

SECOND COMING

(working title)

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THE AGENCY

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SECOND COMING by DEBBIE TUCKER GREEN

Subtitles to be shown on screen. A / is an overlapping point in dialogue. (First trimester is set approximately in February, it is cold.)

BLACK SCREEN: TITLE: 'FEBRUARY'

ECU: Very soft focus, blurred red LED lights of a dot matrix slowly track across and fill the black screen. The soft lights move in an unnatural silence slowly gaining focus they form individual large moving dots, but not yet words.

SFX: EXT morning. The sound of a busy high street snaps in.

SNAP TO:

EXT. HIGH STREET - TUESDAY EARLY MORNING

Amongst the hustle of the cold rush hour a MAN stands with a large sign of an arrow advertising 'Cash-4-Gold' pointing to an unseen shop. People relentlessly pass him ignoring him, he is bored reading a book on Advanced Maths as he mindlessly stands there.

JIM (white 50's) passes him.

Pull focus: behind them are shops with noisy 'Sale' signs in.

SNAP TO:

INT. GP WAITING ROOM - MONDAY AFTERNOON

EXT SFX snap out, INT GP waiting room SFX snap in.

The shot pulls out further to reveal the strip dot matrix only. The dots pull sharply into focus crossing the screen read: Jacqueline Trent.

JAX (Black, 36) seated in the waiting area eyes the dot matrix. A few other patients waiting snatch glances at it knowing it's not them. Some toddlers play in the kids corner under the watchful eye of a mum on her mobile.

A couple of people cough, look unwell. Subtly, waiting people near them flinch and turn away a little.

JAX watches the dot matrix as her name repeatedly makes its way across again. It starts to blink to try and gain anyone's attention.

SNAP TO:

EXT. NEWSAGENTS - TUESDAY EARLY MORNING

The news-agent finishing noisily pushing the grille up, one of the people scanning the ads tries to help.

NEWSAGENT

It's okay.

YOUNG MAN

You got anything?

The window is covered in several small ads some for accommodation with hand written amendments 'No Benefits', and a few for work. A 'Work wanted. Do anything' sign is up visible beyond the grille.

NEWSAGENT (O.C.)

There isn't / anything.

YOUNG MAN (O.C.)

Not nuthin?

NEWSAGENT

There isn't anything.

A couple of cold people keenly scan the ads.

NEWSAGENT (Asian, 40's), unlocks the shop and goes in, the YOUNG MAN (Black, 20's) hovers at the doorway.

The lights of the shop are flicked on.

SNAP TO:

INT. GP WAITING ROOM - MONDAY AFTERNOON

The RECEPTIONIST leans over her desk, irritated and calls:

RECEPTIONIST

Jacqueline Trent?

JAX sat as she was, blinks slowly, gets up and crosses to the GP's room.

SNAP TO:

EXT. STREET CORNER - TUESDAY EARLY MORNING

A group of EASTERN EUROPEAN men wait, chat, keep warm watching the traffic. Their feet shift, hands grip, MAN 3 particularly cold with not enough warm clothes on.

JIM (White, 50s), smartly dressed with a formal bag passes them amongst the general public deep in his own thoughts.

MAN 1 (IN POLISH)
He should carry more clothes -

MAN 2 (IN POLISH)
You should wear more / clothes.

MAN 3 (IN POLISH)
I will buy more clothes.

MAN 1 (IN POLISH)
If you last that long.

A couple of the guys laugh watching their colleague's misfortune, all the while keeping an eye on the passing traffic. MAN 3 is freezing.

MAN 3 (IN ENGLISH)
Fuck.

An unmarked van pulls up. Tinny Polish music playing from its radio.

MAN 1 (IN POLISH)
Here.

The men pile in quickly driven off to cash-in-hand work.

EXT. JOB CENTRE - TUESDAY MORNING

People of all ages queue some perch on railings, some wait alone, others in company, all waiting for it to open. JIM, uncomfortable tries the doors which are locked. He is watched by the people he has queue jumped. At the front of the line is the YOUNG MAN.

YOUNG MAN
Where you goin?

JIM looks at him, looks at the queue, is a bit bewildered.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)
Yeah. This is that.

INT. JOB CENTRE - TUESDAY MORNING

It is still closed but the office is buzzy with staff getting ready for the large queue outside.

JAX is on her mobile as she taps away at her computer. BERNIE is across the office at the photo copier.

BERNIE (ON PHONE)
I got leftovers -

JUSTIN (CALLS)
One minute people!

JAX (ON PHONE)
- leftovers ent gonna do y'nu'un.
You got money?

BERNIE (ON PHONE)
I aint got no money!

BERNIE crosses the office to her desk and logs on at her computer which is next to JAX'S, they continue on their mobiles.

JAX (ON PHONE)
I ent got money but... Y'know...? I
juss feel like... y'know?... Hot
food is callin me.

BERNIE ends the call, eyeballs her mate smiling. BERNIE points at her, shakes her head can't help enjoying the joke.

JUSTIN (O.C.)(CALLING)
I'm doin the doors people!

The doors are opened as the public file in.

SNAP TO:

INT. JOB CENTRE - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

The office is noisy, buzzy. Several workers at their desks with clients including JAX and BERNIE. At one end members of the public wait to be called forward including JIM feeling self-conscious. The office is busy with the chatter of people being processed, snatches of people waiting, explanations, conversations etc.

INT. BERNIE'S DESK (JOB CENTRE) - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

JIM sits in front of BERNIE handing over his piece of paper, she eyes him briefly, scans the paper, smiles.

BERNIE
Did they give you anything else to
bring?

He delves into his formal bag and starts to sift thru' papers. BERNIE patiently waits.

JAX (O.C.)
Do you have any other proof of
identification?

INT. JAX'S DESK (JOB CENTRE) - TUESDAY MORNING

JAX has a client, LEVI (Black, 28) sitting in front of her, she eyes her computer intently as he watches her accusingly.

LEVI
Don't need no other proof of ID cos
my details including my proof of
who I (am) was all put / in.

JAX taps away at her computer. BERNIE looks across.

JAX
We're not talkin about /
'before' -

LEVI
I know you lost the shit -

JAX eyes him sharply.

LEVI (CONT'D)
I know you lost my - to fill in the
same thing again from what's been
filled in before from time? It was
in the computer -

JAX eyes him sharply, BERNIE tries to hide a small smile.

INT. BERNIE'S DESK (JOB CENTRE) - TUESDAY MORNING

BERNIE studies a wedge of papers JIM has given her slowly shaking her head.

BERNIE
It doesn't look like -

JIM
That's all they gave me.

BERNIE
It looks like what you want isn't
here - what we / need -

JIM
That's all I've got.

BERNIE look at him, is sympathetic.

JIM (CONT'D)
...That is all I've got with me.

He gestures, is a bit confused.

BERNIE (QUIETLY)
...I know.

JAX (O.C.)
It's not me who lost your /
details.

JIM stuffs his papers back in his bag getting ready to leave.

INT. JAX DESK (JOB CENTRE) - TUESDAY MORNING

LEVI
Any a us could do your job tap in
some shit *wrong* -

JAX
Who processed / you?

LEVI
Easy. Nuff of us could do that - I
could do that - can do 'wrong'
/ easy.

JAX holds down her temper as she taps away.

JAX
Who processed you?

LEVI
What?

JAX stops on the keyboard and watches him.

JAX
Who (processed you) - when you last
come / in?

LEVI
I dunno - some white dude with bad
hair.

BERNIE tries hide a smile, JAX knows exactly who he means.

Pull focus to ALEX at his station with a client and training new recruit MADDY. ALEX has bad hair.

INT. WINDOW PANE CLASSROOM - TUESDAY MORNING

CLOSE: A breath is breathed onto a cold window pane forcing condensation. A finger draws a simple bird in flight in it exposing the cold sky beyond the glass.

A TEACHER is heard in the full flow of a German language lesson.

TEACHER (O.C.)

Jerome.

The condensation starts to drip thru' the image on the window.

TEACHER (O.C.) (CONT'D)

JEROME!

INT. CLASSROOM - TUESDAY MORNING

JEROME (Black, 12) stops gazing out at the world beyond, sharply snapped back into the reality of the room. The class is full of uniformed pupils including Lauryn.

TEACHER

Welche Farbe hat der Bus?

TEACHER watches JEROME who watches her blankly back.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Jerome?

INT. BERNIE'S CAR. MOVING - TUESDAY LUNCHTIME

BERNIE smokes as she drives, her window open a crack to air out the smoke. Music quietly plays from the radio 'You and Your Smiling Face' (by Brown Sugar). JAX drops her own window lower for air.

BERNIE

The worst kinda bitch to av in the car.

JAX

19 months and 3 weeks and -

BERNIE

And still countin. God.

JAX (DRY)
You should follow me.

BERNIE
Me an the nicotine is good frien'
still -

JAX (DRY)
Addict.

BERNIE
No need for me an' it to fall out.

BERNIE finishes her smoke, flicks her cigarette butt out the window, glances at her friend.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
You wanna come, now you don't wanna
come. Mek mi spend money.

JAX
I wanna come -

BERNIE
Tell your face that then.

INT. NANDO'S - TUESDAY LUNCHTIME

The place is lively, noisy. Music plays in the background.

A white family are at a table noisily celebrating a 12 year old's birthday with several adults. Helium balloons hang above their table which is full of the debris of the meal in progress. A candle sticks out of a piece of chicken the child's MUM trying to light it in vain with a lighter that's not working.

AUNT
You out (of gas)?

KID'S MUM
I'm alright - it should be /
alright.

AUNT
You out - is it / out?

UNCLE
Is that out - wanna borrow my /
one?

KID'S MUM
Yours got some?

AUNT
Buy cheap buy twice - here - hers
is shit - I tell her 'buy cheap buy
twice' - it's outta gas give us /
yours.

UNCLE
Have mine -

INT. NANDO'S JAX AND BERNIE'S TABLE - TUESDAY LUNCHTIME

Beyond the hustle of the birthday table JAX and BERNIE sit at a table for two. JAX doesn't bother with a menu. BERNIE'S eyes are just visible scanning hers.

BERNIE
(You) gettin your usual?

JAX
...Yep.

BERNIE'S eyes briefly glance at her friend, feeling a vibe.

AUNT (O.C.)(LOUDLY)
There you go! There you go!

UNCLE (O.C.)
There you go - Uncle to the rescue.

The family get progressively louder, laughing and enjoying the moment as the candle is lit.

PULL FOCUS TO JAX and BERNIE'S table.

JAX asks something quietly, awkward and unheard to BERNIE.

BERNIE (QUIETLY)
...What?

INT. NANDO'S. FAMILY TABLE - TUESDAY LUNCHTIME

UNCLE
Make a wish boy -

AUNT
Close your eyes an' make a / wish.

KID
Aint I got no cake?

KID'S MUM
Cake's at home / boy.

UNCLE

Cake's in the shop more like.

They laugh loudly and chatter as they eat.

INT. NANDO'S. JAX AND BERNIE'S TABLE - TUESDAY LUNCHTIME

JAX (QUIETLY)

...I don't wanna like... and bring
up all your...

BERNIE

But you're gonna anyway.

BERNIE watches her friend.

JAX

...What was it like?

A waitress places down their order:

WAITRESS

1/4 leg chips perri perri hot and
'slaw -

JAX indicates it's for BERNIE, waitress places the food.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

And this must be for you... with
the wings -

SHE places JAX'S food down. BERNIE watches JAX.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

And you ladies are okay for
(drinks) -

BERNIE

Yes.

WAITRESS

You know you just go up and re-fill
/ your -

BERNIE

Yes.

BERNIE watches the WAITRESS leave.

Beat

BERNIE (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)

Thought you couldn't have no more?

JAX takes a sip of her drink choosing to say nothing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...So what they sayin? How do this
work?

JAX says nothing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...How far gone?

JAX (QUIETLY)
Early.

BERNIE watches her friend.

BERNIE
How early?

JAX
Early early.

Beat

BERNIE
Whass Mark / sayin?

JAX
How long was you thinkin about it?

Beat

BERNIE
What's -

JAX
Didju know from straight?

BERNIE watches her carefully.

The noise from the birthday table intrudes.

WHITE FAMILY (O.C.)
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Distracted BERNIE glances at the other table.

WHITE FAMILY (CONT'D)
HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR TERRY!

INT. NANDO'S. WHITE FAMILY'S TABLE - TUESDAY LUNCHTIME

WHITE FAMILY
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOOOOUUU!

The laughing 12 year old is clapped as he blows out his candle on the chicken.

AUNT (LOUDLY)
Close them eyes! Close them eyes
Tel, else it won't come true!

INT. NANDO'S. JAX AND BERNIE'S TABLE - TUESDAY LUNCHTIME

JAX
...Like... iss juss meant to...
ennit. Like it aint no big
(thing)...

BERNIE watches her friend.

JAX (CONT'D)
...Iss quick now ennit - you're in
then out - does it hurt-?
You was / alright.

BERNIE
It weren't no, little thing. Jax.

BERNIE watches her friend.

BERNIE (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
Whass goin on?

JAX only manages a small, dismissive shake of her head.

BERNIE QUIETLY)
...Iss Mark's / right?

JAX (QUIETLY)
Fuck of B, you know / me.

BERNIE
I know I know - I was juss...

Beat

BERNIE (CONT'D)
It aint comin out wrong or /
nuthin?

JAX
S'alright.
(As) far as they know.

BERNIE
You can carry it?

JAX
(As) far as they know.

BERNIE watches her friend questioningly.

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
I know I know - I don't fuckin...
(know).

BERNIE sighs.

BERNIE
...(If) you wanna do it. (At) least
be sure. At least be that.

JAX
Like you was.

BERNIE clocks JAX sharply. Both know she wasn't.

EXT. POUND SHOP - DAY

Large branch with stock piled high in windows, it is busy.

EXT. 99P SHOP - DAY

It is busier than the pound shop.

EXT. CITIZENS ADVICE BEUREAU - DAY

A queue of people trying to keep warm patiently wait to go
into the small building.

EXT. SKY - DAY

A flock of birds swoop, swirl, fly freely.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD. HOME TIME - TUES. AFTERNOON 3.30PM

Kids noisily stream out thru' the schoolyard to the gates and beyond. JJ swings his bag on his shoulder throwing byes to a few mates as LAURYN (Black, 12) runs up to him breathless.

LAURYN
Whatchu doin?

JJ shrugs.

LAURYN (CONT'D)
Wanna do somethin?

JJ
Gotta go home.

LAURYN
Straight home?

JJ
...Straight home.

EXT. FIELD / REC / WOODED AREA - TUES. AFTERNOON 4.00PM

JEROME (JJ) and LAURYN'S trainers tread thru' the high grass, their bags dragging thru' the grasses tips.

LAURYN (O.C.)
I aint even goin - so why they
learnin me that -

JEROME chooses a familiar spot they sling their bags down, sit chilling amongst the greenery traffic always heard not far away.

JJ scanning the area for wildlife.

LAURYN (CONT'D)
- it aint even a proper language -
that aint even a language JJ - not
no language no-one don't wanna
know -

JJ
Firecrest.

LAURYN follows his eye line.

LAURYN
- who you know who speaks (*that*) -
bout *German* - learn me somethin
bout somewhere I wanna go! Truss
mi.

LAURYN kisses her teeth.

LAURYN (CONT'D)
...Bullfinch.

She's right. JJ kisses his teeth, tries to take a picture of
the bird on his phone.

LAURYN (CONT'D)
Got double geography tomorrow. Now,
(I'm) good at that.

JJ (O.C.)
Geography's rubbish.

JJ watches the bird fly off, LAURYN watches JJ. She goes to
say something but changes her mind taking him in.

A small bug makes its way across her hand, she watches it.

LAURYN
...But you think everything's
rubbish though.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - TUESDAY LATE AFTERNOON

The kitchen radio pumps a tinny track.

JAX'S hands quickly soaping up some crockery (washing up).
They slow to a stop, rest on the sink as JAX pauses, a
weariness passing through her.

SFX: The front door opens and is slammed shut, the hustle of
JJ coming home throwing his schoolbag down, taking his shoes
and jacket off etc.

JAX inhales, her hands slowly pick up and continue their
chore.

JAX CALLING)
Where you been?!

SFX: More hustle is heard from the hallway.

JAX (CALLING)
JJ?!

INT. JAX AND MARK'S HALLWAY - TUESDAY EARLY EVENING

JJ (CALLING)

Lauryn.

We follow JJ hustling into the kitchen, JAX still at the sink, he crosses to her to wash his hands.

JAX

You got homework?

JJ

Huh?

JJ, by her tries to wash his hands, usual routine.

JAX

You got (homework) - and don't be
washin your hands all over the
kitchen / tings -

JJ continues trying with the taps, amused.

JJ

I'm / not.

JAX

- tek your duttiness somewhere
else. Oi -.

He kisses his mum as he exits the room.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - TUESDAY EVENING

A covered plate of food sits on the side. JJ and JAX sit eating and chatting. (Radio is off.)

JAX (O.C.)

Don't bother tell me you can't
remember -

JJ

I / dunno.

JAX

- cos I know you learned somethin
today - you ent goin school for no
reason -

JJ

German.

JAX
What in German -?

The front door slams shut as MARK is heard hustling in.

JAX (CONT'D)
What in German - what you learnin /
in -

JJ
I dunno -

JAX (AMUSED)
You 'dunno'.

JJ
Ich weiß nicht.

JAX
'Eech' what?

JJ giggles.

JAX (AMUSED) (CONT'D)
What?

MARK (38, Black) in his work clothes, pissed off sees the table set for two. JAX ignores MARK.

JAX (CONT'D)
Whassat / mean?

MARK
Y'never do me nuthin?

JAX
Whass it / mean?

MARK
Yu noh do mi nu'un?

JAX
(to MARK) From I don't know when
y'back.

MARK
I'm back.

