

PRICE TAG
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FADE IN:

INT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

The images look grainy with glitches. It is footage taken from low-quality cameras. The people, filmed from a height, resemble lab rats scuttling around, being continually observed.

TV PRESENTER

In the late 1940s, George Orwell wrote one of his most memorable novels about an all controlling state. A world intricately controlled by the government, continually being watched by "Big Brother". The novel: 1984. Fifty so years down the line, present day England, it seems that for some, the Big Brother that Orwell depicted is no longer just a nightmarish fictional vision but something ingrained in reality. Small devices are perpetually scanning our every move. You see them everywhere: on street lamps, traffic lights, gates, in shops and banks. These spying devices, set up for the most part by our government are small cameras known as CCTV cameras. The total of CCTV cameras in the United Kingdom reaches a staggering four million in number, meaning that each citizen gets caught on camera approximately 300 times daily.

The screen breaks up into a multitude of small screens, each with their individual footage.

TV PRESENTER (CONT'D)

And now we ask ourselves, is the CCTV camera a friend or a foe?

FADE TO BLACK

THE MAIN TITLE: PRICE TAG.

Directly under it, SUBTITLE: 1. The label on an item showing its price 2. The cost of an undertaking.

FADE IN

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE - DAY

The office is simply arranged. On the wall is a framed picture of a blotch of ink, a favorite amongst psychiatrists. There is a desk with a computer and a name tag which reads: STEVEN GROPER. Behind the desk is the man himself, seated. STEVEN, 44, is a grayish man with a torpid, sluggish feel to him, continually out of sync with reality. He is absentmindedly watching something in one corner of the room.

In the center of the room is DARREN KINSEY, 26, energetic with an appealing face, dressed with studied clumsiness which passes off as intellectual. He is lying down on a black worn-down couch. Just like Steven, he is also looking at something in one corner of the room and seems to be irritated by it.

Darren's P.O.V: the television is on, airing the documentary on the "REAL BIG BROTHER". The TV presenter is still listing facts and figures in a slurred tone, accompanied by the same poor-quality CCTV footage seen previously.

Darren grows impatient and sits upright, turning with difficulty to Steven, making it apparent that the couch has especially been placed according to the television and not according to Steven's desk.

DARREN
Can you please turn it off.

STEVEN
Turn what off?

DARREN
The TV! What else do you think I'm talking about?
(beat)
You are meant to be my psychiatrist for god's sake. What's the point of me coming here if the only thing we do is watch TV?

Steven sighs, making it clear that he is annoyed and switches off the television.

STEVEN
Well Darren, tell me, what are you thinking about?

CLOSE UP on Darren's face who is lost for words. He racks his brain, not knowing what to say.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

A white empty space. The light is of a soft clinical white which erases any details the room may have. In the center of the room stands a creamy blue fridge, gently humming. Magnetic alphabetical letters, in bright childish colors, are sprinkled across the fridge's door.

The letters start mixing, forming a sentence. Some of the essential letters to form the sentence are missing so the sentence reads: WHO NOSE.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Darren is still lost for words, Steven's question having raised a million unanswerable questions in Darren's mind.

DARREN
What is a thought anyway?

Steven clearly doesn't deal with such philosophically abstract questions and gives Darren a why-should-I-care shrug as an answer.

DARREN (CONT'D)
Forget it. I'm off. And I know
I've said before and did come back,
but this time I mean it, it's over.

Darren storms out of the office, Steven just watches him go with the same blank expression. He consults his watch and notices that he has some free time before his next client so he turns the TV back on, resuming the documentary.

INT. DARREN'S FLAT - DAY

The flat reflects Darren's personality: a conveyed mixture of juvenility and an acute interest in art. Hung on the walls are two framed posters of famous films: A Clockwork Orange and Some Like It Hot along with a black and white photograph of Ernest Hemingway and a copy of the Nue Bleue by Henri Matisse. On the mantelpiece is a figurine of Ash Campbell, the hero from the cult film Evil Dead sporting Darren's sunglasses.

Books, papers and clothes are left lying on the floor. It is clear that Darren lives alone.

Darren is slumped on a derelict but still inviting couch, deep in thought.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The door bell rings, the loud noise forcing Darren out of his reverie. He gets up and reluctantly opens the door. His P.O.V: DOREEN FERNSTER, 55, is Darren's landlady. She looks like a plumber, solidly built even in her fifties.

Darren's face goes pale, not wanting to face Doreen.

DARREN

Miss Fernster. How are you?

DOREEN

(in a Cockney accent)

I 'ope to be a lot better in a few minutes. You know why I'm 'ere don't ya love?

DARRENN

Is it about the rent?

DOREEN

So you hadn't forgotten. It's not the first time you're late in payment. You see Darren, paying the rent is a bit like having your periods. It happens once a month, every month. And if it hasn't come at the end of the month, you start to worry. And if it still hasn't come, you have to take action. See what I mean?

DARREN

I. Yes, I completely understand. I will get you the rent by the end of the day. I'm sorry I haven't paid yet it's just tha...

DOREEN

That's what I wanted to hear. But seeing is believing so it betta' not be an empty promise. If you don't pay up I'm gonna 'ave to kick you out. It would make me lose a month's rent it would, having to find new tenants an' all. And we wouldnae want that, would we love?

Darren shakes his head.

DOREEN (CONT'D)

That's right. See you later then. Remember, cash no checks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Doreen turns around, waddling back down the corridor. Darren closes the door, concerned.

EXT. STREET ATM - DAY

People are queuing up in front of the hole in the wall to withdraw money. Darren is waiting in line, impatient and stressed, taking out his credit card and then putting it back in his pocket and then checking if it is still in his pocket.

When Darren's turn comes, he drops his credit card, too nervous to be able to clearly concentrate.

He inserts the card and types in his pin code along with the requested amount and waits for the bank's verdict.

The ATM emits a beeping sound, rejecting Darren's card.

Darren looks even more stressed out than before. He starts walking left, then right, stops and takes out his phone and dials.

DARREN

Yeah, hi Stuart it's me. What?
It's Darren. Okay I'm sorry, yes I
do realize that it's not obvious
for other people to know who me is.
I just thought it would come up on
your phone. Okay, I'm sorry for
assuming you would check. Look,
can I come over? It's important.
Great. I'll see you in a bit then.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

Stuart's office, unlike Stuart himself, is devoid of charm. It has a few plants that look like they are dying even though they are made of plastic. A few newspaper clippings, book reviews, are pinned on the wall.

STUART

I'm sorry mate but I can't. I
don't give advances, it's my
policy.

STUART, 33, is a handsome, self-made man, full of confidence and determination who doesn't try to hide his egotism.

DARREN

Oh go on Stuart, just this once.
I'm not asking for much, just
enough for the rent.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN (CONT'D)
I'm going to get kicked out if I
can't pay up by tonight.

STUART
How is the book coming along?

DARREN
I can't think clearly at the
moment. But promise once the money
issues will be sorted, I'll be on a
roll.

STUART
Listen Darren, I completely
understand.

A ray of hope illuminates Darren's face.

STUART (CONT'D)
But I don't give advances. Simple,
right. So don't ask.

Darren has a desperate look again.

DARREN
But why not?

Stuart leans back into his chair and spins around on it,
trying to find the best way to make himself clear.

STUART
My philosophy is that why should I
pay someone, right, for something
they haven't done. It's a bit like
paying for a dish in a restaurant
before eating it. If it's bad,
you're not going to pay for it, are
ya?

(beat)
Okay. Bad example because knowing
you, you would pay for it anyway.

DARREN
You pay advances to help the person
in his writing. If he has no money
to survive, he can't write.

STUART
Change job then, sorted.

Stuart thinks about it and on seeing Darren's desperate look
gives in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART (CONT'D)
How much is your rent?

DARREN
305 pounds.

STUART
And how much do you need?

DARREN
305 pounds.

STUART
Okay, but first I need you to help
me.

DARREN
Nothing is ever free with you is
it?

STUART
Fair is fair. Besides, it comes
with a free meal. It's tonight.

Beat.

DARREN
Okay. So can I have the money?

Stuart fumbles through his wallet and takes out a crisp fifty
pound note.

STUART
This is all I have on me. Take it.
And I'm giving it to you as a
friend and not as a client.

Darren has turned white, his rent issue still not solved.

DARREN
It's only fifty pounds...

STUART
It's an advance.

DARREN
Damn it... Okay, but can I crash at
yours tonight if I fail to pay the
rent?

STUART
I can't see why not.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARREN

Right, at least that's sorted. So about tonight?

INT. DARREN'S BANK - DAY

CLIENTS are filling out various forms and queuing up for withdrawals and deposits, robotic in their movements. Most look stressed and worn-out.

Darren heads towards the RECEPTIONIST, 22, seated behind a circular desk.

Darren's P.O.V: the receptionist is a young woman, fresh out of college and eager to please. She looks just like any other receptionist: bland with too much make-up, always adorning a fake smile even when being verbally abused by a customer.

RECEPTIONIST

Hello there, how may I be of an assistance to you?

DARREN

Hi. I'm here to request. To ask if an increase in my overdraft is possible.

RECEPTIONIST

Right. We will see what we can do.
Bear with me a second please.
(typing on her computer)
And may I have your name please?

DARREN

Darren Kinsey. Kinsey like the sexologist.

Darren realizes the stupidity of his answer and turns red but the receptionist's fake smile doesn't betray any emotions.

RECEPTIONIST

(looking back up at Darren)

Okay. Please take a seat Mr Kinsey and somebody will be with you in a few minutes.

Darren mumbles a thanks and walks towards the seats, still flushed with embarrassment.

He sits back, nervous, impatient and bored; fidgeting with his thumbs, unaware of doing so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He is too far gone into his thoughts to notice a woman in a business suit approaching him.

WOMAN

Mr Kinsey, sorry to have kept you
waiting.

Darren snaps out of his thoughts and stares at the woman. His POV: LILY, 30, is pretty in an unconventional manner and very prim. Even in casual clothes, she is the type of woman who likes restraint and nothing out of the ordinary. And just like Stuart, she is oozing with self-confidence.

DARREN

Oh, I'm sorry.
(nervously)
Lost in my own mind.

LILY

That's quite alright Mr Kinsey.

Lily leans in which has the counter effect of making Darren uneasy.

LILY (CONT'D)

You will find that money does that
to people.

Lily gives a warm, radiating smile breaking off from the normal hypocritical smile bankers usually adorn. Darren feebly smiles back, untrusting her friendliness.

INT. LILY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The office is a small cubicle with a desk and a computer. On the wall is a framed poster to make it less claustrophobic and to add a touch of individuality. It is an inspirational poster of a bright green field with a blooming tree set against a bright blue sky. It is almost offensively kitsch.

Lily sits down and automatically rearranges the items on her workplace before talking to Darren.

LILY

Now then, what can we do for you?

DARREN

I was wandering whether you could
increase my overdraft limit.
Exceptionally. So I can pay my
rent.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN (CONT'D)

I'm going to get kicked out if I can't pay, and that would just be really bad timing because I'm going to get a hefty advance for my writer, I mean novel, in less than a week's time probably. Because I'm a writer. So I'll be able to decrease my overdraft in no time.

LILY

I entirely understand. I just need to check if such an action is possible. Bear with me.

Lily starts going through Darren's files on her computer.

Darren's P.O.V: Lily has sharp features that do not give away any emotional signs, almost as if her face has been dusted down with sandpaper.

LILY

Hm. I'm afraid it won't be possible. It seems that you do not have a steady income so there is no guarantee that you will be able to settle a further increase in your overdraft. Sorry.

DARREN

But I don't have a steady job since I'm a writer. Can't you extend it just a little more?

LILY

It appears that you already have an overdraft of 1500 pounds and you have even spent above that limit.

DARREN

But I'm going to get an advance soon.

LILY

Actually, if we have proof that you are indeed going to get an advance and of how much, it might be possible.

DARREN

So if I get you a form of proof by tomorrow could you increase my overdraft?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILY
It's possible yes.
(handing Darren a form)
Here is the bank's address. If you
can fax in the form, I will see
what I can do.

Darren takes the sheet of paper.

DARREN
Okay. Thanks.

LILY
So, how are you enjoying being a
writer?

Darren does not want to answer, having other places to be and other things to do.

DARREN
Fine.

LILY
Not always easy is it? But I was
glancing through your bank details
and I noticed you're quite a big
spender.

Darren starts fidgeting, uncomfortable by where the conversation is heading.

DARREN
Yeah. Well I guess I'm not great
with money.

LILY
No, you're not, are you? Let me
give you a few tips that can help.
It's normally what we tell our
young bankers aged 12 to 16. You
know it's their first relationship
with money and it's important for
them to understand how money works.
Not that I think of you like that
but they are just useful tips.

Lily manages to be condescending even without meaning to do so and it is driving Darren crazy. So Darren just sits there, forcing himself to smile, waiting for her to get it over and done with.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LILY

You know before spending, what we find really helps is that you ask yourself if you really need it. Of course it won't work if you always answer yes.

Lily bursts out laughing. It is a punch-line that she must tell time after time to her young bankers. Darren isn't impressed.

DARREN

That's funny.

LILY

Funny but true.

Beat.

DARREN

Well thank you but I should get going now. I have to see my agent again and give him this form.

