the scrapyard proper)
Oh, wow!

SKUNK
Come over here.

As she leads him through the derelict cars, boats, etc.

DILLON
Oh, wow!

INT. CARAVAN
SKUNK and DILLON enter.

DILLON
Oh, this is really cool. It’s like ...

SKUNK
Sit down.

DILLON
... like a secret hideout or something.
(sitting down in an armchair)
You’re a really cool girl!

SKUNK
Thanks.

DILLON
... For a lesbian.

SKUNK rolls her eyebrows, sits in the other chair. DILLON opens his packet of NIK-NAKS.
DILLON (CONT’D)
You wanna Nik-Nak?

SKUNK
No thanks.

DILLON
Must be a pain, not being able to
eat what you like.
(she shrugs)
You wanna be my girlfriend?

SKUNK
(BEAT; then)
Okay.

DILLON
Can I give you a kiss?

She looks at him. LONG PAUSE; then:

SKUNK
Maybe later.

DILLON
Okay. Only later my mouth’s gonna
be all Nik-Nakky.

SKUNK
(BEAT)
All right. But not a splasher.

DILLON
What?

SKUNK
Not swirly tongues.

DILLON
Okay.

They both stand, kiss for a moment; then:

DILLON (CONT’D)
Okay.

They both sit back down. DILLON starts eating. They smile
shyly at one another.

ARCHIE sits in his suit at the kitchen table, again having
a late dinner. KASIA puts protective covers on schoolbooks.
SKUNK and JED, in their pyjamas, wrestle on the floor.
After a moment:
KASIA
All right, guys. Bed. Come on.

JED
We’re doing our books!

KASIA
Is that what you call it?
(BEAT)
Go on. I’ll do the rest of them.

SKUNK
Da-ad ...

ARCHIE
Do as you’re told. Come on. Big
day tomorrow.

SKUNK and JED get up, go to ARCHIE, kiss him goodnight.

SKUNK
Goodnight, dad.

JED
‘Night, dad.

ARCHIE
‘Night, guys.

Then, as they go:

KASIA
Hey ... Where’s mine?

They turn without stopping and both raise their middle
finger, smiling:

SKUNK                                   JED
Goodnight, Katya.                     Goodnight, Katya.

KASIA
Oh, very good. Very funny ...
(calling after them)
And don’t forget teeth!

KASIA and ARCHIE continue their work a moment, then KASIA
stops. BEAT.

KASIA
You want a drink?

INT. BATHROOM

SKUNK brushes her teeth. JED stands in the doorway.
JED
... and if you wear shoes, they
trip you up. And if you wear
trainers, they stomp on ‘em –
Bang! – And if your hair is long,
what they do is grab it from
behind ...

SKUNK
All right ...

JED
... and ...

SKUNK
... stop!

JED
You need to know about this,
Skunk. The better prepared you
are, the better you’ll do.

SKUNK looks at herself in the mirror. She is worried.

JED (CONT’D; O.S)
So, they grab you by the hair ...

INT. KITCHEN

ARCHIE and KASIA sit at the table, drunk, a three-quarters
empty bottle of gin between them. After a moment:

KASIA
What about Rachel?

ARCHIE
What about her?

KASIA
If she walked in now, would you
take her back?

ARCHIE
You’re joking aren’t you?

KASIA
Not even for the kids?

ARCHIE
Why, so they could live in fear
of her leaving again whenever the
inclination took her? They
wouldn’t even recognise her.
(MORE)
She nods, looking into his eyes. After a moment:

KASIA
Poor Archie.

ARCHIE
(a smile)
Poor Kasia.

PAUSE. KASIA breaks eye-contact, finishes her glass of wine; then, getting up:

KASIA
I’m gonna go to bed.

ARCHIE
All right.

HOLD on ARCHIE, staring into space, as KASIA rinses her glass at the sink, etc. Then, standing over him:

KASIA
Goodnight.

He looks up at her. BEAT.

ARCHIE
Goodnight.

She leans down and kisses him passionately on the mouth, then whispers:

KASIA
Follow me up if you want.

She goes. HOLD on ARCHIE.

INT. BATHROOM

ARCHIE brushes his teeth, rinses, looks at himself in the mirror.

INT. LANDING HALLWAY

ARCHIE tiptoes towards KASIA’s room. As he passes SKUNK’s door:

SKUNK (O.S.)
Dad ...?

He freezes. Waits. After a moment:
SKUNK (O.S.)

Dad ...!

INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM

ARCHIE steps into the doorway, stops.

ARCHIE

Why aren’t you in bed?

SKUNK is sitting on the floor, her back against the wall. She has her duvet pulled up to her chin.

SKUNK

Jed said I’m gonna get my head flushed down the toilet ... 

ARCHIE

By who?

SKUNK

In school.

ARCHIE

And do you believe him?

SKUNK

... And punched in the stomach. Yes, I believe him. He said it’s tradition, dad.

ARCHIE

He’s pulling your leg, love. Seriously. I was told the very same things when I was your age.

SKUNK

Really?

ARCHIE

That’s the tradition.

SKUNK

What is?

ARCHIE

Putting the fear of God into first-years.

(BEAT)

I promise you nothing’s going to happen, Skunk.

(crosses his heart)

See that?

SKUNK

(nods; PAUSE)

Jed’s an idiot.
ARCHIE
(smiles; then)
Come on. You getting into bed or what?

As SKUNK goes to her bed, ARCHIE looks toward KASIA’s room: she is standing in the doorway in her underwear.

SKUNK (O.S.)
Dad ...?

ARCHIE
Yeah?

SKUNK (O.S.)
... Will you lie down beside me til I go asleep?

BEAT. KASIA smiles regretfully, slowly closes her door.

SKUNK (O.S; CONT’D)
Dad ...?

---

68 OMITTED

69 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR

Pulling SKUNK as she walks through the crowds, the screams, the roughhousing, etc. She is very nervous.

70 INT. CLASSROOM

Kids file in, SKUNK among them. She stops when she sees –

SKUNK
My God! Hi Mike!

MIKE, sitting behind his desk, looks up.

MIKE
It’s Mr Kiernan in school, Skunk ...

SKUNK
Oh ...

MIKE
... Not Mike.

SKUNK
Oh, right. Well, in that case, you can call me Miss Cunningham.

A smile between them. SKUNK takes her seat. MIKE stands up, addresses the class:
MIKE
Okay, then ...!

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER
The class is now filing out. As SKUNK passes:

MIKE
Miss Cunningham ...

SKUNK
Yes, Mr Kiernan?

MIKE
... How’s Kasia?

SKUNK
Kasia’s fine.

MIKE
(nods; then)
Say Hi from me, would you?

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING
SKUNK, JED and KASIA are eating their dinner.

SKUNK
... Do you have a message back?

KASIA
I do.

SKUNK
What is it?

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY
The class are filing in again. SKUNK stands with MIKE at his desk. He has a shocked look on his face.

MIKE
Excuse me?!

SKUNK
(giggles)
That’s what she said.

INT. CHANGING ROOM
SKUNK, having just dressed after P.E, plays with her mobile phone while her friend, FIONA TORBY, fixes her hair at the mirror.
FIONA
How many’d you get?

SKUNK
A hundred.

FIONA
Shit.

SKUNK
And a long one: “I must not use inappropriate language in ...”

FIONA
Why can’t he just say “swear”?

SKUNK
... in class. Exactly!

SKUNK is suddenly shouldered hard. Her phone falls out of her hand and is picked up by SUNRISE OSWALD.

SKUNK
Why the hell’d you do that?!

SUNRISE
Shut up. Gimme some money.

FIONA
What?!

SUNRISE
Some money.

SKUNK
Why?!

SUNRISE
‘Cos I want some and ‘cos, if you don’t, my sister’s gonna ... You know my sister, Saskia ...?

SKUNK
Yeah.

SUNRISE
... She’s gonna kick the fucking shit out of you. That’s why.

SKUNK
(considers this a moment; then)
How much?

SUNRISE
All you got. “How fucking much”!
SKUNK sighs, then she and FIONA both hand over some coins which SUNRISE pockets.

SUNRISE (CONT’D)
Now, every week from next week on, I want two pounds from each of you.

SKUNK/FIONA
What?!

SUNRISE
That’s right. This is what it costs to stay off the list.

FIONA
What list?

SUNRISE
“What list”?! (PAUSE; then)
The list of fucking death, bitch. (then, handing phone back)
Here’s your shit fucking loser’s out-of-date fucking mobile.

She exits. SKUNK pushes buttons on her phone.

SKUNK
It’s broken!

FIONA
What?

SKUNK
The cow ...!

As their P.E teacher enters:

SKUNK (CONT’D)
... The absolute fucking ugly, spiteful fucking ...

SKUNK stops, seeing her. BEAT; then:

P.E TEACHER
Go on.