MARK exits to hallway taking off his work jacket. JAX continues to eat, vexed. JJ clocks the atmosphere.

JAX (CALLING)
...You eatin first or / after?

MARK (DRY)(CALLING)
Cos I'm gonna siddown in my dutty
work tings and eat.

JAX continues eating MARK re-enters the room, JJ watches
between them both.

JAX
...JJ, go set y'dad's bath.

JJ leaves his food to do it, JAX continues with her meal.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - TUESDAY LATER

The radio is off. MARK now in house clothes bathed is at the
table alone eating. JAX washes up behind him, both feeling
each other's vibe but refusing to speak first.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM. BED - EVENING

JAX relaxes on JJ'S bed with JJ slouching on her watching the
small tv. She plays with his hair - mothers him as he
pretends not to like it. JAX eyes shift from the crap TV
programme not able to concentrate on the screen.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - LATER EVENING.

MARK is sprawled across the sofa watching crap tv. Too loud
laughter from a programme hollowly fills the room.

JJ in his pajamas, homework book in hand stands in the front
room doorway watching his Dad. MARK doesn't take his eyes
from the TV but feels his son there.

MARK
Dunnit?

JJ
Yeh.

Beat

JJ (CONT'D)
...Mum seen it?

JJ (CONT'D)
Yeh.

As JJ crosses to MARK.

MARK

Has she?

JJ

Yeah - she has, said it was good.
Said to show you.

MARK studies JJ's homework.

MARK

Neat.

JJ grins.

MARK pulls him down to him for a kiss good-night, before catching JJ with a friendly kick as he starts to leave. JJ giggles - trying to make his Dad miss.

MARK (CONT'D)

Sleep good, yeh.

INT. KITCHEN - TUESDAY EVENING

JAX sitting at the kitchen table. It has yet to be cleared of MARK'S plate, the cooker and room not yet cleaned. She is lost in her own thoughts.

JJ passes on his way upstairs sees his mum, almost stops but quietly continues up to bed.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

Radio is quietly on playing tinny music.

JUMP CUTS: JAX busy giving the kitchen a final wipe down, rinses the dishcloth, hangs it over the taps, sweeps, sets back the table and chairs.

MARK (QUIETLY)(O.S)

S'what?

Chair ent good enough?

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - TUESDAY EVENING

JAX watches MARK all over the sofa he doesn't flinch or acknowledge her, doesn't even look at her.

JAX

Move up.

MARK
Sofa's took.

JAX doesn't move. MARK channel hops.

JAX
Move!

MARK
Chairs is there.

Beat

MARK kisses his teeth, reluctantly pulls up his feet a bit.
JAX sits - forces more room for herself on the sofa.

MARK (CONT'D)
How y'arse so big.

JAX
How y'like it.

MARK tries to hide a smile. They watch the tv. It is rubbish.

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
(Re: TV) How the people dem carry
on so fool.

A burst of laughter from the tv. They both continue to watch.

JAX (CONT'D)
You got the remote?

Beat

JAX (CONT'D)
Where's the remote?
...Y'watchin dis?

Beat

JAX (CONT'D)
Y'watchin / dis?

MARK
S'funny.

They watch the TV, another blast of laughter from it. They
both sit there stony faced.

JAX
Iss shit.

MARK
Same shit I'm watchin.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

JJ appears peacefully asleep, shifts a little.

A slit of light is broken by MARK'S silhouette in the doorway. JJ sleeps on.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

MARK in bed watches his woman changing into her night shirt and going thru' her routine of wrapping her hair under a night scarf, he takes her in. She feels his gaze but doesn't turn round.

JAX (QUIETLY)
He alright.

MARK
...Hmmm.

JAX (QUIETLY)
Asleep?

MARK
Hmm.

He watches her back. An awkwardness about her as she gets into bed her side.

MARK (CONT'D)
...You alright?

JAX
...Yeh.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

JJ is fast asleep under his duvet, his room silent and still except for the flicker of his muted tv lighting him.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

The family toothbrushes stand leaning against each other in their pot, the room idle, a tap slowly dripping.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - TUESDAY NIGHT

Still and clean. The room waits for the family life to fill it. The clock ticks on flicking time forward.

MARK (O.C.) (QUIETLY)
...Y'sleepin?

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

Both unable to sleep and knowing the other is awake too.

MARK (O.C.)
You sleepin?

Beat

MARK (GENTLY) (CONT'D)
...Jax -?

JAX
I'm sleepin.

MARK shifts closer to her, watches her... softens. She feels his gaze, avoiding it in the darkness of the room.

He kisses her lightly.

MARK (QUIETLY)
...How asleep?

He kisses her lightly again.

MARK (CONT'D)
...That asleep?

He shifts closer tries to make his move, kisses her deeply.

MARK (CONT'D)
...Proper asleep?

JAX gives him a gentle touch wanting to reciprocate but something disengages in her eyes that MARK doesn't see. She slowly shifts from under him, uncomfortable.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Babe -

MARK (QUIETLY)
C'mon -

JAX
I'm hot.

She eases out of the bed, out of the dark room. The bathroom light snaps on its light briefly bleeding into the bedroom before its door clicks closed.

MARK exhales tired of this.

SNAP TO:

MOMENTS OF JAX'S VISION

A snatched moment, fierce, bright and loud, something fearful and unclear about it. A feel.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

JAX is sweaty, her head aches she is too hot, trying to steady her breaths, her nightshirt sticking to her sweaty body. She sinks her face into a small towel pressing the sweat off her, unnerved by what just happened. As she comes up for air she notices a couple of specks of blood from her nose on the clean towel.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

JJ awake, ears picking up everything lays as he was silently listening to his mum exiting the bathroom and creeping back to her room.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - WEDNESDAY MORNING

The radio is on DJ chatting, music track 'Simmer Down' by D-Influence plays. JJ in his school uniform slowly eats a bowl of cereal putting more and more sugar in it. JJ sits like his DAD, eats like his DAD. JAX on a hustle, dressed for work, phone clamped to her ear grabs the sugar bag from JJ and clips him round the head, not breaking the flow of her phone chat or hustle round the room of making a hot drink.

JAX (ON PHONE)

'Nah I can't... Nah I can't...

I dunno - whatchu doin?... Yeh -
most likely / ennit...'

MARK in his boxers and vest eats going into work a little later.

MARK
(to JJ) Y'got y'school stuff /
ready?

JAX (ON PHONE)
'Whatchu-? Yeh - nah I would - hold
up -'

JJ
(to MARK) Yeh.

MARK
(to JJ) Y'pack up / y'bag?

JAX
(to MARK) You takin the car?

MARK
Yeh. Mek ar come fi yu.

JAX (ON PHONE)
'Come for / me.'

JJ
(to MARK) I already dunnit.

MARK
(to JJ) Homework in it? (to BERNIE
loudly) Alright Bernadette?

JJ
Yeh.

JAX (ON PHONE)
'Y'hear im? ...Yeh.'

She hangs up taking a piece of toast from MARK'S plate.

JAX (CONT'D)
Eat your food.

Both MARK and JJ look up. JAX gestures JJ.

JAX (CONT'D)
This one (JJ). You (MARK) big
enough to know better.

JJ
I'm eatin / it.

JAX
Eatin don't mean playin - y'pack up
y'school bag?.

JJ

Yeh.

JJ still plays with his food. JAX wants MARK to take over.

JAX

Mark - I don't got time -

MARK (UNINTERESTED)

JJ eat your breakfast.

JAX is unimpressed.

MARK (CONT'D)

Wot?

JAX kisses her teeth, roughly kisses JJ, breezes past MARK.

JAX

(See you) later.

They catch each others eye briefly.

MARK (QUIETLY)

Alright then.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - WEDS. MORNING

Music track 'Simmer Down' by D-Influence continues to play from the kitchen. JAX hustles with her jacket and bag, MARK breezes by her giving her a touch, both hesitate briefly.

MARK (QUIETLY)

(You're leaving) like that?

JAX

...Yeah.

MARK

Hmmm?

JAX

...Hm.

Both of their pride is in the way for a proper goodbye. JAX gets her stuff together.

JAX (CONT'D)

I'm gone.

MARK

...From time.

JAX hesitates then continues to leave.

JAX (CALLING)
JJ! *Don't* be late!

She slams the front door closed behind her.

INT. BERNIE'S CAR. MOVING - WEDNESDAY

The radio quietly pumps 'Baby Can I hold You' by Foxy Brown. JAX discreetly checks her nose with her hand, there is no blood she relaxes a little.

BERNIE steals glances at JAX as she drives on.

BERNIE
...You alright?

Beat

JAX
Yeh.

The music continues to play.

JAX (QUIETLY) (DRY) (CONT'D)
Fuckin great.

INT. WORK KITCHEN AREA - WEDNESDAY MORNING

The staff are hustling starting their day, hot drinks are made, packed lunches put in the fridge, a general few minutes trying to delay starting work. JAX covers a yawn feeling and looking tired.

ALEX (O.C.)
First thing you'll notice bout the public is that they thicker than you thought, racister than you thought and rougher than you thought. Jax - am I lyin?

JAX
Don't bring me inna your drama / Alex.

ALEX
Aint no drama - I'm training.

BERNIE
They lettin you train?

JUSTIN

Shit!

MANJEET

Anybody you get is everybody what
you attract / Alex.

ALEX

That what it says in your 'How to
Live Life' books is / it?

JUSTIN

The thick, racist ones be half his
family anyway -

BERNIE

How they lettin him even train?.

Some laughter, MADDY unsure if it's right to laugh or not.

JUSTIN

When you want proper learnin after
the shit stuff he tells you... come
- yeah?

JUSTIN gestures to himself.

MANJEET

Letch.

MADDY is nervous.

ALEX

I'm the standard -

BERNIE / JUSTIN

- shit standard.

MANJEET nods.

JAX

Unless you wanna learn how to lose
the people dem files.

ALEX

How many people they let you train?

MANJEET

She trained me.

ALEX

Nuff / said.

JUSTIN
Who's doin the doors?

ALEX
This is -

MADDY
'Maddy'.

BERNIE
Maddy?

MADDY
As in Madeline -

JUSTIN (O.C.) (CALLING)
Who's doin the doors?!

General greetings as they start to make their way to their stations.

MANJEET
Why's he shoutin when he always
does them?

JAX is one of the last left in the kitchenette, BERNIE catches her eye and discreetly points to her, then does a questioning thumbs up as in 'you ok?'

JAX sees but doesn't respond.

EXT. NEWSAGENTS - WEDS. MORNING

An ad for a job is removed from the window, taken. The blob of Blu-Tak left on the window amongst the rest of the ads.

EXT. STREET CORNER - WEDS. MORNING

A larger group of cold EASTERN EUROPEAN MEN men waiting for cash-in-hand work are picked up in an anonymous van, there are too many and some are left behind. The usual group get in, the left men aren't sure what to do as they watch the van drive off thru' the endless traffic.

INT. NEWSAGENTS - WEDS. DAY

YOUNG MAN
You got anythin?

NEWSAGENT
No - got nothing.

A YOUNG ASIAN MAN (17) fills the fridge. YOUNG MAN watches.

NEWSAGENT (CONT'D)
...He's my Nephew.

YOUNG MAN
Right... iss like that right.

EXT. OVERGROUND RAIL TRACKS - WEDS. AFTERNOON

A train clatters past a group of workmen in orange high-vis gear. MARK and PATRICK (BLACK, 42) are among the track-side workmen.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - AFTERNOON

The trees bend in the wind. Wildlife goes about its business. A bird pecks at a half eaten discarded burger.

EXT. OVERGROUND RAIL TRACKS - WEDS. AFTERNOON

Overground trains criss-cross tracks. Points shift. A train's undercarriage noisily wipes across screen revealing the men working the track. PATRICK glances at MARK who works on distracted.

FOREMAN (CALLS)
They given us till 3 to sort it!

There are general murmurs from the men trying to ignore him as they work.

MARK (CALLS)
Gonna take us longer'n that.

FOREMAN (CALLS)
What?

WORKMATE 2 (MUTTERS)
Deaf with it.

FOREMAN (CALLING)
They tell me - I tell you. They
pressure me - I pressure / you.

MARK (CALLING)
Y'need to / tellem -

FOREMAN (CALLING)(DRY)
Thass what makes the world go /
round.

MARK (CALLING)
Y'need to tellem iss gonna take us
longer'n that.

EXT. BUSY HIGH STREET - WEDS. LATE AFTERNOON

JJ in school uniform, bag on back dodges traffic crossing the road.

EXT. FIELD / REC - WEDS. LATE AFTERNOON

JJ in school uniform swinging his bag, freely running thru' the grasses uninhibited.

He kicks away the discarded part burger that the bird had munched on, kissing his teeth unimpressed.

Birds swirl into the dusk sky watched by JJ enjoying his solitude.

JJ'S fingers brush thru' the tips of the long grasses gently.

He turns his hand gently as a bug crawls over it, before he blows it to freedom.

INT. BERNIE'S CAR - STATIONARY. OUTSIDE WEST INDIAN BAKERY - WEDS. LATE AFTERNOON

The engine is still running, radio quietly plays '(My) Conversation' by Al Cambell. BERNIE eyes her rear view and can see a distant TRAFFIC WARDEN checking cars, she kisses her teeth.

JAX exits the West Indian Bakery with a carrier bag of bread. She snaps open the back seat door - chucks the bag in - shuts it again - gets in the front - BERNIE has already started pulling away.

JAX
Goin thru' bread like water / man.

BERNIE
(re: TRAFFIC WARDEN) They can't
even wait. Seat-belt.

JAX
Bernie.

BERNIE
Seat belt.

JAX reluctantly reaches for hers.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

JJ sat rummaging deep into his school bag.

CUT TO:

He patiently crumbles a wedge of hardy bread from his bag. A wary Magpie watches him from a distance.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

The Magpie is tempted. JJ struggling to hold his position a slight wobble in his hand. The bird watches him, he watches the bird tempting it. It starts to cautiously hop towards him.

EXT. OVERGROUND TRACKSIDE - AFTERNOON

The men are packing up some of their stuff ready to move onto a new patch with some unheard banter. A couple look across the tracks watching MARK with the FOREMAN in heated conversation.

PATRICK smiles.

WORKMATE 1

He don't learn.

PATRICK

He got nuthin to learn.

WORKMATE 1

Not Mark. That wanker.

A train clatters past the workmen. MARK starts to stride back towards his colleagues.

INT. BERNIE'S CAR - MOVING - WEDS. AFTERNOON

Car stereo plays '(My) Conversation' further thru' track.

Beat

BERNIE

...So?

JAX doesn't respond.

Beat

JAX says nothing. BERNIE offs the music.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...You thought about it?

JAX
Nuthin else.

Beat

BERNIE
Wanna talk about it?

JAX shifts says nothing, BERNIE glances at her, then back to the road.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - WEDS. AFTERNOON

JAX hustles round the kitchen preparing the evening meal. BERNIE is sat at the table with a hot drink and some small eats. The radio is on quietly playing 'Ascension' by Maxwell the front door is heard opening and slamming closed with JJ's hustle.

The women share a look, JAX takes a breath preparing herself for the normal routine.

JAX (CALLING)
Where y'been?!

JJ (CALLING)
Nowhere!

BERNIE (CALLING)
Where's nowhere?!

JJ snaps into the kitchen grinning.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Yeah. Look how mi big Godson
tryinta hide from / me.

JJ
Hi Aunty / Bernie.

BERNIE
About! Come and get some -

JJ is already swallowed up in a huge squeeze and kiss from BERNIE.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Y'tink seh y'too big for dis?

JJ (GIGGLES)
No -

BERNIE
Y'tink seh y'too big man / f'dis?

JJ
No I -

She grabs him again with an even bigger squeeze, then takes a good look at him.

BERNIE
You need to come by me - long time
you don't come by me. She feedin
you?

JAX
Here we / go.

JJ giggles.

BERNIE (DRY)
But he's lookin skinny tho' Jax -

JAX
You feed him - from he's your
Godpickney you need to do your duty
save me some shekels, the boy eatin
out my cupboards all hours B, he
don't stop / nyamin'.

BERNIE
He's got a lotta growin to do -

JJ (AMUSED)
Yeh. I / have.

JAX
You don't need to join in wid ar
foolishness - go wash y'dutty hands
Son -

JJ crosses to the kitchen sink.

BERNIE
Not over the sink tings.

BERNIE gives him a pinch as she watches him exit the room closing the door behind him.

The radio continues to play. JAX goes to say something a weariness passes thru' her, she doesn't.

Beat

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...Earlier is better y'know.

JAX says nothing.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - EARLY WEDNESDAY EVENING

The noise and hustle of lockers, men changing and banter. MARK'S shift are changing out of their hi-vis gear into their regular coats and jackets etc. MARK is slower than the rest to change and in no hurry to get home. PATRICK notices, waiting for him.

PATRICK
C'mon n'man!

MARK
Yeh yeh.

PATRICK disappears out the door, MARK dressed snaps his locker closed.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - WEDNESDAY EVENING

JAX wearily sits back on JJ's bed, playing with his hair as they do. The TV is on JJ into it, JAX watches her hand passing thru' her son's hair.

INT. KITCHEN - WEDNESDAY EVENING

The ding of the microwave, MARK'S dinner reheated. He takes it out - it's too hot - but manages to get it to the table. A place is set for him as he sits heavily, alone in the room starting to eat.

JAX (O.C.)
...How was work?

MARK doesn't break his stride eating or look in her direction. JAX stands in the doorway.

MARK
Shit.

Beat

JAX
Thought you'd be back earlier.

MARK says nothing.

JAX (CONT'D)
...Y'don't have to do the overtime -

MARK
Gets me outta the house.

She watches him as he eats.

JAX
Missin you at the table though.

MARK eats.

MARK
(I) don't think you'd miss nuthin
much Jax.