Lily is disappointed.

LILY

Oh. Okay. I hope to see you tomorrow then to see if we can help you. So all we need is the amount of the said advance and from whom.

DARREN

Great. I'll make sure you get it as soon as possible. Thank you.

Darren gets up in a hurry, glad to be leaving.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The restaurant is a posh upbeat place filled with COUPLES dining. They are more absorbed by each other than their food.

Stuart is seated at one of the tables, neatly dressed, looking casual but smart. Opposite him is a BEAUTIFUL BLONDE in her twenties listening intently to Stuart. Both are enjoying a bottle of red wine.

STUART

Hawaii. Two words. Simply amazing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEAUTIFUL BLONDE
And who did you go with?

STUART
Alone. Business trip.

The woman is relieved.

BLONDE
I would like to travel like you do.
I mean I've been nowhere compared
to you, you're just so lucky.

STUART
You should come with me next time.

BLONDE
I wish.

STUART
No I'm serious. I know it may
sound crazy because we hardly know
each other right, but carpe diem
and all that, we should do it.

The woman doesn't try to hide her joy.

STUART
We could start off with Italy or
France. Rome or Paris. And then
we could head tow...

STRANGER
Stuart? Stuart Field? Is that
you?

Stuart looks up, not liking to have been interrupted.
Stuart's P.O.V: the stranger is Darren, nervously looking at
Stuart and his date.

STUART
Darren. Darren Kinsey right? How
have you been? Haven't seen you in
ages.

DARREN
Oh. I've been keeping busy.

The woman shifts her look between the two, expecting to be
introduced.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARREN

And this must be your wife. Me...
Ma... Miranda!

(to the woman)
I've heard so much about you...

Miranda doesn't reply. She looks as if someone has suddenly hit her very hard, going from pale to red. She takes her bread roll and throws it at Stuart.

BECKIE

You lying bastard!

STUART

Beckie, please.

BECKIE

No. Fuck you! I don't know why I ever believed you.

(screaming)
Do you have kids as well? Huh? I can't believe it! You're sick!

The couples at the sojourning tables have turned to look at the commotion. Darren stands there, looking uncomfortable.

STUART

Calm down. I'm sorry I lied, but get this, right. If I hadn't lied to you, I would never have been with you. So technically it's all for the greater good, right?

Beckie looks around for something else to throw but her wine glass is empty. Stuart catches on and grabs the wine bottle before she can, and looks at her triumphantly.

DARREN

I'm sorry. I had no idea. I thought you were...

BECKIE

No, thank you. You don't know how grateful I am.
(to Stuart)
Go fuck yourself!

STUART

I would if I could.

Beckie throws her napkin at him and walks out. By now even the waiters have stopped to watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STUART
Well, sit down.

Darren sits, almost shaking with embarrassment. Stuart calls over a waiter, an easy task since all are still looking at him.

STUART
What kind of a crappy name is Miranda?

Darren shrugs.

STUART
(to the waiter)
Can we have an extra glass and some more bread rolls.

The waiter nods and scuttles away.

STUART
Food has already been ordered. I don't know what she took though.

DARREN
I hate doing this. What was even wrong with her?

STUART
She was a leech. Anyway, plenty more fish in the sea, right? And you shouldn't feel bad, she said it herself. She's thankful. Besides, you get a free meal.

DARREN
What did you order?

STUART
Fish.

INT. THE COCK'S TAVERN - NIGHT

The COCK'S TAVERN is the typical English pub: rustic and dimly lit. It is packed with all kinds of people and the general brouhaha is good humored.

Darren and Stuart are seated at one of the tables. Empty pints proof of their heavy drinking.

STUART
(drumming his hands on the table)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STUART (CONT'D)

Fun night... I still don't get why
you're hiding from your landlady.
Couldn't you just tell her that you
will pay her tomorrow?

DARREN

I don't know if I can. Actually
that reminds me. Can I ask you a
favor?

STUART

What do you mean: "can I ask you a
favor"? That question is pointless,
yeah. Just say I've got a favor to
ask etc etc...

DARREN

I've got a favor to ask.

STUART

I'm listening.

DARREN

The bank will only lend me money if
I can prove that I am going to get
paid soon. So do you think you
could send them a letter telling
them that you are going to pay me
two thousand pounds by the end of
next week?

STUART

But I'm not going to.

DARREN

Yeah, I gathered. But can't you
just lie. Like send it, and once I
get the money, I will tell them
that the deal is off.

STUART

That's lying though.

Darren looks at Stuart, unimpressed.

STUART

Point taken. I'll see what I can
do.

DARREN

Wicked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART

So, let's talk about the book.

DARREN

I'm not ready to talk about it yet.

STUART

Oh come on mate, give me an insight. The central idea. What's it about?

DARREN

I don't have any real ideas at the moment. But promise, once all these money issues are sorted I will be fine.

STUART

You better hurry up or you can return me my fifty pounds.

A beat.

DARREN

I'm off to take a leak.

Darren gets up and heads towards the toilets. Stuart drums his hands again, scanning the pub for attractive single women.

INT. THE COCK'S TAVERN'S TOILETS - NIGHT

Darren is staring at himself in the murky mirror. On the mirror, graffiti reads: "BIG MAN SEARCHING BIG COCK" and "FUCKED OUT OF MY MIND - GIVE ME MORE" followed up by numbers and times of rendezvous.

A FAT MAN, 56, with a rough face and a beer belly looks at Darren while doing up his flies.

FAT MAN

You a fag?

Darren doesn't have a clue why he's asking.

FAT MAN

(nodding at the mirror)

I said are you a fag?

Darren just shakes his head NO.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FAT MAN

You look like a fairy to me. Is that why you come here? To the Cock's Tavern? You know the name's not what you think, it's because they used to have cock - rooster fights here.

The fat man gives Darren a cold look and walks out. Transfixed, Darren thinks things over, not understanding what that was all about.

INT. THE COCK'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Darren's P.O.V: Stuart is at the bar flirting with an ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, 20s, pretty yet borderline anorexic. Darren returns to the table and notices that some customers have now taken it. Not daring to ask for the table, let alone his seat back, Darren takes his pint and drinks it standing up.

Uncomfortable, Darren scans the pub, surveying the crowd. He spots the Fat Man from the toilets and is not quick enough in redirecting his gaze and makes eye contact with him.

Scared for no apparent reason, Darren finishes his drink in a hurry, spilling most of it on his jumper. Once finished, he walks out of the pub in a hurry.

INT. STUART'S FLAT - DAY

It is a spacious living room with famous black and white photographs arranged on the wall with meticulous precision. Darren is curled up on Stuart's sofa, slowly waking up.

A PRETTY WOMAN enters into the living room, looks at Darren and smiles.

LAURA

Hi there, I'm Laura.

DARREN

Darren.

Darren remembers where he saw her: she is the anorexic girl Stuart was talking to in the pub.

DARREN

Did you guys get home late last night?

LAURA

Hm, too drunk to remember.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN
I didn't hear you.

LAURA
That's a good thing.

Realizing the implications of what she just said, Laura blushes. Stuart enters the room, already dressed for work and looking amazingly fresh considering the night he's had. Laura goes up to him and kisses him.

STUART
Hi Darren. You okay?

Darren nods.

STUART
(to Laura)
Hey sweetheart. Look, I'm really sorry but I need to run so why don't I just give you my number so that we can meet up some time soon?

LAURA
That would be lovely.

Laura hands him her phone and waits for him to save his number. Once done, he hands it back.

LAURA
Thanks. Should I give you a missed call so you have mine?

STUART
Yeah, go for it.

Laura rings Stuart's phone and he saves her number.

STUART
Nice one. So I'll see you around.

Laura kisses Stuart good-bye and waves at Darren who waves back before leaving. Both men watch her go.

STUART
That was easy, normally they rack their brains to find excuses to linger.

DARREN
Do you think you will see her again?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART

Not a chance. I can't even
remember her name.

DARREN

Laura.

STUART

Laura... Nice name.

DARREN

You wouldn't even see her again if
she phoned you?

STUART

That'll never happen. She doesn't
have my number.

DARREN

But you just gave her your number,
didn't you?

STUART

Yeah but it's a different phone.

(off his reaction)

I've got a phone just for my dates.
And now you're going to ask me why,
aren't you?

Darren nods lightly.

STUART

When you give them your number they
immediately give you a missed call
to see if you haven't lied. So
instead of lying, I thought I might
as well just get another phone.
Simple and efficient. Good-bye
Laura.

(beat)

Right, I'm off. Leave when you
want, just bang the door shut
behind you. And get a move on with
your writing.

DARREN

Don't forget about the bank.

STUART

Yeah, I'll do it as long as you
write.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

Darren is in Steven's office, lying down on the couch. In Steven's chair sits another identical Darren. In a corner of the room, the blue fridge is softly humming.

DARREN #1

Maybe if I knew what a thought was
I could be more efficient at having
some.

DARREN #2

Don't you think you're just trying
to shy away from actually writing?

DARREN #1

Hm. I don't know. Maybe. I guess
I always find excuses not to write.
(beat)

I really have a bad hang-over
though.

Darren #2 looks at Darren #1 knowingly.

In the corner of the room, the fridge stops humming and both Darrens turn to look at it. Colors, images and forms flow out of it, but nothing concrete.

DARREN #1

Are these thoughts what I see in my
mind? Nothing ever makes sense.
Why can't it make sense?

DARREN #2

For one, Darren, many believe that
a thought is a recycling of what is
already in your mind. So in a way,
it's normal that you can't come up
with anything new.

Darren #2's words are soothing and said in a confident tone,
as if it were a father reassuring his child.

DARREN #2

And also Darren, you will find that
they don't have to make sense and
your irritation is just a normal
reaction. Most people do tend to
get annoyed by the fluidity and
abstractness of it all. Some get
so irritated with it that they jump
of bridges and skyscrapers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN #1
But I don't want to jump off a
skyscraper!
(beat)
Do I?

Darren #2 shakes his head. Darren #1 is slightly relieved.

INT. LILY'S OFFICE - DAY

Lily is beaming at Darren, seeming even friendlier than before.

DARREN
I believe that my agent Stuart
Field faxed the required documents.
Did you receive them?

LILY
Yes we did. But I'm afraid it
still doesn't mean that we can give
you the money.

Darren is nervous, fearing for the worse.

DARREN
But doesn't he say that he is going
to pay me two thousand pounds?

LILY
(looking at Stuart's fax)
Actually no. He has written that
he might pay you. You better make
sure that he is, because in what he
wrote he seems unsure.

Darren closes his eyes, he should have expected this from Stuart.

LILY
Let me see what I can do.

Lily types on her computer, deep in concentration. The pressure is building up and it is plain torture for Darren.

DARREN
Any luck?

Lily looks up, smiling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY

Actually yes, it seems that you are in luck. We can give you 350 pounds but no more.

Darren is over the moon, extremely happy and relieved.

DARREN

Oh that's just great. Thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. That's just. Wow. How can I ever thank you? Let me take you out to dinner tonight or other-

Darren stops dead in his sentence, embarrassed.

SUBTITLE: impulse: a tendency to act without reflection.

DARREN

Sorry. I mean that's silly of me. And you must be really busy and all that... And I guess you're not suppose to go out with your clients.

LILY

This is a bank not a brothel. We are allowed to date our clients.

DARREN

It's not really a date is it?

LILY

Well when somebody invites somebody out, it is seen as a date. And I would just love that. There is a restaurant that I have heard about that I have been dying to go to. It's French... Bon appetit.

Lily chuckles, Darren just stares, speechless. She writes something down energetically and hands it to Darren.

LILY

Here is my number. Call me to let me know when to meet up, although we should meet up at 8 but call me all the same at 6.

Darren gets up and clumsily takes her number.

LILY

So I'll see you tonight then.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARREN
(faintly)
Tonight it is.

SUBTITLE: stupid: unintelligent, foolish.

INT. FRENCH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The restaurant runs along a romantic mood: dimly lit, soft classical music that could as easily be played in an elevator and candlelit dinner. The waiters are hovering around, looking like a strange breed of penguins.

Darren and Lily are seated at a table in the middle of the restaurant, halfway through their meal, Lily looking animated and Darren bored out of his mind. Lily has changed clothes for the occasion, slightly overdressed having made an effort to look more appealing. Darren hasn't changed clothes since their earlier encounter at the bank.

LILY
And that's how he lost all his
money. SWOOSH. It's scary how you
can lose money so easily. All your
money gone. Just like that. What
do you think?

DARREN
(in a drunken slur)
I think it's... scary.

Lily goes over the story again in her mind, it's that good. She chuckles at the funny bits and gasps at the scary bits.

LILY
It's funny how I know so many
things about your life and you know
so little about mine.

Darren is slow in answering.

DARREN
What do you mean?

LILY
I know all about your bank account
details and your spending habits.
And you don't know anything like
that about me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

So you know everything about
somebody through their bank
details?

LILY

Pretty much. I know you went to
Paris, France, four months ago. I
know what you did there. All
thanks to your bank details.
Amazing, isn't it? That I know so
much and you don't know half as
much about me. Crazy.

DARREN

I guess that makes you mysterious
then.

Lily blushes, flattered.

LILY

Really? You think I'm mysterious?

