

HAPPY ENDINGS

A sitcom
by
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Episode 1: Unattended Vomit

FADE IN:

1 INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY 1

A SLIM BLACK WOMAN in her late 40's holds her phone to her ear as she looks down with DISTASTE at SOMETHING on the floor.

Vomit.

She wears a COAT and carries her BAG -- clearly on her way OUT. Whatever is on the floor might be disgusting, but whoever's on the phone is *really* pissing her off.

This is CAMILLE and she takes no shit.

CAMILLE

'Course it's not unattended, I'm here, ain't I? Look, just send somebody, I can't hang about, I've gotta be somewhere.

An OFFICIOUS SQUEAK bursts from the phone.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

(Losing her rag)

How is it my responsibility!? There's puke on the floor outside 122. You're Estates it's *your* responsibility. Send a sodding cleaner.

She hangs up and turns to go, but is confronted by an OUTSTRETCHED PALM attached to the long arm of a TINY SECURITY GUARD.

SECURITY GUARD

Hold it.

This is CLIVE, his favourite colour is Beige and he irons his pants. What more do you need to know?

CLIVE

This yours?

CAMILLE

Clive, I haven't got time for your Dirty Harry routine.

Camille moves round him, but he blocks her way.

CLIVE

Whoah there!

He UNHOOKS his radio like a gunslinger.

SECURITY GUARD

Control, this is 463 in corridor A1
outside 122. We've got a 318 and a
citizen fleeing the scene. Request back-
up.

GIGGLING echoes from the RADIO.

CAMILLE

And you wonder why no-one takes you
seriously.

She shoves past him, but Clive, despite being the
approximate shape of a bowling ball, is remarkably lithe.
He JUMPS in front of Camille, JAMS a LARGE SILVER WHISTLE
between his lips ... but before he can BLOW Camille's hand
SHOOTS out and GRABS it.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

I'm three seconds away from shoving *this*
where the sun don't shine. You'll be
tooting a tune every time you take a step
for weeks.

Clive, panicking, grabs his radio.

CLIVE

(Into his radio)

CODE RED! CODE RED!

He drops into a deeply unimpressive Kung Fu pose.

CLIVE (CONT'D)

I warn you, I was in the TA as a youth!

CAMILLE

And I was in Feltham!

At that moment a tall, gangling guy in his early thirties,
his face almost hidden under his fringe, ambles into view.
He stops DEAD, SNIFFS and peers out from under his fringe.

This is DEENIS, which rhymes with Penis.

DEENIS

That's a lot of carrot.

He looks up.

DEENIS (CONT'D)

Whose is it?

CAMILLE

(Indicating Clive)

His.

CLIVE

It is *not*!

Camille tosses the whistle to Deenis. Clive grabs at it, but misses.

CLIVE (CONT'D)

That is my personal property!

Deenis catches the whistle.

DEENIS

Clive, uncool man. You've been warned about using this Whistle. It's not policy and you're already on performance review.

CLIVE

How else am I to defend myself? All I have left is my pepper spray.

DEENIS

What pepper spray?

Camille BEAMS a MEGAWATT SMILE at Deenis and moves past him, leaving him to deal with Clive. Deenis doesn't notice as he's just spotted something half-hidden on Clive's belt.

DEENIS (CONT'D)

Clive, is that a *Taser*!?

CUT TO:

2

INT. AA/NA MEETING ROOM - DAY

2

The SERENE FACE of a white guy in his late 50's LOOMS. He's deep in meditation and, in apparent defiance of gravity, his LONG GREY HAIR and BEARD hang straight UP towards the roof.

Take a second ... let your mind process ... are you there yet?

Allow me to explain ...

The world ROTATES, revealing that the man is hanging upside down from some kind of METAL FRAME, whilst meditating.

It can only be BERNIE.

BERNIE

Group ...

The room is full of people of all ages, creeds and colours sat cross legged on the floor. All of them are meditating deeply.

Bernie, however, is the only one hanging upside down from the ceiling like a hippie Spider Man.

Bernie and the group all CHANT together.

BERNIE & GROUP

... Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Bernie opens his eyes, smiles beneficently at everyone and claps his hands. The group all join him in beaming and applauding.

The group all stand and HUG and thank each other, then BOW to Bernie who CLASPS his hands in prayer and bestows some kind of blessing on each as they leave the room.

The last student, Beth, stands in the doorway looking at Bernie. She deeply moved and is almost in tears.

BETH

I ...

BERNIE

One day at a time, Beth. One day at a time.

The student nods, smiles, chokes back a sob and hurries from the room quite overcome. Bernie hangs in the room for a moment enjoying the peace.

Then reaches up to unhook himself from his meditation bar.

He can't reach it.

He chuckles to himself at the absurdity of the Universe and then tries again.

He still can't reach.

In fact, no matter how hard he tries, he *really* can't reach.

Bernie FLAILS in near panic, but no matter what he does he still can't quite reach the bar to free himself. He's just a little bit too old, too fat and too inflexible.

It does, of course, rather beg the question of how he got up here in the first place, but we'll leave that one for another time.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
OK ... ok, allow me to accept the things
I cannot change ...

Bernie hangs in the empty seminar room like a rather fat
bat his eyes closed mediatively.

His eyes SNAP OPEN.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
(Yelling)
HELP!

3 **I/E. VICTORIAN FLAT CONVERSION/DOORSTEP - DAY** 3

A good looking black guy in his late twenties, wearing
RUMPLED DESIGNER CLUB GEAR, kneels at the letterbox and
YELLS through it. His eyes are crazed and he looks like a
man one step away from mayhem. We'll call him TROY
because, sadly, it's his name.

TROY
Let me in you BASTARDS!