OMITTED

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

SKUNK sits at the kitchen table doing her lines. ARCHIE leans over her, looks down at what she’s writing. Then:
ARCHIE
How many’d you get?

SKUNK
Two hundred.

ARCHIE
Must’ve been one of the bad ones.

SKUNK
(turns to him)
Can I get a mobile phone?

ARCHIE
You have one.

SKUNK
It broke. Can I get a new one?

ARCHIE
No.

SKUNK
Why not?

ARCHIE
‘Cos you should’ve taken better care of the old one.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ARCHIE, KASIA and JED watch the news. SKUNK plays with ARCHIE’s hair, speaks like an Enid Blyton character.

SKUNK
It’d make me so happy …

ARCHIE
Sshh!

SKUNK
… I’d just be the happiest child …

ARCHIE
I’m trying to …
(pulling his head away)
Jesus!

INT. LANDING HALLWAY - MORNING

SKUNK knocks on the bathroom door.

SKUNK
Dad …?
ARCHIE sits on the toilet, reading the paper.

    ARCHIE
    Go away, Skunk!

ARCHIE eats his dinner. SKUNK lies on the couch. Sullen:

    SKUNK
    It's just not fair.

    ARCHIE
    I don't care.

    SKUNK
    About me.

    ARCHIE
    What?

    SKUNK
    You don't care about me.

    ARCHIE
    Give me a break, Skunk, will you?

    SKUNK
    (BEAT)
    Well, you don't.
    (LONG PAUSE; then, under her breath)
    You wish I was dead.

    ARCHIE
    What?

    SKUNK
    Nothing.

ARCHIE is putting his coat on to go to work. SKUNK is shadowing him.

    SKUNK
    Pleeease, dad?

    ARCHIE
    Stop now.

    SKUNK
    Pleeeeeease?
ARCHIE

EMILY !!!!!!

SKUNK is shocked into silence. PAUSE.

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
Now, I don’t want to hear it again! Do you understand?!
(PAUSE; louder)
Do you understand!

She nods, lip aquiver. He leaves the house. The door closes. PAUSE. Then, from the KITCHEN:

JED (O.S.)
(doiing NELSON from The Simpsons)
Haw-Haw!

EXT. SCRAPYARD - NIGHT

DILLON and SKUNK sit in the front of an old truck. SKUNK is eating M&Ms. After a moment:

DILLON
What time is it?

SKUNK
Ten past ten. Do you think he’s learned his lesson yet?

DILLON
Who’s this?

SUSAN OSWALD runs through the SCRAPYARD, pursued by an OLDER BOY, who catches her around the waist, swings her around, puts her down.

DILLON
Slut.

SKUNK
What? No, she’s not.

DILLON shrugs. SKUNK continues to eat her M&M’s.

SUSAN unzips the OLDER BOY and begins giving him a blowjob.

DILLON (O.S.)
Told you ...

CLOSE ON SKUNK

frozen, an M&M halfway to her open mouth.

DILLON (O.S.; CONT’D)
... You call it fellatio.
She now looks down at the M&M she’s holding.

     DILLON (O.S; CONT’D)
     Skunk ...?

     SKUNK
     I have to go home.

82 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The front door opens and SKUNK enters, closing it quietly behind her.

     SKUNK
     Hello?

83 INT. KITCHEN

SKUNK enters, almost bumping into KASIA.

     KASIA
     Where were you?
     (SKUNK shrugs)
     Why didn’t you call?

     SKUNK
     I don’t have a phone.

KASIA suddenly grabs her by the arm and slaps her arse several times – hard.

     KASIA
     How dare you ...!! How dare you do what you just did, you little brat!!

SKUNK is in tears. KASIA dials her mobile, waits, then:

     KASIA
     Yeah, she’s here. She’s fine.

84 INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

ARCHIE sits in an armchair, staring at the TV. SKUNK stands contritely in front of him. After several moments:

     SKUNK
     I’m sorry, dad.

SILENCE. ARCHIE gets up, leaves the room. HOLD on SKUNK.

85 INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

HER FINGER
is pressed down on the TEST STRIP, leaving blood-deposit.

THE TEST STRIP

is put into the meter on the MACHINE which gives the numerical reading.

SKUNK
looks at it. Frowns. HOLD.

86
INT. KITCHEN

ARCHIE sits reading the newspaper. SKUNK enters. He looks up.

SKUNK
My levels are off.

87
INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM

SKUNK is now in her pyjamas. She sits on the edge of the bed. ARCHIE prepares an insulin injection.

ARCHIE
You can never forget how important this is ...

SKUNK
I know.

ARCHIE
... Routine. I know it’s hard, but ....

SKUNK
Say, “It’s okay,” dad.

ARCHIE
What?

SKUNK
I said I was sorry, now you have to say, “It’s okay.”

ARCHIE
(PAUSE)
It’s okay.

BEAT. He hugs her tightly. Then:

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
You know how much I worry about you ...?
SKUNK
Yes.

ARCHIE
... you and Jed, and how much I love you?

SKUNK
What would you do if I died, dad?

ARCHIE
(BEAT)
I can’t even answer that.

SKUNK
Would you cry?

ARCHIE
Uh-huh.

SKUNK
A lot?

ARCHIE
I don’t think I would ever stop, love.

After a LONG PAUSE:

SKUNK
Tell me about the night I was born.

ARCHIE
Oh, come on ...! The night?

SKUNK
The dream.

ARCHIE
Again?! I don’t even understand why you like it, Skunk.

SKUNK
I do.

ARCHIE
(shakes his head; then)
All right. It was about this woman ...

SKUNK
Uh-huh.

ARCHIE
... and it was different times in her life.
SKUNK
Different moments.

ARCHIE
Yeah.

SKUNK
Like what?

ARCHIE
I can’t remember! You know I can’t!

SKUNK giggles. ARCHIE continues:

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
I know that some of them were sad ...

SKUNK
Okay.

ARCHIE
... but that most of them were happy.

SKUNK
And the woman was me.

ARCHIE
The woman was you.

SKUNK
And the dream was my future.

ARCHIE
Well, I don’t know, but that’s what it felt like, yeah.

SKUNK
And what did I look like?

ARCHIE
Stunning.

SKUNK
And then you woke.

ARCHIE
I woke and I was crying and laughing all at once.

SKUNK
And mum was there.

ARCHIE
She’s the one who woke me.
SKUNK
And what did she say?

ARCHIE
She said, "Archie ...
(BEAT)
... She’s here."

SKUNK
Meaning me.

ARCHIE
Well, you were the one about to be born ...
(BEAT)
... weren’t you.

She’s crying.

ARCHIE
Oh, Skunk!

SKUNK
(laughing)
I can’t help it!

ARCHIE
You’re a very strange girl, love.
Come on. Let’s get this done.

She pulls her top up, exposing her stomach. ARCHIE injects her.

88 INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR – DAY

Packed. SKUNK is showing FIONA TORBY her new phone.

FIONA
Beautiful.

SKUNK
Yeah, the only thing is I’ve got to pay for half of it.

FIONA
How d’you do that?

SKUNK
Give up half of my pocket money every week.

FIONA
Shit. That sucks.

SKUNK hurriedly puts the phone away when she sees SUNRISE approach.
SUNRISE
All right?

FIONA hands her two pounds. To SKUNK:

SUNRISE
Fuck is yours, you chunky twat?
(to FIONA; taking the five)
You’re all right; you’re punctual.

SKUNK
Can I bring it into you on Monday?

SUNRISE
You ain’t got it?

SKUNK
I will on Monday.

SUNRISE
(PAUSE)
Make sure you do or you’re going on the list.
(BEAT)
Have your swollen fucking head kicked in. Chubby cunt.

She goes. HOLD on SKUNK and FIONA.

89 OMITTED

90 OMITTED

91 INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM - NIGHT
SKUNK stands at her window, staring across the square at -
RICK’S WINDOW
which remains in darkness.

SKUNK
stares for a long time.

92 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY
MR and MRS BUCKLEY stand at the entrance, while, off a little, KASIA instructs SKUNK.
KASIA
Now, you know to do whatever you’re told ...

SKUNK
Yes.

KASIA
... And not to forget your manners.

SKUNK
Kasia...!

KASIA
All right. All right. Go on, then.

SKUNK joins MR and MRS BUCKLEY and they go inside.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

RICK is sitting in bed watching TV. The door opens and MR and MRS BUCKLEY enter.

MRS BUCKLEY
Hello, darling!

RICK
Hi, Mum.

MRS BUCKLEY
Look who’s here to visit.

SKUNK peeks her head in shyly.

RICK
Hiya, Skunk. Come in.

She does. MR BUCKLEY shuts the door.

RICK (CONT’D)
How are you?

SKUNK
Fine. Why are you talking like that?

MR BUCKLEY
It’s his medication.

RICK
Talking like what?