Darren falls back into his chair downing his glass of red
wine.

LILY

Nobody has ever said that about me.

Darren stares in disbelief at Lily, who is smiling.

EXT. FRENCH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

DARREN

Thank you Lily. It was...
enjoyable. So, I'll see you in
your office some time soon.

Darren hastily starts walking away, too drunk to walk
straight.

LILY

Darren, wait.

Darren winces.

DARREN

What?

LILY

You're too drunk. Let me get a
taxi for you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lily hails for a taxi before Darren knows what is happening. The taxi drives up to the pavement. Lily opens the door and Darren gets in.

LILY

Where do you live?

DARREN

London.

LILY

Can you please be more specific?

DARREN

22 Havestock Hill, Flat 2B, on the first floor, the door to the right of the staircase. London.

Lily gets into the taxi and closes the door.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

DARREN

Why did you get in? It's fine
Lily, I've got my chauffeur now.
And he knows where I live, I told
him so. I'll be able to get home
safely now, isn't that so Sir?

The taxi driver nods. Darren turns triumphantly towards Lily.

DARREN

See.

LILY

I thought we could share the taxi,
it would be cheaper.

(to the driver)

Lets go.

The taxi starts up and drives off. Darren is confused and has trouble understanding what is happening.

DARREN

But you live in the opposite direction. It's miles apart.

Lily kisses Darren on the cheek. Suddenly Darren understands what is happening. He closes his eyes, hating himself for not having seen it coming.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

A groggy looking Darren, still not recovered from the previous night's events is squished into a chair. Stuart, smart and upbeat looking as always, by contrast makes Darren look even worse.

DARREN

She forced herself home. I
couldn't do anything about it.

STUART

I like women who take initiatives.

DARREN

But you don't get it. I didn't
want her to come home.

STUART

Word of advice. It can't do you
any harm and it might even help
with the writing.

DARREN

But that's not the issue. What I'm
trying to get at is that I do not
want anything to do with her.

STUART

Avoid her then. Or dump her. Both
actually.

DARREN

That's the problem: I can't avoid
her. She's my banker!

STUART

Sounds drastic but either you a.
Dump her or b. Dump her or c.
Dump her and change bank. Simple.
Over and done with. Move on.

Darren hides his head in his hands, exasperated.

DARREN

You're not helping. I'll just lie
low for a while, maybe she will get
the message.

STUART

Just text her telling her that.
Avoids any confusion. But enough
of that. How's the writing going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

From the cold look Darren gives him, Stuart gets the message: it's not going at all.

INT. DARREN'S FLAT - DAY

The flat is cleaner than usual, making it look a bit empty. Darren is on the couch with his note-pad scribbling. On the floor next to the couch, empty cups of coffee are lined up.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

An odd, surreal landscape: a million bizarre things are rushing past Darren- toys from his childhood, unknown faces. The fridge is in the middle of the landscape, as always, gently humming. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE is also there, with his trademark moustache and spectacles, riding a bicycle. There are snippets of writing in the sky, things that Darren once scribbled down. They appear like blotches of ink and slowly take the form of sentences. Some read: "give the duck a home not an oven" or "dustbin: decomposition and recombination of other elements" and "immature: not fully developed".

Nietzsche rides past Darren.

DARREN
(puzzled)
Nietzsche?

Nietzsche waves and rides on. There is a rabbit cajoling a big carrot and looks like it is very much in love with it. TWO HUNTERS, 40s, walk by and stop to stare at the odd couple.

HUNTER #1
I hate rabbits. They always think
it's Saint Valentine's day.

Hunter #2 reaches for his gun and shoots the rabbit to bits.

HUNTER #2
At least they will always have
Paris.

Hunter #1 looks at him with adoration.

HUNTER #1
I love you.

HUNTER #2
I love you too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The hunters hold hands and walk off into the sunset. Darren can't deal with this much nonsense and rubs his eyes, frustrated.

INT. DARREN'S FLAT - DAY

Darren throws his note-pad skidding across the floor.

DARREN

Fuck.

The door bell rings. Darren goes to the door and looks through the fish-eye. THROUGH THE FISH-EYE LENS: a distorted Lily stands there, smiling.

DARREN

Fuck again.

In a panic, he sneaks away from the door. His phone on the table rings. She must have heard it ring so he goes to pick it up.

DARREN

(feigning delight)

Lily. How are you?

(feigning surprise)

What? You're outside my flat?

Now? Really? Yes, I'm home. No,
I didn't hear.

The door bell rings, irritating Darren.

DARREN

Yup. I heard that one. I'll come
and open up then.

Darren is unhappy but goes to the door to open it anyway, forcing a big smile on his face worthy of a bank receptionist's smile.

SUBTITLE: ambush: a surprise attack by a person in a concealed position.

LILY

Hi there. I was just in the neighborhood and since I was here I thought I would pop by to say hi.
So hi.

Lily enters the flat and at the same time leans in to kiss Darren. He is unwilling to kiss her and tries to dodge it, making it an awkward kiss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

Sorry.

LILY

Don't apologize.

DARREN

Yeah right... Sorry.

Lily lovingly looks at Darren and kisses him again, Darren can't help wincing.

DARREN

I'm surprised you managed to find my flat again.

LILY

I cheated. I looked it up on your files at the bank.

Darren is not thrilled.

LILY

I can't believe you didn't hear the doorbell. Is your hearing okay? I mean, it's pretty loud.

DARREN

Hm. I was in the bedroom. Tea?

LILY

I could die for one.

Darren looks at Lily and briefly raises his eyebrows, wishing she would die.

DARREN

Tea it is then.

Darren hurries off into the kitchen, leaving Lily to rummage through the living room at ease. She walks up to the table and spots a pile of unopened bank letters. She picks them up, scorning.

LILY

Darren.

Darren comes out of the kitchen, and on seeing the letters in her hand, he goes pale.

LILY

You don't even open the letters from the bank.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILY (CONT'D)

There are some dating from two months back. Honestly Darren, bank letters are to be taken seriously. We. Well the bank doesn't send them to just waste paper you know. Nor to annoy you. They are sent to help you.

Darren is ashamed.

DARREN

I know. I will. I will do it in the future. Sorry. But I know what the letters say - I mean I know I have no money.

LILY

If you read the letters it would make you realize that you should do something about your money situation. Do you know if you are going to get that advance?

DARREN

I don't think I will.

LILY

How are you going to pay your rent?

Darren shrugs. Lily's expression has changed: she looks serious and stern.

LILY

Darren. Move in with me.

DARREN

I'm sorry. What?

LILY

Move in with me. Let's live together. You and me.

Darren's stunned.

LILY

It's obvious that you can't afford this flat and it would be a smart move for you economically speaking. And yes, it's true we don't know each other very well. Well, I know you better. But we will have plenty of time once we live together and it would be nice.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LILY (CONT'D)

Look at it like an investment, it
can only grow. What do you think?
Please say yes.

Beat.

DARREN

I. I... it's all too sudden. I
need to think about it.

LILY

Think about the money you'll save.

DARREN

I. I'll go and fetch the tea.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

STUART

No. Don't you even consider it
mate. Why would you want to move
in with someone. With a woman too.
Worse, with a woman you don't like.
Besides, I thought your breed were
loners.

DARREN

The Kinseys?

STUART

Writers for god's sake! Not your
family. Look, it's not that
difficult right. Phone her up and
say, yeah, hello. What's her name?

DARREN

Lily.

STUART

Yeah, Lily. I'm phoning to tell
you that no thanks, I'm not moving
in with you. What's that you say?
Well if I don't want to move in
with you, I won't. I'm not going
to do it just to make you happy.
Simple, right?

Beat.

DARREN

It may sound stupid but she's
right. Economically speaking, it's
a viable move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STUART

Wrong. Universally speaking, it's a stupid move. Just get it out of your head. Next time I expect to see you single, happy and writing. Speaking of which, I want to see some of your writing in no more than two weeks.

DARREN

I don't think that will be possible.

Stuart spins around in his chair, annoyed.

STUART

Let's make things clear. If you don't show me anything soon you can give me back the fifty pounds. And even though you're a good friend, you can forget all about us working together. Got it?

Once again Darren is subdued.

DARREN

I'll try my best.

STUART

Don't try. Do.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

We are back in Darren's nonsensical mind. Random things walk or float by, snippets appear in the sky: "HEAD IN THE CLOUDS, FEET ON THE GROUND" and "ETC...". Out of the clouds, high up in the sky, two giant hands are coveting a light bulb which is switched off. An ELECTRICIAN, 43, is setting up a ladder to try and fix it.

Darren watches the electrician, concerned. Stuart is also next to Darren and evidently looks pissed off.

The electrician has set up his ladder and starts to climb.

ELECTRICIAN

A ladder. A ladder. A ladder from the mind to the bladder.

And continues his way upwards towards the light bulb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

(to Stuart)

I'm sorry. I just can't come up
with anything substantial.
Everything is messed up and just
plain stupid. I just can't seem to
help it.

Stuart turns to look at the rabbit who is in love with the carrot.

STUART

What the fuck is that?

Darren is embarrassed and has no control over the situation.
In the blank sky, Stuart's words appear in snippets: WHAT,
FUCK and THAT.

DARREN

(pathetically)

It's a rabbit and a carrot. I
think they're in love. But I
thought the hunters killed them
last time.

Stuart's face is reddening with anger.

DARREN

I'm sorry. I just can't think at
the moment.

An ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, 24, with large breasts walks by. Stuart
forgets his anger and eyes her up, resting his eyes for too
long on her chest.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN

(gesticulating at her
breasts)

That bum on my chest. Those are my
breasts.

The woman walks on by.

STUART

You've got to be fucking kidding
me! How immature can you be?

In the sky appears: FUCKING, IMMATURE.

STUART

I'm sorry but I'm not buying any of
this. Is this one big joke for you
Darren? Hey?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART (CONT'D)

Are you taking me for a ride? I
mean what the fuck are you playing
at?

Darren has started sweating profusely.

DARREN

I'm sorry. Just really sorry. I.
I'll try harder. I promise. It's
just that...

STUART

You better get your act together,
pronto. Got it.

Stuart walks off. The electrician now high up in the sky
falls off his ladder. Darren turns away, head in hands.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

Darren walks up to the blue fridge in the white empty space
and starts kicking it, releasing his frustration.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

The latest number one hit song is blasting through the
speakers. SHOPPERS scuttle around, picking up this and that.
Darren is with his shopping basket, looking worn out. He
stumbles around, grabbing a few items off the shelves without
paying notice to the cost.

Lily is also there with an empty shopping basket, following
Darren around.

LILY

Listen Darren, I don't mean to be
pushy but have you thought about my
offer yet?

The irritating music being played in the supermarket and
Lily's rambles get on Darren's nerves. He stops to look at
her.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

STUART

So have you ditched that girl of
yours?

DARREN

Lily?

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

LILY

So?

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

STUART

For god's sake. Just tell me what you said. Yes or no?

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Darren's P.O.V.: Lily is so impatient that she's biting her lip. Tired, Darren finally gives in.

DARREN

Yes, I'll move in with you.

Lily squeaks with joy. Darren tries to smile though inside he's crying.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

Darren hangs his head low, ashamed.

DARREN

I said... yes.

STUART

I can't believe you're so stupid!
It's suicide!

DARREN

At least it's an economically smart
suicide...

Stuart glares at Darren, disbelieving.

SUBTITLE: doom: a grim fate, a condemnation.

Beat.

DARREN

Can you help me move in?

STUART

Forget it. You're on your own.
I've got two words for you: Good-bye freedom.

INT. DARREN'S FLAT -- DAY

The flat is now empty, making it look cold and hollow. Darren is putting his remaining belongings into boxes, a sad expression on his face.

INT. LILY'S CORRIDOR -- DAY

The corridor is pip-squeak clean and the design is old-fashioned.

Darren, sweaty and unhappy, rings Lily's doorbell. He has a bunch of boxes with him which break the harmony of the corridor.

Lily opens the door with a big smile on her face. But on looking at the boxes, her smile fades.

LILY

Darren sweetie, I had no idea that you were going to move in all your stuff. I guess it's my fault, I should have made it clearer. It's just you that I want, not all these things from your past.

DARREN

But these things are me.

LILY

I quite understand, but I'm not asking you to get rid of them or anything. Can't you just store them somewhere? Please?

SUBTITLE: emasculation: deprive of force or vigor, to make feeble or ineffective.

DARREN

Do I have a choice?

LILY

Of course you do honey. But it would just take up a lot of space, and the flat doesn't need any extra things, really. So it would be a bit pointless having so many unneeded things taking up space when...

DARREN

Okay. I'll store them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lily kisses him on the cheek.

LILY
You're an angel.

Darren attempts a smile but fails, turning it into a weird contortion of the mouth.

INT. LILY'S FLAT -- NIGHT

The flat feels sterilized, everything is so neat and tidy.

Darren's P.O.V.: he looks at the white couch with two orange pillows on it. All the rest of her memorabilia looks studied and dull, without mystery or life.

Lily comes up behind Darren and puts her arms around him.

LILY
Isn't this great?

DARREN
Hm.

LILY
Oh Darren sweetie, before I forget.
It's just a silly little detail
really but it's the way I like it.