He KICKS at the door. Several neighbours watch SHAKING
THEIR HEADS. One of them is ON THE PHONE. Troy IGNORES
THEM as he PEERS through the LETTER-BOX, YELLING:

TROY (CONT'D)
SCOOBY DOO! WHERE ARE YOU!

HE SEES:

A HUGE MAN stomps up the hallway. Behind him a DOG HOWLS
from somewhere deeper inside the flat. The HUGE MAN
reaches the door and bends at the waist like a folding
ruler and YELLS BACK through the letter-box.

HUGE MAN
You received the re-possession notice!
This flat, the hot-tub and all your
assets now belong to SPR administrators.

TROY
I signed a payment plan! We agreed terms!

HUGE MAN
Which include the dog. It's a pedigree
and as such a valuable asset!

TROY
(Channelling Braveheart)
You can take my flat, you can take my hot-
tub ...

Troy BACKS UP.

... but you'll never take ... MY DOGGY!

And SPRINTS at the door emitting a BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM as he HURLS himself shoulder-first at the door, his EYE's SQUEEZED SHUT against the inevitable pain of the upcoming COLLISION.

The door OPENS a SPLIT-SECOND before he connects with it.

Troy's MOMENTUM carries him sailing through and ...

4 **INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS** 4

... past the rather surprised looking man who's just opened the door, down the hallway and through a doorway into ...

5 **INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS** 5

... a LARGE KITCHEN where he finally collides with a CHAIR, and pinwheels past a trio of STARING MEN, and careens out through a set of FRENCH WINDOWS and into ...

6 **EXT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS** 6

... the GARDEN.

Troy stumbles and skids to the EDGE of a LARGE HOT-TUB and TEETERS precariously on the edge, but just manages to hold his balance.

He SMILES.

TROY

Nailed it.

With a HOWL of EXCITEMENT the low, heavily muscled brown mass of SCOOPY -- a powerfully built, but above all HEAVY -- Staffordshire Bull Terrier, EXPLODES from the FRENCH WINDOWS and LEAPS at his beloved master.

BAM!

And OVER THEY GO, straight into the waiting TUB.

SPLASH!

7 **INT. HOT TUB - DAY** 7

Troy and Scooby SLOWLY SPIN in the tub like a couple of playful GUPPIES. A HAND PLUNGES into view, GRABS Troy and YANKS him backwards out of the Tub and away from Scooby.

Troy REACHES for Scooby, who propels himself towards his disappearing master.

EXT. GARDEN/HOT-TUB - CONTINUOUS

Troy is unceremoniously DRAGGED from the tub by the trio of men from the kitchen, who've been joined by the HUGE MAN from the front door.

HUGE MAN

The dog is a *asset*!

Troy STRUGGLES to free himself, but to no effect.

TROY

No WAY! You're not having my BEST MATE!
COME ON ... all together or one at a
time, I'll 'AVE YOU ALL!!!

The men glance at each other: this dude's nuts!

But they've forgotten someone ...

With a FIERCE GROWL Scooby leaps at the cluster of men, his teeth GNASHING. The men SCATTER as Scooby lands on the HUGE MAN who falls back SQUEALING like a SCHOOLGIRL.

Two of the trio PLUNGE BACKWARDS into the HOT-TUB and Troy finds himself SQUARING UP to the remaining BAILIFF, who looks him up and down, and SMIRKS: this'll be easy.

TROY (CONT'D)

(Pointing over the bailiff's
shoulder)

LOOK! What's *THAT*!?!?

The bailiff SHAKES HIS HEAD and advances on Troy. Troy decides a NEW TACTIC is in order.

TROY (CONT'D)

(To Scooby)

Scooby --

Troy turns and, to the bailiff's surprise, SPRINTS AWAY and back towards the house.

BAILIFF

(Confused)

Er ...

TROY

(Yelling)

-- HEEL!!!!

Scooby THROWS HIMSELF after Troy's fast retreating figure and both BOLT back into the flat and are gone.

9

I/E. KITCHEN/HALLWAY/FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

9

Troy and Scooby SPRINT through the kitchen and down the hall towards the BRIGHT SQUARE of the front door and ... FREEDOM!

10

EXT. FRONT GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

10

Troy SKIDS to a STOP and his mouth drops as he spots a POLICE CAR headed towards him. His face WORKS as Scooby BARKS, urging them to 'get a move on.'

TROY

I ain't losing you, mate. Not without a fight ...

He looks down at Scooby who stares up at him, his tongue lolling.

TROY (CONT'D)

(Correcting himself)

... more of a fight.

Behind them the HUGE MAN and the BAILIFF come THUNDERING out of the flat as Troy raises his arms and SPRINTS at the POLICE CAR. Scooby follows, jumping and barking with excitement as Troy YELLS!

TROY (CONT'D)

Fuck you I won't do what you tell me ...

Fuck you I won't do what you **tell** me ..

FUCK YOU I WON'T DO WHAT YOU TELL ME ...

SMASH CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER --

Troy's head is SLAMMED down onto the bonnet of the police car, his hands CUFFED behind his back, by an angry looking WPC.

A second police officer, a TALL THIN BLACK SARGEANT with eyes that have seen too much, pets Scooby and regards the HUGE MAN who GLARES back at him.

SARGEANT

No, I am *not* fan of Rage Against The Machine. He's being arrested and I'm impounding the dog as evidence.

TROY

(Reasonable voice)

I'll agree they're an acquired taste. Niche, even.

WPC
I'm arresting you on suspicion of
assaulting an officer of the law.

TROY
(To WPC)
Did I mention I signed a payment plan?

WPC
(Ignoring him)
You do not have to say anything, but it
may harm your defence if ...

The PC's voice trails away as a TINNY MUZAK VERSION of
RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE'S anthem 'Killing in the Name
Of', sounding as if it's being played on a crappy phone
inside a yogurt pot, RISES.