SKUNK
Kinda groggy.
RICK
Am I?
He looks confused. PAUSE. He smiles. Everyone laughs.

SKUNK
Oh, wow, you’ve got your own telly and all.

RICK
Yeah. You know, I watch, um ...
(struggles to remember; SILENCE; then)
I’m sorry.

MR BUCKLEY
(calming unnecessarily)
That’s okay. That’s okay.

RICK
How’s school?

SKUNK
’S alright. We’re on a half day today.

MRS BUCKLEY
Isn’t she good to come, Rick?

RICK
She is ...

MRS BUCKLEY
She asked to, you know.

RICK
... she’s really good.
(to SKUNK)
I always thought that Skunk was good, didn’t I?

SKUNK
I dunno.

He looks at her a moment, smiling, then turns to the TV. After several moments more:

SKUNK
So, what did it feel like?

RICK
Hm?

SKUNK
When you went kinda mad.
(to MR BUCKLEY)
Is it all right to say that?
RICK
It’s hard to describe, really.
It’s like there’s a toxic cloud,
isn’t that right, mum? Down in my
stomach ...

SKUNK
A toxic cloud?!

RICK
... Or a mist of ... I don’t
know, evil or something ...

SKUNK
Really?!

RICK
... Or badness. Yeah.

SKUNK
And is it there right now?

MR BUCKLEY Less. MRS BUCKLEY Less.

MR BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
In fact, Doctor Sinclair says, at
this rate of improvement, Rick
might be able to come home for a
weekend. Right, son?

SKUNK
When?

RICK
(slightly panicked)
Not now ...

MR BUCKLEY No, no. Not now. MRS BUCKLEY No, no. Not now.

RICK
... But soon.

SILENCE. Then, smiling lopsidedly at SKUNK, he enthuses:

RICK (CONT’D)
It’s so good of you to come, Skunk!

HOLD on SKUNK smiling awkwardly back.
SKUNK and DILLON walk.

DILLON
... yeah, I’d an uncle was crazy
something like that, he thought
he’d worms in his hair ...

SKUNK
Oh, yeah?

DILLON
... like nesting there. Shaved it
off, he’s been bald ever since.

SKUNK
Is he better, though?

DILLON
Nah, he’s worse. He lives in
Florida now. You know they’ve
lizards there?

SKUNK
What?!

DILLON
Lizards. Millions of ‘em just
walkin’ around the streets –
“Hey, how you doin’?” – You and I
should go, you know that?

SKUNK
When?

DILLON
I dunno. One day.
(BEAT)
Why, would you come if I asked
you?

SKUNK
Yeah.

DILLON
What about that guy you’re in
love with?

SKUNK
Mike?

DILLON
That teacher.

SKUNK
He’d understand. I’m in love with
you as well, you know.
DILLON
Sweet. They call that a _menage a trois._

SKUNK
What does that mean?

DILLON
Love triangle. Give us a kiss.

SKUNK
No!

DILLON
Go on.

She kisses him. He smiles.

DILLON
Nice one.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

VIKRAM, an Indian pupil, reads aloud. The class, including SKUNK, listen.

VIKRAM
"... and so, in spite of the enormous fear he felt, James took a breath, and, without any further hesitation, stepped through the doorway."

MIKE
Well done, Vikram. So ...
(to class)
... what’s on the other side?

KEVIN
How should _we_ know?

MIKE
Well, take a guess. Anna?

ANNA
Dragons?

MIKE
Maybe.

ANNA
There are.
(holds up book)
They’re on the cover, see?
VIKRAM
Does he die? I don’t want him to die.

KIM, a Korean pupil, punches STEPHEN.

STEPHEN (O.S.)
Ouch, Motherfucker!

MIKE
Stephen!

STEPHEN
He hit me!

MIKE
Kim! Come on, lads!

VIKRAM
Does he die?

MIKE
I can’t really say if he dies or not, Vikram. That’s why we read on. To find out.
(to class)
But, lets agree there’s a chance he might, all right?

VIKRAM
I don’t want him to.

MIKE
(ignoring this)
... all right? Then, why does he go? Kevin.

KEVIN
Well, his life was rubbish, wasn’t it; and boring, whereas through the door, there might be wicked shit ...

ANNA
Like dragons.

KEVIN
... like dragons and shit and trolls and shit you could disembowel, yeah?

VIKRAM
And what if they disembowelled you?

KEVIN
Do me a favour, Vik.
MIKE
Well, that’s the definition of courage, isn’t it? Being afraid and doing it anyway?

VIKRAM
Hmm.
(BEAT)
I still would not go.

C.U MIKE: his face has gone blank. As he sits down slowly:

ANNA (O.S.)
Well, of course you wouldn’t.

VIKRAM (O.S.)
I wouldn’t want to die.

MIKE
(quietly; almost to himself)
He doesn’t die, Vikram.

PAUSE. The entire class registers shock. Then:

VIKRAM
You tell me the end? Why do you tell me the end?!

Everybody starts giving out, except SKUNK, who is watching MIKE. KIM punches STEPHEN again.

STEPHEN
Ouch, motherfucker!

ANNA
Sir ...?

VIKRAM
(starting to cry)
You ruined it, Mr Kiernan!

ANNA
Sir!

VIKRAM
You ruined it!

KIM punches STEPHEN again.

STEPHEN
Ouch, you fucking arsehole!

VIKRAM
... Why did you have to ruin it?!

HOLD on SKUNK as the chaos continues.
SKUNK watches, over FIONA’s shoulder, SUNRISE approach.

FIONA
... I don’t know, it was like ...

SKUNK
Uh-huh.

FIONA
... like he just switched off or something. Click ...!

SKUNK
Yeah.

FIONA
... Click! ... And he just wasn’t there anymore ...

SUNRISE
(arriving)
Hello, fats.

SKUNK
(PAUSE; scared)
I haven’t got it.

SUNRISE
You haven’t got it?! (pushes SKUNK against the wall)
Are you fucking joking me?

SKUNK tries to move away, but SUNRISE grabs her and, again, pushes her against the wall and repeats:

SUNRISE (CONT’D)
Are you fucking joking me?

SKUNK
Leave me alone.

SKUNK tries to walk away again and, again, SUNRISE grabs her, but this time –

SKUNK (CONT’D)
Let go!

SKUNK swings SUNRISE around, throwing her to the ground. Shocked at her own actions, she gives a little hysterical titter.

SUNRISE
You fucking laughing?!
SKUNK
No, I ...
(another involuntary titter)
... I'm sorry, Sunrise ...

SUNRISE
(getting up; embarrassed and slightly teary)
Bitch, you're gone ...

SKUNK
... I ... Sunrise ...!

SUNRISE
... History, yeah? You're now officially on the list, so just you fucking wait.
(BEAT)
Dumpy little turd.

She goes. SKUNK watches, then notices that several kids scattered around the playground are just standing there solemnly, staring right at her.

INT. CLASSROOM
SKUNK stares off into space as an unseen FEMALE TEACHER drones on.

EXT. STREET
SKUNK on her way home. She stops, seeing ahead of her, SUNRISE and her big sister, SASKIA.

INT. MIKE'S CAR
MIKE drives home. He takes a corner, sees, as they pass, running in the opposite direction, SKUNK and her pursuers.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET
SKUNK, exhausted, comes to a stop, turns to face the two OSWALD girls who have slowed now to a walk. As they approach:

SKUNK
Please ...
(as they get closer)
Please ...

SUNRISE punches her in the face. She falls, curls up into a ball as the two girls begin kicking her.
They are being pulled away from her by MIKE.

MIKE
What the hell do you think you’re doing?!

SASKIA
Fucking touch me again, I’ll report you ...!

MIKE
Report me?!

(BEAT)
How old are you? Huh? Beating up someone half your size!

SASKIA
Oh, fuck off, Paedo!

MIKE
Get out of my sight! Go on!

SASKIA
... Fucking queer!

(to SUNRISE)
Come on.

MIKE
Not you, Sunrise. You stand over there.

SASKIA
(as SUNRISE obeys)
What’cha doing? Don’t listen to him.

SUNRISE
He’s a teacher, Sask.

SASKIA
He’s a fucking jockstrap, more like. I’ll see you at home, then, yeah?

She goes. MIKE squats down in front of SKUNK.

MIKE
Skunk ...?

(BEAT)
Darling, are you all right?

SUNRISE
“Darling”?!
SKUNK looks up at MIKE. Her nose is bleeding.

SKUNK
I think so.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR

SKUNK sits on a bench, bloody tissues held to her nose. O.S and muffled, we can hear MIKE’S VOICE raised in anger.

INT. CLASSROOM

MIKE sits across from SUNRISE.

SUNRISE
What kids?

MIKE
Don’t insult me, Sunrise. Please. You’re a thief and you’re a bully and I am not going to entertain your denials. Not for a second. All right? Now, every day for the next two weeks you’ll come here for ...