Darren holds his breath, waiting for it.

LILY
Can you take off your shoes when
you enter the flat and leave them
on the mat? And also to never put
used plates and glasses in the sink
but next to them, otherwise it can
clog up the sink. I know it's
silly, but I'm used to it being
that why.

Darren eyes widen.

DARREN
You didn't tell me you had an
obsessive compulsive disorder.

Lily is taken aback.

LILY
I'm sorry?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

It was a joke. It was meant to be funny. Sure, I'll do what you said.

LILY

Thanks. You're a star.

Lily tightens her grasp on Darren.

LILY

Don't worry, you will feel at home in no time at all. Come on, I'll give you a special tour of the flat.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The bedroom is just like the rest of the flat: unexciting. Darren is fast asleep in bed, curled up in the thick blanket.

Lily crawls onto the bed, already dressed for work and pokes Darren who stirs.

LILY

Come on sleepy head. Wakey wakey.
It's time to get ready for work.

DARREN

(disgruntled)

But I can work whenever I like.

LILY

True. But maybe it would help if you acted as if you had a proper job. Hobbies are good for a while but at the end of the day they really are quite inconsequential. You know?

DARREN

But I do have a proper job.

LILY

Yes well if that's the case, you should get up and work.

Darren buries his face in the pillow.

LILY

And talking about work, I made a timetable for you which I've left on the table.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY (CONT'D)

It suggests how many hours you should write. I think some extra discipline can really help with your writing.

Lily bends down to kiss his head.

LILY

I should get going. Don't forget to be home by eight for dinner.

Lily squeaks with pleasure.

LILY

Oh my god, saying home sounds so odd now that we live together.

DARREN

Don't say it then.

LILY

(as if talking to a kid)
My my Mr. Grumpy Head. Are you always this grumpy in the morning?

Darren buries hi head deeper into the pillow.

DARREN

Hm.

LILY

Okay Mr. Grumpy Head, I'm sorry that I'm excited that we are now living together. I'll see you at eight. And do try and work.

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE -- DAY

DARREN

So I've moved in with Lily.

STEVEN

Congratulations.

Darren glares at Steven.

DARREN

It's not a good thing. I told you I didn't want to.

Steven just shrugs. Steven's P.O.V.: in one corner of the room, behind the desk, are Darren's boxes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVEN

Do I have to keep your boxes for
long?

DARREN

I don't know.

A beat.

DARREN

Lily mapped out a timetable for my writing. She thinks writing is something fun and childish like playing with crayons. I don't understand why I said yes to her. Maybe I unconsciously wanted to move in with her. What do you think?

Steven again just shrugs, irritating Darren.

DARREN

Forget it... Steven, I was wandering if I could use your computer because the last one I had crashed and I need one to write. And since I'm paying you to apparently do nothing, I thought it would be fair to let me use it.

Steven is only half-listening.

STEVEN

Hm.

DARREN

I'll take that for a yes then.

INT. LILY'S FLAT -- EVENING

Lily is standing in the living room, excited, holding a digital camera in her hand. As soon as Darren enters the door, Lily takes a photo of him, blinding Darren with the flash in the process.

LILY

Surprise!!!

Darren stumbles backwards, shocked. Lily points towards a modest looking bicycle propped in the corner.

LILY

Surprise!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lily takes another photo.

LILY

It's for you. I bought it so now
you can save on taxis and public
transport. Isn't that great?

DARREN

Yeah. That's just... what can I
say?

LILY

I know! It's another tip we give
to our young bankers.

DARREN

The ones aged 12 to 16?

Lily nods.

LILY

Huh huh. You're going to be able
to save a lot of money with it.
Let me take another photo of you by
the bike. The first photos for our
album. Go on, go on. Go next to
the bike.

Darren reluctantly goes up to the bike.

LILY

Smile!

Darren does a forced, thick smile and Lily takes the photo.

LILY

I was thinking I could start a blog
about us. And you could help me
with the writing. Who knows, you
could even do blog writing
professionally.

In an ironic gesture, Darren motions two thumbs up.

EXT. LONDON STREETS -- DAY

Darren pushes his bike along the sidewalk. He stops and
anxiously looks left and right before chaining his bike to a
post. A bus comes to a halt at the bus stop and Darren runs
towards it, jumping on in the nick of time.

INT. THE WILD BOAR -- DAY

Darren is slowly sipping a beer in a quiet downtown pub. The pub looks old and used with the floors and tables bearing the marks of stubbed out cigarettes and spilt drinks.

Darren is concentrating on his note-pad, looking desperate.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

The fridge can be heard gently humming in the distance. Darren is in the deep dark conceptual area of his mind which borders onto the unconscious. It is a bulk of thoughts and memories stuck together forming a recognizable pattern, that of a narrow lane. The lane is grim and dark, an image taken from the collective consciousness's idea of a lane. The lane sways back and forth with the pounding of the thoughts as they get stimulated by the neurons. As in a dream, it doesn't keep it's perspectives, getting out of proportions, widening and shortening at random. On the wall, a big sign reads: DO NOT THAW. Darren wanders into the lane, scared but determined in his action to understand.

Out in the distance, a bright pink and blue neon sign projects its blinking message into the darkness - carrying the light forward. It reads: PEEP SHOW.

Darren runs towards the sign, as anyone would run towards something bright amidst darkness.

EXT. PEEP SHOW

The exterior of the peep show is illuminated by the gritty, artificial light of the neon sign. The peep show entrance is covered by a kitsch sparkling curtain, hiding whatever may be inside. Curious, Darren puts his hand through the curtain.

PROSTITUTE #1
I wouldnae do that love.

Stunned, Darren turns to see where the voice came from. Resting against a wall, briefly lit up by the neon sign, are THREE PROSTITUTES old and battered, looking like old wrinkly men who've crossed-dressed in an unconvincing fashion. Dragging on their cheap cigarettes with their make-up clumsily put on, they are a sorry sight.

PROSTITUTE #2
'Cus it ain't a pretty sight. Not
for a young looker like ya.

CONTINUED:

DARREN

But it is my mind isn't it?
Doesn't it belong to me?

The prostitutes chuckle at Darren's accent which seems so posh compared to their own.

PROSTITUTE #1

Oh, I'd say dat it's mo' than just
your mind duck. If I were to be...
For fuck's sake. What's dat
fuckin' word?

PROSTITUTE #3

What word?

PROSTITUTE #1

A real proper posh word it is...
I've got the fuckah. Excuse me
French love. As I was saying, if I
wanted to be even mo' specific I
would say that it's your
unconscious... A client told me
that. A professor he was an'all.
Not half-propah.

The other two prostitutes cooe at their friend's elegant choice of words, even though they are uncertain about which one they should be cooeing about. Darren muses things over, desperate to make sense of it. Prostitute #3 walks up to him, pulls up her top and flashes him.

PROSTITUTE #3

Fancy a preview love?

Darren steps back, disgusted. An open topped double decker bus, much like the ones you see touring around London, drives by and stops near them. On the bus, in bold capital letters it reads: TRIPPING INTO THE UNCONSCIOUS - SIGHTSEEING TOUR. The bus is crammed with eager tourists armed with cameras.

BUS GUIDE

And here ladies and gentlemen, we have arrived at our final destination. Too dark to see, too strange to tell, where derelict thoughts roam and outcast ideas linger, the one and only, the unconsciousness.

The tourist snap away with their cameras, impressed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PROSTITUTE #2
For fuck's sake, it's the third
time today it is. I thought it was
the low season!

The prostitutes annoyed at being taken on photograph,
threaten the passengers from a distance. This only excites
the tourists even more.

PROSTITUTE #1
Lookin' ain't free. Pay and
display or get out of here!

One of the tourist throws his half-eaten sandwich towards the
prostitutes.

BUS GUIDE
We would like to remind the
passengers that it is forbidden to
feed the attractions.

Some of the passengers let out a murmur of disappointment.
The bus drives on.

PROSTITUTE #3
Bloody tourists.

DARREN
But wait. If inside is my
unconsciousness and you're outside
it, then what are you?

PROSTITUTE #1
Prostitutes of course.

The other two nod in agreement, thinking it was very well
answered.

DARREN
That's not what I meant. What I'm
trying to get at is. Okay. Let's
try and make things clear. You are
conceptual prostitutes right?

PROSTITUTES
(in unison)
Conceptual prostitutes.

PROSTITUTE #2
Oh I like that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARREN

Good. Point being though, if
you're neither in there nor in my
consciousness, then why are you in
my mind?

A silence. Prostitute #3 lifts up her top again.

PROSTITUTE #3

How about that preview lov'?

Irritated, Darren pushes her out of the way.

PROSTITUTE #1

Oi. Don't push 'er. We don't do
rough stuff. Have to go inside for
that.

DARREN

I wouldn't do anything with you.
You're pointless!

The prostitutes stare at him, furious.

PROSTITUTE #1

Get 'im girls!

The prostitutes jump on Darren and start hitting him. The double decker bus drives up again and the tourists delighted at such a great photo opportunity flash away.

STUART

Darren.

INT. THE WILD BOAR -- DAY

Darren starts, not having seen Stuart approach.

STUART

You look tired mate.

Darren shrugs and rubs his eyes. Stuart is looking around the pub. His P.O.V.: a HERD OF PEOPLE are flocked around the bar, a mixture of artistic people and businessmen.

STUART

Come on. Come and join us.

Darren follows his gaze. He doesn't want to socialize with Stuart's friends but accepts out of politeness. At the bar, JOHN, 33, a slim man in a suit and who looks like a rat, leans in towards Darren.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN
Hi, I'm John.
(pointing towards Stuart)
One of Stuart's mates.

All the people crammed around the bar, jostling one another, makes it difficult to be heard.

DARREN
Hi. I'm Darren.

John nods, not having anything more to say. They just look at each other and smile. One of John's friends comes up next to them.

JOHN
Greg.
(pointing at Darren)
This is Barry.

GREG, 29, who looks like a replicate of John, nods at Darren.

GREG
I'm going to get some drinks.
Barry, what do you want?

DARREN
A pint would be great, thanks.

JOHN
Same here. I'll buy the next round.

Greg dives back into the crowd, wrestling his way to the counter. John nods at Darren and walks away, having spotted a friend. Darren stands there smiling awkwardly at nobody in particular, trying to look friendly.

Stuart comes up to him, Darren is more than happy to see him.

STUART
How's it all going?

DARREN
Okay. You?

STUART
Fanfuckintastic. Honestly, can't complain mate.

Greg returns with two beers, having given one to John along the way. He spill some beer on the floor in front of Darren and Stuart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART

Greg my man, you've drunk too much already. Look what you've done.

GREG

Too much is never enough. I'll just find a dirty blonde to lick it up.

Stuart and Greg both laugh at the joke.

GREG

(giving the pint to
Darren)

Here you go Barry.

Greg walks away with his beer to join John.

STUART

Did he just call you Barry?

DARREN

His friend misunderstood my name.

STUART

And you couldn't correct them?

Darren shrugs, not having a valid explanation.

STUART

If everything is crap with your banker, I hope at least that the sex is good. What's it like?

DARREN

Economical.

Stuart smiles, liking those kind of jokes. He is about to pick up on it when a CUTE WOMAN, 24, catches his attention.

STUART

Right.

(gesturing towards the
woman)

Wish me luck.

Stuart pats Darren on the shoulder and confidently walks towards his prey.

Once again, Darren stands awkwardly alone. Observing the crowd, a woman catches Darren's attention.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Darren's P.O.V.: she is dressed in an odd yet appealing way, that of a fashionable up-to-date with the new trend woman mixed with a bohemian, off-beat style. The woman is JANE, 27, a cute brunette, and judging by her dress-code, she is an off-beat, impulsive woman. Darren is immediately intrigued by her, there is something very attractive about her.

SUBTITLE: serendipity: the faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident.

Darren sums up all the courage he has and walks up to her.

DARREN

Hi.

Jane looks at him, intrigued.

JANE

Hi.

A beat.

DARREN

Hm. Have you known Stuart for long?

JANE

Ouch. That's a pretty bad pick-up line don't you think?

Darren is confused.

DARREN

What do you mean?

Jane pauses, definitely enjoying it.

JANE

Well, if you have come here to make me notice your friend Stuart, that's kind of feeble. I thought you were only meant to do that in kindergarten. But. And this is even worse, is that you wanted to speak to me because I don't know- maybe because I'm pretty or something- and the only thing you could think of to start off the conversation is to talk about your friend who I don't know but presumably should.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JANE (CONT'D)

And then I would ask you why I should get to know him and then you would say this and that and then maybe suggest that I should get to know you instead because I'm sure you're way more cooler.

Darren is lost for words, embarrassed.

DARREN

I'm sorry. I thought you already knew him.

Darren scuttles off, hiding behind Stuart. Jane watches him go, amused.

INT. THE WILD BOAR -- LATER

During the flow of the evening, Jane spots Darren drinking alone, playing with some peanuts. She walks up to him.

JANE

Hi, I'm bored.

DARREN

I'm Darren.

Darren is untrusting and Jane picks up on it.

JANE

I'm sorry about earlier on. I was just teasing.

DARREN

You impress me.

JANE

What do you mean?