11 **INT. BERNIE & CAMILLE'S HOUSE/HALLWAY - NIGHT** 11

The front door opens and Camille walks in, flicking on the
light as she does. She stops to look at herself in the
hallway mirror and doesn't much like what she sees:
strained, pale and tired.

CAMILLE
(To the house)
Bernie? You in? ... *Bernie?*

No answer.

Camille pinches her cheeks to get a little colour in them.

Better.

She heads into the dark living room ...

12 **INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS** 12

... reaches past a SHADOWED CHAIR to switch on the light.

CLICK.

... and jumps seemingly ten feet in the air as the light
reveals BERNIE sat shrouded in a BLACK PRAYER SHAWL
looking a bit like DEATH.

CAMILLE
JESUS FUCKING CHRIST!

Bernie barely moves.

Camille stumbles backwards clutching at her chest as if
experiencing a heart attack.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

I'm having palpitations.

Bernie opens one eye.

BERNIE

I was approaching the infinite.

CAMILLE

I'm already there. Christ, Bernie I have asked you repeatedly not to meditate in the dark in that bloody shroud. I thought it was death come for me.

BERNIE

Don't fear the reaper. Death is just a doorway. I made my peace with it long ago.

CAMILLE

I think I preferred you perpetually pissed to perpetually spouting shit. When are you gonna get over this nonsense?

BERNIE

Try it.

CAMILLE

Meditation? No thanks.

BERNIE

Why not? It would help you re-align your chakras. Open you up to the music of the spheres

CAMILLE

I don't s'pose you've made dinner?

BERNIE

I have, actually. Lentil surprise.

CAMILLE

Last time we had that the sheets were floating three feet off the bed all night and the neighbours called Southern Water 'cause they thought the drains were backed up.

BERNIE

New recipe. I'm almost completely sure I know what I did wrong last time.

Camille suddenly pauses and puts a hand to her stomach.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Ha ha. You are a laugh a minute. How my sides are aching.

Camille clamps a hand over her mouth and dashes from the room leaving Bernie staring at the blank space she just occupied. He STANDS revealing a T-Shirt emblazoned with a picture of a COW and a SLOGAN: Not your Mother, not your Milk, and follows Camille.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Cammi? You alright?

13

INT. BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

13

The sounds of her HEAVING echo down from upstairs. Bernie hovers at the bottom of the stairs, a little unsure what to do.

BERNIE
Do you want ... I dunno, a herbal tea or something?

The PHONE JANGLES.

Bernie looks from the stairs to the phone, trapped with indecisiveness.

CAMILLE
Get the bloody phone!

More HEAVING sounds from upstairs as Bernie answers the phone.

BERNIE
Yeah, hello? ... the Police?

14

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

14

Camille leans on the counter as a WPC behind about a foot of glass gives her a withering look. Bernie, still wearing his 'NOT YOUR MILK' T-shirt, wanders round reading posters and generally assessing the Feng Shui.

He's not impressed.

CAMILLE
So, you don't know him?

WPC
No.

CAMILLE
Coco, Austin Coco. From Streatham. Tall thin. Went into the Police years back. Nice guy. You'd think Jamaican parents called Coco would know better than to name their son after the six million dollar man. You'd be wrong.

WPC

Who?

CAMILLE

Austin Coco!

WPC

I don't know any six million dollar man
and I don't know any Austin Coco.

CAMILLE

Really? Both were proper popular on the
Talbot Estate in 1976.

BERNIE

And I bet they've both aged badly. Have
you seen Lee Majors recently? Looks like
he's been pickled.

The WPC sighs as Bernie, pointedly ignoring Camille,
floats over.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

You could use a few plants out here. You
need something organic to balance the
whole fascist vibe. I'm not criticising,
but it's a bit unwelcoming.

CAMILLE

It's not a cafe, it's not supposed to be
friendly.

BERNIE

Why not? That's what's wrong with the
justice system in this country. No
spiritual dimension. It wasn't until I
accepted the spiritual that I began to
recover.

(To the WPC)

I'm an alcoholic and drug addict. How
about a fern?

The WPC doesn't know how to process this, but then, who
would?

CAMILLE

Why do you insist on telling everyone
about that? It's not exactly a
conversation starter.

BERNIE

Unlike Austin, smooth as sodding silk,
Coco?

CAMILLE

You're not *still* threatened by him are
you, it's been thirty years?

BERNIE

Course not.

The WPC pushes an INTERCOM button as Bernie, in a bit of a sulk, but trying not to show it, stomps away to the corner of the room. He plops down in a chair next to a huge SLUMPED FIGURE who looks like a haphazard rockery.

WPC

Sarge, can you *please* put a rush on Troy Benford's release?

A BARK of unintelligible NOISE from the speaker is his reply.

WPC (CONT'D)

I'm begging you.

Camille gifts the WPC with one of her MEGAWATT SMILES

BERNIE

(Grumbling to himself)

Austin bloody Coco.

The SLUMPED FIGURE'S head slowly raises and swivels to face Bernie, revealing a TRIBAL FACE TATTOO and BLANK EYES. Bernie gazes back

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Welcome back.

CAMILLE

Don't talk to him, Bernie.

BERNIE

Why not? He's a human being just like us. Capable of great acts of love, joy and kindness. Full of potential.

WPC

He's mostly full of Special Brew.

Bernie sticks out his hand in greeting and SMILES at the lumpy man.

BERNIE

Brother, I'm Bernie and I have been where you are now. What's your name?

The man SLOWLY BLINKS.

TRIBAL

Tribal.

BERNIE

Cool. Suits you. If you ever decide you need to change and don't know how to take that first step ...

Bernie produces a CARD and tucks it into Tribal's hand.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

... come see us.