SUNRISE
(looking away)
Yeah, right.

MIKE
... for a ... Look at me, Sunrise!

She does. Hatefully. MIKE continues:

MIKE (CONT’D)
... for an hour and a half’s detention, starting tomorrow. Do you understand? (no answer)
Do you understand, Sunrise? (no answer)
Do you understand?

INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - HALLWAY

SKUNK and MIKE enter. SKUNK calls out:

SKUNK
Hello-o! Jed ...? Kasia...?

They head down the hall. Just then, KASIA appears from the kitchen, sees SKUNK’s bruised face.
KASIA
Skunk! What happened you?!

MIKE
She’s okay.

KASIA
My God!

MIKE
She had a bit of a run-in with another girl. We sorted it out. Don’t worry.

SKUNK
Mike rescued me.

KASIA
Really.

SKUNK
Can I have a jam sandwich?

KASIA
Okay. Change out of your uniform first.

SKUNK exits. KASIA goes to the press.

KASIA
So, who was it?

MIKE
She says she wants to tell you herself.

KASIA
Fair enough. Can I make you some tea?

MIKE
No, no, I’m okay.

She brings bread and jam to the table and begins to prepare SKUNK’s sandwich. MIKE watches her for several moments; then, thoughtfully:

MIKE
It’s weird, when you’re in the middle of something, isn’t it? How things can be so, you know ... confusing ...

KASIA
Mm.
MIKE
... unclear, whereas ...

KASIA
What are you talking about?

MIKE
Well, I’m saying, whereas, a bit of distance, or time, or a bit of perspective, everything sort of ...

(sighs)
Look: whatever you want.

KASIA
Sorry?

MIKE
The house, the baby, whatever you want, I’ll give you.

KASIA
That’s very kind of you, Mike.

MIKE
No, see, this is what I’m saying. It took my stepping back to ...

KASIA
Right.

MIKE
... or away ...

KASIA
... to get perspective.

MIKE
Yes. And to realise that the things that you want ...

KASIA
Mike ...

MIKE
... the things that you want are the things that I want, Kasia.

KASIA
Mike.

(BEAT)
I’m with Archie now.
EXT. HALLWAY

Pulling SKUNK, now dressed in her everyday clothes, down the stairs, along the hallway, towards the kitchen, over which we hear:

MIKE (O.S.)
You what?!

KASIA (O.S.)
I’m sorry.

MIKE (O.S.)
With fucking Archie?!

KASIA (O.S.)
Yes.

MIKE (O.S.)
As lovers?!!

SKUNK stops just outside the door. Reacts.

INT. KITCHEN

BEAT. KASIA nods.

MIKE (CONT’D)
And are you in love?

KASIA
(PAUSE)
Yes.

A LONG PAUSE; then, on the verge of tears:

MIKE
I’m so fucking happy for you!

He picks the jam-jar up and throws it against the wall, smashing it.

EXT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE

MIKE exits, heading for his car. He reaches it, gets in. SKUNK comes running out of the house, calling:

SKUNK
Mike?

He drives off. She calls again:

SKUNK
Mike!
He’s gone. HOLD on SKUNK. She runs off in the other direction.

108 INT. MIKE’S CAR
MIKE drives, tears streaming down his face. HOLD before -
SPLAT! a bagful of SHIT explodes against his window.

109 EXT. SCRAPYARD
SKUNK walks, lost in thought. She comes to the caravan and
opens the door.

109B INT. CARAVAN
She enters, seeing, on one of the armchairs, a guy,
trousers around his ankles, having sex with SUSAN OSWALD.
SKUNK gasps. SUSAN sees her.

    SUSAN
    What the fuck?!

The guy turns around. It’s JED. SKUNK, in shock, backs away.

    JED
    Skunk ...

She bolts.

110 INT. CUNNINGHAM KITCHEN - EVENING
ARCHIE and KASIA sit at the table, which is laid for dinner.

    KASIA
    ... What could I do ...?

    ARCHIE
    Uh-huh.

    KASIA
    ... I told him.

    ARCHIE
    What?

    KASIA
    That I was with you. What else?

    ARCHIE
    And where was Skunk at the time?
KASIA
Upstairs. But we need to tell
her, Archie ...

ARCHIE
I know.

KASIA
... her and Jed.

ARCHIE
I know. Just let me, uh ...

We hear the front door opening. After a moment, SKUNK enters. ARCHIE goes to her.

ARCHIE
Let me see.
   (squats down, examines
   her face)
Are you okay?

SKUNK
Uh-huh.

ARCHIE
Sit down and tell me about it.

SKUNK
(as they sit)
There’s nothing to tell, dad.

ARCHIE
Of course there is. Who was it?

SKUNK
I dunno. Some girl.

ARCHIE
And why did she ...

SKUNK
Can we talk about it another
time, dad?

ARCHIE
Skunk...

PAUSE. We hear the front door open and close, then
footsteps running up the stairs and another door closing.
PAUSE. Everyone looks at each other.

111 INT. JED’S BEDROOM 111

He is lying in bed, miserable. SKUNK enters.
SKUNK
You have to come down for your dinner.
    (LONG PAUSE)
What were you doing?

JED
You know what.

SKUNK
Why?

JED
I dunno.

SKUNK
Why her?

JED
I dunno! Promise you won’t tell anyone, will you?

SKUNK
Okay. I just don’t ... 

JED
You haven’t promised!

SKUNK
I promise. I just don’t understand why people would do that.

JED
It’s what you do when you’re in love.

SKUNK
You’re in love?!

JED
I am. I don’t know about her.

SKUNK
And what if she’s pregnant?

JED
She’s not! Jesus ...

SKUNK
What if, though?

JED
Skunk!

SKUNK stops. LONG PAUSE; then:
JED (CONT’D)
What’s for dinner?

INT. SUSAN’S BEDROOM – NIGHT
SUSAN sits with SUNRISE.

SUNRISE
What do you mean, you don’t know?

SUSAN
I’m not sure.

SUNRISE (CONT’D)
Well, whose could it be, then?

SUSAN
Simon Malloy’s ...

SUNRISE
Okay ...

SUSAN
... Jed Cunningham’s, Dennis Woods’ ...

SUNRISE
Jed Cunningham’s?!

SUSAN
Yeah, I know.

SUNRISE
Who else?

SUSAN
A couple of guys whose names I can’t remember ... Who’s the one with the dreadlocks?

SUNRISE
Nicky Cantwell?

SUSAN
He’s going to fucking kill me, Sunrise!

SUNRISE
He’s not. Just let me ...

SUSAN
Yes, he is!

SUNRISE
... Just let me think for a minute, will you?
HOLD as she does.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

BOB has the TV in his arms again. He struggles under the weight. SUSAN, SUNRISE (both wearing school uniforms) and SASKIA watch in horror.

SUNRISE
... Dad, don't ...!

BOB
I will and it won't even matter, 'cos after, I'll lock you all in the fucking shed and I won't let you fucking out, you hear me?! Drastic fucking measures're gonna be taken unless you give me the dirty bastard father's fucking name!

(BEAT; raises the TV)
WHOSE IS IT?!

SUNRISE
SUSAN!!!

SASKIA
SUSAN!!!

SUSAN
Mister Kiernan!

BOB
(BEAT; then, lowering the TV)
Who the fuck is ...?

SUNRISE
He's a teacher in school.

BOB
A TEACHER?!!!

SUSAN
He ... He took me for lifts in his car ...!

The TV slips out of BOB's grip, crashing to the floor.

BOB
Fuck!

SUSAN
... He ...

SUNRISE
SASKIA
Da-ad!!!

Da-ad!!!
INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

PULLING BOB in C.U down the empty corridor.

SUSAN (V.O; CONT’D)
... He said I could be his
girlfriend if I ... if I let him
put it in me!

FOLLOWING BOB into -

INT. MIKE’S CLASSROOM

The class is going wild, kids screaming at each other,
throwing things, etc. MIKE sits behind his desk, oblivious
to it all, staring off into space, then -

BANG! BOB knocks him off his chair and begins beating him
viciously. MIKE curls up into a ball as blows rain down.

After several moments of this, BOB screams.

SKUNK has her arms around him and is biting into his waist.
He grabs her by the hair and pulls her away from him. Then,
raising his fist to hit her:

SKUNK
Mr Oswald ...!

He hesitates. SKUNK is terrified.

SKUNK (CONT’D)
... It’s a lovely day, look?

SILENCE. BOB looks out the window. It’s raining. He looks
at the class, all the frightened faces staring at him. He
looks at SKUNK again. Another PAUSE, then:

BOB
It’s fucking raining!

He releases her, goes.

SKUNK
Mike!

She runs to him, squats down. He has blood all over his
face. His nose is broken. His eyes are beginning to swell.
One of his front teeth is missing.

SKUNK
Mike!