DARREN

I sent messengers to ask girls out for me until end of high-school. But you, only until kindergarten. I mean, wow. Way ahead of your time.

Jane gives a heart-warming laugh.

JANE

That's only because I went to school until end of kindergarten.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

Ah. Hm. Right. I'm sorry. I
mean, okay. I...

Jane bursts out laughing.

JANE

I'm joking, it's not true. I know,
I know. I don't make the best
jokes.

DARREN

No. No. That was funny. You had
me.

(beat)

So Miss Bored, what's your real
name?

JANE

Jane. And you're still Darren?

DARREN

Yup. Still bored?

JANE

Nope.

DARREN

Really? That easy?

JANE

Guess so. You looked bored too. I
saw you playing with peanuts.

DARREN

Peanuts are fun.

JANE

That's what an autist would say.

Jane's phone rings and she grudgingly picks up. Darren
mechanically looks at his watch and his face goes pale. Jane
hangs up and turns back towards him.

JANE

What's wrong?

DARREN

I'm late.

JANE

I gather you're not talking about
your periods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARREN

What is it with women always
talking about their periods?

JANE

Does it happen to you often?

DARREN

Once a month.

Jane can't help giggling.

DARREN

I have to run. Really nice meeting
you Jane.

Jane doesn't try and hide her disappointment.

JANE

Do you really have to go?

DARREN

Afraid so. Curfew.

Jane is about to say something but withholds. She watches him bolt out of the pub, mesmerized by Darren.

In a corner of the pub, Stuart looks at Jane, a broad smile crossing his face.

INT. LILY'S FLAT -- NIGHT

Darren and Lily are seated at table, eating pasta with tomato sauce.

LILY

So how is the bike?

DARREN

Great. It's almost as fast as taking the bus.

Lily smiles.

LILY

And a lot cheaper too.

A beat.

LILY

What else did you do today?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

Nothing much. I wrote a bit.

LILY

Is that all?

Darren looks at her and shrugs. Lily puts down her cutlery and wipes her mouth.

LILY

Darren. Communication is important in a relationship. You should talk more. It is a well known fact that in order for a relationship to strive and remain healthy, we have to be able to communicate with one another.

DARREN

I understand. But all I did was write all day. It's just not that interesting to talk about.

LILY

If writing isn't that interesting then maybe you should drop it. Let it go and move on and find a better job. I know you were suppose to get an advance and that would have been okay but we both know that you can't continue writing without earning. That doesn't add up.

SUBTITLE: intractable: hard to deal with.

DARREN

But I like writing. It's what I do best.

Lily stares at him, unconvinced.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

Stuart is seated at his desk, going through his mobile phone with all the contact numbers of his one-night-stands. Somebody knocks on the door.

STUART

Come in.

Darren enters and plops himself down in his usual seat, facing Stuart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STUART

Darren my man. How are you?

DARREN

Fine thanks.

STUART

Good good. You should have stayed on a bit more at the pub yesterday. It was mental.

DARREN

Yeah... Next time maybe.

STUART

Definitely. So tell me, how are you doing with the writing? And also, when are you going to dump Lily?

DARREN

I don't think I know how to answer either question.

STUART

Easy, let me. Actually it's a double question with a single answer. Get this right, it's so fucking simple it's criminal.

By now Stuart is swinging around in his chair, building up memento.

STUART

Here we go. Lily isn't any good for you and isn't helping with the writing. So dump her and get writing. Simple, right? Easy as pie.

DARREN

Thanks Stuart.

Stuart nods, happy to be helpful.

STUART

Free advice, use it.

DARREN

Nothing's ever free with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART

True. In return I want my book.
Imagine you're like my surrogate
mother right, and you're carrying
my baby inside you, and I need to
take care of you until you pop it
out.

Darren is confused by his metaphor.

DARREN

Nice.

Darren's phone rings, he answers it, happy to avoid any further conversation with Stuart.

DARREN

Hello? Sorry, who is this?

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Jane is on the phone and dressed in her usual original way, a mismatch of bright colors.

JANE

It's Jane Thornhill. We met at the pub. Remember?

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

DARREN

Yeah, of course I do... It was only yesterday.

Darren gets up, trying to get out of ear shot from Stuart.

INT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Jane hops up and down out of nervousness.

JANE

You might have short-term memory loss or something. You never know. Anyway, I was wandering whether you fancied meeting up for a coffee or something this afternoon. I don't know, I thought it could be nice.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE - DAY

Darren is glued to a corner of the room, thinking it will stop Stuart from hearing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

Yes, I would love to. That would
be great. When is good for you?
Four? Yes, that's perfect.
Brickston? Yeah, I know the place.
They do good cakes. Okay then.
Yeah. Thanks for calling. Bye.

Darren hangs up, delighted that Jane called and meets
Stuart's inquisitive look.

DARREN

It was Jane. The girl I was
talking with at the pub last night.
I'm seeing her again today.

Darren looks at his phone and suddenly it hits him.

DARREN

I wonder how she got my number.

STUART

Hm. About that, I gave it to her
when you left. I thought it might
help you move on.

DARREN

... Thanks... I guess.

STUART

No worries. I need to take care of
my baby.

(beat)

I'm talking about the book, not
you.

DARREN

Is there something you're not
telling me?

STUART

Fuck off.

INT. BRICKSTON CAFE - DAY

The cafe is a charmful, snug little place - judging by the crowd, it is a favorite spot for the afternoon tea. Jane is already seated at one of the tables with a cup of coffee, doodling on a paper napkin.

DARREN

Hi.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jane looks up and instantly hides the paper napkin.

JANE
Hey, you're here.

Darren sits down and notices the empty cup of coffee next to hers.

DARREN
Have you been here for long?

JANE
No. Not really. A few minutes I think, something like that.

Jane notices Darren looking at the empty cup of coffee, smirking.

JANE
I lose track of time. Oh go on, why don't you order something instead of questioning me.

Darren calls over a waiter.

DARREN
(in a soft tone)
May I have a black coffee please?

The waiter nods and walks off.

JANE
You sound like the Queen when you order.

DARREN
Oh, shut up.

Jane giggles.

DARREN
So...

JANE
So?

DARREN
So.

JANE
Do you want to know what I do for a living?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARREN

Why didn't you ask me what I do first?

JANE

Because it's the question you wanted to ask me. And I thought I would help you out, unless you wanted to continue with the "so" conversation.

DARREN

You've got a point. So... Here I go again. Tell me Jane, what do you for a living?

JANE

Well Darren, I'm a chef.

DARREN

So you cook food.

JANE

No, that's gynecology.

(off his look)

Yeah, sorry. I make really crappy jokes sometimes. I wish I wouldn't but I can't seem to help it. I guess it's because crappy jokes are easier to make than good jokes. But that's not really an excuse is it?

DARREN

It's fine, don't worry.

(beat)

Granted, it wasn't the best joke but at least you tried. And it's also because I said something stupid. That said, just for the record, I knew that chefs cook food.

JANE

Wow, Mr. Einstein.

Darren looks at her suspiciously.

DARREN

Are you always this mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JANE

Normally I think I'm quite sweet.
I blame the coffee.

DARREN

Better add sugar to it then.

JANE

If I did I could end up with
diabetes.

DARREN

But at least you would be sweet.

A silence.

JANE

I'm sorry. I hate coming across as
mean. But maybe it's because I'm
nervous and then I talk too much
and bla bla bla.

Jane catches the attention of a waiter.

JANE

Bill please.

Darren is shocked.

DARREN

You're leaving?

JANE

Yup. And so are you. Come on,
let's go outside, it's nicer.

DARREN

And what about my coffee?

JANE

Ask for take-away.

Darren looks at her and smiles, intrigued by her
impulsiveness.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Jane and Darren are strolling along the streets, Darren
finishes his coffee and throws the empty cup into the bin.

DARREN

So what made you want to become a
chef?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE

It was an appealing option I guess.

DARREN

Did you always know that you wanted to be one?

JANE

Yup, of course I did. Since I was little I always had my life beautifully planned out. Start work at the age of 22, at 26 I would marry, at 27 have kids and at 50 menopause.

DARREN

How old are you know?

JANE

27.

DARREN

Are you married?

JANE

Nope. As single as a bee. It just shows you that life doesn't always go as planned.

Jane shrugs.

JANE

Cooking wasn't a sudden thing. I never thought I could make a career out of it while growing up. I just love good food and so I decided to do what I've always loved. Cooking and eating.

DARREN

It sounds like a passionate love affair.

JANE

Oh it is. And the good thing is it just keeps getting better.

Darren looks at her, impressed.

JANE

Food is just... the best. I wish I could just eat as much as I wanted all the time.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANE (CONT'D)

Actually, that's why I want to get pregnant one day. To eat loads and loads of food and I would be fat anyway so I wouldn't feel guilty.

DARREN

I thought women got pregnant for the joy of motherhood, not the joy of eating.

JANE

How would you know, you're not a woman.

DARREN

Thanks for noticing.

They both look at each other and smile.

JANE

And so, what about you?

DARREN

What about me? I can't get pregnant because I'm a man. I thought we agreed about that.

JANE

I'm sorry to hear that but it doesn't stopping you from eating though. But I was talking about your job. I know that your friend at the pub told me that you were a good writer, but that's all I know.

Darren is touched that Stuart said such a thing.

DARREN

That was my agent, it's normal he would say that- he has to sell me. About my writing- I love words and telling stories. There's not much to say really.

JANE

Have you ever been published?

DARREN

No. Only short stories but nothing really substantial. At the moment it doesn't look like I will ever be published.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Jane notices that Darren is uncomfortable with the subject and decides not to push on. Darren looks at his watch.

DARREN
Damn it, I should get going.

Jane is disappointed.

JANE
Already? You keep running off, you're like a modern version of Cinderella.

DARREN
I'm sorry, I would have loved to stay but I can't. But let's meet up soon.

JANE
You promise?

DARREN
Yeah, of course.

JANE
Can I have an assurance that will prove that you'll come back?

DARREN
Like what?

Jane thinks about it.

JANE
Well Cinderella, why don't you give me your shoe?

DARREN
You're joking right?

JANE
No, I'm not.

Darren hesitates but finally gives in and gives her one of his shoes.

DARREN
Here. Promise you'll give it back?

JANE
If you promise to see me again, yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Darren looks at her and smiles.

DARREN
See you soon then.

Darren hops away, Jane looks at him go, smiling.

INT. LILY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Lily and Darren are seated, silent while eating a bland dinner of steamed vegetables and chicken.

LILY
So, are you still not going to talk
about what you did today?

DARREN
Sure. I just wrote and saw my
agent and we talked about writing
and that's it really.

LILY
Maybe it would help if you sounded
more passionate about it.

Darren doesn't bother replying and concentrates on eating the meal.

LILY
Don't you want to know what I did
today?

DARREN
Sure.

LILY
I went through your bank details.

Darren's face goes blank.

LILY
You're still spending money you
don't have. And I think that it
would help if we went through your
monthly bank statements to see how
much you spend per day and on what.
Although we don't need to look at
your bank statement to figure out
that you spend much more than you
earn.

Lily looks at Darren, triumphant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY
 I honestly feel, and this is not
 the "bank me" talking, that a
 steady job would be the right
 solution for you. And of course I-

Lily stops and rectifies herself.

LILY
 It wouldn't stop you from writing.

DARREN
 But writing is already a full time
 occupation.

LILY
 If that is how you feel, I can't
 stop you but I hope you will
 realize it by yourself one day.
 Meanwhile, maybe we should be
 stricter with the writing
 deadlines, it might help you
 concentrate.

SUBTITLE: annihilate: defeat utterly, make insignificant.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

Darren is in a bright green field with a tree in the middle, all set against a cloudless bright blue sky. The scenery does not look real and is uncannily resemblant to the inspirational poster in Lily's office. The light is too bright for Darren and he reaches into his pocket for his sunglasses. When he puts them on, he notices that they have no lenses. Squinting because of the light, he spots the tree and decides to shade himself under it.

When Darren reaches the tree, he sees Lily seated underneath it, reading a book out loud.

LILY
 1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9.10.11...

Lily is just reciting numbers. As soon as she says them, they materialize out of her mouth, floating upwards.

SUBTITLE: serenade: a complimentary performance given to express love for someone.

LILY
 12.13.14.15.16.17.18.19...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN
Can you please stop that?

LILY
20.21.22.23.24...

DARREN
Stop it! Please! It's annoying...

Lily has almost started singing the numbers.

LILY
25.26.27.28.29...

Darren reaches into his pocket and withdraws a gun. He aims it at Lily's head, whom doesn't seem to mind, turns his head away and pulls the trigger. A gun shot is heard and in the sky the word: BANG appears as if a firework display. A PARACHUTIST emerges from the explosion, floating in the sky with his parachute.

PARACHUTIST
(shouting at Darren)
Your brain is boring so I'm
leaving.

And continues floating downwards. Darren looks at the man and then at the gun and then at the sky in disbelief. Darren turns back to Lily.

DARREN
What are you doing to me?

LILY
53.54.55.56.57.58...

In a last feeble attempt Darren aims the gun at his own head and shoots. BANG. Again the word in the sky. The gun is as useless as his mind. Oblivious, Lily just continues reciting.

LILY
59.60.61.62.63.64.65...