Camille gazes at Bernie. A tiny smile teases the corner of her lips. Despite herself, she's proud.

WPC

Waste of time.

Camille's head snaps round, trapping the police officer like a deer in the headlights.

CAMILLE

At least he's trying. What have you lot ever done for people like Tribal?

The WPC blinks and whatever she might have said in reply is lost as a DOOR OPENS revealing a dishevelled Troy and a happy looking Scooby, both in the company of the very tall, thin black Sargeant.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

(To the tall Sgt)

AUSTIN COCO!

Bernie's JAW DROPS.

AUSTIN

It's Colbert these days.

CAMILLE

Austin Colbert ... sounds like a naff hatchback.

Scooby BARKS. Troy WINCES.

15

INT. CAMILLE'S CAR - NIGHT

15

Troy sits in the back looking truly defeated, Scooby in his lap gazes out the window with interest at the passing city. Camille drives and Bernie peers over his seat at Troy.

BERNIE

I don't get why he let you keep Scooby?

TROY

He said he knew Mum.

BERNIE

Yeah, well, he knows me, too. He knows I'm your Dad ... legally. That's probably what it was. Probably nothing to do with your Mum.

TROY

I think he's more likely to remember Mum, Bernie. Unless you shagged 'im as well.

CAMILLE

Troy!

Bernie shoots Camille a LOOK.

BERNIE

(To Camille)

How does he know about that?

TROY

(To Bernie)

Are you saying you did?

Camille IGNORES Troy and replies to Bernie.

CAMILLE

Troy wanted a list.

BERNIE

A list of what?

CAMILLE

Possible fathers.

BERNIE

When was this!?

CAMILLE

Years ago.

BERNIE

Am I on it?

TROY

(To Bernie)

Why would you be on it?

BERNIE

Well, I think I've earned it and it's the principle of the thing!

Camille is starting to look SHAKY.

CAMILLE

No, you're not on it. Let it go, Bernie. Where am I going, Troy? Your flat?

Bernie is stunned into temporary silence.

TROY

It's not my flat anymore. Belongs to the bank.

CAMILLE

I thought you signed a payment plan? And what about that gig in Estonia, the festival?

TROY

They booked a younger DJ. Said they needed a name the kids would recognise.

CAMILLE

Like what, Tinky Winky? It's Estonia for gods sake.

BERNIE

(Grumbling to himself)

I'm not on the list, but Austin sodding Coco is. That ain't right. I should at least be on the list.

Camille WINCES with sudden PAIN and pulls over.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(Suddenly worried)

You alright?

CAMILLE

Indigestion.

BERNIE

Do you want a bucket?

CAMILLE

I want a toilet.

TROY

Want me to drive?

BERNIE

No chance! You drive like a maniac.

TROY

At least I've got a licence. When d'you get your's back, Three years? Or was it five?

Bernie struggles to MAINTAIN his CALM and FAILS.

BERNIE

Hey, we just dropped everything to come and rescue you from the forces of darkness. And I'm not even on the list. A little gratitude would be nice.

TROY

Busy evening was it? Sitting in the dark wrapped in your cape, staring up your own backside?

BERNIE

It's a prayer shawl!

CAMILLE

SHUT UP THE PAIR OF YOU!

Scooby hides his face and WHINES as a sullen silence descends on the car.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

It's passed. I'm fine, thanks for asking. Troy, you can crash at ours till you get straight. We can talk about everything else tomorrow after I'm back from Am Dram. The end.

TROY

(Whinnying like a teenager)

But Muuum!

BERNIE

(Sulky)

I don't really want him at ours.

Camille pulls out into traffic.

CAMILLE

TOUGH!

16

INT. CAMILLE AND BERNIE'S PLACE - DAY

16

Bernie and Troy sit opposite each other; Bernie's choice of T-shirt today reads: EAT FRUIT NOT FRIENDS. Tea steams from mugs and the remains of two very different LUNCHES -- one a MEATY FRY UP the other full of WHOLESOME VEGAN GRIT -- litter the table. Troy chucks a remnant of SAUSAGE to Scooby as Bernie gives his son a disapproving look.

BERNIE

Meat is murder.

TROY

Good.

Troy's PHONE JANGLES. He GRABS it.

TROY (CONT'D)

Sajiv? Christ, I've been trying to get hold of you for --

SAJIV

(On phone, cutting him off)

Blud, first thing I need you to know is don't worry. OK, I need you to hear that my brother: Do ... Not ... Worry. You hearin' me blud?

TROY

Why are you talking like a wannabe gangster? You're an accountant.

Bernie has busied himself trying to tempt Scooby with VEGAN SAUSAGES. The dog suspects foul play.

SAJIV

And as *your* accountant, I'm telling you not to worry: I have found enough in your cash reserves to cover my fees. I am not one of your creditors! How's that for good news!

TROY

What!? You're the one who got me in this mess in the first place! You're supposed to pay tax, Saj. It's not an optional extra!

SAJIV

That was a 'tax shelter', perfectly morally legal.

Troy is on his feet.

TROY

But not *actually* legal. Lets discuss where you are, actually, 'cause I been to your office and your house and you ain't there.

Faintly the sound of an AIRPORT ANNOUNCEMENT echoes down the phone.

TROY (CONT'D)

Are you at the airport?

Scooby starts GROWLING at the VEGETARIAN SAUSAGE Bernie is trying to feed him.

SAJIV

Gotta go, mate, we're boarding. I'll be in touch.

Sajiv HANGS UP.

TROY
SAJIV! ... SAJIV!

SILENCE from the phone. Troy STARES at his PHONE in shock. Bernie suddenly lets out a YELP of TRIUMPH as Scooby EATS the veggie sausage!

Bernie looks up at Troy, grinning.

BERNIE
I knew he had the capacity for spiritual growth.