MRS MCCLUSKEY enters, followed by MR BROWN, the school
janitor. Seeing MIKE:
MRS MCCLUSKEY
My God! Mr Brown, call an ambulance! Call the police!

MR BROWN
(exiting)
Will do!

MRS MCCLUSKEY
My God!

INT. OSWALD’S HOUSE – DAY

Present are BOB, SASKIA and SUSAN. SUNRISE comes running in. (SUSAN and SUNRISE still wear school uniforms)

SUNRISE
They’re coming, dad!

BOB
All right.
(kneeling down in front of SUSAN)
Now, you know I’ll be back, and you know I’ll make sure every-thing turns out okay, don’t you?
(she nods; he embraces her)
I love you so fucking much.

Loud knocking. A VOICE in the letterbox.

VOICE
Mr Oswald?

BOB
I love you all so much.

VOICE
Mr Oswald!

BOB
(to the other girls)
C’mere, we’ll do a big fucking family hug.

They gather around him so that he can embrace them all. HOLD, then –

EXT. OSWALD’S HOUSE – DAY

Four POLICEMEN manhandle a struggling BOB out the door.

BOB
(calling back)
Saskia! No boys, all right?
(MORE)
BOB (cont'd)
No parties!
(to POLICEMEN)
Fucking pigs!

POLICEMAN 1
No need for that, sir.

BOB
Cunts!

POLICEMAN 1
No need for that kind of abuse, sir.

BOB
(calling back)
... And stay away from my fucking shit!

They continue to struggle.

OMITTED

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

MIKE, bruises, stitches, etc., is being interrogated by DC CARSON (male) and DC JENKS (female).

DC CARSON
... and, when's the last time you saw Miss Oswald.

MIKE
Last week.

DC CARSON
Where?

MIKE
Outside the school. She was hurting another child, so I had to ... Hang on, did you say Sunrise?

DC CARSON
Sorry?

MIKE
Sunrise Oswald?

DC CARSON
Susan.
(to DC JENKS)
What did we say?
DC JENKS
Susan.

MIKE
Sorry. Right. No, no, it was Sunrise I reprimanded. Susan, I don’t know.

DC CARSON
You don’t know her.

MIKE
No. Well, I know her, she’s in the school, but I’ve never had any contact with her.

DC CARSON
I see. Well, she claims you’ve been having an affair.

MIKE
She what?!

DC CARSON
That’s right.

MIKE
That’s insane. How old is she?

DC JENKS addresses MIKE for the first time.

DC JENKS
She’s fourteen years old, Mr Kiernan. She’s also pregnant.

LONG PAUSE. MIKE just stares at her; then:

MIKE
I have the right to call a solicitor, don’t I?

DC JENKS
Yes.

MIKE
Well, I’d like to do that now.

The door opens and a POLICEWOMAN pops her head in.

POLICEWOMAN
Sorry, uh ... Mr Kiernan’ solicitor’s here.

DC JENKS and DC CARSON look at each other.
C.U: ARCHIE.

ARCHIE
... And this is alleged only.

DC CARSON (O.S.)
Yes.

ARCHIE
So, you haven’t arrested him yet.

DC CARSON (O.S.)
For the moment, he’s helping us with our inquiries.

ARCHIE
(to MIKE)
Get your jacket on.

GO WIDE to include MIKE, DC JENKS, DC CARSON, as:

DC JENKS
Wait a minute ...

ARCHIE
She’s a liar.

DC JENKS
What?

ARCHIE
She’s done this kind of thing before, Detective. Check it out. Another man, another accusation - essentially of rape - another lie. Now, make a decision; release my client or, better yet, arrest him so we can take this matter further when her story falls apart.

(SILENCE; then, to MIKE)
Get your coat.

DC CARSON
Hang on ...

(BEAT; then, heading for the door)
... I just need a word with my superior.

INT. PUB - DAY

ARCHIE and MIKE at the bar, drinks in front of them.
MIKE
Thank you.

ARCHIE
Thank Kasia, Mike. She’s the one who convinced me to ...

MIKE
Right.

ARCHIE
... to come in for you.

MIKE
How are you two doing?

ARCHIE
I don’t really want to talk about that.

MIKE
Do you not?

ARCHIE
No.

MIKE
Why? Is what you have so special it can’t be articulated?

ARCHIE
(BEAT) No. It’s because it’s none of your business, Mike.

MIKE
Fuck you, you know what? The last thing I need, beyond losing the fucking woman I love, is to be obliged to the man who stole her.

ARCHIE
I didn’t steal her ...

MIKE
Well ...

ARCHIE
... And there’s no obligation.

MIKE
Oh, fuck off, Archie, will you? You couldn’t be more patronising if you tried.

ARCHIE watches MIKE simmer a moment; then:
ARCHIE
Fair enough.
(getting up)
Look after yourself, Mike.

ARCHIE goes. HOLD on MIKE.

122 INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

ARCHIE, KASIA, SKUNK and JED have dinner.

SKUNK
... Then what?

ARCHIE
I dunno. They might do a DNA test ...

SKUNK
Right.

ARCHIE
Do you know what that is?

SKUNK
(BEAT)
Yes.

ARCHIE
... So ...

SKUNK
No.

KASIA
It’s a test that’ll show he isn’t the father.

SKUNK
He isn’t the father ...

ARCHIE
We know.

SKUNK
... She’s a liar. I mean, everyone knows she’s done it with ...
... (unconsciously glancing at JED)
... God, with lots of boys ...

KASIA
It doesn’t matter, Skunk.

SKUNK
Why not?
KASIA
Because they’re boys. Mike is an adult, you understand? A teacher. And in this kind of situation, they have to be absolutely sure of his innocence. And until they are, they just can’t allow him to work with children.

The doorbell rings. JED goes to answer the door.

SKUNK
So, he’s not coming back.

ARCHIE
Not for the moment, no.
(BEAT)
I’m sorry, Darling.

SILENCE. JED returns. As he sits back down:

JED
For you, Skunk.

THE FRONT DOOR is opened by SKUNK to reveal DILLON standing there.

SKUNK
Hi.

DILLON
Hi. Do you wanna go for a walk?

SKUNK and DILLON stand there.

SKUNK
Birmingham?!

DILLON
Yeah.

SKUNK
But I thought ... I thought you and me were gonna go to Florida, and see ...

DILLON
That was ... Yeah, but ...

SKUNK
... you know, see the lizards and all.
DILLON
... That was when we’re older.

SKUNK
Why not now, though?

DILLON
‘Cos my aunt says I have to go to Birmingham, Skunk.

SKUNK
(PAUSE)
But what am I gonna do without you?

DILLON
Here ...

He takes a friendship bracelet out of his pocket.

DILLON (CONT’D)
... Will you take this?

SKUNK
Why?

DILLON
To remember me by.

She takes it. PAUSE.

SKUNK
When do you go?

DILLON
Tomorrow.

SKUNK
Tomorrow?!

DILLON
Early. So I’m not gonna get to see you again.

SKUNK is in shock. PAUSE; then:

SKUNK
And how long did you know this?

DILLON
What?

She starts hitting him.

SKUNK
How long did you know this, you’re only telling me now?!
You’re an arsehole, Dillon ...
DILLON
(fending her off)
Skunk!

SKUNK
... How long did you know you were going?!

DILLON
Skunk! Stop!

She stops hitting him. They just stand there.

DILLON (CONT’D)
I wanted to tell you, but I was afraid to.
(Beat)
Please don’t hate me, Skunk.

SKUNK
You’re leaving me, Dillon.

DILLON
Yeah, but ...

SKUNK
Of course I hate you!

Beat; then, shouting -

SKUNK (CONT’D)
I’ll always hate you!

She runs away. HOLD on DILLON.

CUT TO:

AN ODDLY SHAPED CAKE
upon which is inscribed with icing: “Welcome home, Rick!

MR BUCKLEY (O.S.)
It’s okay.

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S.)
It’s not.

MR BUCKLEY (O.S.)
It’s fine.

MRS BUCKLEY (O.S.)
“Fine”! ...

MR and MRS BUCKLEY stand in their KITCHEN, looking down at the cake.
MRS BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
... I wanted it to be perfect.

MR BUCKLEY
Is it edible?

MRS BUCKLEY
Course it is! How dare you?!

MR BUCKLEY
And the sentiment’s legible. I mean, that’s all you want, really, isn’t it?

MRS BUCKLEY
I suppose.

MR BUCKLEY
I’ve gotta go.
   (kisses her)
He’ll love it, Doris.

He goes. She calls after him:

MRS BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
Oh, get some milk on your way back, Dave, would you?

MR BUCKLEY (O.S.)
Sure.

We hear the front door open and close. HOLD.