JAX watches him a moment then slips out of the doorway saying
nothing else.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - WEDNESDAY NIGHT

JAX sits on the edge of the bath, thoughtful. Alone. Taking a
moment.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - SUNDAY MORNING

Radio pumps an AKALA track.

JUMP CUTS: JJ roughly slices two pieces of hardy bread.
Leaving a trail of crumbs. His eyes under the grill as two
pieces of bread brown. JJ'S bare feet pad round the kitchen
as he fixes himself a hot drink out of shot.

His hands spreading his toast thick with too much spread,
leaving more mess behind him.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BED - SUNDAY MORNING

Stillness of their semi-dark room, quiet, curtains still closed the sleeping shapes of JAX and MARK under the duvet. MARK asleep, shifts.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - SUNDAY MORNING

JUMP CUTS: Same music from the kitchen is heard in the front room. JJ has a slice of chocolate toast clamped between his teeth as his eyes dart and hands rapidly flick thru' a stack of DVD's. The curtains are still closed grey morning light peeping through, JJ sees what he's looking for, picking it up.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - SUNDAY MORNING

JAX appears asleep eyes closed, MARK the same, facing away from each other.

JAX (QUIETLY)
You sleepin?

There is no answer JAX opens her eyes but doesn't shift.

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
You asleep -?

JAX (CONT'D)
...Mark?

MARK
I'm asleep.

JAX hesitates. Tries to be nice.

JAX
...Asleep / asleep?

MARK
Asleep.

JAX shifts turns towards him, thinks about it then gives MARK a gentle touch. There is no response. She is gentle down his spine. There is no response. She is unsure.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Whatchu sayin?

She gives him a gentle touch again, no response.

JAX (CONT'D)
...You makin me look at your back.
Again?

MARK
How does it feel?

Beat

He rolls over to face her they watch each other close.

Beat

He gently touches her.

MARK (CONT'D)
Been so long since you last let me
near...

MARK withdraws his touch.

MARK (CONT'D)
Maybe I'm outta the habit a you.

JAX is left watching him as he turns away giving her his back again.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - SUNDAY MORNING

The kitchen radio is on, a different track.

The debris of JJ'S breakfast. Chocolate spread standing on the side lid half off, knife used and on the side, crumbs trailed. Margarine stained with chocolate spread etc.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - SUNDAY MORNING

JAX eyes closed as she was. MARK sleeping as he was. The room is peaceful... until JJ DVD in hand flops down on the bed between his sleeping parents.

JJ (LOUDLY)
Dad where's the remote?

MARK groans, shifts, JJ leans over his DAD trying to find it.

JJ (CONT'D)
Mum - where's the / remote?

JAX answers from under the duvet.

JAX (TIRED)
Ask y'Dad.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - SUNDAY MORNING

Music track, 'A Long Walk' by Jill Scott plays on the radio.

The empty room with increased debris left behind after another (JAX's) breakfast. Margarine and jam in addition to the usual.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JAX and JJ sit in bed watching the kids DVD, MARK still dozes undercover. JAX eats toast and jam, sips on her hot drink.

JJ
Gonna get crumbs.

JAX
I aint you.

JJ
(re: DVD) This the good bit.

JAX kicks MARK under the covers.

JAX
This the good bit Mark.

MARK from under the covers:

MARK
...I seen it.

JAX
I seen it.

JJ
Dad!

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - MORNING - LATER

Music track 'Notice, Know This' by Chuck D plays on the radio.

The kitchen has more breakfast mess (MARK's) around it milk out, spread out, dirty knives, kettle on the side, bread not put away, half a pack of bacon out, ketchup etc.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - MORNING - LATER

MARK and JAX sitting up watching JJ's DVD. JJ slumped dozing between them. MARK eats his bacon-buttie, drinks a hot drink.

JAX
Don't be crumbing up the bed.

MARK
I ent you.

They watch the film.

MARK (CONT'D)
This the good bit.

JAX watches him.

MARK (CONT'D)
What?

JAX tries to hide a smile, he has seen it.

MARK (CONT'D)
...What?

JAX (GENTLY)
C'mere.

Leaning over the sleeping JJ she goes to wipe the mess of the sandwich from MARK'S smiling mouth. HE subtly leans just out of reach wiping it himself as they watch each other.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX'S PARENT'S KITCHEN / DINING ROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Lively vibe of chat and eating. JAX'S MUM has cooked up the usual too big Sunday spread of rice and peas, veg, potatoes, meat, macaroni pie etc. all being enjoyed in conversation:

DAD
Thass right - you alright tho?

JAX
His mout's too big / Dad.

DAD
You lookin after you?

MARK
Gotta speak up -

JAX
Not as much as you do / y'don't.

DAD
Y'need to look out fi yu cah dem
high up ones always lookin out fe
themselves same / way.

JJ goes for more meat.

JAX'S MUM
He's hungry -

JAX
Not *that* hungry Mum - thass juss
hoggish behaviours - finish your
firsts / JJ.

JAX'S MUM winks at JJ.

MARK (PLAYFUL)
So how come Jax can't cook like
this?

Some laughter. JAX clips a laughing JJ who ducks just in
time.

JAX'S MUM (PLAYFUL)
(re: MARK) Why yu mekkin trouble /
for?

JAX (DRY)
Mum taught me all I need to know
yeh.

MARK (PLAYFUL)
Look like she was holdin somethin
back - JJ back mi up Son.

JJ looks between his parents enjoying the banter.

JAX'S DAD
Lose lose either way / boy.

The doorbell rings. JAX takes meat from MARK'S plate, giving it to a willing JJ.

MARK
An' I see that!

MUM goes to get up but MARK indicates for her to stay eating and gets up instead as he makes his way to the front door.

JJ grins thru' a mouthful of meat.

SANDRA (O.C.)
Yes people.

SANDRA enters smoking, MARK following. SHE sizes up the enjoyment in the room immediately feeling out of it. The atmosphere shifts.

DAD
Lost y'keys?

There are general greetings. JAX eyes her, MUM gets up to fix her a plate.

JJ
Hello / Aunty.

SANDRA
Y'alright / Jerome?

HE nods, mouth full.

JAX
Mum siddown - you only just sat /
down.

SANDRA
Y'leave anythin for me? How's
school li'l man?

Before JJ can answer SANDRA continues.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Mark y'cool?

MARK
Blessed still. Life alright with
you?

SANDRA
Can't complain.
Well. I could.

JAX (DRY)
You could.

SANDRA exhales her cigarette.

JAX (CONT'D)
...Still got the habit.

SANDRA (DRY)
Not as will powered as you Sis.

DAD
Not by the food / Sandra.

JAX
How's reception?

SANDRA hesitates not sure whether to take the bait.

SANDRA (DRY)
Great. How's welfare?

JAX
I wouldn't know. I'm not on it.

JJ looks between the two women as he eats, this is usual.

SANDRA
Neither am I.

JAX
Anymore. What is it you doin now
exactly?

SANDRA (DRY)
Receptioning.

JAX
Which is exactly what?

MUM
Jackie.

SANDRA
Don't you have no receptionists
where you work or are you too high
ups to know what they do?

MUM
Sandra.

SANDRA
(to JAX) Aint it depressin doin
what you do? Deciding who gets a
little piece of what or you lovin
playin judge and jury deciding who
gets a slice a the State pie?

Beat

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Prefer to pick up phones than sit
there and piss other peoples lives
/ away.

DAD
Sandra.

SANDRA gestures an apology for her swearing.

SANDRA
But I would Mum.

JACKIE holds it down.

MUM
The people are alright tho'.

SANDRA
S'white people ennit, them young
head ones.

MARK
How long you been there now?

SANDRA
Five weeks.

MUM
She's enjoyin it.

JAX
Thass long. For you.

MUM
As long as she enjoyin / it.

JAX
Almost a career.

INT. JAX'S PARENT'S KITCHEN - LATER SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Radio on playing music. From behind: the figures of MARK
washing up, JJ drying, they muck about and chat as they work.

INT. JAX'S PARENT'S FRONT ROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

TV is on a Sunday soap. Jax's DAD sleeps off dinner breathing heavily, MUM on a separate easy chair glares at him, turning up the TV over her husband's breathing.

JAX'S MUM

Vincent.

JAX'S DAD sleeps on.

INT. JAX'S PARENT'S DINING ROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

SANDRA eating her plate of food alone, the table is part cleared.

INT. JAX PARENT'S FRONT ROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

The volume of the TV is raised further but JAX'S DAD'S breathing is still audible irritating JAX'S MUM.

JAX'S MUM

VINCENT!

JAX'S MUM kisses her teeth.

JAX'S MUM (CONT'D)

VINCENT!

JAX'S DAD grunts, shifts barely awake.

JAX'S DAD

What.

JAX'S MUM

Y'breathin!

HE grunts, shifts resumes his noisy sleep.

INT. JAX'S OLD BEDROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

It is the same room she shared with SANDRA as kids, who still lives at home.

JAX lays on her old single bed trying to watch a small old fashioned TV, a different channel to what MUM was watching. She can't concentrate. She checks her nose for blood - there is none. Her hand rests on her flat belly, she watches it, removes it. She closes her eyes tired. The TV chatters on.

INT. BERNIE'S CAR - MOVING - MONDAY MORNING

JAX in the passenger seat, seat belt on. Music plays from the radio as BERNIE negotiates the rush hour. JAX already looks tired.

BERNIE
Y'look like shit Jax.

JAX (DRY)
Nice.

BERNIE
Juss tryinta -

JAX
Yeah. Don't, yeh. Your 'nice' is
rubbish.

BERNIE watches the road, pulls off to a quiet side street.

JAX (CONT'D)
Where y'goin - where you - Bernie
whatchu / *doin*?

BERNIE
Fuck bein late.

JAX
Drive the / car.

BERNIE
I'll call in sick -

JAX
Drive the / car.

BERNIE
- on your behalf.

JAX
Bernie -

BERNIE
Fuck dem, them people too inna inna
anyway.

BERNIE parks up the centre locking snaps on. JAX isn't impressed.

JAX (DRY)
Oh. Prisoner.

BERNIE offs the engine. She goes to speak, hesitates. Says nothing.

JAX(DRY) (CONT'D)

Great.

BERNIE tries to start the conversation again but isn't sure how to, hesitates again.

Beat

BERNIE (QUIETLY)

...You're the closest thing I got
to a sister and I'm closer'n you
are to yourn... but -

JAX

You're mekkin us late for work.

Beat

BERNIE tries again.

BERNIE

Whass... I'ma -

JAX

Drive the car / B.

BERNIE

Nah cos Jax I... Iss like...

Beat

JAX kisses her teeth vexed.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(It) should be me vex' / Jackie.

JAX (DRY)

Right.

BERNIE

Why y'tell me for if you don't
wanna talk about / it?

JAX (DRY)

'You should be vex'?

BERNIE

Draggin up my -

JAX
I never drag up nuthin I was askin
/ you -

BERNIE
Draggin up my shit for no good
reason -

JAX (DRY)
'no good reason'--? Drive the -.

JAX is increasingly vexed, holds her tongue.

BERNIE
You know what you even wanna / do?

JAX
I was 'askin' / you -

BERNIE
If you know what you wanna / do -

JAX
I weren't 'draggin' / up nuthin.

BERNIE
Cos yeh I would rather that I never
did know -

JAX
Drive the / car.

BERNIE
- from y'did seem so sure -

JAX
Your 'nice' is great yeh - you said
I got time - I still got / time -

BERNIE
- though now it look like you're
stallin' -

JAX
You should know bout the time ting
and stalling.

BERNIE is stung.

BERNIE

...You wanna think about it - cool -
but I juss wanna know - was just
askin - where you are wid dis ting
'ere, cos from you wanna talk about
it -

JAX

Bess I never / say nu'un.

BERNIE

-(then) don't wanna talk bout it -
alright - (I'll) back my shit off -
but I know how hard JJ was to come
by and for you who lost fuckin -
three -

JAX

Four

BERNIE

- before him to get him - I can't
not say nuthin... (You) gone thru'
whatchu gone thru' - me watchin you
and Mark go thru' all that - I dun
try an be nice tip-toeing round
this shit but it don't mek no sense
whatchu considering bout / this
one.

JAX

Start the / car.

BERNIE

Like I'm not tryinta - and iss
f'you / but -

JAX

I swear to God Bernie I'll drive it
my-fuckin-/self.

BERNIE

- and if you wanna do what you
wanna do - I'm wid you still. Thass
up to you - and wid Mark an' that -
but if you aint sure...

BERNIE gestures, confused.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

This don't make no fuckin sense.

JAX tries her door.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Unless it's not Mark's -

JAX (QUIETLY)
Fuck / you.

BERNIE
Then what's the problem?

JAX tries her door again, firmer.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Jackie?

BERNIE watches her.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...Iss not Marks?

JAX
Iss Marks. It *is* / Marks -

BERNIE
Nah mek no fuckin sense then Jax.

BERNIE watches her friend.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Jackie.

Beat

JAX
...We been sorta...

BERNIE
What?

JAX
Off. For a (while)... for a hot
minute, y'know?

BERNIE
And so it go - (but) you two is
tight man.

BERNIE watches her blankly.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...So iss not -

JAX
It is.

Beat

BERNIE tries to silently figure it out.

BERNIE
...Is it some like - he juss like -
never fully -

JAX
It aint / that.

BERNIE
Sometimes it can / juss -

JAX
We haven't been... even that.

BERNIE
Then you goin nuts or he fucked you
when you was sleepin.

JAX is not impressed.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Or you aint pregnant.

JACKIE kisses her teeth pissed off.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Or y'lyin.

They catch each others eye. JAX tries to forcefully get out
but the centre locking is still on.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Alright-sorry-Jax-I'm sorry-/
sorry.

JAX
Start the car.

JAX tries harder and harder to get out BERNIE watching her
concerned.

BERNIE
I'm sorry I'm (sorry)- Jax I know I
know I'm chattin shit - you know I
chat shit - I know you - know you /
wouldn't.

JAX
You don't know nuthin -

BERNIE
Then tell me.

Beat

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Fuck, gurl.
Tell me somethin.

JAX stops trying the door is exhausted at the thought of trying to explain further. She stares ahead, lost.

Beat

JAX goes to say something, doesn't. BERNIE watches her. JAX feels self conscious, but says nothing. BERNIE almost speaks, but doesn't.

Beat

BERNIE shifts, stares out the window, both women in a pissed off silence. Nothing else is forthcoming from JAX.

BERNIE kisses her teeth, vexed.

SNAP TO:

BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE: 'MAY'

EXT. SCHOOL - THURSDAY AFTERNOON

Outside the building the camera cranes past the building's fourth floor windows. Class after class of kids in lessons, attentive facing forward. Except for one pupil in one class, at his window seat JJ staring out into the world bored.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - THURSDAY AFTERNOON 4.00PM

JJ in his school uniform, crouching down silently holding out a handful of crumbed hardo' bread, still, concentrating. Waiting.

A different smaller curious bird watches from afar taking him in.

LAURYN laying on the grass, still, watches the bird, watches JJ almost holding her breath.

The bird takes a couple of tentative steps towards JJ.

His arm starts to tremble aching from being held out for ages. He gestures for LAURYN to be quieter.

The bird hops forward some more.

JJ deliberately avoids its eye line.

The bird hops lightly onto JJ's hand and starts to feed from his bread.

LAURYN is impressed.

EXT. FIELD / REC / WOODED AREA - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

JJ gently holding the bird, it is fairly calm - LAURYN wants to have a go. Reluctantly JJ tries to carefully hand it over to her talking quietly to it and her all the time.

JJ (O.C.)
Mind it Lo' -

LAURYN (O.C.)
I got / it.

JJ (QUIETLY)
(to BIRD) She only wants a / touch -

LAURYN
I got / it.

JJ
You got / it?

LAURYN
Hold on -

JJ
Careful - Lo' - gently / yeh -?

LAURYN
Yeh I got it.

The bird starts to flap increasingly startled, it becomes difficult for LAURYN to hold.

JJ (O.C.)
Lauryn / man -

LAURYN (O.C.)
I got it I got it I got it.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

The bird flaps on the grass, unable to fly. It drags its broken wing squawking unnervingly.

JJ and LAURYN watch it, uncomfortable.

Beat

LAURYN (QUIETLY)
...I gotta go home JJ.

Neither of them move JJ upset by the sight of the bird in pain. LAURYN is self conscious.

LAURYN (O.C.) (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
I'm goin home.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY EARLY EVENING

Bag height. JJ'S school bag is carefully set down on the floor. There is movement from within in it. JJ'S socked feet leave his bedroom and quickly make their way to his parents room.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY EARLY EVENING

JJ makes for the wardrobe where JAX has several shoe boxes stacked. He empties one of them carefully re-placing the shoes in the wardrobe, taking the empty box back to his room.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY EARLY EVENING

JJ snaps open a drawer, searches thru' some T-shirts, picks an old one and lines the shoe box with it.

He stabs the lid of the shoe box with a pen and carefully places the weak bird in it covering the box with the lid.

JJ waits. Unsure what to do next. He peeps in the box, quietly takes it downstairs.

INT. KITCHEN. EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

Thru' the kitchen JJ unlocks the back door to the garden, carefully placing the box down on the grass.

EXT. JAX AND MARK'S GARDEN - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

JJ searches for and finds twigs, grass, small flowers etc. to carefully add to the box.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

JAX watches JJ thru' the kitchen window curious as she preps dinner.

JJ happier with his work picks up the box and starts to bring it in -

JAX (CALLING)
Jerome.

JJ continues to make his way in.

JAX (CONT'D)
JJ.

JJ is preoccupied with the box.

JAX (CONT'D)
Jerome! What / y'got?

JJ
Nuthin.

They eyeball. JAX not impressed with his obvious lie.

JJ (CONT'D)
...Iss sick.

JAX
What's sick? This some school ting?