TROY
I'm ruined.

BERNIE
It's only a Tofu sausage. Ain't the end of the world.

Scooby suddenly GAGS and COUGHS UP the half eaten sausage onto Troy's BARE FOOT.

17

INT. TOOTING BEC FRIENDS HALL - DAY

17

On stage a bunch of forty-something's in unflattering leotards, glittery make-up with ALADDIN SANE ZIG ZAG slashes across their faces, parade across the stage belting out the chorus to LIFE ON MARS.

It's bloody awful.

They part to reveal CAMILLE dressed as a pound-shop ZIGGY STARDUST in a BRILLIANT PURPLE MINIDRESS and LIME GREEN SCARF tottering on massive PURPLE PLATFORM BOOTS. She takes one step, opens her mouth to sing and ...

Her PLATFORM BOOT wobbles, she SLIPS and crashes down onto the stage in a mass of androgynous limbs.

CAMILLE
BASTARD BOOTS!

The chorus girls -- and that's stretching the term till it breaks -- rush over to help Cammille up.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)
Gordon, I'm really sorry, but it's these sodding boots or me.

In the seats a figure in a NATTY HAT stands up and strides forward.

GORDON
Sweetie, are you alright?

CAMILLE

Can we change the boots?

GORDON

The problem is you're a bit petite. In order to make a grand entrance, the kind of entrance an alien fallen from another star needs to make, you have to tower over the chorus line. We need you to be six feet, and darling, you're only five foot three.

One of the chorus 'girls', MARNIE, a vision -- albeit a scary one -- in a LONG BLOND WIG and ORANGE TIGHTS capped with scary looking BRIGHT RED HEELS. Notices that Camille is sweating heavily and seems exhausted.

MARNIE

(To Camille)

You're not right, girl.

CAMILLE

Just tired.

MARNIE

(To Gordon)

We need five, G.

GORDON

No more tea!?

The chorus line takes that as permission for a tea break and scurry from the stage and head for a conspicuous TEA URN.

GORDON (CONT'D)

That wasn't permission ladies!

On stage Marnie helps Camille to her feet and they head BACKSTAGE.

18

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

18

Camille SAGS into a chair as Marnie whips off the blond wig, revealing short DARK CROPPED HAIR and lots of EARRINGS. Marnie completes the transformation by slipping on a pair of THICK GLASSES.

CAMILLE

Can you help me get these sodding boots off?

MARNIE

No.

CAMILLE
Some bloody friend.

MARNIE
Friendship is one thing, but your feet
stink after two minutes in those things.
I'm not putting my nose anywhere near
'em.

Camille sags back exhausted.

CAMILLE
OK.

Marnie sits down in a chair opposite and winces.

MARNIE
God, this leotard bunches in all the
wrong places. I swear I'm on the verge of
a yeast infection.

Gordon strides backstage.

GORDON
What's wrong with my star?

CAMILLE
Her feet hurt.

MARNIE
And stink.

GORDON
(Worried)
Is that what's affecting your
performance?

CAMILLE
Troy got arrested yesterday.

Marnie's mouth drops.

MARNIE
And you didn't think to mention that to
your best mate?

GORDON
Who's Troy? Is he theatrical? We are
lacking credible male leads.

MARNIE
Go away Gordon, this has nothing to do
with David Bowie.

GORDON

I'm trying to push the boundaries of amateur dramatics, Marnie. I thought I had your support.

CAMILLE

Troy's my son. And he hates Bowie almost as much as I'm learning to.

Gordon GASPS and takes a step back, shocked.

GORDON

You need a moment to think about what you've just said. I'll return when you've come to your senses.

He strides away shaking his head as he goes.

MARNIE

What was he arrested for?

CAMILLE

Attacking a police car with his face.

Marnie nods.

MARNIE

I can see that.

CAMILLE

Guess who arrested him? Austin Coco.

MARNIE

Wow. No wonder you're feeling weird. He brings back a few memories. Doing the walk of shame trying to remember where we left our knickers, for one.

Camille looks uncomfortable.

CAMILLE

Marnie, it's not that ...

MARNIE

Then what?

CAMILLE

I ...

Camille, struggling to get the words out, looks to her friend for support.

MARNIE

I will slap you.

CAMILLE

... I've got cancer.

Marnie reflexively rubs her SHORT CROPPED HAIR.

MARNIE

You always want whatever I've got, don't you. This is Austin Coco all over again. He was my boyfriend and you shagged him.

CAMILLE

With you!

Marnie stands.

MARNIE

Stand up.

CAMILLE

What for?

MARNIE

'Cause I can't hug you sitting down.

CAMILLE

I want a vodka not a hug.

But she hauls herself to her feet and, due to the platforms, towers over Marnie. Marnie gazes up at her.

MARNIE

This may not be as comforting as I'd intended.

Marnie hugs Camille and, due to Camille's platforms, her face winds up mashed into Cammi's breasts. They stand there for a moment.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

We'll get through this. And we'll laugh about it all the way.

The moment stretches ...

CAMILLE

Can we go to the pub now?

Marnie breaks the awkward embrace.

MARNIE

God, yeah.

Bernie, wearing WHITE GLOVES, sits at a TABLE under a work lamp carefully opening a PACKAGE with a SCALPEL. Something funky and very rare plays on his turntable. The room is endless SHELVES half-full of RECORDS.

Troy enters holding a TINY CRYSTAL PYRAMID.

TROY
I'm assuming this is you?

BERNIE
Caused me a lot of problems, that one.

TROY
Caused me a few, I sat on it.

BERNIE
Ever wonder why the ancient Egyptians
chose to be buried in the strongest
geometric structure known to man?

TROY
Not as much as I wonder why I keep
finding these, mostly with my arse,
hidden all over the house.