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Steven is lying down on the couch, happily watching TV. Darren is seated at Steven's desk, in front of the computer, looking frustrated.

DARREN
I just can't write!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A beat.

DARREN
You know, I think you should help
me.

Steven just goes on watching television, annoying Darren.

DARREN
Right, that does it. Steven, if
you don't listen to me, I will use
you as one of the characters in my
book.

On hearing this, Steven sits upright, scared.

STEVEN
But that's unethical Darren.

DARREN
Making people pay and not even
listening to them, now that's
unethical.

Steven just shrugs.

DARREN
So either you hear me out or else
I'll write about you. I just can't
write at the moment. My
girlfriend, she just... I don't
know how to explain it but... Are
you listening?

STEVEN
Are you really going to use me in
your book?

Darren sits back, tired.

DARREN
I don't know. I don't know
anything at the moment.

STEVEN
What would I do in it?

DARREN
Nothing I guess. Or you would be
watching TV.

STEVEN
Wouldn't that make me look boring?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Darren turns to look at Steven, astonished.

STEVEN

What?

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Darren is awake but prefers to remains hidden under the blanket. Lily, dressed for work, comes in.

LILY

Come on Darren, it's past the time to get up now. In other words, up you get. I have to go but I don't want you to forget about the party tonight. I want you fully ready and operational by 7. I'll come home and pick you up then. And please please please try and write will you? It would make me much happier if you took the writing seriously. Right, honey, see you at 7.

EXT. VEGETABLE MARKET - DAY

The vegetable market is alive with the shouts of the vendors marketing their fruit and vegetables. Prices by the kilo are being shouted out, making them incomprehensible amongst the crowd. The stalls are a sight in themselves: a vast collection of colors and shapes. Jane and Darren are roaming around the market, happily gazing around. Jane is clutching a straw bag, jumpy, looking out for the best pick of the day.

DARREN

So are you looking for anything specific?

JANE

I need to see which vegetables are worth buying. So no, nothing specific really.

Jane jumps from one stall to the next, alert, in her element. Darren watches, amused.

JANE

To know if what you're buying is any good or not, you need to touch and smell it.

DARREN

Very erotic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE

It told you it was a passionate
love affair.

Jane picks up a few tomatoes, closely examining them. Jane decides that she doesn't want the tomatoes and moves on.

DARREN

Jane, do you ever get creative
block?

Jane looks at him curiously.

JANE

I'm not sure chefs can get creative
blocks. It's not like I would look
at some vegetables and not find
them inspiring. Sure, I can mess a
dish up but at least I would have
tried... Why do you ask?

DARREN

I'm not sure. Actually I am. I'm
having trouble writing at the
moment. And I was just thinking
about it and then I wandered if it
sometimes happened to you and so I
asked.

JANE

How come you can't write?

DARREN

Nothing's coming to me.

JANE

You're a funny guy Darren. I'm
sure you have plenty of cool things
to say... Write about me, I'm cool.

Darren laughs even though he's not in the mood.

DARREN

Thanks. But I never write about
things concerning my life.

JANE

Wow. I'm part of your life?

DARREN

Afraid so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANE

I'm not sure what to say. I can only relate to it through my experience with cooking. I know that for cooking you have to start off with something. Vegetables or meat or spices etc...

Jane picks up an aubergine.

JANE

Fresh produces. You always need something to work on. I'm sure that every creative person needs to do that. But you, as far as I understand, use nothing remotely related to you. I think you should try and change that. Maybe you should try by starting to work on your own life. Everybody needs a basic outline to work on otherwise it would just be formless. Like in cooking, if you don't start off with fresh material then it's not creative and you end up with a microwave dish. So what I'm trying to get at is that you can start writing about yourself because the end product has nothing to do with what you started with.

Darren is transfixed, hypnotized by her words.

JANE

Listen to me, I should write a self-help book.

DARREN

I would buy it. No, it was great. I promise you Jane, you have no idea how happy I am. I think you are the first person who has actually tried to help me instead of forcing me to write regardless.

JANE

You really were desperate weren't you?

DARREN

You have no idea.

Jane stares at him, trying to understand him a bit better.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JANE

Look, why don't you come back to
mine and have dinner with me?

DARREN

I would have loved to but I can't.

JANE

You're always running off.

DARREN

I promise you I would rather stay
but I honestly can't. Why don't we
meet up tomorrow?

Jane is upset but tries not to show it.

DARREN

Do you want my shoe again?

Jane nods. Darren rummages through his bag and gives her
back the same shoe.

JANE

Nope. I want one of the ones
you're wearing.

Darren smiles and takes off one of his shoes and puts on the
one she gave back. He now has one trainer on one foot, and
one town shoe on the other. Jane laughs.

DARREN

Do you have a weird foot fetish
you're not telling me about?

JANE

Not even. It's just my way of
getting a compensation from the
fact that you keep running off.
Besides, with odd shoes you can't
run as fast.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

The white empty room with the blue humming fridge in its center. The fridge door stops humming and the door opens, revealing Jane inside. She beckons Darren to also enter the fridge. He does so.

INT. DARREN'S OLD FLAT

Darren is in his kitchen with an apron on. He has positioned the television in such a way that he can watch it while cooking.

On the TV, a B-grade cooking show is being aired.

INT. COOKING SHOW

Jane also has an apron on, smiling at the camera. Glass bowls, vegetables, spices and cooking appliances are on display in front of her, on a steel table.

JANE

Welcome to our show "Food for Thought". Today is a show especially for Darren Kinsey. You know who you are.

INT. DARREN'S OLD FLAT

Darren smiles, flattered that her show is for him.

INT. COOKING SHOW

JANE

Today we are going to prepare a special dish. Now Darren, I want you to concentrate on the process and make sure you don't miss out anything.

Darren is slightly nervous, rubbing his hands on his apron and checking his cooking utensils to double-check that he is fully ready.

ON THE TV:

JANE

As I've said before Darren, cooking and writing are in some ways similar. Say for example if I take some vegetables and some spices and throw them into a pan is a bit like you taking ideas and experiences and mixing them together. Right, so let us check our fridge to see what exciting ingredients we can use today.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Darren goes up to his blue fridge and opens it. Darren's P.O.V.: inside the fridge are small, neatly packed boxes each beautifully etiquetted. Some read: "thoughts of all thoughts" "philosophical meditations", "thoughtless thoughts", "basic questions from A to Z" etc... He looks up at the top of the fridge, on the freezer department it reads: "UNCONSCIOUSNESS - DO NOT THAW". Unsure of what to use, Darren turns to the TV.

JANE

You can write from experience without it remaining your life. I keep saying it, in the end product you can't recognize all the ingredients. They have been changed, transformed.

DARREN

But I don't get it. Why does my life have to be in my writing? It's too personal.

INT. COOKING SHOW

JANE

Because if you don't use something fresh and original...

The microwave emits a beeping sound. Jane goes up to it and opens it up and retrieves Lily's head, very much alive, on a plate.

LILY

A one track mind. Bla bla bla. A one track mind. Bla bla bla.

JANE

... you end up with a microwave dish.

INT. A SPACIOUS LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Soft music is being played, echoing throughout the room. The GUESTS, all dressed in the same manner with the same bored expression on their face, are in flocks, dispersed around the room.

Darren is trying to be discreet in a dark corner, attempting to drink away his boredom.

SUBTITLE: inconspicuous: not easily noticed.

CHARLOTTE, 46, slim and dull looking, approaches Darren.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLOTTE

Hello there. I'm Charlotte, I'm
the host.

DARREN

Darren, I'm a guest's escort.

Charlotte is taken aback.

CHARLOTTE

You mean you're a paid escort?

Darren is obviously quite drunk and has problems
concentrating on her face, leaning in more than is necessary.

DARREN

Sadly not. I'm her latest
accessory and she seems obligated
to cart me around with her to her
boring parties.

Charlotte is shocked by his rudeness.

CHARLOTTE

Well you shouldn't have bothered if
you don't like parties.

DARREN

Don't get me wrong. I'm not anti-
social, it's just that I dislike
these kind of people.

CHARLOTTE

I hope you're not always this rude.
I'm mean really. And who did you
say you came with?

DARREN

I didn't say it.

Charlotte is slowly boiling with anger.

CHARLOTTE

So tell me. Who did you come with?

A loud, screeching laugh erupts from a different corner of
the room. Darren immediately recognizes it as being Lily's
laugh and points towards her without looking.

DARREN

With Lily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He almost spits out Lily's name, full of hatred. Charlotte is disappointed.

CHARLOTTE

So you were invited. Well now, if you would be so kind as to excuse me, I have guests to attend to.

DARREN

More questioning to be done?

Charlotte glares at him and walks away. Darren watches her go with a smile on his face. He lifts his glass to his mouth only to realize that it is empty. He goes to the bar to get a refill.

At the bar, DEREK, 56, tall and balding approaches him.

DEREK

Enjoying the night? Good hey.
Quite a night. Really quite
enjoyable. I'm Derek by the way,
nice to meet you.

DARREN

I'm bored.

Derek looks at him, not understanding.

DARREN

Bored is not my real name, just my
actual state of being. I'm Darren.

Derek doesn't seem to want to continue with the conversation but does so anyway.

DEREK

Yes. I see. Hm. Well Darren,
tell me, what do you do?

DARREN

I'm an investment banker.

DEREK

How fascinating.

DARREN

Not really.

Derek is starting to feel uneasy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DEREK

I know some investment bankers, a very good friend of mine is one, quite an interesting fellow. He makes it sound like a very exciting job.

Lily comes up from behind.

LILY

What exciting job are you talking about?

DEREK

About this man's job.

LILY

Really?

DEREK

Oh yes, investment banking.

LILY

Actually Derek, he is a writer.

Derek is confused. Darren is too drunk to care.

DEREK

Tell me Darren, do you earn a good living with writing?

Lily is quick to pick up her cue.

LILY

No Derek, sadly he doesn't. Actually, it's seems that Darren succeeds in losing money with his work instead of gaining any. Which is quite contradictory. But at the moment I'm trying to help him manage his money better so he can go further with what he has, which isn't much until he finds a better job.

SUBTITLE: animadvert: to criticize, censure.

Derek and Lily look at Darren. It appears as if Darren has received a slap in the face, but doesn't say anything.

INT. DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

The soft music is still being played but now all the guests are seated for dinner. All are animatedly talking to one another, except for Darren who is even drunker than before.

MATTHEW, 48, a small plump man, is sitting next to Darren.

MATTHEW

Darren, would you care for some more food?

DARREN

No. Just some more wine please.

LILY

I'm not sure more wine is such a great idea.

DARREN

When has more wine ever been a bad idea? I think it's a great idea. Matthew, can you please pass me the wine?

Matthew hesitates but passes him the wine.

MATTHEW

Darren, tell me something about yourself, you haven't uttered a word since we've been seated.

DARREN

There's not much to say.

CHARLOTTE

Apparently Darren doesn't enjoy talking to us much. He told me he finds us boring.

All the guests turn to look at Darren.

DARREN

It was just a silly joke. Oh go on, there must be so many jokes about boring accountants and bankers for a reason no?

MATTHEW

Are there?

DARREN

Yes there are.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lily kicks him from under the table, trying to make him shut up.

DARREN

I'm sorry but it's true. Saying
bankers are boring is a druism.

Lily is ashamed and furious at Darren.

LILY

Tell us Darren, what would a druism
be?

Darren looks her in the eyes, defiantly.

DARREN

A drunken truth. A crystal clear
fact.

LILY

Yes well, we could do with a bit
less of the drunkenness.

Darren is about to refill his glass but Lily is faster than him and snatches the bottle from his hands. Darren looks at Lily and hisses. Lily is not impressed. All the guests have turned silent, embarrassed and shocked.

INT. LILY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Darren is slowly sobering up. Lily follows suit, still fuming with rage. Darren plops himself down on the couch, feeling sick and knowing that Lily is not going to let him get away with his behavior. Lily hovers above him, glaring at him.

LILY

I hope you had fun tonight Darren.

DARREN

I think I was too drunk to have fun.

LILY

Too drunk to remember that you
humiliated me in front of my
friends?

DARREN

It was meant to be a joke.

LILY

Well I wasn't laughing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN
You never do.

This aggravates Lily even more.

LILY
I'm not going to say anything to that. Listen Darren, I was mad with you at first but I think I understand why you were like that.

Darren looks up intrigued.

LILY
I think you might have a drinking problem.

Darren is amused.

DARREN
That's ridiculous. I don't have a drinking problem.

LILY
I don't think it's ridiculous. Anyway, from now on, I think it best if you drank less. And also Darren, maybe you're drinking more because of me?

Darren shuts his eyes, trying to control his dizziness.

LILY
I understand. I know I've been really caught up with work lately and so I couldn't spend much time with you. But from now on, I'll try and change that, so we can do more things together.

DARREN
I think I'm going to be sick.

Darren gets up and rushes to the bathroom.

EXT. LONDON PARK - DAY

Jane and Darren are buying ice-creams from an ice-cream van in the park. The VENDOR, 55, has a pleasant, jovial face.

They take their ice-creams and start walking around the park.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE
So how's the writing going?

DARREN
Still blocked... But it's the least of my worries at the moment.

JANE
What do you mean?

Darren looks at Jane and hesitates about telling her or not.