JJ tries to continue thru' to the hallway.

JAX (CONT'D)
Lemme see -

JJ
You'll scare it -

JAX
Scare what?

JJ
Don't scare it / Mum.

JAX
Mek mi / see -.

JJ
Iss nuthin.

They eyeball again. JAX pissed off at his lie. She tentatively lifts the box lid a touch before stepping back sharply.

JAX
Outta the house -

JJ
Mum -

JAX
Nah nah nah - iss a outside
creature so tek it back where it /
belong.

There is movement from inside the box.

JJ
You're scaring / it!

JAX
I don't want no sick someting all
in the (house) - what part of
'bird' belong / in here?

JJ
Iss broken - iss / broken.

JAX
You be broken boy if you don't get
that dutty ting / outta my -

JJ
Lauryn broke / it.

JJ goes to take it thru' the house.

JAX
- out my kitchen - y'mad!? Move!

JJ goes back towards the garden pissed off.

JAX (CONT'D)
Boy done lost the last bit of sense
you got given.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - THURSDAY EVENING - LATER

MARK stands looking thru' the dark kitchen window as JAX had.

JJ's form silhouetted in the dark, militantly sitting crossed legged on the grass with the box in front of him.

JAX (O.C.)
He can stay out there all night
(as) far as I'm concerned.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

JAX and MARK are eating at the table set for three, a place set for JJ who is still in the garden in the dark with the bird box.

MARK
Y'know what he's like.

JAX
That 'alf dead ting ent / comin in
here.

MARK
He will stay out there all night.

JAX
Good.

MARK
He's stubborn.

JAX
He's ignorant.

MARK
He's his mother's child.

JAX tries not to soften, MARK knows he has her.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
He needs to eat. He needs to eat
somethin and he needs to come in...
Jax man.

They eat. JAX avoiding MARK'S gaze.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

JJ is at the sink refusing to look in his parent's direction.
JAX still eats refusing to look at JJ. MARK watches his son.

MARK

Mek sure you wash y'hands good -

JAX

and *not* over the kitchen tings!

The garden door is slammed shut a bit too loudly as JJ exits back into the dark garden thru' it vexed. JAX slams down her knife and fork ready to start after him.

JAX (CONT'D)

Thass it! The boy has -

MARK

- leave it leave / it -

JAX

I'm *not* havin / him -

MARK

Leave it - *leave him* - he'll -
(Jax) come on - / he'll -

JAX

Mark!

MARK

Come on - he'll come round, he'll
come in -

JAX

I don't want him in.

MARK

He -
Jackie?

He catches her eye.

MARK (CONT'D)

C'mon.

Beat.

MARK gestures to her food. JAX reluctantly resumes eating, vexed.

EXT. GARDEN - EVENING

JJ gently places a cap full of water in the box for the bird, re-sits sitting crossed legged on the grass with the box on the ground in front of him, angry.

MARK (O.C.)
Let him care for the ting - let him
just... (try) - we all done this
kinda su'un when we was / young.

INT. KITCHEN - THURSDAY EVENING

JAX
I never did deal wid no dead bird
in no box / Mark.

MARK
It ent dead.

JAX
How yu know?

MARK
Iss not / dead.

JAX
You been by it?

MARK
Jax / man.

JAX
Y'been by it? Not everyone (is)
like you / y'know.

MARK
He only wants to see if he can help
the ting -

JAX
And I never did play no vet when I
was a yout' neither.

MARK
We know what you was playin
instead.

They catch a look between them.

JAX
...An' it was you I was playin it
with.

MARK
Thass right.

He can hardly hold down his smile. It's infectious.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Now you wanna be nice?...

MARK
I am nice.

JAX kisses her teeth lightly.

JAX
Not to me you aint.

MARK watches his woman.

MARK
Treat you how you treat me.

JAX (DRY)
Treat you good -

MARK (DRY)
You think?
Treat you better.

JAX
...You think?

MARK tries to work out the right words, but they don't come.
The air is warmer between them.

EXT. JAX AND MARK'S GARDEN - EVENING

JJ still stubbornly sits crossed legged in front of the box on the grass. His cold breath illuminated by the light from the empty kitchen. He gently rocks trying to keep warm.

JAX (O.C.)(QUIETLY)
He won't -

MARK (O.C.)(QUIETLY)
He's cold -

JAX (O.C.)(QUIETLY)
Nah he / won't.

MARK (O.C.)(QUIETLY)
He's gonna come / in.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - EVENING

The TV is on quietly beyond them.

JAX and MARK are on the sofa gentle with each other, it's been a while. They kiss deeply.

JAX (QUIETLY)
Mark.

MARK (QUIETLY)
...Jax man where y'been?

They are both careful with each other enjoying being close. JAX whispers something unheard in his ear that makes them both giggle.

JAX
He's you y'know.

MARK
He's all you.

EXT. JAX AND MARK'S GARDEN - THURSDAY EVENING

JJ now in a coat sits as he was on the grass with the box in front of him, he lifts the lid a touch peeping in, there is some movement from inside as he lowers the lid again.

HE sighs breath visible in the air, cold but determined. He blows on his hands trying to keep warm.

MARK (O.C.)(QUIETLY)
Wot?

JAX (O.C.)(QUIETLY)
Wot?

Stiffly JJ slowly gets up.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

The TV is still quietly on beyond them, images flickering.

MARK (QUIETLY)
...Wot?

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Nuthin.

MARK holds JAX close, they watch each other, he tries to read her as they hold each other increasingly tighter, both knowing that whatever's been going wrong still hasn't been spoken about.

MARK (QUIETLY)
...Y'alright?

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Yeh.

He watches her. She feels it as she kisses him again to avoid his gaze knowing it didn't sound convincing.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S CUPBOARD UNDER STAIRS - LATER

The bird box sits neatly in the hallway as JJ shoves items aside under the stairs to make room for it.

He carefully places the box on a shelf and turns the light off, then on, then off again.

JJ (CALLING)
On or off Dad?

MARK (O.S.)(CALLING)
Off.

JJ (CALLING)
Huh?

MARK (O.S.)(CALLING)
Off.
Keep it calmer.

SNAP TO:

SNATCHES OF JAX'S VISION. It is bright - too bright something edgy, firey, loud, frightening and dangerous about it. For a brief moment she is part visible in it, scared. A progression from the last one.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - THURS. NIGHT

JAX sat on the edge of the bath, flannel covering her face, whole body shaking.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

JJ picks at his food at the cleared table while MARK makes him a hot drink.

JJ
Foxes woulda got it.

MARK
Laws a nature boy.

MARK watches him.

MARK (CONT'D)
...Wash up when y'dun yeh?

JJ nods. MARK watches his cold son picking at his food. MARK gently takes his JJ's cold hands between his own and rubs them warm, gently blowing on them too.

JJ starts to eat.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

JAX removes the flannel from her hot face it is stained with a small amount of blood from her nose. Her breathing is rapid, temperature up, she has a tremble about her.

JAX sits rocking slightly. Her nose starts to trickle a small amount of fresh blood. She seems increasingly small and helpless.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S CUPBOARD UNDER STAIRS - LATER

MARK (QUIETLY)
What y'gonna do with it if it don't
get no better?

Beat. JJ shrugs, just.

JJ (QUIETLY)
Ich weiß nicht.

MARK smiles, JJ shifts.

JJ (CONT'D)
Dad -

MARK (QUIETLY)
Hold it down (your voice) so you
don't scare / it -

JJ (QUIETLY)
Thass what I said to /mum.

MARK (QUIETLY)
Andju know your job is to clock it
every few hours / yeh?

JJ (QUIETLY)
Dad -

MARK (QUIETLY)
Without wakin the whole house - cos
I aint runnin up and / down.

JJ (QUIETLY)
Dad d'you wannit to be a boy or a
girl?

MARK (QUIETLY)
The bird?

JJ (QUIETLY)
The baby.

SNAP TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - FRIDAY MORNING

Noisy, loud and busy. Several men getting changed into work safety gear, lockers noisily opened, personal items placed in before being slammed closed, plenty of loud banter. Amongst them are MARK and PATRICK getting changed into steel boots and hi-vis gear with their colleagues.

WORKMATE 1 (O.C.)
You're the type a fucker who would
phone up and vote -

WORKMATE 2 (O.C.)
I was sayin - I was just / sayin -

WORKMATE 3
You phone / up?

WORKMATE 2
I was just sayin I thought the girl
in silver did alright.

SNAP TO:

EXT. OVER GROUND TRACKSIDE - FRIDAY MORNING (LATE SPRING)

The MEN all walking trackside to get to their work point in their orange hi-vis gear and hard hats.

WORKMATE 3
Silver?

WORKMATE 1
Says it all.

WORKMATE 2
She did / alright.

WORKMATE 1
Don't watch it.

WORKMATE 2
You too busy watchin documentaries
or some other bollocks.

PATRICK glances at MARK who is in his own thoughts.

WORKMATE 1 (O.C.)
Only you can think that watchin
shit that aint your shit is a
problem -

WORKMATE 2
Borin'.

EXT. OVER GROUND TRACKSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

The MEN work trackside doing maintenance, including PATRICK and MARK, replacing stripped copper cabling from a track, physical work. Over ground trains rattle close by on other lines. The men talk loudly to be heard.

WORKMATE 2
I never said I phoned.

MARK'S hands slip, he silently curses, resumes what he was doing. PATRICK sees.

PATRICK
Phones who?

WORKMATE 3
One a them votin programmes.

PATRICK
That kids watch?

WORKMATE 1
There you / go.

WORKMATE 2
All a you can -

WORKMATE 1
(to #3) You watch it?

WORKMATE 3
I got shit to / do.

WORKMATE 2
All a you can kiss it - spin on it
and fuck right off.

MARK
(Re: work) Some fucker's properly
stripped this shit out.

INT. STAFF KITCHEN AREA - FRIDAY MORNING

JAX sips on a drink, MADDY a little awkward around her. Other STAFF hustle thru' shot on their way from and to the kitchen area. Beyond JAX and MADDY thru' the window the usual smoker's cluster can be seen outside including BERNIE.

JAX (O.C.)
Thought you'd be out with the rest.

*

MADDY
Alex did say I should just... where
ever he goes - but that was a while
/ back.

JAX
Alex is a dick.

MADDY isn't sure whether to agree.

MADDY
14 months and 4 days nicotine free.
It's been - I can't really...

MADDY glances outside.

MADDY (CONT'D)
He knows I struggle.

JAX (DRY)
So you ent goin nowhere then.

MADDY
Alex said you'd given up.

JAX
Alex likes to chat people's
business.

MADDY doesn't know how to take the last comment.

MADDY
...How long you stopped for?

BERNIE strides back in fresh from her smoke, she and JAX barely clock each other, an off vibe between them that MADDY watches.

JAX gets ready to go back to her desk.

JAX
This place'll get you sparkin back
up.
Truss mi.

SNAP TO:

EXT. OVER GROUND TRACKSIDE - LATER

A train rattles by them close wiping into the present visuals.

PATRICK (QUIETLY)(O.C)
She leavin you?

The men work in pairs a little apart.

MARK (QUIETLY)
...No.

PATRICK
She dealin wid a next man?

MARK
Fuck off P.

PATRICK continues to work.

MARK (CONT'D)
No.

PATRICK
She a bad mudder -

MARK
She's a great mother.

PATRICK
So you ent got nothin to worry bout
then.
Nothin worth worryin bout.
(MORE)

PATRICK (CONT'D)
...They can be sometime-ish, y'know
that.

They work.

PATRICK (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...You been... You been through
whatchu been through / before.

MARK (QUIETLY)
We been through it before.

PATRICK
Three times before - I / know.

MARK
Four. It was four.
...Four.

PATRICK watches his friend.

PATRICK
...Which is why she might not wanna
drag your arse through it again.

MARK works on. Another train rattles by them close.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
...She 'fraid.
She nervous.

MARK avoids looking at PATRICK and works on.

MARK
...And I aint?

EXT. HIGH STREET - MORNING

Some shop windows have signs 'Closing Down Today!',
'Everything Must Go.'

EXT. CHEQUE CASHING SHOP - FRIDAY MORNING

The shop has a sign: 'We Can Make your Money Stretch Till Pay
Day'. A customer is on their way in.

YOUNG MAN walks past, looking casually smart.

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Got any cheese an onion?

INT. GREGG'S BAKERS - FRIDAY DAY

A couple of customers scan the counters making up their minds. YOUNG MAN enters holding several identical envelopes (CVs).

GREGG'S WORKER 2
Fresh batch still in the oven.

GREGG'S WORKER 1
(to YOUNG MAN) Not got nuthin love.

YOUNG MAN
You aint got / nuthin?

GREGG'S WORKER 1
(to colleague) There is nothing is
there - ?

GREGG'S WORKER #2
There is nothing. You can leave it -
he can leave it - you're welcome to
leave it again but there is still
nothing goin.

A large tray of steaming hot cheese and onion pasties make their way thru' and are already being bagged up to sell.

YOUNG MAN leaves his enveloped CV on the counter as he exits.

EXT. HIGH STREET - FRIDAY DAY

Above a parade of shops are some flats. A couple have metal sheeting over their windows. Repossessed.

YOUNG MAN passes the MAN standing with the sign, says something unheard to him. The MAN with the sign shakes his head, continues to read a book on Chemistry.

YOUNG MAN disappearing into the public.

WORKMATE 1 (O.S.)
Iss work.

PATRICK (O.S.)
Iss bullshit.

INT. MARK'S STAFF CANTEEN - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Loud, noisy and busy. The men eat together.

WORKMATE 1
Least it's work Patrick -

MARK
Iss *bullshit*.

WORKMATE 2
They always gonna need us replacin
this stuff -

MARK
- on top of what we already do?

WORKMATE 2 (DRY)
Only so much we can do.

MARK
Someone wanna tell management that
then.

WORKMATE 1 (QUIETLY)
You do.

Some of the men laugh a little, carry on eating.

MARK
...See mi laughin?

The men aren't sure how to take him. PATRICK admires his
friend.

PATRICK (DRY)
Mili. (Militant)

INT. JOB CENTRE - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

The place is packed, busy. All staff have clients. JAX and
BERNIE continue to work by each other but glances among the
staff are shared as they watch the frosty vibe between them.
The two women barely look at each other as they continue
their work.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Pupils doing P.E loudly - free, enjoying their game.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - FRIDAY AFTERNOON 3.00PM

Flocks of birds swirl in the air. Pairs of birds chase, the
feeling of freedom.

INT. CLASSROOM - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

TEACHER (a different one) is at the white board explaining a diagram. Pupils are copying it into their books making notes, checking text books, some small chatter as they work.

JJ appears attentive until his gaze drifts boredly out the window distracted by birds chasing each other across the sky.

TEACHER (O.C.)

Jerome.
JEROME!

There is some sniggering from other students as he wearily turns to pay attention.

JJ
Wot Miss?

EXT. FIELD / REC - LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON

JAX'S feet brushing thru' the long grasses her step pressing a way through.

She slips her bag from her shoulder to her hand and lets it brush the grasses as she walks.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Tinny radio playing, 'Get Yourself Together' by Young Disciples. MARK in house clothes picking thru' dried rice in a pan, washes it several times before setting it on the gas.

He starts to season some meat.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON

JAX'S eyes take in the expanse of greenery around her. Her anxious fingers show her stress, the small wildlife oblivious to her presence.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON

MARK covers the meat in the seasoning bowl, puts it in the fridge, he takes out several vegetables which he starts washing and chopping.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON

JAX carefully lays down her jacket easing herself onto it.

The wildlife buzzes around her, birds watch her, the constant traffic hums in the distance never far away.

Camera slowly tracks in on her: as tired she becomes less interested in her surroundings as she feels the weight of her world. She slowly just about shakes her head, exhausted.

Time passes.

Planes leave their trail across the sky, leaves breeze and creatures crawl. Grasses shiver and the relentless traffic beyond never stops.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - LATE AFT. - MOMENTS LATER

JJ
Are there birds in them?

JAX
No... No birds.

Beat

JJ
Am I in them?

JAX
...No... Not you.

JJ
Is Dad in / 'em?

JAX
No.

Beat

JJ
...Just you?

JAX
Not just me... but...

SHE watches his disappointment.

JAX (CONT'D)
Just me.

JJ
Is it always the same?

Beat

JAX shakes her head 'no'.

JJ (CONT'D)
Are you scared in 'em?

JAX looks at her SON.

JJ (CONT'D)
...If you was scared you should
dream me in em and I'd come / and -

JAX (GENTLY)
- and do what?

JJ plays with the grass.

JAX (DRY) (CONT'D)
...Put you in my dreams be a
nightmare.

JJ smiles.

JAX (CONT'D)
Lucky I ent scared in em huh?

JJ
...Wish I had dreams like yours.
Cool.
Can't remember mine.

Beat

JAX
So this is where I should look you
right?

JJ shrugs. JAX watches him.

JAX (DRY) (CONT'D)
You shruggin me boy?

JJ smiles.

JAX (DRY) (CONT'D)
You think you can sit there and
gimme a shrug / off?

JJ (AMUSED)
Nah.

JAX
'Nah'?

JJ
No.

JAX
'No'. Thass right 'no' - bout
'nah'.

SHE watches him, smiles, JJ tries not to grin. HE gives a tiny shrug again. JAX goes to pinch him but he has already ducked out the way.

JAX (CONT'D)
How's German?

JJ
Didn't have it.

Beat

JJ (CONT'D)
...Geography's borin tho'.

JAX
Don't care how borin it / is.

JJ
You'd be bored.

JAX
Work's borin.

JJ
Not as borin as geography.

JAX (DRY)
Cos you know?
Y'gettin good trainin boy.

They settle into their own thoughts.

JJ
...Sometimes I come here.

Beat

JAX
You got homework?

JJ says nothing, JAX eyes him.

JAX (CONT'D)
You got homework.