BERNIE
Pyramids attract, focus and store cosmic
energy. The Egyptians knew that, which is
why they had themselves buried in
pyramids. Store enough cosmic energy and
you get re-birth, resurrection ... get
it? You need a boost. Your energy is
very, very low.

Troy is almost speechless, almost.

TROY
You scare me. You've just told me that
you've booby-trapped the entire house
with tiny, incredibly strong, incredibly
sharp glass pyramids. That's frightening.

BERNIE
Crystal, not glass. Don't work with
glass.

Bernie TURNS and holds up a VINYL SINGLE for Troy's
inspection. Troy FOCUSES on the RECORD and suddenly
forgets all about pyramids.

TROY
(Awed)
Is that ...

Bernie grins and nods.

BERNIE
On Atlantic and backed with ...

He lets the single REVOLVE in his hands to show the B-
Side. Troy takes an EXCITED BREATH.

TROY

Peepin'.

BERNIE

It gets better. This is a nineteen sixty five *promo* copy. Only released to US radio stations. Mint condition.

TROY

Where the hell did you get it?

BERNIE

Jelly found it in some collection he bought at a boot sale and almost passed out. It's supposed to be a Birthday present for your Mum.

TROY

Her birthday's in November.

Bernie shrugs and looks a little uncomfortable.

BERNIE

Well, I thought I might give it to her a bit early.

TROY

Nine months early?

Bernie ignores him.

BERNIE

I was playing this when we met. Saw her on the dancefloor and ... that was that. She could really *move*. Still can.

TROY

I'd mash it up with something new. You heard the Oakenfold remix of that Elvis song, Rubberneckin'? It's mental.

BERNIE

(Horrified)

You don't draw tits on the Mona Lisa you bloody philistine. How are you my son?

TROY

'Cause you got lucky, pops. Now play that funky music white boy.

Bernie grins MISCHIEVOUSLY like a naughty ten year old. He SCUTTLES to the record player and, with utmost care, puts it on. Hand TREMBLING slightly, he drops the needle.

'Got To Get You Off My Mind' by Solomon Burke BLARES.

As the music THUMPS, Bernie and Troy start to DANCE and, as Solomon's voice cuts in, Troy starts to SING ALONG.

He's GOOD!

The music BLARES.

BERNIE

Listen to that, my son. Music of the spheres. Music of the sodding spheres!

They dance.

20

INT. DOG & FOX - EVENING

20

Marnie, Camille and Gordon are all very, very drunk. Marnie and Camille are still wearing their stage costumes - Camille in PURPLE and LIME GREEN and Marnie in ORANGE AND RED - and both looking somewhat the worse for wear.

GORDON

I mean ... is it cancer or is it CANCER!

MARNIE

What's the difference?

GORDON

Well, Marnie had skin cancer, which is ... cancer ... but lung cancer is **CANCER**, Right?

CAMILLE

It's breast cancer.

GORDON

Oh. Well, it's not like that's one of the bad one's, is it? You just whip 'em off and you're done.

Camille picks up her glass as if to HIT Gordon with it, but Marnie is too quick for her and grabs the glass out of her hand just before Camille can BEAN him.

GORDON (CONT'D)

(Oblivious)

I had a friend with both testicular and penile cancer. It even spread up his arse. That's **CANCER!!!** I don't know what you're worried about.

Camille BLINKS drunkenly, trying to figure out where her glass went. Marnie, meanwhile, hands the glass to Gordon.

MARNIE

Your round.

Gordon sways over to the bar.

CAMILLE

Whip 'em off. Like it's that easy. All he's thinking about is the bloody show.

MARNIE

He's trying to be supportive ... he's just really shit at it.

Camille sits down and the appropriate sound is SPLAT. On the table a PHONE JANGLES for attention. She glares at it.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Austin Coco and cancer all in one day. Which one did Bernie freak out about most?

Camille grabs the phone and drops it in a half empty pint pot. It SQUEALS like a small furry thing being drowned. Marnie shakes her head.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

You haven't told him, have you.

CAMILLE

I haven't got round to it yet.

MARNIE

Scared he'll go on a bender?

CAMILLE

With Troy around he probably already has. Speaking of benders.

Gordon is WEAVING back towards their table with fresh drinks.

MARNIE

(Angry with Camille)

Camille!

Camille looks a bit embarrassed as Gordon reaches the table, a massive SMILE illuminating his bleary face.

GORDON

The new bartender's *gorgeous!*

Marnie and Camille look over at the bar: the bartender is a huge, hairy, beery, leery mass wearing a T-Shirt that reads 'SQUADDIES SHOOT FROM THE HIP.'

MARNIE

I think your gay-dar needs a tune up, Gordon.

Gordon looks back at the bartender through the finest BEER-GOGGLES money can buy. The bartender BARES his teeth in what looks like a SNARL.

GORDON

Did you see that look? That's a man who's eager to embrace an alternate lifestyle.

A phone JANGLES from inside someone's pocket. Camille manages to extract HER PHONE from HER POCKET and stares at it dumbly.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Why is my phone in a pint pot?

21 **INT. BERNIE & CAMILLE'S PLACE - EVENING**

21

Bernie is sat in his meditation shawl his PHONE at his ear. It rings, but no answer. He hangs up, puts the phone down and picks up a small TIBETAN SINGING BOWL.

He STRIKES the bowl and runs the STRIKER around the rim causing the bowl to emit a RINGING TONE that fills the room.

Bernie begins to CHANT.

BERNIE

Om mani padme hum ... Om mani padme hum
... Om mani padme hum ...

UPSTAIRS:

22 **INT. UPSTAIRS/SPARE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

22

Troy lays on the floor STARING UP at the CEILING. Scooby is sat up, alert by the door as the DRONE of the Bernie's PRAYER BOWL and CHANTING rise from below.