DARREN
Nothing really. How's the ice-cream?

JANE
You're crap at changing subjects.

Darren smiles.

DARREN
Yeah, I know. My ice-cream's really good though, you should taste it.

Jane giggles at Darren's continual attempt to try and change the subject and tries the ice-cream.

JANE
You know we both took the same flavor, don't you?

DARREN
You never know, maybe he tricked us.

They continue walking, happy to be with one another.

JANE
So where did you have to run off to last night?

DARREN
A friend was having a party. It was pretty boring.

JANE
Hm.

Jane spots a couple holding hands, walking around the park, she tries not to be envious of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARREN

So what's new with you?

JANE

Nothing much. Bachelor's life:
work, more cooking, eating,
watching TV and then bed.

DARREN

Sounds fun.

JANE

Yeah... but a change would be
nice...

Darren continues eating his ice-cream, Jane looks at him,
tired of giving him hints.

JANE

Aren't you tired of being single?

Darren looks at her, not knowing what to say so he just
shrugs.

JANE

Great. Is that all you can say?

Darren doesn't understand her sudden change of mood.

JANE

Why do you meet up with me so often
Darren? It must mean something
right?

DARREN

It's because I enjoy spending time
with you.

JANE

Is that like saying that you just
want to be friends?

DARREN

Hey, calm down.

Darren looks at Jane, concerned.

DARREN

What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JANE

You just don't get it do you? For god's sake, get a clue Nancy Drew. You honestly don't get it?

DARREN

Get what?

JANE

Forget it Darren.

Jane turns and leaves, leaving Darren baffled and confused. Darren decides to run after her.

DARREN

Jane, wait!

Jane stops and turns around, hopeful.

DARREN

You forgot to give me my shoe back.

Jane goes from pale to red. Darren can't help smiling. He suddenly leans in and kisses her.

JANE

You're an arsehole.

DARREN

Yeah, I know.

JANE

I hate you.

Darren kisses her again. Jane looks at him, in love.

EXT. ATM - DAY

Darren is withdrawing money, waiting for the ATM to dispense his cash. As soon as it does so, his phone rings. He looks at the caller's name, rolls his eyes, and picks up.

DARREN

Yes Lily?

Darren suddenly turns pale. And looks left and right.

DARREN

What? How do you know I'm here? I can't see you, where are you?

INT. LILY'S OFFICE - DAY

Lily is comfortably seated in her office at the bank, on the phone while looking at her computer screen, smiling.

LILY

No, I'm not there silly. I'm at work. It's the funniest thing, I just remembered that I could add an option on my computer which notifies me each time you use your credit card. Telling me where, for what and how much.

EXT. ATM - DAY

Darren is so shocked that he almost drops his phone.

INT. LILY'S OFFICE - DAY

LILY

I know! Isn't that incredible!

A male BANK WORKER, 42, in a business suit, knocks on the door. Lily turns to look and gestures that she's almost finished her conversation.

LILY

Oh, I have to go honey. I'll see you at eight then? And don't spend all that money in a day. Love you. Bye.

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Darren is in front of Steven's computer, looking through his files.

DARREN

I didn't know you kept files of your patients. Can I use them?

STEVEN

They are confidential.

DARREN

Well most of them are blank.

Steven just shrugs.

DARREN

In fact there are just three complete files.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN (CONT'D)

The rest are empty. Mine's empty too. Do you even remember what I talk about? I bet you don't.

Steven slightly turns up the volume of the TV which aggravates Darren.

Because you just don't care do you?
I bet I could tell you that I'm
going to kill myself and you
wouldn't even do anything.

Steven is slow in answering, engrossed by the TV.

STEVEN

There wouldn't be much I could do if your mind has already been made up.

DARREN

Great Steven, thanks a lot for being so helpful.

STEVEN

That's what I'm here for.

Darren is getting really annoyed, needing to vent out his frustration.

DARREN

For god's sake, you're also immune to sarcasm? I'm sorry but you're not exactly the best psychiatrist around. In fact, I think I would get even better advice talking to Beethoven than to you.

Steven turns to look at Darren, confused.

STEVEN

But Beethoven is dead...

DARREN

Exactly! Though I was referring to his deafness... but the fact that he is dead is even more to the point. I mean do you even have a psychiatry license or just a TV license that you've expanded into psychiatry?

STEVEN

I do have one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARREN

Oh yeah, where from?

STEVEN

I got it on the Internet. Actually that's why my sessions are cheaper than elsewhere.

Darren looks at Steven in disbelief.

DARREN

Unbelievable... This does it. I'm using you as one of my main character's. The one that drives my main character to suicide.

Steven gets up from the couch.

STEVEN

Don't do that.

DARREN

So listen.

A disgruntled Steven sits back down.

DARREN

I'm with a woman I don't want to be with while I want to be with someone else. Yet I can't leave her.

STEVEN

It sounds like a soap opera.

DARREN

I don't care what I sounds like. I need advice.

STEVEN

You're with somebody you can't leave but you want to leave... So just leave her.

DARREN

But I can't, you fool!

Suddenly it hits Darren.

DARREN

Wow. I've got it. If I can't leave her, maybe she can leave me.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARREN (CONT'D)
That sounds so stupid it might
work.

Darren gets up.

DARREN
I'm off. Thank you Steven.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Darren is on the phone while walking along the streets.

DARREN
Yeah, Stuart it's Darren. Lily and
I would really love it if you came
to ours for dinner tonight. Shall
we say 8? Great, bring lots of
wine, yeah, see you there.

Darren hangs up, satisfied. And redials. But he is out of balance. Suddenly, he gets an idea.

EXT. ATM - DAY

Darren puts in his credit card to withdraw money, as soon as he has taken his money, Lily phones him. He looks at his phone triumphantly: his plan worked.

INT. LILY'S FLAT - NIGHT

The door bell rings and Darren goes to answer it. When he opens the door, Stuart is standing there, smartly dressed as always, with a bag full up with wine bottles.

STUART
Darren.

DARREN
Thanks for coming.

STUART
Don't mention it mate.

Lily comes up to them.

STUART
And you must be Lily. I've heard
so much about you.

Lily can't help blushing.

DARREN
Well, come in and have a drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stuart enters the living room and sits down near Lily.

DARREN
Is wine alright?

STUART
Perfect.

DARREN
Lily?

LILY
Yes, the same please. Actually,
I'll get it, you should sit down.

DARREN
No!

Darren said it a bit too loudly, shocking Lily and Stuart.

DARREN
I mean you relax. I'll do the
drinks.

Darren takes Stuart's bag and goes into the kitchen.

STUART
So Lily, I hear that you are a
banker. Is that fun?

LILY
Oh, endless fun. Everybody thinks
it's boring but I just love it.

STUART
You know I wanted to become a
banker once. But then my present
job came up first and I jumped on
it. Still, it's good money.

Lily instantly likes Stuart.

STUART
I must say I've heard a lot about
you, but what Darren said is
nothing compared to who you
actually are.

Lily can't help giggling like a school girl.

LILY
Oh please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART
I mean it.

Lily looks at Stuart enviously, he has her hooked.

LILY
And what is it like working with
Darren?

STUART
Well it demands a lot of patience.
But I know the end result will be
good. Honestly, the money we make
on writers in the business is
almost criminal.

Darren returns with the wine and hands them the glasses and sits down.

STUART
So Darren, how's the book coming along?

DARREN
It's coming. Soon Stuart, I promise you.

STUART
You've been making a lot of promises, I hope you keep them.

DARREN
I will.

Lily can't stop throwing side-glances at Stuart, thrilled by his presence.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Darren is happily walking along the sidewalk, almost skipping until he enters a pub.

INT. THE ROYAL TAVERN - DAY

The Royal Tavern is unlike the usual pubs. It is more airy, with a more relaxed feel to it.

Darren looks around the almost empty pub and spots Jane. Instantly, a smile radiates his face.

He goes up to her and kisses her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE

Heya.

DARREN

I missed you.

JANE

Awww.

DARREN

It's true.

JANE

Well that's sweet of you. I missed you too.

DARREN

What do you want to drink?

JANE

The same as you. I trust you.

Darren goes up to the BARTENDER, a woman in her forties.

BARTENDER

Heya love. What can I get you?

DARREN

Two glasses of pimm's please.

BARTENDER

Straightaway love.

The Bartender prepares the drinks.

DARREN

Is it okay if I pay by credit card?

BARTENDER

Yeah, that's fine.

The Bartender gives him the drinks and he pays for them with his credit card. He then takes the drinks and returns to the table.

JANE

So what have you been up to?

DARREN

Nothing much. A bit of writing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANE
So you're finally writing? Wow.
Congratulations.

DARREN
Thanks. And what about you?

JANE
A bit of cooking.

A beat.

JANE
Darren, do you want to do something tonight?

Darren looks up, surprised.

DARREN
Tonight?

JANE
Don't look so surprised. We only do things during the day. I don't know, it would be nice if for a change we did something during the evening.

Darren doesn't know what to say.

DARREN
Euh, yeah, sure... Yeah, that would be nice.

Suddenly, Lily enters the pub and spots Darren and walks up to him. Darren goes pale.

Lily leans over and kisses him. Jane looks at her, not comprehending what she just saw.

LILY
(to Jane)
Hi, I'm Lily. Darren's girlfriend.

Jane is shocked and doesn't answer.

DARREN
Lily, this is Jane.

The situation is plain torture for Darren.

JANE
And I was just leaving.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Jane gets up, tears forming in her eyes, and exits in a hurry. Darren watches her go, unable to do much.

LILY

She's a bit odd. I finished work a bit early today and just before leaving I saw that you used your credit card. And as you know this pub is just around the corner from work, so I thought I would see what you were up to. And I was also a bit scared that you would drink too much. You know what happened last time.

Darren doesn't listen to her but Lily seems oblivious to that.

LILY

Darren I've got some great news. I think I may have found you a job as a waiter in a posh restaurant. And it sounds like writer. What do you think?

Darren doesn't answer.

EXT. JANE'S CORRIDOR - DAY

Darren sums up all his courage before knocking on Jane's door.

JANE

Who is it?

DARREN

It's me. I mean it's Darren.

JANE

Go away!

DARREN

No. I want to explain.

JANE

Explain why you lied to me all along? You disgust me Darren, just go away!

DARREN

I'm sorry. But I can explain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE
(furious)
Oh right. So that would make
everything okay then?

Darren feels the tears coming up, and almost starts choking on his words.

DARREN
Just open the door, please. Give
me a chance to explain myself.

JANE
I don't want to hear your sorry
explanations.
And if I really did want some
explanation, I can just look up the
definition of arsehole in the
dictionary!

DARREN
So I'm a vital part of the human
body?

Darren wishes he didn't say that.

JANE
And a shitty one too! Leave me
alone Darren. After all you've
done to me, you can at least do
that much in return.

Darren knows that there is no point continuing in arguing, it will just make things worse. Defeated, he walks away.

INT. LILY'S FLAT -- DAY

Darren is sporting a week's old beard. He is slumped in front of the TV, hypnotized by it.

SUPER: lovesick: languishing with romantic love.

Lily comes up and stands defiantly in front of him and the TV.

LILY
This isn't working out Darren.

Darren doesn't respond, not even really noticing her.

LILY
You don't do anything with your
days.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY (CONT'D)

You have got to do something.
 (beat)
 If you're not going to take up that
 job I found you, at least pretend
 to write.

Lily gets annoyed with Darren's passiveness but walks away, knowing that it is of no use to confront him. Lately, he doesn't react to anything.

INT. DARREN'S MIND

In Steven's office, a TELEVISION is placed on the couch near Steven, who is in his normal chair. After a few seconds, Steven leans in, towards the television.

STEVEN

Well, do you want to talk about
 your urge to control people?

The television on the couch switches on. On the screen is Darren.

ON THE TV SCREEN: Darren is contemplating various acts of suicides: hanging, poisoning and drowning.

Darren is now on top of a skyscraper, the wind blowing in his hair, he looks down at the miniature street below, spreads his arms and jumps.

The TV suddenly switches channels. An evil, menacing looking Lily is on the screen of the TV. She is participating in a talk show with a huge audience watching her, taking in her every word.

LILY

It feels so exhilarating to have
 total control over people. I mean,
 I don't know how to describe it.
 It all started when-

Darren bursts onto the talk show's set, pointing towards Lily, angry, furious.

DARREN

You've ruined my life!

The audience boos at him, taking Lily's side.

LILY

Oh Darren sweetie, you've ruined
 your own life.
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY (CONT'D)
You can't go on blaming other
people for your own mistakes.

The audience clap at Lily's retort.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE -- DAY

Darren is with Stuart, in his office.

STUART
So what's wrong with you Darren?

DARREN
(shrugs)
Nothing.

STUART
Lily phoned me up. She's worried
about you. She thinks it's because
you've realized that you can't earn
a living with writing. Tell me
that's not true.

DARREN
For fuck sake. No, it's not true.
It's just-

STUART
Good. That's what I wanted to
hear. So you're still writing.
Excellent.

Darren gets up to leave.

DARREN
God. You two are really made for
each other.

STUART
(hopeful)
You really think so?

INT. LILY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Lily and Darren are eating in silence.

DARREN
Lily... Is there still a job
opportunity for me?