JJ gets up awkwardly, slinging his bag on his back as JAX watches him.

JAX (CONT'D)
...Soon come.

JJ nods as he goes, JAX watching him leave.

INT. KITCHEN - FRIDAY EVENING

MARK snaps off the music on the radio (a different track). JAX reluctantly sits at the table.

HE carefully plates up the meal he's made. He is a little nervous. The table is set well for two. Neither are comfortable.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Where's JJ?

MARK
JJ's alright.

JAX
Ent askin if he's alright, askin
where he / is.

MARK
Think I wouldn't know where he is?

They eat, the vibe isn't what MARK wanted. He glances at JAX starting her food.

MARK (CONT'D)
By y'mums.

Beat

They eat.

JAX
...Y'leave somethin for him?

MARK
He's eatin there.

Beat

JAX
Leave him a little somethin / tho'.

MARK

He won't need feedin.

JAX

He likes a little left overs - you
know he likes a little left /
overs.

MARK

He ent comin home hungry / Jax.

JAX

How you / know?

MARK

So what? Tonight's about him / or -

JAX

I dunno what tonight's meant to be
about Mark.

They eat in an awkward silence. MARK watches her the evening
isn't working, JAX concentrates on her food.

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)

...I ent really into him bein out
without checking / with -

MARK

Y'mum's fine about it.

JAX

She knew?

MARK

I said we wanted / to -

JAX

(You) chattin our business?

MARK sighs, shakes his head slightly.

MARK

Y'mum's fine about havin him, she
loves / it.

JAX

I'm just / sayin that -

MARK

I know.

JAX

Y'know.

MARK

I know.

They continue the meal in silence.

INT. BATHROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

Condensation runs down the window. A shower blasts powerfully out of shot.

MARK is in the shower, parts of his blurred figure visible beyond the shower curtain. Droplets of shower water power into the shower curtain chasing down the plastic.

INT. KITCHEN - FRIDAY NIGHT

Wet dishes are stacked dripping clean on the draining board. The table cleared apart from condiments and wiped down.

A plate is covered by another plate and stands on the side for JJ.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

JAX sits at the end of their made bed thoughtful. She toys with her night T-shirt, loosening it over her abdomen.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S GARDEN - FRIDAY NIGHT

MARK stands in the dark garden in clean house clothes cold, his breath visible, isolated.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - FRIDAY NIGHT - LATER

JJ in his PJ's passes his MUM's room glimpsing her sitting there. He watches for a moment:

JJ (QUIETLY)

Night Mum.

JAX

Come.

He crosses to her.

JAX (CONT'D)

...Nice time huh? Nana spoil yu?

JJ grins.

JJ
Dad did me leftovers downstairs
too.

JAX
(For) tomorrow.

She gives him the usual squeeze and kiss good-night.

JAX (CONT'D)
S'late.
Sweet dreams yeh?

JJ nods enjoying their shared moment, hesitates.

JJ
...Can I say good night to the baby
too?

JAX tries to mask her surprise she watches her son who waits expectantly. She gives the smallest of nods. JJ leans in to her belly, whispers loudly:

JJ (CONT'D)
'Ni'ight. See you soon.'

He watches her belly a moment.

JJ (CONT'D)
Iss small.

JAX
You were small. Look atchu now.

JJ grins and bounces out of the room continuing to the bathroom.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - NIGHT

The trees stand as dark figures their treetops lit by moonlight.

Nocturnal animal's glowing eyes occasionally flicker in the dark.

EXT. HIGH STREET - NIGHT

The 24 hour signs glow down the empty street. A fox saunters down the road like he owns it.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

MARK sits on his side of the bed in his boxers. JAX sits on her side of the bed in her nightshirt not facing each other. A lot of air between them.

MARK (QUIETLY)
...JJ wants a girl...
But I'd love it to be a boy.

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY)
I know you know.

MARK
...I know you.

Beat

MARK (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
(I) know you shittin yourself...
I'm shittin myself. But better we
be brickin it together.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
...Jax.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
Jax?

JAX (QUIETLY) (DRY)
You got a way with words.

MARK
Nah.
I got a way with you.

He clambers across the bed to her. From behind he gently holds her JAX doesn't respond, he gently tries to kiss her but notices her just about flinch.

MARK (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...So what? I can't touch you now?

He backs off a little.

MARK (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
When's it due?

JAX says nothing, does nothing. MARK touches her gently.

MARK (CONT'D)
When's it due?

SNAP TO:

The sound of JAX'S visions ring deafeningly loud.

Snatch of JAX'S VISION:

JAX is in it sweating, trembling, scared. She utters something sharp but unheard in the vision. The vision intensifies slightly. Exhausted in it she utters:

VISION JAX
Fuck.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - NIGHT MOMENTS LATER

JAX'S nose trickles blood, she is frightened and confused.

The deafening noise of the vision snaps out with:

MARK
What the fuck's goin on?

MARK watches her from the doorway. JAX is startled.

MARK (CONT'D)
Y'bleedin -

JAX
I'm not bleeding.

MARK
You're *bleeding* -

He goes to her, she turns away.

JAX
I'm not / (bleeding).

MARK
Jackie / you're -

JAX
I'm alright.

JAX grabs several sheets of toilet roll placing them under her nose, MARK goes to help.

MARK
What's -?

JAX
Iss alright - iss alright.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

Tucked under his duvet, face visible JJ hears the muffled voices of his parents. He blinks.

MARK
Lemme just -

JAX (O.C.)
I'm alright.

JJ pulls his duvet further up over him.

INT. BATHROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

MARK (O.C.)
So what - I can't touch you *at all*
now?

She tries to stem the flow with more tissues and tries to clean the sink. MARK watches.

JAX
It ent nuthin.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

The room stands empty, neat, TV fully off. A crack of moonlight seeping thru' the join of the curtains.

JAX'S muffled voice can be heard from upstairs.

JAX (O.S.)
I'm - juss - I'm ok.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

The bathroom stands empty. Some bloodied tissues lay on the side.

JAX'S muffled voice can just be heard from the kitchen.

JAX
I'm alright. It'll pass.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

JAX sitting at the kitchen table weary, head tilted back. MARK patiently refreshes some kitchen towel and gently compresses the bridge of her nose occasionally wiping a trace of blood from her nostril. They do this, stay like this, gentle.

MARK (QUIETLY)
You're burnin' / up.

JAX
Iss a nosebleed it's juss - it's /
just...

MARK (GENTLY)
Fuck Jackie man.

JAX
I'm alright.

MARK (GENTLY)
This happened before?

JAX says nothing.

MARK (CONT'D)
Let me just...

He gives her a gentle touch, she squeezes his hand both a bit nervous.

EXT. (CHEAP) GENERAL STORE HIGH STREET - SAT. AFTERNOON

A pile-em-high shop with too much stock. A ring of bandanas hang swaying slightly. A 'phone unlocking' dot matrix sign blinks on and off. A light box picture with a 'falling waterfall' shimmers in the way too full window display, amongst stacks of pots, pans and various household goods.

INT. (CHEAP) GENERAL STORE HIGH STREET - SAT. AFTERNOON

Crappy music plays from a tinny stereo.

The owner's hand - pen hovering fills in a crossword he is doing on the counter. The pen hovers again, is put down.

LAURYN'S hand brushes thru' the hanging bandanas, her earbuds cable leads up to her searching face looking thru' the selection. Tinny music bleeds out from them.

The OWNER'S eyes flick up in her direction - stay on her.

Other shoppers continue to browse unobserved.

LAURYN fingers a hanging bandana. Beyond her the shop keeper eyes her suspiciously. LAURYN browses, comes back to the bandanas thoughtful, the SHOPKEEPER shifts LAURYN feels herself being watched she takes out one of her MP3 ear-buds, music bleeds out.

LAURYN (LOUDLY)
I have got money y'know.

LAURYN kisses her teeth. Exits.

EXT. HIGH STREET - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

LAURYN passes among the passing public and crosses to another general store.

EXT. HIGH STREET - SAT. AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

LAURYN entering another general store with a wide selection of bandanas hanging also.

INT. SECOND GENERAL STORE - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

LAURYN unplugs an ear bud. Tinny music bleeds out.

LAURYN
How much?

SHOPKEEPER #2
One fifty.

LAURYN lightly feels a couple she likes selects them, studies them.

LAURYN
Two for two pounds then yeh?

EXT. STREET JAX HOUSE IS ON - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Walking, LAURYN shifts her plastic carrier bag from one hand to the other. She is not as sure as she usually is. She starts to slow as she gets closer to JAX and MARK'S house. She watches the outside of it for a while apprehensive.

EXT. STREET JAX HOUSE IS ON - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

LAURYN is perched on a neighbour's wall a couple of doors down thoughtful, not sure what to do. She toys with her MP3, turns it off, pulls her earbuds out and scrunches them into her pocket. She watches JJ'S house.

Beat

She jumps down with her bag crossing the road deciding to knock.

I/E. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT DOOR - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

MARK opens the door to a nervous LAURYN.

MARK
Hey stranger - longtime -

MARK calls back into the house.

MARK (SHOUTING) (CONT'D)
JEROME!
(to LAURYN) You alright?

LAURYN
Hi Mr / Trent.

MARK calls louder into the house.

MARK
JEROME! FOR YOU!

LAURYN shifts uncomfortable on the doorstep.

MARK (CONT'D)
(to LAURYN) Y'comin in?

MARK steps back, LAURYN looks to the floor unsure.

MARK (CONT'D)
Hold up hold up.

The door is semi closed as MARK disappears into the house calling Jerome.

Beat

Beat

LAURYN toys with her carrier bag, thinks about leaving. JJ re-opens the front door his hands and jeans covered in dirt.

They watch each other for a few moments.

EXT. JAX AND MARK'S GARDEN - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

JJ finishing digging a hole big enough to put the shoe box with the dead bird in. His hands are dirty, jeans muddy, he is sweating. LAURYN pulls some small flowers from her bag and the two bandanas trying to decide which one. She holds both.

LAURYN (QUIETLY)

Which?

JJ doesn't look.

LAURYN (CONT'D)

JJ, which one?

Beat

He indicates a preference, she puts the discarded one back in the bag watching him work.

Beat

JJ

...I think it starved itself.

Beat

LAURYN

What was you feedin it?

JJ

Bread.

LAURYN

Bread aint no good -

JJ

Then feed. Brought some special.
Looked it up.

The hole is big enough he sits back a bit breathless.

JJ (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)

Iss startin to stink.

Beat

LAURYN

Maybe it didn't want / to -

JJ
I think it was in pain.

Beat

JJ (CONT'D)
So it starved itself.

JJ puts some finishing touches to the bird grave. LAURYN looks in the box and makes to wrap the bird in the bandana. Before she gets to touch the dead bird:

JJ (CONT'D)
I'll do it.

EXT. JAX AND MARK'S GARDEN - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

JJ and LAURYN'S muddy trainers gently press down on the mound of earth that is the bird's grave.

They stand back.

LAURYN places the few flowers on it, JJ adjusts them slightly. They watch the grave not knowing what to do next. LAURYN watches JJ not knowing what to say.

LAURYN (QUIETLY)
...Sorry.

EXT. OVER GROUND RAIL TRACKS - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

JJ and LAURYN walk near some railtracks.

JJ
Dad says iss dumb. Says when they
stop runnin trains cos there aint
no tracks -

LAURYN
There is track / tho'.

JJ
- then they'll have to do / su'un.

LAURYN
But there is / track.

JJ
Says they aint doin nuthin cos they
don't wanna do nuthin cos they aint
sayin somethin.
(MORE)

JJ (CONT'D)
Says if it was us tiefin the tracks
then they'd say somethin then
they'd av somethin to say - mek a
big ting of it but cos it aint us
they aint sayin shit...
Thass what Dad says.

LAURYN looks at the intact tracks, doesn't understand.

JJ (CONT'D)
The copper.

They walk in silence.

LAURYN (QUIETLY)
...You still vex wid me?

JJ says nothing. They walk.

LAURYN (CONT'D)
Are yer?

Beat

JJ (QUIETLY)
Y'too heavy hand'.

LAURYN
...Thass what my mum says.

JJ
You told your / mum?

LAURYN
You told yours.

Beat

LAURYN (CONT'D)
Mum says I'm clumsy. Don't know
what I'm doin. Don't know my own
strength.

JJ
You aint strong.
...I'm stronger than you.

LAURYN
(I'm) clumsy tho'.

They walk and climb thru' some fencing, a short cut.

JJ
Nah. You aint.

Beat

They walk, LAURYN'S hand lightly brushing his.

LAURYN
Your mum still sick?

JJ
She ent sick she just pregnant.
Toldju.

LAURYN
She know you know yet?

Beat

LAURYN (CONT'D)
I don't want no kids or if I had
kids I'd have four. Two boys two
girls - have the boys first...
Three boys and one girl so then no-
one could ramp wid her. Other than
that I don't want no kids.

JJ
...No-one don't ramp wid you.

LAURYN smiles.

JJ pushes into LAURYN she pushes back, he pushes into her
harder, they giggle.

LAURYN
You gonna be a good big brother JJ.
My brother's a idiot... but you'll
be a good one.

They continue towards the rec. SHE is forgiven.

EXT. GREGG'S BAKERS - MONDAY MORNING

JAX on her way to work, exits the bakers with a small cake
bag.

INT. JOB CENTRE KITCHEN AREA - MONDAY MORNING

It is yet to open, the smokers are huddled outside, including
BERNIE. Some staff are at their stations, a couple drift
thru' the kitchen eyeing JAX but saying nothing.

JAX rummages thru' the drawer for some scissors. She snaps open a cupboard for a small plate which she washes and dries before exiting the room.

INT. JOB CENTRE JAX'S DESK - MONDAY MORNING

JAX cuts a piece of masking tape, gets a toothpick from her drawer and makes a small white flag which she sticks in the small cup cake she had bought.

JUSTIN (O.C.) (CALLING)
Who's doin the doors?

The small peace offering is placed on BERNIE'S desk, just as they all start to file in. JAX re-sits, saying nothing as she gets ready to start her work day.

EXT. STAFF CAR PAR - MONDAY AFTERNOON

BERNIE
...You in 'em?

JAX
Some.

BERNIE
Doin what?

JAX shrugs.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
They all the same?

JAX
Nah. Yeah - sorta different but...

Beat

BERNIE
Bad dream sleepin.

JAX
They're worse -

BERNIE
'than dreams' you said.

Beat

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...You alright?

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY)

...No.

Beat

BERNIE unlocks the car.

BERNIE

You gettin in then or what?

INT. BERNIE'S CAR - PARKED OUTSIDE JAX'S HOUSE - MOMENTS
LATER

The women sit in the car in their own thoughts. The engine is running, the car radio is on quietly. A too lively DJ chats over a tune.

Beat

BERNIE turns off the engine, kills the radio. The keys sway in the ignition the vibe in the car is still. BERNIE shifts. She goes to say something changes her mind, JAX notices.

BERNIE

...Like... I'm tryin to...

Beat

BERNIE (CONT'D)

...Is it somethin like a
psychological -

JAX

B.

BERNIE

Some throw-back su'un that's comin
out in -

JAX

No.

BERNIE

Stressin out your - so they're
stress bleeds.

JAX

No.

BERNIE

You don't know.

JAX
You don't / know.

BERNIE
Is it somethin from the - y'know...
like your body's past -

JAX (QUIETLY)
What?

BERNIE
...From the last three -

JAX (QUIETLY)
- four -

BERNIE
- your body's kinda like...

JAX goes to say something, doesn't.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Aint bein bad Jax but -

JAX
You're meant to be reassuring me.

BERNIE
Who's reassurin me? Iss a bit mad -
one minute you can't av no more,
two-tvos you're tellin / me -

JAX
They thought it would be
'difficult' for me have a next /
yout'.

BERNIE
They said you 'couldn't av no more'
I was there remember - me and Mark
both andju never even tell me
you're tryin -

JAX
I weren't / tryin.

BERNIE
Iss like - I'm tryin to...

BERNIE looks confused, JAX people watches thru' her window.

Beat

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...Glad you never done what I did
though.

Beat

JAX
I'm not.

BERNIE sighs.

BERNIE
Right.
...Whass Mark sayin?

BERNIE watches her, waiting.

JAX
Y'know.

BERNIE
No. I don't know.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Excited.
Nervous. Y'know.

Beat

BERNIE (QUIETLY)
...I weren't talkin bout the
pregnancy.

JAX avoids BERNIE'S eye BERNIE knows her well enough to know
MARK hasn't been told as much as she has.

Beat

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...Hallucinations.

JAX (QUIETLY)
Visions.

BERNIE
Dream sleepin.

JAX
...Visions.
Toldju.

Beat

JAX (VERY QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...Frightening.

INT. JAX'S MUM AND DAD'S FRONT ROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

JAX'S DAD has his feet up, mouth part open as he sleeps off dinner breathing loudly.

JAX'S MUM on her separate easy chair glares at him as she turns up the tv watching her soap.

INT. JAX'S MUM'S KITCHEN - LATER AFTERNOON

From behind: The figures of MARK washing up, JJ drying. They muck about and chat as they work.

MARK
...I think I'd want a boy y'know.

JJ looks at his Dad.

MARK (CONT'D)
But you'd be a hard act to follow son.

INT. JAX'S OLD BEDROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

JAX lays on her old single bed watching the portable TV. SANDRA moves around the room ironing her work clothes - she still lives there, she keeps an eye on the TV programme.

JAX (DRY)
...Now you're earnin' -

SANDRA
My / business.

JAX
Now you got a few shekels / comin in -

SANDRA
Why you all up in my / business?

JAX
- you can put a little something mum and dad's / way.

SANDRA
I don't put my mout' on your
household - so don't put your mout'
on -

JAX
This aint your / household.

SANDRA
- you don't even live here.