TROY

(Almost unconscious)

I hate my life.

The WHINE and CHANTING continue, but now Scooby decides to JOIN IN. His EAR-SPLITTING HOWL joins Bernie's racket turning the whole thing into a CACOPHONY!

Troy GRABS a PILLOW, shoves it over his face and begins his own muffled chanting.

TROY (CONT'D)

(Muffled)

I hate my life ... I hate my life ... I
hate my life.

But there's more to come as from downstairs THE DOORBELL RINGS. Bernie's CHANTING, PRAYER BOWL WHINE and SCOOBY's HOWLING continue unabated as ...

The DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN, but this time it just KEEPS GOING!

Troy can't take it!

TROY (CONT'D)
(Shouting down stairs)
DAD! GET THE BLOODY DOOR!

The DOORBELL, CHANTING and Scooby's HOWLING are going crazy. Troy drags himself to his feet and, scowling, stalks downstairs to ...

23

INT. HALLWAY/FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

23

... the front door and OPENS IT.

REVEALING: A DISHEVELLED FEMALE FIGURE who immediately pushes past him, into the house and SLAMS the door behind herself.

The figure is BETH, the girl from Bernie's session yesterday who stayed behind to thank him. Her eye's are WILD, she's SWEATY, DIRTY and clearly OFF HER FACE.

Scooby, GROWLS and goes for her. Troy GRABS the dog and holds him BACK as Beth shrinks back against the closed door, TRAPPED.

TROY
Wait ... down, DOWN!

Beth is OVERCOME with PARANOIA.

BETH
They're after me! QUIET! QUIET!

She crouches by the door, terrified of something outside more terrible than Troy and an enraged staff.

TROY
Who the hell are you!?

Bernie, still clad in his PRAYER SHAWL and looking like a cross between Timothy Leery and Batman, appears BEHIND them.

BERNIE
Beth ... ?

Beth spots Bernie and throws herself into his arms. She hugs him incredibly tight.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
(To Troy)
It's alright! I'm her sponsor!

TROY
Of course you are.

24

EXT. PUB - LATER

24

Gordon and the barman are SNOGGING with incredible passion as Camille sits on the kerb a few feet away. Marnie watches the snogging with some irritation.

MARNIE
How is he always right?

CAMILLE
Practice.

A MINI-CAB pulls up. Marnie helps a very unsteady Camille to her feet and pours her into the cab, which is quite a feat considering how drunk she is, and how high her platforms are.

MARNIE
(To Gordon)
Gordon. Gordon! Gordon!!!

No response from the lovers. Marnie gives up and plops into the back of the cab right into the middle of ...

25

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

25

... Camille explaining she has cancer to the cab driver, who doesn't really seem to grasp it.

CAMILLE
... so it's not like **BAD CANCER** you know?
It's one o'the good ones. Like skin.
Skin's a good one.
(Gesturing at Marnie)
She had skin.

MARNIE
You can tell the cab driver, but you can't tell your family?

CAMILLE
I'm practicing for when we get back.

MARNIE
Good.

CAB DRIVER

Hello, yes. I'm Ahmed and I drive you.
Where you go? Via Streatham, yes?

MARNIE

No, we're not going anywhere near
Streatham.

CAMILLE

Austin Coco used to live in Streatham ...

MARNIE

NO!

CAB DRIVER

OK, Streatham! We go!

He pulls away into traffic.

MARNIE

We're not going to Streatham. We're going
to Tooting.

CAB DRIVER

OK, near Streatham. No problem. Streatham
high road ... whoosh, Tooting!

CAMILLE

He might still live there. I could call
him. Find out. Remind him of old times.

Camille fumbles with her phone. Marnie wrestles it out of
her hand.

MARNIE

No Austin Coco and ...
(To cab driver)
NO STREATHAM!

CAB DRIVER

No, no, no ... I say *via* Streatham.

MARNIE

What's your obsession with Streatham?

CAB DRIVER

Sat Nav she is broke. Everywhere *via*
Streatham, yes?

Marnie slumps back in her seat, defeated.

MARNIE

It's completely the wrong direction, but
yeah ... whatever.

CAB DRIVER
(Happy)
Via Streatham we go!

Marnie's distracted argument with the cab driver has allowed Camille to get to HER PHONE and CALL someone.

CAMILLE
(On phone)
Austin Coco, it's your lucky day!

Marnie grabs Camille's phone and CHUCKS it out the window.

CUT TO:

26 **EXT. CURB - CONTINUOUS**

26

The phone BOUNCES to a stop in the gutter. A TINNY voice -- Austin Coco, or Colbert as he's now known -- echoes from it as the CAB speeds away.

AUSTIN
(On phone)
Hello? Who is this ... Camille ... ?

27 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

27

Bernie sits sipping a cup of HERBAL TEA opposite Beth who's incredibly twitchy and quite obviously 'coming down'. Scooby sits in front of her keeping a keen eye on this odd woman.

BETH
So ... then I couldn't stop thinking about the game, right? The way in which the drug allows you to perceive the way we're all part of the same over-arching construct and that we're just elements trapped within it, unable to have agency or make decisions ...

She turns to Troy who sits glaring at her in another chair.

BETH (CONT'D)
Double Espresso.

BERNIE
(To Beth)
Espresso might be a bit of a bad idea right now, Beth. How about peppermint tea?

BETH

Yeah, OK, yeah. I think that's sensible.
They put things in coffee beans at
Starbucks. Did you know that? They do.
Watch how they hide from you when they
make the coffee. That's why. Mercury and
lanolin cut with tree resin from the
Brazilian rainforest. I blogged about it.

Scooby's EARS go up in surprise as if to say: What the
fuck!?

TROY

(To Bernie)

Why's she think she's in a coffee shop?
She's mental.