Lily looks at him, surprised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY

Are you serious? Oh my god, Darren that's great news. To tell you the truth I'm surprised, I never thought that you would get over your writing.

DARREN

I guess I had to grow up someday.

LILY

Oh Darren, I'm so happy. Yes, you can go tomorrow morning. They said that you go whenever you wanted, and they would give you a day's trial to see if they like you.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Lily and Darren are in bed, sleeping, when the alarm rings. Lily stirs and turns to face Darren.

LILY

Darren sweetie, it's time to get up.

Darren wakes up.

LILY

I left the address for you on the table, and they are expecting you to come at 9.

Darren gets up, groggy but determined.

LILY

I feel ill, so I'm going to stay at home today. I will see you tonight. Good luck with work and tell me all about it when you get home.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

The restaurant is designed in a modern fashion: a bright space with a minimum of decorations. Darren is standing there, listening to his BOSS, 45.

BOSS

So it's quite simple. You need to learn the menu before the customers get here, and also the wine list along with today's specials.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOSS (CONT'D)

Once that is done, I will get another waiter to explain what you need to do. Do you think you can handle it?

Darren does not look enthusiastic.

DARREN

I can try.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

The restuarant is now packed with customers, all demanding the waiters' attention. Darren is scurrying past them, trying his best to please but is making a messy job of serving. He needs to carry his tray with both hands and has to walk very slowly.

The Boss comes up to him.

BOSS

Listen Darren, I honestly don't think you're cut out for the job. You can get your day's pay but I want you to leave. I'm sorry.

Darren looks more happy then sad.

INT. LILY'S FLAT -- DAY

Darren is walking across the living room, tired.

EXT. LILY'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Darren notices that the door to the bedroom is shut, something which Lily never does. When he opens it, Lily lets out a shriek of surprise.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Lily and Stuart are lying naked, in bed. Darren is so shocked that he can't say anything, so they all just stare, embarrassed.

DARREN

Hello Stuart, how are you doing?

STUART

I'm okay. You?

DARREN

Can't complain, thank you for asking.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Actually I can complain. I find my girlfriend in bed with my agent and yet my agent casually asks if I'm okay. I think the situation speaks for itself Stuart.

LILY

Darren, I'm...

DARREN

Stop it. You're what? You're sorry? As if you didn't plan this. You plan everything small thing in your life from when you should go to the bathroom to when you are going to phone me. So telling me that this wasn't planned is hard to believe when it's coming from you.

LILY

I don't plan when I should go to the bathroom...

DARREN

That's beside the point Lily. You're a control freak, you like everything in your life to be so fucking neat and perfect. And I never did fit into it, you tried to make me bend to whatever you wanted, never to what I wanted. You've never cared about me, everything had to be according to you.

LILY

That's unfair, I've always tried to help you.

DARREN

Oh great, so what is this? Shock therapy? What a good Samaritan you are.

LILY

Don't be unreasonable Darren.

DARREN

What's unreasonable about being upset by this? I can't believe that you still trying to argue with me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARREN (CONT'D)

Oh, and the job you forced me into,
I'm sure you will be happy to know
that I got fired.

Lily tucks the covers a bit further up her body, deeply embarrassed.

DARREN

Stuart, you're an arsehole but
there's nothing new about that and
you will most probably take it as a
compliment. So there's not much I
can say.

Stuart for once, doesn't know what to answer.

DARREN (CONT'D)

Right, so I guess I'll pack and
leave.

Darren goes to the cupboard and takes out his bag and starts packing whatever is his in the room. Lily and Stuart don't know what to do, trapped.

LILY

Darren, please, can't you wait for
us to get dressed before packing?

DARREN

You obviously couldn't wait, so why
should I?

This shuts Lily up. Darren finishes packing quickly, since he didn't have many belongings, and is ready to leave.

DARREN (CONT'D)

Oh, and I'm keeping the bike.

Darren leaves, slamming the door shut behind him.

Stuart and Lily still don't dare move for fear that he will come back.

STUART

That was awkward...

EXT. LONDON STREETS -- DAY

Darren has his bag on his shoulders, and is riding through the streets of London. He has a huge smile on his face, happy to be free.

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Darren is with his bag of belongings in Steven's office.

DARREN

Listen Steven, I know I've been
asking a lot of you lately but can
I crash here for just a week, until
I find a place to stay?

STEVEN

But I have clients coming.

DARREN

I won't be here during the day,
just the night. Oh please Steven,
I really need your help right now.

Steven is reluctant.

STEVEN

Okay. But for no less than a week.

DARREN

I promise.

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Darren is at Steven's desk, in front of the computer, staring at the screen, frustrated.

EXT. THE TOP OF A SKYSCRAPER -- DAY

Darren is on top of a skyscraper, standing next to a man in his thirties. The man is JOE THUMBS, a man with a sweet, agreeable yet melancholy face.

EXT. LONDON STREET -- DAY

A group of KINDERGARTEN PUPILS, all in uniform, are walking hand in hand along the pavement. All are full of joy, laughing and playing around. Two TEACHERS, 40s, are controlling their every movement, making sure they all stay together.

EXT. THE TOP OF A SKYSCRAPER -- DAY

Darren is still looking at Joe Thumbs who is thinking about jumping.

Joe Thumbs looks down and then jumps.

EXT. LONDON STREET -- DAY

The children keep on walking. Suddenly something falls from the sky. SPLAT. The flock of children start dispersing and screaming, some covered with blood. The teachers push their way through the children to see what has happened.

There is now chaos on the street as people run forward: the deformed mass of Joe Thumbs has merged with the corpses of a few children. The teachers are traumatized and look up, trying to understand where the man came from.

Off-screen, Darren is heard sniggering. In the blank sky, typewritten letters read: TOO CRUDE.

The sound of a sheet of paper ripped from the note-pad can be heard.

EXT. THE TOP OF A SKYSCRAPER -- DAY

Joe Thumbs is standing on top of the skyscraper again. He turns to look at Darren.

JOE THUMBS
I'm jumping from up high to say
good-bye.

He jumps and screams from below are heard shortly afterwards.

EXT. LONDON STREET -- DAY

A WOMAN in her early thirties, smartly dressed in a business suit, is staring with shock at the formless mass of Joe Thumbs and her potential client.

Two policemen, both wearing pink fluffy bunny ears, come up to the scene and look up to see where Joe came from.

Suddenly, the woman recognizes the man.

WOMAN
Joe?

POLICEMAN #1
You know this man?

WOMAN
He's my boyfriend.

POLICEMAN #2
Strange coincidence that this man
landed next to his girlfriend,
almost killing her.

CONTINUED:

POLICEMAAN #1
Homicide?

Policeman #2 nods and TV REPORTERS rush up to the scene and start filming.

While the scene is unfolding, suddenly Darren finds himself in the middle of it, seated at Steven's desk, typing away frantically on the computer.

DARREN

So it would be the story about a man. Joe Thumbs. And. And his death. But the death will turn into something else. He wanted to break free of his life, but the accidental homicide just makes things worse. Through the interviews of friends and family we will discover what his life was like.

A WOMAN, 34, prim with cold, harsh features, walks up to the body.

DARREN (CONT'D)

He had a girlfriend. A total control freak who never allowed him to do anything.

A MAN, 48, sad and grim, walks down the street.

DARREN (CONT'D)

And a psychiatrist who never listened to him but at least never told him what to do.

The rabbit and the carrot stroll by.

DARREN (CONT'D)

And bit by bit, he will slowly start losing his mind.

Darren watches the scene, happily typing away.

INT. STUART'S OFFICE -- DAY

Darren is seated in Stuart's office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

It's really simple. It's about somebody's life being totally controlled, changed and revised even after his death. You know, they don't care who he is, all they want is for him to become what they want.

Stuart thinks about it a while.

STUART

I like it. Send me whatever you have written and carry on from there.

DARREN

And I want an advance. Two thousand pounds.

STUART

I don't think that will be possible Darren. You know that I don't give advances.

Darren looks around Stuart's office. It has changed. There are some plants and an inspirational poster resemblant to the one in Lily's office.

DARREN

I see you've redecorated your office.

Stuart hesitates in answering.

STUART

It's Lily... She thought my office was too dull so she livened it up a little.

DARREN

Wow, that was fast. So about that advance, I want two thousand pounds in my bank by next week.

STUART

I'll see what I can do but I...

DARREN

Don't try. DO.

Stuart leans back in his chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STUART

Fine Darren, you win. And it's because I like what you're on to, not because of what happened.

DARREN

How would you take it if I slept with your girlfriend?

STUART

You already have and I thought you didn't like it...

DARREN

That's not what I meant. But okay, let bygones be bygones.

STUART

Good man. And what about you, weren't you seeing someone?

Darren face loses a bit of its color.

DARREN

No. No, I'm not.

INT. TAXI -- DAY

Darren is seated in the taxi, looking glum. The TAXI DRIVER, a plump, cheerful looking man in his fifties, picks up on Darren's mood.

TAXI DRIVER

Why the sad face mate?

Darren doesn't even look up.

TAXI DRIVER

Oh go on, you can tell me, I'm a good listener. I've heard many stories I have. Most of them about love. Love this and love that... It's crazy how people can get caught up with it, innit? It can ruin a life it can. And that's what's happened to you, hasn't it?

Darren still doesn't look up but is now listening.

TAXI DRIVER

Don't worry son, it's never too late to repair your mistakes.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAXI DRIVER (CONT'D)
 We're a forgiving lot and in my opinion, unforgiving people are best forgotten. I mean it son, as long as your heart's still there, there's still hope.

DARREN
 If only it was that easy.

The driver, happy that Darren is now talking, starts talking with even more zest.

TAXI DRIVER
 Well it can be. You just have to try your luck and give another chance. Fight for what you believe in, innit. Open up your heart and let it flow out. It's not that hard... Christ, even a taxi driver could do that.

EXT. LONDON STREET -- DAY

The black taxi does a U-turn in the street.

INT. JANE'S CORRIDOR -- LATER

An out-of-breath Darren, holding a basket full of vegetables, knocks on Jane's door. She opens it.

JANE
 (bluntly)
 What do you want?

DARREN
 (showing her the vegetables)
 I've brought you vegetables.
 (beat)
 I'm so sorry. I just can't stop thinking about you. It's maddening. I know what I did was wrong, but let me explain. Please.

Jane is frowning.

JANE
 It's easy to always say you're sorry. It doesn't mean anything.

DARREN
 I've broken up with Lily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE
Yeah, I heard.

Darren is shocked.

DARREN
How come?

JANE
It turns out that we have the same banker. Only it seems that we did not share the same level of intimacy. With me it was strictly professional.

Darren figures out that it's no point talking to Jane, she's not likely to forgive him.

DARREN
I came here to ask for forgiveness. But now I realize that it's just stupid. That I should have been honest with you from the start instead of lying. I know. I know. It sounds pathetic.
(giving her the vegetables)
Take these. I'm a crap cook anyway.

Darren gives Jane the vegetables who reluctantly accepts them. Darren turns around to leave, slowly walking away.

Suddenly Jane rushes after him, catching him up and grabbing him by the arm, spinning him around and kissing him.

DARREN (CONT'D)
Honestly, I thought it was the man who was meant to do that.

JANE
Shush. Don't be so gender conscious.

They kiss again.

JANE
And anyhow. You should just stop running away like a little girl.

DARREN
I'm really sorry about all this.
Will you let me explain?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANE

Stop it. I would just like it if
you're weren't such an arsehole in
the future.

DARREN

I will try.
(beat)
But it won't be easy.

Jane laughs and embraces Darren again.

DARREN (CONT'D)

I've almost finished my book. A
lot of it is about you in a way. I
hope you don't mind?

JANE

I'm flattered.

Jane looks at the vegetables standing by her door.

JANE (CONT'D)

About those vegetables... are you
hungry?

Darren nods and she leads him by the hand towards her flat.

JANE (CONT'D)

Can I ask you a question?

DARREN

Yeah, sure.

JANE

What made you come back?

DARREN

A taxi driver.

Jane looks at Darren, confused. He leans in to kiss her and they enter the flat, happy to be with each other. They close the door, leaving the vegetables outside.

INT. TAXI -- AFTERNOON

The same taxi driver as before. A WOMAN in her thirties, bland looking, is seated at the back of the cab, unhappy looking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAXI DRIVER

You shouldn't be so sad. You know it's never too late to repair what you have broken. Love deserves a second chance. If you think it's right, you should go back and open up your heart, love.

WOMAN

(confused)

Thanks. But I. I just want to go to the airport, like I asked.

(quickly adding)

I'm meeting up with my boyfriend in New York. We've been together for three years now.

TAXI DRIVER

Good for you love. I'm sorry, but you can't blame me for asking. I always tell the same thing to the unhappy looking customers. People are only sad either because of love or because of money. So I have a fifty-fifty chance that they are in love. I just give them a helping hand.

WOMAN

(intrigued)

Does it actually work?

TAXI DRIVER

Sometimes, yeah. It makes me feel good when it does. You know, in a small way, I'm making the world a better place.

WOMAN

(weirdly in awe)

Wow.

TAXI DRIVER

To tell you the truth, it's just to kill boredom really.

(beat)

And it tips better.

FADE OUT.