JAX
I don't live here cos I left. I
grew up. I got out and did what
most people / do.

SANDRA
Good for you good for you / Sis.

JAX
Payin my way not stayin home ridin
mum and dad's back.

SANDRA
Wish I was you yeah? Shame I ent
you. Would it that we was all like
friggin you. *Sis*.

JAX deliberately starts to channel hop. SANDRA eyes JAX'S
pregnant belly.

SANDRA (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...Fifth time lucky.
Fifth time lucky?

JAX
JJ's where I got lucky. Luck ent
got nothin to do with / this.

SANDRA
You nervous - aint you nervous?

JAX refuses to respond.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
...If I was you I'd be nervous, I'd
be shittin' myself.
Mum and Dad know y'know.

JAX says nothing.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
We all know. Aint sayin nuthin till
you 'announce'.
(MORE)

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Knowin whass happened before an
all. So we waitin on you.

JAX refuses to respond.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
You got us all playin your little
game ennit?

JAX says nothing.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
...How far gone was you... when you
lost the last one...?

JAX says nothing.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Further on than this one ennit...?

Beat

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Bes' you rest and not stress up
y'self... aye. Sis.

JAX fiercely avoids looking at SANDRA. SANDRA changes the TV
channel back to what it was.

EXT. HIGH STREET - MONDAY MORNING

Between shoppers and people, signs in some shop windows read
'Last Few Days', '30% off', 'Sale! Sale! Sale!' etc.

EXT. HIGH STREET - MONDAY MORNING

Amongst the traffic a large white van pulls over its
passenger opens the slide side door as too many EASTERN
EUROPEAN MEN clamber out as more get in, including MAN 4.

Beyond it a couple of PCSO'S watch on, unnoticed amongst the
pedestrians.

The white van already gone passes the YOUNG MAN.

EXT. NANDO'S - MONDAY MORNING

YOUNG MAN is seen inside at the counter having the same
conversation asking for work as usual. The employee shakes
her head, he leaves his CV on the counter anyway. The
employee having already lost interest, he makes his way out.

EXT. STAFF SMOKER'S CORNER - MONDAY MORNING

Amongst the banter of the smokers JAX can just be seen (BERNIE is not with her). JAX has a cigarette lightly clenched between her teeth hesitates as she gently lights it and pulls on it fresh. She exhales the smoke slowly, enjoying.

INT. LADIES WORK LOOS - AFTERNOON

JAX trying to scrub any trace of nicotine from her fingers. BERNIE looks on unimpressed.

BERNIE
You are jokin me?

JAX says nothing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
You are (jokin)-you are jokin me?

JAX says nothing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Nah nah / nah -

JAX
Behave yourself -

BERNIE
What-? you in here tryinta hide the fuckin fact -

JAX (QUIETLY)
Got nuthin to / hide.

BERNIE (DRY)
Or juss don't want Mark to know?

JAX says nothing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Or is it you tryinta smoke it outta you or su'un? Or su'un juss enough so it come out fucked up or backward or some such shit?

JAX blasts the blower to dry her hands BERNIE waits till it stops.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Least you was making the effort to
do shit right when you lost the
other ones.

JAX

Don't / fuckin -

BERNIE

I'ma tek dis as your hormones goin
mental -

JAX

Tek it how you / like.

BERNIE

- or your lacka sleep messin wid
y'mind -

JAX (DRY)

Whatever you / say.

BERNIE

- but I aint gonna stand here and
watch you smoke your way thru' your
bombo claat mistakes.

JAX

'Mistakes'?!

A cubicle door creaks open. MADDY, sheepishly crosses to wash
her hands. The two women surprised at her presence watch her.

BERNIE

(to MADDY) What is said in the bogs
stays in the bogs.
Y'unnerstand?

MADDY

I didn't... I don't... I didn't
hear what you was...

JAX and BERNIE silently watch as MADDY glances at the hand
dryer, glances at the women and decides to quickly shake her
hands dry instead as she makes her way out the women watching
her go.

JAX (QUIETLY)

Fuck you yeh? Bernie.

BERNIE

Hear wot - a piece a fuckin cake
ent gonna do it this time,
Jacqueline.

INT. OPEN PLAN COUNCIL OFFICE - MONDAY AFTERNOON

JUSTIN stands over the photocopier scooping up copies of a clients notes.

The office is busy, all workers have clients and there are several people waiting, all ages.

A child feels the leaves of a fake plant in the busy office as it waits with its DAD in the queue. DAD taps the child's fingers away from the plastic plant.

Various signs of encouragement on the walls about getting back to work.

Another hand takes another number from the machine.

The dot matrix changes figures.

A few TEENAGERS sit bored.

The TODDLER tries to eat the plastic plant.

MADDY glances at BERNIE and JAX. ALEX notices the off vibe between them, says nothing glancing to MANJEET who has picked up on it also.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - MONDAY NIGHT

Thru' JJ's rain soaked window the blurry lights of London blink. JJ's finger traces a raindrop down the condensation, before drawing a simple image of a bird.

The bathroom door is heard to slam shut behind MARK.

JJ wipes his window clean.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - MONDAY NIGHT

Thru' the ajar bedroom door, JAX can just be seen perched on the edge of the bed. Her eyes close for a brief moment, weary. Her fingers automatically checking her nose for blood, there is none. Tired she exits the room.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - MONDAY NIGHT

JJ's tv is quietly on. His room busy with kids stuff, homework and school books. Laying on his bed with him, their usual routine is JAX absently playing with his hair. He slouches on her watching TV but she can't concentrate.

JJ's eyes don't leave the TV screen. He gently sniffs a couple of times.

JJ (QUIETLY)
You been smokin Mum?

JAX (QUIETLY)
...No.

JJ continues to watch his programme convinced. JAX tries to keep her voice steady.

JAX (CONT'D)
...Y'dun your homework?

JJ's eyes don't leave the TV.

JJ
Never had none.

His eyes don't leave the TV.

JAX
...JJ.

JJ
I dunnit in class. (It) was easy.

JAX tries to control her breathing but she is struggling.

JAX (GENTLY)
...Y'too smart.

JAX'S body starts to quietly heave as she tries to stop herself crying.

For a while JJ doesn't notice absorbed in his programme.

As his mum tries to suppress her emotions he glances up at her and sees. He watches her not knowing what to do.

Beat

SNAP TO:

BLACK SCREEN:

TITLE 'SEPTEMBER'

SFX: Over the title, the muffled sounds of JAX and MARK in the middle of a huge argument.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

The TV is on quietly but the muffled sounds of raised voices intrudes from downstairs. LAURYN sits by JJ on his bed both with no choice but to hear.

The silent pictures of birds / wildlife freely look down on the two kids.

MARK (O.C.)(LOUDLY)
Go on - go on - sit there sit there
- *sit there* - go on - sit there and-

LAURYN and JJ can't look at each other both embarrassed.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - THURSDAY NIGHT

JAX seated at the kitchen table heavily pregnant. MARK furious is up and around her:

MARK
- sit there and say that - say it
say it - *say it* - go on - to my
face - fuckin *go on!*

HE hisses into her ear:

MARK (CONT'D)
Yeh - see yeh? See - yeh? Y'don't
even try an' (deny) - don't even -
y'not even - not even tryin to - go
on, deny it *thass you* - try ennit -
try - TRY. Lie. *Lie* -.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

Frustrated, MARK downstairs is heard shouting.

MARK (O.C.)
To my face GO ON! *Jax. LIE!*
Go on. (I) fuckin dare yer!

LAURYN slowly looks at JJ who does not look at her.

LAURYN (QUIETLY)
Jerome...
I gotta go home.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

The bathroom stands empty, clean, toothbrushes leaning against each other, a tap drips slowly. The sound of the argument resonating from the kitchen.

MARK (O.C.)(LOUDLY)
Sit there - yeh sit there like
you're su'un -

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - THURSDAY NIGHT

JAX still sits at the table struggling silently to hold her upset and temper back, refusing to clock MARK.

MARK
- sit there like you're su'un
special - like you're somethin who
someone wants - who someone would
want - yeh? Who someone would want
to fuckin lay down wid and set up
wid for the last twenty (years) -
sit there like you're some *su'un*
like *that*.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
...You aint shit Jacqueline.

HE watches her baiting her, seeing her temper rise.

MARK (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
You aint shit - you aint nu'un -
you ent nu'un no-one wants...
Nuthin.
Who gonna want you?
Who gonna fuckin (want) - you aint
fuckin worth... (nuthin Jax).

MARK watches her.

MARK (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
This shit aint worth havin truss
mi... '*Jax*'.

MARK watches her.

MARK (CONT'D)
...You aint worth this.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

The quiet downstairs is worse than hearing the raised voices.

LAURYN shifts slightly. JJ is still.

LAURYN watches JJ's one tear creep down his face.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S STAIRS - THURSDAY NIGHT

JJ and LAURYN quietly making their way downstairs. LAURYN putting her jacket on hovers at the front door.

JJ (QUIETLY)
...He said he'd drop you.

JJ nervously looks towards the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - THURSDAY NIGHT

JAX still hasn't moved from sitting. JJ enters the tense kitchen both JAX and MARK avoid looking at him.

Beat

JJ (QUIETLY)
...She gotta go (home)... Lauryn's
gotta go (home)...

JJ is nervous to say more.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...You said you drop / her.

MARK
I know what I said.

JJ looks between his parents. No-one speaks.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
Hear wot Son.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
Son?

JJ (QUIETLY)
...Dad.

MARK
Hear what boy, see if you can work
dis -

JAX
Mark -

MARK
See if you can GCSE this one -

JAX
Mark / don't.

MARK
- cos your Dad's strugglin so see
if you can maths it for me that how
from your mother wouldn't let me
touch / her -

JAX
Jerome go see / your -

MARK
- Jerome don't go *nowhere*.

JJ doesn't move.

JAX (QUIETLY)
Leave him outta dis ting / Mark.

MARK
You help y'Dad out yeh?

JAX
Mark!

MARK
Huh?

JJ doesn't move.

MARK (CONT'D)
Huh?

JJ reluctantly nods.

JJ
...Yeh.

MARK looks at JJ hard.

JJ (CONT'D)
Yes.

MARK

Aint lookin to embarrass yer boy
you ent embarrassed is yer cos I
ent embarrassed - c'mon now cos we
both done had dem talks - cah see
it - *dis one* (Jax)- one minute she
want - the next minute she / don't -

JAX

Mark-leave-the-boy-outta / (this) -
Jerome -

MARK

- for the longest time so how the
ass it maths it that / all now -

JJ has tears quietly creeping down his cheeks.

JAX

JJ - JJ come out the kitchen.

JJ shifts slightly.

MARK

Don't go *nowhere* / boy.

JJ stays.

JAX

I swear to God / Mark -

MARK

Cos I know it don't tek no A-level
maths to know I aint fuckin stupid
like I can't fuckin *count*.

JJ is transfixed and upset, says nothing. JAX watches MARK in
disbelief.

MARK (CONT'D)

Wot?

JAX (QUIETLY)

...Jerome -

MARK

(to JAX) Bes' you say nothin / yeh.

JAX (QUIETLY)

Jerome come out the / kitchen.

MARK

Stay there boy and bes' you (Jax)
don't say *shit*.

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

Cos y'mum thinks - 'ere wot - what d'you think a y'mum? What d'you - what d'you think your mum is boy? Not askin what we thought she was - we know what we thought she was who we thought she was - not askin that cos we know that don't stand for shit - (the) last twenty years don't stand for *nuthin* know that now.

Nah.

What I wanna know Son, what I'm askin - cos you know she thinks we're stupid - she thinks we're dumb - what I wanna know is what you think bout her? ...What you think of her?

JJ can't speak.

MARK (CONT'D)

I know what I think...

JJ doesn't speak. JAX is upset at watching her son's upset.

MARK (CONT'D)

Jerome?

JAX (QUIETLY)

Stop / Mark.

MARK

What d'you think about her / boy?

JAX (QUIETLY)

Mark I aint gonna tell you again leave / the boy -

MARK

You 'aint gonna / tell me' *what*?

JAX

- leave him / outta -

MARK

What is it you ent gonna tell me?
What else you *got* to not tell me?

JAX says nothing.

MARK (CONT'D)

Jacqueline?

(You) 'tell me what?'

He watches her.

MARK (CONT'D)
Tell me *somethin*. Fuckin - ah beg -
tell me fuckin / *somethin*.

JAX (QUIETLY)
Leave JJ outta dis madness Mark.

MARK
I never drag him in / it.

JAX
I never -

MARK
Yeh yu did from yu dunnit - JJ
clear the table.

JJ doesn't move.

MARK (CONT'D)
JJ clear down the table y'mum's dun
wid her dinner.

JJ doesn't move. MARK watches the look between JJ and JAX.

JAX
Leave it JJ.

JJ doesn't move.

MARK
Somethin wrong wid your hearin /
boy?

JJ doesn't move, looks to the floor.

JAX (QUIETLY)
Leave it JJ, yeh?
(to JJ) Iss alright.
Iss alright.
...I'll do it later.

Beat

MARK (QUIETLY)
From everybody finish their food.
JJ.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
Jerome. Clear the table.
...Clear the table.

JJ and JAX watch each other. JJ doesn't move.

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
Clear the / table.

JJ (QUIETLY)
You finished mum...?

JAX is heartbroken but says nothing. A stand off in the kitchen, JJ is the first to move as he reluctantly starts to clear the table starting furthest away from his mum. It gets harder as he gets closer to her carefully removing items from around her, isolating her.

JAX (VERY QUIETLY)
...Jerome.

Beat

JJ
...Lauryn has got to go / home.

JAX
I'll take / her.

MARK
No you won't.

JJ looks to MARK unsure what to do. JAX looks to her son.

JAX
JJ.
Jerome.
Jerome. Tell her to go get her
things.

JAX tries to give JJ a gentle touch, he subtly shirks from it which she sees. It hurts. He exits the kitchen.

JAX doesn't move, incensed.

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
Un. Fuckin. Forgiveable.

MARK
...Yeh. You are.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S CAR - MOVING - THURSDAY NIGHT

Rain chases down the rear passenger window, LAURYN in the back is transfixed looking at the back of JAX's head. The journey is in an awkward silence.

JAX

Tell me what turnin Lauryn - from I
always / miss it.

LAURYN

This one.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S STAIRS - THURSDAY NIGHT

JJ sits partway up the stairs facing the front door. HE can hear his DAD clearing down the kitchen. MARK'S movements become less and less active. JJ hears a kitchen chair scrape and MARK sit down, then there is near silence. JJ watches the front door. He is still, only the tiny motion of his feet showing his anxiety.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

JJ opens his chest of drawers and pulls out a fresh pair of PJ bottoms, opens a second one and pulls out a fresh T-shirt. He exits his room with them.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

In his PJ's and T-shirt JJ awkwardly climbs into JAX'S side of his parents bed. He isn't used to the two pillows his MUM has.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S CAR. STATIONARY - THURSDAY NIGHT

The car is parked outside the house with only JAX in it. The seat belt zips undone over her pregnant belly, engine still running JAX sits there. Still.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

MARK kisses JJ, hugs him, they hold onto each other. MARK kisses his son again and lays him down.

MARK (QUIETLY)

Go sleep yeh. Love you bad.

JJ shuffles under the duvet, eyes his Dad exiting the room.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S CAR. STATIONARY - THURSDAY NIGHT

JAX still sat in the driver's seat as she was. She lights up a cigarette, familiar, pulling on it long and slowly. Some ash slowly cascades over her large pregnant bump. Weary, her eyes close she has had enough.

The exhaled cigarette smoke bounces back against the windscreen towards her.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - THURSDAY NIGHT

MARK sits at the clean table waiting, his mug of steaming hot drink untouched.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

JAX quietly gets her night things together careful not to wake JJ. She pauses by him, goes to kiss him but doesn't, nervous of waking him she exits the room instead quietly closing the door behind her.

JJ's eyes open watching her go.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

JAX takes in the room fully, freshly. The drawings, the detail, the pictures of birds etc. She closes his opened drawers gently. She clears a space for her clothes on his desk.

She clocks her pregnant reflection in the dark window, the night lights of London blurred by the rain running down the pane.

JAX sits on the corner of JJ's bed exhausted. She cries. Trying not to wake the rest of household she is beside herself.

The pictures of wildlife and of JJ growing up silently watching her.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURS. NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

In her night clothes JAX pulls the curtains closed. Lit only by the small muted TV she neatly folds and places her clothes on JJ's desk - almost too neatly. She studies the photos of JJ at various ages giving her no comfort.

She awkwardly climbs into the single bed, tries to do something with the one thin pillow and lays awake.

The silent TV that she does not watch flickers light over her and her swollen belly. She shifts, uncomfortable.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

A hint of something shifting outside JJ's room door. The quietest of knocks. JAX lays in bed unsure if she's heard right.

JAX opens the door to find nobody there but looking down sees one of her pillows carefully placed on the floor. She watches it a moment before gently picking it up and placing it under JJ's single pillow. She watches the single bed thoughtful.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

The room is clean, dark. The family toothbrushes stand in their cup, leaning against each other idle. A child's tube of toothpaste semi squeezed lays on the sink cap off toothpaste showing, family towels hang idle in their place on their hooks etc.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - LATER - NIGHT

MARK sleeps lightly. JJ sleeps too, head now resting on one single pillow.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - LATER - NIGHT

The mug MARK had still sits on the kitchen table silhouetted by the moonlight from the window.

The clock slowly flicks time forward.

JAX turns on a side light only, takes in the room for a moment before crossing to the chair at the table. She sits quietly, heavily, tired.

JAX eyes the mug then slowly gets up and carefully washes it. The hot water briefly snapping the boiler on noisily.

She sets it quietly on the empty drainer, clean. Watches it drip water. She wipes down the sink.

A moment.

She gets a tea-towel then slowly dries the mug and puts it away.