INT. OSWALD’S HOUSE - EVENING

SASKIA, SUNRISE, SUSAN and several others, male and female, party. The place is a mess, everyone drinking, smoking BOB’s weed. SASKIA makes out with a BEARDED GUY. SUSAN watches EASTENDERS on the much smaller TV we saw earlier in the kitchen. The doorbell rings. Nobody moves.

SUSAN
Is anyone gonna get that?
   (no answer; another ring)
Saskia ...?
   (no answer; then, getting up)
Fucking hell!

EXT. OSWALD FRONT DOOR

Opened by SUSAN to reveal JED standing there.

SUSAN
Hi Jed.
JED
Can I talk to you about something?

SUSAN
(sways slightly; BEAT; then)
What is it?

JED
I just wanted to say that, if you want me to, then I’ll be the daddy.

SUSAN
The what?!

JED
The dad of the baby. I’ll take, you know, the responsibility for it. You and me can get married and ...

SUSAN
Jesus Christ! Are you serious?

JED
Yeah.

SUSAN
Jed, listen: we’re having a party here, all right?

JED
But ...

SUSAN
Don’t call over again.

She shuts the door in his face. As she heads back down the hall, we can see that the backs of her tracksuit bottoms are dark with blood.

128 INT. LIVING ROOM

Everybody’s mellower now except SASKIA and SUNRISE who are dancing to their dance instruction DVD on the couch. Between them, SUSAN lies asleep. She is right at the sofa’s edge and, inevitably, after a bit more dancing, she topples onto the floor -

SUNRISE
Whoops!

and stays there, unmoving. PAUSE; then:
SUNRISE
Susan?

SASKIA
Oh, God! Sunrise!

SUNRISE
What.

SASKIA
Oh, God! Oh, Jesus ...!

SUNRISE
Shit.

She has just seen what SASKIA is shouting about. The sofa, where SUSAN has just been lying, is covered in blood.

SASKIA
... Oh, God!

BEARDED GUY
What’s going on?

SUNRISE is now in front of SUSAN, shaking her.

SUNRISE
Susan!

(BEAT)
Susan! Call an ambulance, Saskia.

SASKIA
What’s the number?

SUSAN
Nine-nine-nine, you twat!

129 INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION – NIGHT

Quiet. Rick’s DOCTOR signs a couple of forms at the counter. He gives them to the RECEPTIONIST, then, turning to MR BUCKLEY and RICK:

DOCTOR
So, you have my number, so don’t forget: routine, medication ... I gave you the chart ...

MR BUCKLEY
You did.

DOCTOR
... and calm. So, let’s, in as much as we can, confine things to the home for the weekend, okay? Just to be safe this first time out.
A strange looking PATIENT wanders past in the background, staring intensely at them. Then, to DOCTOR:

MR BUCKLEY
Yes. Of course. Thank you, Doctor.

DOCTOR
Not at all. Best of luck, Rick.
(shaking his hand)
Have a great weekend.

INT. MR BUCKLEY'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

MR BUCKLEY drives, RICK beside him. After a moment:

MR BUCKLEY
I wonder does he mean we can’t have a kickabout. I wouldn’t mind a bit of a kickabout. Rick?

RICK
Hm?

MR BUCKLEY
Would you?

RICK
I think I’d rather stay inside, dad.

MR BUCKLEY
Fair enough. No, you’re probably right. Best to go by the book.
(PAUSE)
Mum made a cake.

RICK
Mm-hm.

MR BUCKLEY
It’s lopsided.
(BEAT)
Just thought I should warn you.

RICK smiles a little. They turn into DRUMMOND CLOSE and are lit through the windscreen by flashing blue lights -

MR BUCKLEY
Something going on there, eh, Rick?

which belong to an ambulance parked outside the Oswalds. SUSAN is being taken out on a stretcher. Her sisters stand about, upset.
MR BUCKLEY
Nothing changes, right?

MR BUCKLEY pulls the car up outside his own house.

MR BUCKLEY (CONT’D; O.S)
... Well, we won’t let it bother us will we?

As they get out of the car, MRS BUCKLEY comes running out of the house and throws her arms around RICK (Over the following, RICK never takes his eyes off what’s happening outside the Oswalds’).

MRS BUCKLEY
Oh, my darling! My darling, welcome home!

MR BUCKLEY
Guess what? I forgot to get the milk.

MRS BUCKLEY
Oh, Dave!

MR BUCKLEY
I’ll just nip down to the garage, shall I?

MRS BUCKLEY
(of the Oswalds)
What’s going on up there?

MR BUCKLEY
(getting back into the car)
Pay no attention. I’ll be back in five minutes.

He drives away. MRS BUCKLEY turns back to RICK, who is still staring; taking his arm:

MRS BUCKLEY
Come on, Rick. You heard your father. Pay no attention.

SASKIA spots him.

SASKIA
Jesus Christ! Here’s the other pervert, look?

SUNRISE looks. SASKIA shouts at RICK:

SASKIA
It’s because of fucking scum like you that this is happening!
SUNRISE
Fucking rapist!

SASKIA
Fucking sicko!

MRS BUCKLEY gently urges:

MRS BUCKLEY
Come on, darling. Let's go inside.

As she guides him toward the door:

SUNRISE (O.S.)
Fucking evil bastard!!!

SUNRISE
Fucking rapist!

SASKIA
Fucking sicko!

MRS BUCKLEY gently urges:

MRS BUCKLEY
Come on, darling. Let's go inside.

As she guides him toward the door:

SUNRISE (O.S.)
Fucking evil bastard!!!

INT. HALLWAY

MRS BUCKLEY shuts the door, then turns to see RICK heading up the stairs. She frowns.

MRS BUCKLEY
Rick? Where are you going?

He stops. Then, without turning:

RICK
To my room.

MRS BUCKLEY
But ...

RICK
Just for a little while.

MRS BUCKLEY
But, I made you cake, love.

RICK
(Beat; then ascending again)
I'll have some later, mum.

MRS BUCKLEY
(hurrying after him)
But, you only just got here, Rick. Please! Don't go to your room ...!

SOUND of the AMBULANCE SIREN passing outside, takes us to -
where MRS BUCKLEY catches up and grabs RICK’s arm. Becoming hysterical now:

MRS BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
... Please, love! Don’t mind what they said.

RICK
But, they’re right, mum!

MRS BUCKLEY
No ...

RICK
They’re right!

MRS BUCKLEY
... they’re not! They couldn’t be more wrong! You’re gentle, and good and ... Please come down, Rick ... Please ...

He moves away. She grabs him again, panicking:

MRS BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
... Please, love. Don’t go to your room ...
   (they struggle)
... Please, love ... Please, love ...
... Please, love ...

133 EXT. STREET
The ambulance speeds past camera, its SIREN blasting loud.

134 INT. CONVENIENCE STORE.
Quiet. MR BUCKLEY buys milk and toilet roll.

135 OMITTED

136 INT. CAR - MOVING
MR BUCKLEY drives.

137 INT. BUCKLEY’S HOUSE - HALLWAY
MRS BUCKLEY lies at the bottom of the stairs, eyes staring, body contorted into an impossible position.
We hear Mr Buckley’s CAR pulling in, the ENGINE turning off, the DOOR opening and closing.

SILENCE.

THE FRONT DOOR opens and MR BUCKLEY enters -

MR BUCKLEY
Guys ...?

closing it behind him. He turns, sees MRS BUCKLEY. SILENCE; then:

MR BUCKLEY
Doris ...?
( getting down on one knee)
Doris! Jesus Christ!
( trying to hold her)
Jesus Christ!
( calling)
RICK!
( BEAT)
RICK!

RICK (O.S.)
I’m sorry, dad.

RICK is standing in the hallway. He is crying.

MR BUCKLEY
What did you do?! (to MRS BUCKLEY)
Doris!

He gets to his feet, takes out his mobile.

MR BUCKLEY (CONT’D)
I’ve gotta call somebody.

RICK
No!

MR BUCKLEY
What?

RICK
Please!

MR BUCKLEY
(dialling)
I’ve gotta call somebody, Rick!

RICK
They’ll say I’m bad.
MR BUCKLEY
(putting his phone to
his ear)
What?!

RICK
They’ll say I’m bad like before,
but it wasn’t me...

MR BUCKLEY
Rick...

RICK
... It wasn’t my fault!

MR BUCKLEY, waiting for his call to be answered, ignores him.

RICK (CONT’D)
Please, dad...

MR BUCKLEY
Rick...

RICK (CONT’D)
... You don’t have to tell them!

MR BUCKLEY
Rick...
(onto phone)
Hello?

RICK rushes forward –

RICK
YOU DON’T HAVE TO TELL THEM, DAD!

then, stabbing him repeatedly with the kitchen knife:

RICK (CONT’D)
YOU DON’T HAVE TO TELL THEM, DAD!
YOU DON’T HAVE TO TELL THEM ...!

138 INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

ARCHIE knocks on the open door –

ARCHIE
Skunk...?

and enters.