BERNIE

(To Troy)

Juts play along, I don't want you to
freak her out any more.

TROY

How exactly would I do that? Give her a
flat white?

Scooby WHINES and turns to the front window as HEAD LIGHTS
illuminate the curtains. A CAR pulls up outside. Beth
BOLTS to her feet, panicked.

BETH

(Freaking out)

Oh god, they've found me!

TROY

Who? Costa? Cafe Nero? Greggs the Bakers?

Beth turns on him, horrified.

BETH

You *know*.

Bernie shoots Troy a POISONOUS look.

BERNIE

Beth ... he's kidding.

Beth CIRCLES Troy who's suddenly VERY NERVOUS. This woman
is bat-shit crazy and he's just set her off.

TROY

(Carefully)

Yeah ... joking.

BETH

How do you know about Greggs? Who have
you told. *Who's outside!?*

Troy tries to stand, Beth GRABS the nearest object-- Bernie's singing bowl -- and threatens Troy with it. Which is a lot harder than it sounds, I mean, it's a bowl.

Bernie slowly advances on Beth and tries to calm her as he does.

BERNIE

Beth ... think about the karmic implications of committing violence with an antique prayer bowl.

Amazingly, this *does* give Beth pause. She turns the bowl over in her hands, studying it wonderingly.

The room HOLDS it's BREATH ...

In the middle of this tense moment Scooby trots over in front of Beth and, to her surprise, ROLLS onto his BACK, PAWS in the AIR, TONGUE LOLLING and his FURRY BELLY exposed.

He WUFFS at her and pants, his long TONGUE DANGLING comically from his gob.

Beth ... SMILES, and slowly KNEELS, places her HAND on his BELLY and begins to stroke him. He WUFFS and WHINES in pleasure.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(Jaw dropping)

That's ... amazing.

TROY

Wait till he pops a woody.

Beth's face is beatific. She looks up at Troy.

BETH

What's his name?

TROY

Scooby.

She looks down at the dog who's slobbering all over the place with pleasure.

BETH

Scooby ...

(Absently to Troy)

... thanks, Shaggy.

Troy makes to correct her, but Bernie GRABS his arm and shakes his head. Troy, for once, keeps his gob shut. The HEADLIGHTS outside pull away and the room DIMS.

28

EXT. BERNIE AND CAMILLE'S/FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

28

Marnie supports Camille who hangs on the door frame looking QUEASY.

MARNIE

Where are your keys, girl?

CAMILLE

It's not too late to double team Austin
Coco.

MARNIE

First thing you're gonna do when you see
Bernie is tell him, right?

The front door FLIES OPEN to reveal BERNIE. Camille looks up at him and suddenly her eyes BULGE.

She looks at him, her face is wide open and achingly vulnerable.

CAMILLE

I got cancer.

Bernie does a double take.

MARNIE

Perfect timing, girl.

29

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAWN

29

Camille sits STARING DOWN at Scooby who has his head in her lap and GAZES UP at her, his tongue lolling. The others are INDISTINCT SHAPES all around her and their OVERLAPPING VOICES are more like WHITE NOISE.

She BLINKS and slowly the voices, followed by the room, come into FOCUS.

TROY

... I can't process this.

MARNIE

Not really about you, Troy, is it.

BETH

(She's come down a bit, but
not much)

I think you meddling kids need to just,
you know, chill. Daphne's news is ...
heavy.

MARNIE

(To Beth)

Who are you and why are you here?

TROY
Bernie's her sponsor.

Marnie LAUGHS.

TROY (CONT'D)
(Finding common ground with
Marnie)
I know, right?

BETH
That's not fair, Shaggy. Bernie's
amazing.

TROY
Stop calling me that!

MARNIE
Great, another infatuated student.

BETH
Excuse me, Velma, but that's the kettle
calling the pot black. Everyone knows
you're obsessed with Shaggy and Scooby
hates it.

Marnie looks BAFFLED.

Bernie, who's been QUIET up until this moment, LEANS
FORWARD to Camille. The room goes SILENT as he SPEAKS.

BERNIE
Why'd you hide this from me?

CAMILLE
You wasn't strong enough.

BERNIE
Every day I want a drink. All day, every
day. Non-stop. This isn't a reason to
drink ... it's the strongest reason in
the world *not* to.

Camille looks at Bernie and her eyes mist with tears. He
gets up and crosses to her, wrapping her in his arms.

CAMILLE
Austin Coco's got nothing on you.

BERNIE
'Cept he's on the list.

30 **EXT. CLAYBOURNE COLLEGE - DAY** 30

Camille and Bernie walk up the road together. They reach a corner, swap a familiar kiss and split up. He heads one way, she another.

31 **INT. CLAYBOURNE COLLEGE ADMIN BUILDING/OFFICE - DAY** 31

Camille walks into a LARGE OPEN-PLAN OFFICE. Many clusters of desks subdivided by partitions into different teams. She stops by one and peers down at Deenis.

CAMILLE

What'd you do with Clive?

Deenis JUMPS then looks up at Camille.

DEENIS

Oh, we ... er ... disarmed him. It took awhile.

Camille holds out a CD to Deenis. His eyes LIGHT UP as he takes it.

DEENIS (CONT'D)

Ali Farka Toure!? Wow!

CAMILLE

It's a bit of an apology. The ... carrot in the hallway on Friday, it was mine. Sorry.

Deenis looks up at her, his eyes concerned.

DEENIS

Oh, that's alright. Everything ... cool?

CAMILLE

No, not really.

Deenis nods, not really knowing how to respond to that. Camille shoots him one of her patented MEGAWATT SMILES and he looks down, slightly sheepish.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

Later.

She walks away into the office, headed for an empty desk DRIPPING with PLANTS.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

What you got for us this week life?

FADE OUT.