The clock slowly ticks time forward.

JAX snaps off the side light plunging the kitchen into a room of silhouettes in the darkness.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BATHROOM - THURSDAY NIGHT

JAX is exhausted.

She slowly lifts her night shirt revealing her swollen belly, watching it, then her reflection of it in the mirror. She presses her tight belly, pokes it then presses against it firmer before letting her night shirt fall gently back over it.

Sitting on the closed toilet she lights up a cigarette her hands sure and steady. She draws on it deeply, her belly rising and falling as she smokes. The tip of the cigarette at times close to the arc of her swollen belly.

The sound of her actions are heightened, the burn of the cigarette, her inhale, exhale, the rub of fabric against skin etc.

The fizz of the ash as she outs the stub of the cigarette under the cold tap.

Her hands open the bathroom cabinet, we catch a glimpse of her face in the mirror calm, methodical, eyes searching as her hands rummage O.C for what they are looking for.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - THURS. NIGHT

Silhouetted small potted plants stand on the windowsill against the net curtains.

The clock slowly ticks time forward.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

JAX gently eases herself down on the closed toilet blinks, waits, calm.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - THURS. NIGHT

The TV is on mute flickering and into the room that has been tidied. JJ'S bed carefully made with the two pillows in neat order. JAX'S clothes sit neatly where she had left them.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

JAX continues to sit as she was calm and still, eyes slowly blinking.

The sound of liquid dripping into a wet pool can be heard.

The taps of the sink are dry. The taps of the bath are dry.

JAX slowly closes her eyes as she exhales carefully.

MARK (O.S.)
Keys! Keys! Keys! Keys! JJ! You got
the keys?!

SNAP TO:

JAX AND MARK'S UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - THURS. NIGHT

MARK in his boxers frantically taking the stairs barefoot to get downstairs, carrying something heavy. He shouts back upstairs:

MARK
Jerome! KEYS!

SNAP TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - THURS. NIGHT

JJ transfixed stands in his pajama bottoms and T-shirt bare foot, bewildered.

MARK (O.C.)(SHOUTS)
JEROME! JEROME!

SNAP TO:

JAX AND MARK'S HALLWAY DOWNSTAIRS - THURS. NIGHT

MARK'S bare feet trying to force themselves into trainers -

MARK (SHOUTING) (CONT'D)
JEROME -

Still carrying a load - it is JAX'S limp, unconscious, heavily pregnant body MARK struggles to hold her.

SNAP TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - THURS. NIGHT

JJ still transfixed as he was.

MARK (O.S.) (SHOUTS)
- **MOVE!!**

JJ can't and can't stop watching what he's seeing.

SNAP TO:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - THURS. NIGHT

JUMP CUTS: MARK in his boxers and trainers rushes to the closed front door he needs JJ to open it as his arms are full of JAX.

MARK
JEROME! *JEROME!* Fuck!

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - THURS. NIGHT

JJ transfixed, bewildered sees his MUM being carried by his DAD. She has tea towels wet with blood tied around her wrists trying to stem the flow but some blood still seeping thru'.

MARK (O.C.)
(Hollers) **KEYS!** JEROME!

JUMP CUTS: JJ snaps into action searching for his Dad's keys.

SNAP TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE / CAR - THURS. NIGHT - RAINING

JUMP CUTS: Thru' the wet, MARK awkwardly bundles semi conscious JAX onto the back seat. JJ's bare feet on the concrete are at the front passenger side - MARK sprints round to the driver's side:

MARK
Sit with your mum - sit with your
(mum)- *sit* with her.

JUMP CUTS: JJ'S bare feet on the wet pavement rapidly step into the back of the car.

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S MOVING CAR - THURS. NIGHT - RAINING

JJ scared on the backseat with his MUM'S head on his lap, her eyes closed and her breathing light. He can't take his eyes from her, he is scared to touch her he has her blood stains on him. The sound of the windscreen wipers relentlessly wiping water around the wet screen.

JJ (QUIETLY)
Dad... Dad...

The car drives on with JJ and JAX being bounced by the movement of it.

JJ (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...Are we nearly there yet?

SNAP TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT - LATER (FLASH FORWARD)

The sound of the car journey plays over the visuals of:

MARK and JJ sit in a corridor on impersonal waiting chairs, still in their night clothes and stained.

MARK (O.S.)
She alright? She alright?

SNAP TO:

INT. JAX AND MARK'S MOVING CAR. THURS. NIGHT (PRESENT) - RAIN

MARK'S eyes flick from the wet road to JJ in the rear view.

MARK
...She *alright*..?

JJ says nothing, JAX'S head shifts on his lap as the car continues its rapid drive.

JJ gingerly touches his MUM'S bloodied hand but is repulsed and draws back.

INT. HOSPITAL A + E - THURSDAY NIGHT

The bright glare of a busy, noisy hospital A+E department.

JAX is quickly bundled onto an emergency trolley. STAFF hustle around her, call her, assess her, wheel her away. MARK is left standing in his boxers and trainers, stained, breathless, forgotten.

JJ stands by his Dad barefoot in his PJ bottoms and old T-shirt. Stunned. Both very alone amongst the hustle.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - THURS. NIGHT - LATER (REPEATED SHOT)

Clinical, bright and almost empty. MARK and JJ sit in a corridor on impersonal waiting chairs still in their stained night clothes. JJ barefoot.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - THURS. NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

JAX'S MUM and DAD sit fully clothed in coats etc., anxiously next to them. All in their own silent thoughts.

Beat

The footsteps of SANDRA build as she approaches carrying two plastic bags with clothes. At JJ and MARK she hands them and their house keys over.

SANDRA
I dun the bathroom.

Neither JJ or MARK move or take the offered bags.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Jerome.

MARK (QUIETLY)
...Jerome.

JJ takes his bag. SANDRA forces MARK to take his.

SANDRA
What they sayin?

Beat

SANDRA (CONT'D)
They said anythin / since -

MUM
Nu'un don't change.

Beat

MUM (CONT'D)
Juss ha' fi... wait.

Beat

SANDRA
How's the baby?

MARK (QUIETLY)
Fuck the baby this is about her.

SANDRA takes a seat.

Beat

SANDRA (QUIETLY)
...So what you do?

A flicker in MARK'S eye, he doesn't respond.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Whatchu do 'ar?

DAD (QUIETLY)
No Sandra.

Beat

SANDRA
...Las' time I see her she / was -

DAD
No / Sandra.

SANDRA
- someone gotta say it Dad - know
you're thinkin it - she seem
alright - she was alright - still
her same / self -

DAD
Not / here.

JJ looks between the adults.

SANDRA
- we all wonderin it tho' - know
you thinkin it Mum - only one who
been with her between us is... you.
Mark.
So I say / again what -

MARK (QUIETLY)

Jerome -

SANDRA

- is what you / do -

MARK

Jerome go get / changed.

SANDRA

- do to her to drive her to this?

MARK doesn't rise to it. JJ doesn't move.

Beat

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Jerome, you / know?

MARK

Don't -

SANDRA

Jerome what / d'you -?

MARK (QUIETLY)

Don't talk to my boy.

SANDRA

'Your' boy? My nephew - Jerome -

MARK (QUIETLY)

I ent gonna tell you again -

SANDRA

- or what - *what*? You gonna do me
like you did her?

MARK

I never did her / nuthin.

DAD

Sandra.

SANDRA (DRY)

She juss do it cos she's like that -
don't think so - cos she felt like
it? Don't think so Mark - not the
Jax that I know and I know her
longer than you - so su'un muss
have driven her / to it -

DAD

This isn't the / time.

SANDRA

- su'un or *someone* - and from it
weren't us, that leaves you - I'm
juss sayin what everyone is thinkin
- I'm juss sayin what everyone *here*
is thinkin - everyone that is
family is / thinkin.

MARK (QUIETLY)

Thank you for gettin the clothes
Sandra. But you can go home now.

SANDRA

You can't tell / me -

MARK

JJ go get / changed.

JJ doesn't move.

SANDRA

- can't tell me where to go what to
do and to tek myself / *anywhere*
Mark.

MARK

JJ go get *changed*.

JJ looks to his NAN who gives him a tiny nod.

SANDRA

What did you / do?

JJ

Where?

SANDRA

What did you do to my / sister?

MARK

Find somewhere *and* / *change*.

JJ snatches up his bag to find the male toilets.

SANDRA

What did you do Mark - what did you
say to / her?

MARK

(to DAD) If I say somethin to this
one -

SANDRA

'this one'!?

DAD
Leave it / now.

MARK
- it'll be somethin we both regret
so I suggest' -

NAN struggles to keep it together.

SANDRA
Suggest' *what?* Go on - what can you
'*suggest*'? Cos I ent gonna sit here
and slit *my* wrists am I? You ent
able to do *me* like that. *Mark*.

MARK is already up with his carrier bag following JJ to get changed.

SANDRA eyes him as he goes then looks to her parents for support, they are in their own thoughts, she sits back joining their silence.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - THURS. NIGHT - LATER

Some Staff pass the waiting family. JJ and MARK now fully dressed tho' not in clothes they would have chosen, bags full of their dirty items, old trainers on JJ'S feet.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

BERNIE sits with the family JJ slumped asleep his head on her lap, BERNIE gently pats the rise and fall of his sleeping body.

They wait.

INT. HOSPITAL SIDE ROOM ON WARD - THURS. NIGHT

JAX lays in bed against the fresh white neatly turned sheets, bed slightly propped up. Her wrists are freshly bandaged. She's on a drip. A nurse hustles around her checking, taking blood pressure, marking charts.

JAX'S tired eyes watch her.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...You a doctor?

NURSE (GENTLY)
No. I'm a nurse.

JAX closes her eyes tries to flex her fingers, it hurts.

NURSE (CONT'D)
How you doing?

JAX wearily watches the nurse.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...You wanna know why?

NURSE smiles at her kindly.

NURSE
Not if you don't want to tell me.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...I want to tell you.

NURSE pauses watches JAX, sees her struggle.

JAX (CONT'D)
...I been...
I've been...

JAX'S mouth moves but words struggle to form. Tears start to prick her eyes.

JAX (CONT'D)
I can't...

Beat

NURSE (GENTLY)
...Do you want me to get someone
for you to talk to?

JAX eyes the nurse pleadingly but says nothing. NURSE gives her a gentle comforting touch.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...How's the baby?

NURSE
Baby's doing fine... and you've got
a bit of a fan club outside.

JAX
I don't want -

NURSE
Only when you're ready.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

JAX'S DAD glances unseen in MARK'S direction. SANDRA dozes, JJ shifts on BERNIE'S lap she strokes his face lightly, talks quietly as his sleepy eyes open a touch:

BERNIE (VERY QUIETLY)
...You alright? Nu'un don't happen
sweetheart, go back to sleep.

Comforted he snuggles deeper into her lap eyes already closed as BERNIE gives him a gentle squeeze.

The NURSE passes them in the corridor stealing a glance at them as she goes.

They wait.

INT. HOSPITAL SIDE ROOM ON WARD - NIGHT - LATER

JAX is sitting in her high backed hospital chair in her hospital gown and dressing gown. Her wrists bandaged, drip to the side, looking uneasy.

On a visitors chair sits a non-uniformed member of staff with their ID dangling round their neck patiently waiting, thoughtful.

Beat

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR (GENTLY)
...The 'Second Coming's' quite
something.

JAX says nothing.

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
So...

JAX watches him.

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
...How long have you been having
these thoughts for..?

JAX says nothing.

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
What prompted you to think that, do
you / think?

JAX (QUIETLY)
I toldju.

Beat

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR
Did you get these type of thoughts
with -

He checks his notes.

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
Jerome?

JAX
No.

HE watches her, waits for more. There is none, he shifts.

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR
Sometimes - these thoughts aren't
always unique - Jackie. Sometimes
women feel like this - have felt
like this and it's linked to, say -
depression or a temporary kind
of...

JAX looks away already disengaging. The COUNSELLOR sees.

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
Although it can feel very real. I'm
sure.

JAX says nothing.

HOSPITAL COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
And I know it can be hard to hear -
and not what you want to hear if
this is what you've been living
with for the last several months -
I mean...
If you've been believing this is
the... y'know, that can all link
into what you think of you. What
that makes you. What would you
think that makes you..?

Beat

JAX tries to flex her fingers, feels the soreness of her
wrists, it hurts.

JAX (QUIETLY)
A fuckin big deal.

CROWD OF KIDS (O.S.)
Fight! Fight! Fight!

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - 3 WEEKS LATER. TUESDAY - RAINING

A large crowd of hyped school uniformed kids faces and bodies crammed together watching a fight.

Two fighting boys on each other, JJ and SIMON deep in battle on the floor. Surrounding them is a large crowd of noisy, hyped kids, all in uniform. Some supporting JJ, some calling SIMON'S name. LAURYN sees who's fighting and walks away from the crowd.

CROWD OF KIDS
FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!

JJ is on top of SIMON (white, 12) landing some fierce punches before SIMON - a much bigger boy - manages to roll him off and land a few of his own.

CROWD OF KIDS (CONT'D)
Fight! Fight! Fight!

Adult hands of a TEACHER loom into view grabbing SIMON off JJ. The crowd starts to scatter as SIMON is forced to his feet.

TEACHER (O.C.)(SHOUTS)
GET TO YOUR LESSONS! OR YOU'RE ALL
ON REPORT!

JJ still enraged lands a free blow bloodying SIMON'S nose before another TEACHER hauls him off.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
You two are in the shit.

JJ and SIMON breathing heavily, looking rough, eyeball as they are forced thru' the playground of admiring kids.

INT. HEAD TEACHER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Rain is heard battering against the window outside.

The HEAD TEACHER seated at his desk, the two boys standing in front of it. The HEAD waits, watches, he waits a bit bored. Slowly SIMON extends his hand to JJ to shake a truce.

JJ watches SIMON. Doesn't take his hand.

HEAD TEACHER
Come on.

JJ doesn't move.

HEAD TEACHER (CONT'D)
Come on Jerome.

JJ still doesn't move.

EXT. HIGH STREET - TUESDAY AFTERNOON - RAINING

The man standing with the big arrow 'Cash-4-Gold' sign is not there - but the big arrow is leaning up against some railings on its own. People hustle by ignoring it.

It slips to the wet floor. People still hustle by ignoring it some unknowingly treading on it.

EXT. BETTING SHOP - TUESDAY AFTERNOON - RAINING

Thru' the wet and passing bodies it glows warm doing busy trade inside.

EXT. FIELD / REC. - TUESDAY AFTERNOON - RAINING

The grasses are wet, wildlife is wet scurrying for shelter, leaves drip water, plants drink it in.

EXT. FIELD / REC. / WOODED AREA - TUESDAY AFTERNOON

The area is still wet though it's stopped raining.

JJ is watched by various birds from bird's eyes point of view. Some thru' the grasses, some from trees, some aerial, as he sits alone, dishevelled on his jacket on the wet grass, legs pulled up head bowed. A lonely figure.

The distant traffic rumbles endlessly on. A breeze catches the greenery, still JJ sits there bag slung to one side in his torn uniform.

The birds watch as LAURYN approaches quietly. She is nervous, hesitant, she doesn't get the chance to sit before:

JJ (QUIETLY)
Fuck off yeh.

Beat

LAURYN is hurt.

JJ (CONT'D)
Juss. Fuck. Off. Lauryn.

LAURYN doesn't sit, she is gutted.

LAURYN
...I didn't know they would spread
it... I didn't think they would say
nuthin. I only told...

Beat

LAURYN (CONT'D)
Jerome?

JJ hasn't bothered to even look at her. SHE doesn't know
whether to sit or stand.

Beat

She leaves with the birds and trees watching her go.

INT. SMALL OFFICE - TUESDAY AFTERNOON - RAINING

Raindrops chase each other down the outside of the window.
JAX seated inside watches them fall.

A functional office with an expectant vibe that JAX (in her
own clothes) deflects. She's content to say nothing, doesn't
want to be there.

Beat

JAX takes in the near empty car park.

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY)
You drive?

A different COUNSELLOR sits across from her.

COUNSELLOR
...Cycle.

JAX (QUIETLY)
(You're) gonna get wet.

COUNSELLOR looks at JAX'S file.

COUNSELLOR
...How long to go now?

Beat

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
How long have / you -

JAX
How long does it say?

COUNSELLOR
You tell me.

JAX
You got the file.

COUNSELLOR
I'm sure you know.

JAX
You're paid to know.

JAX eyes the COUNSELLOR like they are stupid.

JAX (DRY) (CONT'D)
A week since last time you asked.

Beat

JAX (DRY) (CONT'D)
...Soon.

COUNSELLOR
And how are you feeling about the
birth?
Now?

Beat

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
As you say, not long to go...

Time ticks on the COUNSELLOR calmly watches her, comfortable
and used to this.

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
...Or are you not going to talk
about that to me either today?

Beat

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
...You don't have to tell me
anything -

JAX (QUIETLY)
I know I / don't.

COUNSELLOR
you don't have to say anything you
know / that.

JAX
I know / that.

COUNSELLOR
But you do have to be here.

JAX
I know that. I'm / here.

COUNSELLOR
Which we both know and you - yes
you're 'here' -

JAX
I'm here - I come.

COUNSELLOR
You do come -

JAX
doin as I'm told -

COUNSELLOR
- doing as you're asked -

JAX
- 'doin as I'm told'.

JAX shrugs, just.

COUNSELLOR
...How are your -

JAX
Still sore.
...Crap grip.

COUNSELLOR
That'll come back.

JAX says nothing.

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
You'll get some more of that back -
not as much as before but more than
you have now - some physio - are
you doing the exercises they've /
recommended?

JAX
I'll discuss that with my Doctor,
(DRY) 'Doctor'.

COUNSELLOR
I'm not a Doctor, you know / that.

JAX (QUIETLY)
I dunno what the fuck you / are.