SKUNK sits, as before, on the floor, back against the wall, duvet pulled up to her chin.

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
... You okay?
SKUNK
Why didn’t you tell me and Jed about you and Kasia?

ARCHIE
(PAUSE)
I’m sorry.
(BEAT)
I was trying to find the, um ...
I suppose, the right moment ...

SKUNK
Are you gonna marry her?

ARCHIE
I ...

SKUNK
(calling)
I know you’re out there!

KASIA appears in the doorway. SKUNK continues to ARCHIE:

SKUNK (CONT’D)
Are you?
(BEAT)
Because she’ll leave us, dad, the way she left Mike, like mum left us, like everyone does.

KASIA
I won’t.

SKUNK
You will. Don’t lie. It’ll all go wrong as usual, dad. Everything always goes wrong. Why do only bad things ever happen?!

ARCHIE
Good things happen too.

SKUNK
Like what, your love affair? What about me? Or Jed? Or Rick? Or Mike? What about Mike, Kasia?!!

KASIA
Skunk. I ...

SKUNK
Get out! I don’t wanna talk to either of you.
(PAUSE; a shout)
GET OUT!!

CUT TO:
A CELL DOOR being opened by an OFFICER. With him is POLICEMAN 1.

POLICEMAN 1
Mr Oswald ...?

BOB (O.S.)
What?

POLICEMAN 1
... I’m afraid I have some unfortunate news.

OMITTED

OMITTED

OMITTED

INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM - NIGHT
SKUNK walks to her window, reaches to close her curtains, when she sees -

RICK
standing at his own window.

SKUNK
is astonished. After a moment, she raises her hand, waves tentatively.

RICK
raises his own hand. But, instead of waving, he beckons.

EXT. DRUMMOND CLOSE
Following SKUNK in a SINGLE SHOT as she makes her way across the green, all the way to the BUCKLEY’s house.

She arrives at the door, knocks, waits.

The door opens. She smiles.

SKUNK
Hi Rick.
INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

BOB is screaming, out of control with grief. Doctors and security restrain him.

INT. CUNNINGHAM KITCHEN - NIGHT

ARCHIE, KASIA and JED. ARCHIE paces, phone in hand.

ARCHIE
I’ll kill her.

JED
Maybe ...

ARCHIE
Maybe what?! She knows she has to call if she’s gonna be late ...

KASIA
Call her again.

ARCHIE
(dialling again)
... She knows from last time.

He puts the phone to his ear and waits; then:

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
Skunk? I’m really worried. Please call me, will you, darling? It’s dad.

(clicking off)
Oh, fuck this.

He grabs his coat from the back of a chair.

KASIA
Where are you going?

ARCHIE
To look for her.

As he puts it on:

JED
I know where she might be, dad.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

ARCHIE enters, JED behind him. ARCHIE shines a torch around.

ARCHIE
... And, what? You come here to ...
JED
Just to hang out.

ARCHIE
Uh-huh.
(shines the torch around some more; then)
Whose are the cigarettes?
The beam is on the ashtray, full of butts.

ARCHIE shines the torch in JED’s guilty face.

ARCHIE
Not mine.

ARCHIE shines the torch in JED’s guilty face.

EXT. CARAVAN

They step out. ARCHIE looks around, takes out his phone, checks it, puts it back in his pocket. PAUSE.

ARCHIE
Come on, Skunk. Where are you?

DISSOLVE TO:

SKUNK
in profile. She is lying on her back on the floor of RICK’S BEDROOM. She is terrified. RICK’s face enters frame, his mouth moving to SKUNK’s. Then, their lips not quite touching, he inhales as if taking her breath from her body.

SILENCE.

He does it again.

SILENCE.
And again.

SILENCE.

And again.

FADE TO BLACK:

154  INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

ARCHIE argues with a POLICEMAN.

POLICEMAN
... I’m just saying, kids, they wander in; they’ve been to a party ...

ARCHIE
Christ ...!

POLICEMAN
... a friend’s ...

ARCHIE
... We’ve spoken to all her friends, okay? We’ve exhausted that possibility along with every other! Now my daughter has type 1 diabetes, and if she doesn’t stay monitored, she ...

POLICEMAN
Calm down ... All right ...

ARCHIE
... she could die, do you understand me?! She could die!

JED starts crying. As ARCHIE sees this:

ARCHIE
Shit. C’mere, son.

JED goes to ARCHIE. ARCHIE embraces him. HOLD.

154B  INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE

KASIA stands at the back door, smoking, fretting. Her phone rings from the LIVING ROOM. She rushes in, picks it up, answers.

KASIA
Archie?

MIKE (V.O.)
Kasia?
KASIA

Mike?

MIKE (V.O.)
Sorry to ring so late ...

154C INT. MIKE’S FLAT

MIKE, very drunk, sits on his couch.

MIKE (CONT’D)
... Can I talk to you?

We CUT BACK AND FORTH between them until stated.

KASIA
Mike. This isn’t really ...

MIKE
I’m not gonna keep you long, all right? I just wanted to ring this once to say, I dunno, sorry ...?

KASIA
Okay.

MIKE
... to say thank you?

KASIA
For what?

MIKE
I dunno. For helping me out today, I suppose? Archie as well, of course, I was fairly rude to him earlier on and I didn’t mean to be, he’s a decent guy, and I just wanna say you’re a very good match and I wish you the best ...

(beat)
... I wish you the very best.

KASIA
All right.

MIKE
Will you do me a favour, Kasia? Will you apologise to Skunk for me ...?

KASIA
For what?
MIKE
Just for all the stupid embarrassing shit she’s had to be witness to. She’s a terrific kid, you know? Jed as well, of course, but Skunk, I dunno, some day she’s gonna blow us all away, d’you reckon, Kasia?

KASIA puts her hand over her mouth to prevent herself from crying.

MIKE (CONT’D)
D’you reckon she’s gonna blow us all away?

KASIA
Mm-hm.

INT. RICK’S BEDROOM
RICK sits against the wall, staring in horror at SKUNK, who lies on the floor, her breaths coming in shallow gasps, her body spasming violently, foam spilling from her mouth, her eyes rolling back in her head.

INT. CUNNINGHAM SITTING ROOM
KASIA is barely holding herself together.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Anyway. That’s all I wanted to say. Thank you, Kasia.

INT. MIKE’S FLAT
MIKE continues:

MIKE (CONT’D)
Have a good life, yeah?

INT. CUNNINGHAM SITTING ROOM
KASIA nods.

KASIA
You too, Mike.
Click. He’s gone. HOLD on KASIA. After a moment, the sound of a car turning into the close makes her look up.

EXT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE

ARCHIE’S CAR comes to a stop outside. He and JED get out. ARCHIE looks up, his eye caught by the light in RICK’S WINDOW. He stares at it a second before:

VOICE
Well?

He turns. KASIA is standing at their door. JED is already walking toward her. He passes inside without saying anything. ARCHIE and KASIA just stare at each other.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. DRUMMOND CLOSE – DAWN

The sun is coming up.

OMITTED

INT. OSWALD’S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAWN

SASKIA and SUNRISE lie together in the same bed. After a moment:

SUNRISE
Did dad come home?

SASKIA
(PAUSE)
No.

SUNRISE
Where is he?

SASKIA
I don’t know.

INT. TAXI – MOVING

BOB, devastated, sits in the back.

OMITTED
The taxi pulls up outside the OSWALDS’ HOUSE. BOB gets out. The taxi drives away. BOB stands there, looking at his front door, trying to find the courage to enter.

OVER HIS SHOULDER

and just out of focus, a FIGURE staggers out of the BUCKLEY HOUSE.

BOB turns, sees -

MR BUCKLEY

covered in blood. He sways a little, then collapses.

MRS BUCKLEY’S dead body lies at the bottom of the stairs. BOB is standing over it.

BOB

Jesus ... Christ ...!

He looks up. A fast, continuous thumping noise is coming from upstairs.

BOB

Rick?

Pulling BOB up the last couple of stairs, across the landing, the thumping sound increasing in volume, and into -

where the first thing he sees is RICK sitting against the wall, head slumped forward, dead, blood from his slit throat everywhere. BOB reacts, then looks around to see -

SKUNK

lying on the floor, vomit on her front, her body contorting in a diabetic fit. As he moves to her:

BOB

Oh, no ... no ... no ... no ... Darling, no ...

He gets down, cradles her in his arms, looks wildly around, sees her PHONE on the bed, grabs it, dials, waits; then:
BOB
Hello? Can I get an ambulance, please?
(BEAT)
It’s fif ... It’s fourteen
Drummond Close. That’s in ...
Yes.
(BEAT)
A fit.
(BEAT)
I don’t know. There’s someone’s
been stabbed as well. And ...
(BEAT)
I don’t fucking know, could you
just fucking come, please?
(BEAT)
Thank you.