COUNSELLOR
Have you had any more 'visions'
Jacqueline?

COUNSELLOR watches her.

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
Have you had any further - the last
ones I have logged are from our
initial (conversation) - but you
were getting them quite...
regularly.
Weren't you?

Pause

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
There is something to talk about.
Jackie.

JAX says nothing.

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
I can still ask you to come here. I
will ask you to come here. Come
here and talk about nothing. Come
here and not talk. Either way.

Beat

JAX (DRY)
...(I've) stopped smoking.

COUNSELLOR
That's great. That is, really.
Great. I'm impressed -

JAX
That's / nothing.

COUNSELLOR
- and d'you still think you're
giving birth to the Second Coming?

Beat

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
Jackie?

JAX looks at the rain washed window.

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
...Jackie.

Beat

JAX shrugs. (Unseen to COUNSELLOR) She smiles, briefly. Just.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S CAR, PARKED. CAR PARK - TUES. AFTERNOON

The rain lashes down outside, bouncing off the windscreen. MARK in the drivers seat slouches down further, bored waiting. It's been a while. BERNIE glances over to him, looks out at the bad weather thru' the foggy passenger side window, wipes some of the condensation away. Lowers the window open a touch for air. Waits.

MARK sighs.

Beyond the windscreen is the clinic where JAX is.

MARK
You know what they talk bout in there?

BERNIE
No.

MARK
...How she say more to some - one a dem than she say to me?

Beat

MARK (CONT'D)
She say more to you than she sayin to me?

BERNIE
She aint sayin shit to me.
Thass mekkin any sense Mark.

They both get lost in their own thoughts.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
...How you doin?

MARK starts to answer but has no words. He sighs, tired.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
How's home?

MARK doesn't bother to answer. BERNIE watches him.

BERNIE (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...Yeah.

Beat

MARK (QUIETLY)
...Dis is bullshit.

BERNIE
Iss su'un.

MARK kisses his teeth.

MARK (QUIETLY)
You know who the babyfather is?

BERNIE
I dunno what the fuck's goin on
Mark.

INT. WINDOW PANE. SMALL OFFICE - AFTERNOON - LATER

Raindrops chase each other down the window pane. MARK has started the car, its headlights bounce among the drop-lets of water on the window. JAX sees it all in detail.

JAX (O.C.)(QUIETLY)
I think...

INT. SMALL OFFICE - TUESDAY AFTERNOON

JAX
I think that I ent been getting
them... dreams no more.

Beat

JAX (CONT'D)
Sleepin good.

COUNSELLOR (DRY)
No interruptions.

JAX (DRY)
Straight through.

COUNSELLOR (DRY)
No night terrors -?

JAX (DRY)
Nah.

COUNSELLOR
Your full eight hours of the good
stuff -

JAX
Thass right -

COUNSELLOR
- not still getting the nosebleeds
then?

JAX'S eyes flicker she says nothing.

COUNSELLOR (CONT'D)
We can do this.
Week in week out Jackie.
But I am still going to / ask.

JAX
I know I probably got some mental
somethin goin on and that I'm
probably a bit sick-in-the-head or
somethin and that it should be a
temporary ting and that I aint
unique. 'Doctor'. I been told all
that.

COUNSELLOR watches her, JAX has had enough.

JAX (DRY) (CONT'D)
Can I go now?

Beat

COUNSELLOR
...You said, 'probably'-.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - TUESDAY EARLY EVENING

JAX sitting at the end of the kitchen table alone. She traces the arc of her pregnant belly gently, gives it a tender touch. The only thing on the table is her hot steaming mug of tea with a spoon sticking out of it.

She lifts a spoonful of tea and awkwardly sips from it (the mug too heavy for her hands). SHE flexes her sore wrists, takes no more.

The sound of the TV drifts in to the kitchen from the front room.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - TUESDAY EARLY EVENING.

Some of MARK'S clothes hang from hangers in the room along with some items from the bedroom that are his. MARK on the sofa is not able to concentrate on the mindless TV.

He looks up, his eyes are wet.

The front door slams closed, JJ's hustle is heard from the hallway as he enters the house. MARK brusquely wipes his eyes.

MARK (CALLING)
Son?

JJ (O.S.)(CALLING)
...Yeh.

JJ still damp from outside pokes his head round the front room door.

MARK
Y'back?

JJ
Yeh.

MARK
Still rainin?

JJ
Nah it dun.

MARK
You alright?

JJ
Yeh, Dad.

They watch each other a moment, neither feeling that good.

MARK
...Alright.

JJ is already gone gently closing the front room door.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - TUES. EARLY EVENING

JAX watches him from the kitchen.

JAX (O.C.)
You got homework?

She waits, the game they play feels nervously awkward.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

JJ reluctantly steps into the room but hesitates across from JAX and comes no closer. Something unsaid passes between them. JAX tries a weak smile.

JAX
...You got homework.

JJ says nothing.

JAX (DRY) (CONT'D)
(It) still rainin?

JJ shakes his head. He watches her wrists.

JAX (CONT'D)
Y'eat?

JJ shrugs, she eyes him up and down seeing his torn uniform and marked face. JJ sees her see, tries to hide his shirt. He says nothing.

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...C'mere Son.

He wants to but doesn't.

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
Who you been fightin?

JJ
...No-one.

She watches him and his lie too weary to fight it.

JJ (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...I never started it.

JAX
You never 'started' / it.

JJ
I never started it...

JAX watches him unimpressed.

JJ (CONT'D)

I never (started it) - I dunno - I
didn't / even -

JAX

What was you fightin / about?

JJ

I dunno -

JAX

You 'don't know'.

JJ

I / dunno!

JAX

Not good enough boy -

JJ

Mum -

JAX

What was you fightin about this
time?

JJ

I never done / nuthin!

JAX

'Never done nuthin' tear up your
shirt? 'Never dun nuthin' mark up
y'damn face? Y'tell y'father?

JJ

Yeh.

JAX

What was you fightin over - and
don't play dumb like you / don't -

JJ

I / dunno.

JAX

- don't know nuthin -

JJ

Mum -

JAX

What was you -

JJ
Mum!

JAX
JEROME!

JJ (QUIETLY)
Same as last time -

JAX
Which was *what*?!

They eyeball.

JJ
You.

JAX blinks stunned with nothing left to say as JJ has already left the room, noisily making his way upstairs.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM - TUESDAY NIGHT

London's night lights shimmer blurred through his window pane. Street lights pump out a warm glow.

JJ's head gently leans against the window - eyes alert watching the outside world. His breath forms circles of condensation as he breathes so close to it.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - TUESDAY NIGHT

JAX weighed down with the pregnancy walks heavily from the kitchen. She pauses outside the closed front room door.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...Mark?

INT. JAX AND MARK'S FRONT ROOM - TUES. NIGHT

MARK lays on the sofa in a sleeping bag. Lit by the flicker of the quiet TV. He hears JAX but says nothing.

JAX (O.S.)
Mark.

He does nothing but listen quietly to the sound of her moving on.

INT. JJ'S BEDROOM DOORWAY - TUES. NIGHT

JAX stands in the doorway watching her sleeping son.

JAX (QUIETLY)
...JJ?

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...You wanna sleep by me?

There is no answer, JJ doesn't move.

JAX (CONT'D)
...I know you awake Son.

JJ shifts, looks at her from under his duvet.

JAX (CONT'D)
Y'comin in with me?

JJ watches her, doesn't move. They watch each for a while
JAX forces a small, sad smile.

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
No worries.

Beat

JAX (CONT'D)
...I never said thanks for the
pillow from before.
...Thanks.

He shifts a little under his duvet.

JAX (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
Love you yeh. Sweet dreams.

She gently closes his door, JJ watches her go.

INT. JAX AND MARK'S BEDROOM - TUES. NIGHT

JAX in her nightdress, head wrapped caresses her big belly.

The bed is still made. She sits on her side MARK's side empty
and untouched. She climbs into the cold bed alone.

INT. JAX'S MUM AND DAD'S KITCHEN / DINING ROOM - SUNDAY AFT.

Sunday dinner. The table is full of food. All are round the table except MARK, the atmosphere subdued. MUM embarrassed and awkward is leaning over to JAX'S plate finishing cutting JAX'S food up into bite sized chunks. JJ quietly watches.

SANDRA (O.C.)
She come out the house she don't
get back in / mum.

JAX'S MUM
Y'comin / home.

SANDRA
So bess she stays where she is.

DAD looks at SANDRA sharp.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Nah Dad iss true - he starts
claimin all sorts a foolishness if
she walks / out.

MUM (QUIETLY)
That small enough?

JAX nods.

JAX'S DAD
Y'don't have to stay / there.

SANDRA
And what about this one (Jerome)?
Mark be all over him if / you go -

JAX (QUIETLY)
Mark ent like / that.

JAX'S MUM
Y' wanna come home?

JAX says nothing.

SANDRA
Have to be where the boy is /
Sis -

JJ (VERY QUIETLY)
My name's / Jerome.

SANDRA
- for him to mess wid your parental
whatevers - nah - madness -

JAX (QUIETLY)
Mark ent like / that.

SANDRA
- and the boy needs to be at home
for stability and school and all
them tings deyah...
And there ent no room here.

JAX'S MUM
Seh who?

SANDRA is silenced, eats. JJ glances to his MUM.

SANDRA
...I'm juss sayin... bout the
legals and ting.

SANDRA talks thru' a mouthful of food:

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Mek him come outta the / place.

JAX'S MUM
Eat / Jackie.

SANDRA
Ennit Dad - he should leave the
house for / her.

JAX'S MUM
Y'need to eat.

SANDRA
You and this one and the next one
need to stay in the place - thass
your yard much / as his.

JAX'S MUM
Y'eatin for two. Not juss you to
think about.

JAX
Baby's fine.

SANDRA
That belly look like it don't even
need no more food - and ennit Dad,
Mark should move out the place?

Beat

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Ennit Dad?

Silence

JJ picks at his plate of food not hungry watching his AUNT unimpressed. SANDRA looks for support but gets none, she resumes eating.

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY)
JJ... eat your food.

SANDRA
How's your -

JAX (QUIETLY)
Sore.

SANDRA
Still?

JAX
...Still.

SANDRA
Mum - is there any more meat?

INT. JAX'S MUM AND DAD'S KITCHEN - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

The radio is off. JJ silently washes the dishes alone.

INT. JAX'S MUM AND DAD'S FRONT ROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

The Sunday soap is on TV. MUM toys with remote, can't focus on the TV. SANDRA is on the sofa watching the programme.

INT. JAX'S OLD BEDROOM - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

DAD sits on JAX'S old bed trying to talk to her, he is not good at it. HE is uncomfortable and awkward.

Beat

JAX'S DAD
...Y'know...

JAX says nothing.

JAX'S DAD (CONT'D)
Becah...
Whatever you...

Beat

Beat

JAX'S DAD (CONT'D)
Y'still... y'know?
...Me an' y'mum y'know?

They catch each other's eye.

JAX (QUIETLY)
It's okay Dad.
...I'm fine.
Really.

He watches her.

JAX (CONT'D)
I am y'know.

JAX'S DAD
...No... Jacqueline.
Y'not.

EXT. STREET CORNER - MONDAY DAY

JIM bored, stands with the large arrow sign 'Cash-4-Gold'. He has no book for distraction.

EXT. OVER GROUND RAIL TRACKS - MONDAY DAY

Trains rattle by, the team of men that include PATRICK and MARK work on in their hi-vis gear, MARK a little apart.

INT. CLASSROOM - MONDAY DAY

A German lesson in full flow. TEACHER is talking, the white board is full of long German words and phrases. The class appear to be copying them down.

JJ appears to be writing, but closer - he doodles drawing pictures of birds in flight.

EXT. STREET CORNER - MONDAY DAY

The YOUNG MAN CV's in hand watches as amongst the traffic and public a group of PCSO's question the EASTERN EUROPEAN MEN as their van discreetly continues on in the traffic without them.

Further up the road unnoticed, another van has picked up some AFRICAN CARIBBEAN MEN. YOUNG MAN watches before he walks off disappearing into the hustle of the public.

INT. OPEN PLAN COUNCIL OFFICE - MONDAY DAY

MADDY is finishing with a client at JAX'S old desk, BERNIE glances over not impressed.

LEVI
She not here?

MADDY
Not at the moment, no.

LEVI hesitates.

LEVI
Tell her thanks, yeh.
I got somethin.

LEVI exits, ALEX breezes past.

ALEX
You gettin comfortable?

MADDY grins, indicates slashing her wrists which makes a couple of her colleagues quietly laugh. BERNIE sees and crosses to MADDY.

BERNIE (QUIETLY)
Jax is comin back - yeh, bitch? So
don't count on over stayin. Truss
mi.

INT. OPEN PLAN COUNCIL OFFICE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The office is in full swing people being seen, people waiting to be seen the staff all busy. MADDY finishes with a client, another already waiting to take their place.

A self conscious figure steps up to sit in front of MADDY'S post. It is SANDRA (MADDY doesn't know her).

MADDY
Have you got your -

SANDRA hands over her forms, knows the routine. MADDY looks thru' the documents not bothering to look up.

MADDY (CONT'D)
And how long have you been out of
work for now?

EXT. FIELD / REC. - MONDAY AFTERNOON

JAX very heavily pregnant sits amongst the grass the distant traffic rumbles on. She is almost full term. She is bored. She is lonely.

Beat

She closes her eyes tired, sighs.

Beat

She nods. The faintest of smiles.

Beat

She winces, a contraction.

JAX (QUIETLY)
Fuck.

SHE winces again, another contraction. SHE eases out her breath.

The wildlife watches her.

TITLE: 'ONE YEAR LATER'

SUBTITLE: 'FIRST BIRTHDAY'

EXT. JAX AND MARK'S GARDEN - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

A bright, hot day. A small family BBQ is happening.

The cared for garden is in full bloom. Flowers burst bright with colour, the grass is trimmed, weeds have been killed. A boom box stands on the kitchen windowsill pumping 'Tune In' by Gregory Isaacs out into the garden. A proper BBQ grill smokes as JAX'S DAD proudly tends to the meat. The kitchen table is out spread with salads, breads, cooked meat, sweets and nibbles all covered with hard nets.

Wildlife buzzes around and is swiped out of the air. Chatter and laughter fill the garden, a few friends are there as well as the family. JJ ducks in and out among the adults, laughing.

Balloons have been stuck to various places with the number 1 on. A cheap plastic banner saying 'Happy First Birthday' is taped across the doorway.

JAX'S baby a girl, is crawling among various legs, getting picked up for lots of kisses and cuddles and put down as she squirms for freedom to crawl again.

JAX sits a little apart on a summer chair. Her wrists discreetly show the old healed scars of her past. She quietly watches the family and her baby.

MARK sits down in a chair next to her can of drink in hand. SHE feels him, but doesn't look. Both a little self conscious in each others company.

Beat

MARK (QUIETLY)
...Nice.

JAX
...Yeh.

Beat

JAX'S DAD turns the chicken laughing, MUM risks getting tipsy on the punch, SANDRA chats to her new man etc... MARK and JAX quietly watch.

Beat

MARK (QUIETLY)
...How you been sleepin?

Beat

JAX (QUIETLY)
If you was by me you would know.

Beat

MARK
That an invite?

JAX (QUIETLY)
...You don't need no invite Mark.
You know / that.

JJ (CALLING)
Dad! Dad! You wanna plate?! You
wanna plate?!

JAX (QUIETLY)
...But I sleep alright.

JJ (CALLING)
DAD! You want / food?!

JAX
Thanks for askin.

Beat

JJ (CALLING)
DAD! DAD!

JAX (QUIETLY)
How you sleepin?

MARK (QUIETLY)
Shit.
Without you.

JAX smiles a little.

MARK (DRY) (CONT'D)
You laugh.

JAX (DRY)
Mi noh laugh.

JJ (CALLING)
DAD -!

MARK (CALLING)
Gimme a plate boy! Plenty meat but
mek sure pops don't gimme no 'alf
cooked su'un to sick / mi!

JAX'S DAD (CALLING)
Mi noh do no 'alf cooked / nuthin.

MARK (CALLING)
I dunno whatchu doin over there /
chef.

JAX'S DAD (CALLING)
You don't need to know!

There is much laughter and banter in the garden, MARK and JAX have a quietness about them and are still a little shy with each other. Another old skool track kicks in, they watch the BABY GIRL crawl, quietly amused.

MARK
...She move.

JAX
She's quick.

MARK
Hmm.

Beat

Beat

MARK steals a look at JAX.

MARK (VERY QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
You're lookin good.

JAX smiles a bit embarrassed.

MARK (QUIETLY) (CONT'D)
...How's your -

JAX
Yeh.

MARK
Yeh?

JAX
Yeh.

MARK
They alright / then?

JAX
Yeh yeh. Iss... They... Healed.

Beat

JAX (CONT'D)
...Embarrassing.

Beat

MARK
Nah.

JJ picks up his BABY SISTER smothers her in kisses as she squirms to be put down which he does.

MARK (CONT'D)

Nah.

JAX glances at MARK. They watch the BBQ in their silences.

MARK (CONT'D)

Nah. You ent that, Jax.

They sit quietly with each other, the BBQ carries on beyond them.

At BABY level: BABY GIRL crawls between legs over the garden. She crawls across the grass, sits up on the grass a little apart from the people, pauses a while then resumes crawling off in between more people's legs before she is scooped up again.

Camera stays at baby ground level where she momentarily sat, slowly the small patch of ground begins to shift subtly. It becomes uneven.

The small patch of grass pulls apart further, something is pushing thru' from underneath.

The bird buried a year earlier emerges covered in earth thru' the ground, part of the bandana it had been wrapped in visible from its grave. It struggles, flaps the earth off its wings hops, falters, flutters, then flies to freedom in perfect health.

Nobody has seen.

END.

(draft Sept) SECOND COMING 146.