He looks at SKUNK. Her fit has subsided a little. He looks
at the phone in his hand.

166 INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM
ARCHIE lies curled up and asleep on SKUNK’s bed.

167 INT. RICK’S BEDROOM
BOB scrolls through SKUNK’s address book.
CLOSE ON SCREEN: as it stops on -
DAD.

168 INT. SKUNK’S BEDROOM
ARCHIE’s phone rings. He wakes, reaches into his pocket,
fumbles it out.
CLOSE ON SCREEN: It reads -
SKUNK.
ARCHIE stares. HOLD.

169 INT. RICK’S BEDROOM
SKUNK is unconscious now, completely unmoving. BOB holds
her tightly, his face against hers, continues to rock her.

BOB
... There we are now ... There we
are ... Daddy’s coming, Darling
Pulling ARCHIE as he hurries toward the Buckleys.

BOB (V.O; CONT’D)
... Daddy’s on his way ...
Daddy’s on his way ...
(PAUSE)
... Daddy’s on his way ...

FADE TO BLACK:

ARCHIE sits in a chair beside a hospital bed, holding SKUNK’s hand in both of his. After a moment:

ARCHIE
I won’t deny it’s getting tough to think of things to talk about, Skunk. I mean, not enough happens in a day to fill, you know, ten minutes lately. Although the scan is pretty impressive, isn’t it?

INSERT:
A BABY SCAN photo lying on SKUNK’s bed.

ARCHIE (O.S; CONT’D)
That’s pretty exciting.

BACK TO ARCHIE.

ARCHIE (CONT’D)
And you know, Kasia... Not that boys are better than girls, but Kasia kept saying, “No, let it be a suprise,” – the gender, like – but then, when the woman asked, she’s ... you know, if we wanted to know what it was, she’s like, “Oh, we’d absolutely love to, yes!”

(shakes his head)
I dunno. Couldn’t help herself, I suppose.

(BEAT)
How the hell am I going to cope, love? Christ! ‘Nother boy in the house ...

(BEAT)
... Another Jed!

(PAUSE)

(MORE)
The thing that annoys me, though, is she gets pissed off all the time - Kasia- tells me I need to spend more time at home. Bit naggy, actually.

(BEAT)

Though I won’t deny that, what, with work and with coming here to see you, I suppose my attention has been lacking a little bit lately ...

(BEAT)

... But ...

(breaking down a little)

... you’re my girl, Skunk ...

(PAUSE)

... You’re my girl, so, how can I do anything else, you know ...?

CLOSE ON SKUNK

her eyes closed. Unmoving.

ARCHIE (O.S; CONT’D)

... How can I ever do anything else?

HOLD for several moments; then –

DISSOLVE TO:

WIDE SHOT

Of THE ROOM, ARCHIE, SKUNK. HOLD for several moments; then –

DISSOLVE TO:

ARCHIE

his head bowed, SKUNK’s hand still held in his. Oddly, the background is now different, suggestive more of a church than a hospital room. HOLD again; then –

DISSOLVE TO:

SKUNK

again. Her background has also changed. An entire church is spread out behind her. HOLD; then –

DISSOLVE TO:

A WIDE SHOT
of the back of the church. SKUNK, alone now, is standing, facing us. HOLD; then -

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSER ON SKUNK

just staring straight ahead. SILENCE; then -

VOICE

Skunk!

She turns to see:

SKUNK

Jed!

JED

Hey, sis. Looking good.

SKUNK

Yeah, right.

JED

No, I mean it.

SKUNK

Kasia!

KASIA

(apparing; hugging her)

Oh, I’m so proud of you, darling.

SKUNK steps back, looking down at KASIA’s swollen stomach.

KASIA(CONT’D)

Your new brother.

SKUNK

Wow!

(then, seeing MIKE)

Oh, my God!

He also hugs her.

MIKE

You okay?

SKUNK

Yeah, I’m good.

SKUNK looks around the church. Gathered are all the people she’s known in her life. Among them she spots -

THE BARLOW BROTHERS

who glide past on their scooters. Her gaze follows them to -
DILLON

standing with several other YOUNG MEN. He raises his wrist, points at it.

She looks at her own, seeing the friendship bracelet he gave to her.

Next up is -

SKUNK

Fiona!

They hug.

FIONA

I’m so happy for you, Skunk.

They come apart as -

THE OSWALDS

burst loudly through the front doors. As they walk along the back wall, a MAN accidentally collides with BOB.

BOB

You got a problem?

SASKIA grabs his arm, hisses -

SASKIA

Dad! For fuck’s sake!

and pulls him into the back row where SUSAN and SUNRISE are already seated. He looks up, then smiles sheepishly at -

SKUNK

who smiles sheepishly back. Then:

VOICE

Skunk?

She turns.

SKUNK

Rick!

They hug. Hard.

SKUNK

I’m sorry.

(BEAT)

I’m so sorry.

RICK

For what?
SKUNK
For all the pain you had in your life.

RICK
Don’t be.

They come apart; BEAT; then:

RICK (CONT’D)
You ready?

SKUNK
(PAUSE; then)
Why isn’t my dad here?

RICK
He doesn’t want to say goodbye.

SKUNK
That’s silly.
(SILENCE; then)
What’s it like there?

RICK
Awesome.

SKUNK
Really? Will I be happy?

RICK
Very.

SKUNK
Will I be able to eat what I like?
(off his smile)
What?

RICK
Nothing. Yes. You’ll be able to eat what you like.

SKUNK
Even M&Ms?

RICK
Uh-huh.

SKUNK
(after a LONG PAUSE)
I can’t go without saying goodbye to my dad.

RICK
All right.
SKUNK
Can I do that?

RICK
Of course you can. He’s outside.

SKUNK turns and looks at the church’s INNER DOORS. Then, to RICK:

SKUNK
All right. Be back in a minute.

She walks down the aisle toward the doors, pulls one open and steps into -

THE FOYER

on the far side of which ARCHIE stands beside the half-open OUTSIDE DOOR. Through it, we can see a beautiful GARDEN filled with sunlight. After a SILENCE:

SKUNK
Why won’t you say goodbye?

ARCHIE
Why won’t you come back?

SKUNK
It’s just too hard, Dad.
(PAUSE)
Do you hate me?

ARCHIE
Why would I hate you?

SKUNK
For going.

ARCHIE
I love you, Skunk. I’ll always love you.

SKUNK
Then I need you to say it.

ARCHIE
I can’t.

SKUNK
You can. Of course you can.
(LONG PAUSE; then, crying)
Just say Goodbye.

ARCHIE
Why should I?
SKUNK
Because I’m your girl.

ARCHIE also starts crying. PAUSE.

SKUNK (CONT’D)
Please.
(PAUSE)
Say Goodbye, dad.

LONG PAUSE; finally, through his tears:

ARCHIE
Goodbye, love.

She is already running toward him. He moves forward too and she leaps into his arms in the middle of the FOYER and he spins her around, holding her as tightly as he can.

CLOSE ON SKUNK
her eyes shut tight, as we -
FLASH ON
a series of vaguely formed images.

A WOMAN
throws her arms around a smiling man.
Cuts her finger while chopping carrots.
Stands at the top of a mountain, looking down at the landscape below.
Holds the hand of another woman who is crying.
PUSHES a child on a bicycle.

172 OMITTED

173 CLOSE ON ARCHIE
holding SKUNK to him.

174 THE WOMAN
runs full out on an athletics track.
Is examined by a doctor.
Holds her hands out as a smiling toddler toddles into them.
Prunes roses.
Wades in the ocean.

CLOSE ON SKUNK
eyes closed, still in her father’s embrace.

175 OMITTED

176 THE WOMAN
sets candles into a child’s birthday cake.
Sinks under the water of a bath.
Looks through a telescope.
Puts on eyeshadow.
Stands in a forest.
Cries in an empty hallway.
Poses in a sexy dress.
Sucks a long string of spaghetti into her mouth. Laughs.
Guides two children as they throw bread to ducks in a park.
Points out cloud formations to the same two children.
Lies in a hospital bed, holding a newborn baby. The children touch its head.
Holds an old man’s hand across a table. Smiles at him.
Comes up behind him somewhere else. He’s sitting. Leans over and kisses the top of his head.

177 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM
ARCHIE sits, head bowed, still holding SKUNK’s hand.

178 INT. CHURCH FOYER
SKUNK is alone.
She looks back into the CHURCH where everybody waits.
She turns back to look across the FOYER at the churches open FRONT DOOR, the garden beyond filled with sunlight.
SILENCE.

She runs across the FOYER and out the FRONT DOOR, disappearing down the steps.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Her eyes open. They blink several times, eventually focusing on -

ARCHIE

his head bowed.

CLOSE ON SKUNK’S HAND

held in her father’s. After a moment, her fingers slowly curl around his and squeeze.

ARCHIE

raises his head.

FADE OUT.