

1

BLACKOUT:

1

Music. Pounding and upbeat. Mister Blue Sky by ELO.

The pounding beat of the song becomes the sound of a body running. Heavy breathing. Feet pounding the pavement.

This sound too takes on a new rhythm. It becomes the terrible sound of choking. Choking in water.

The choking SLOWS and becomes the drag of waves on the shore. Relentless. Eroding.

One by one these layers fall away, leaving only the insistently upbeat music.

FADE IN:

2

EXT. A SERIES OF ROADS - EVENING

2

Extreme CLOSE-UP on a woman's face.[OLDER COLLY]
Nothing is hidden as she looks at the camera. Her face is red. She breathes heavily. This looks like a panic attack. A shock.

PULL out. Older Colly is in running clothes. An urban, well-heeled city street. A streetlight gives her an even redder glow.

STOP FRAME: She stands still as the light fades around her. Unable to go on, confused.

Then. A snap. She charges full pelt towards the camera, Her gaze fixed on us. The camera JOLTS and TRACKS fast backwards to stay ahead of her.

She runs towards us.

She wants to be engulfed by the camera.

She wants to lose herself in this lens.

She's tired, but that's not the point. This is panic. Avoiding.

The music becomes louder as she runs faster. In the background we can still hear that choking noise. And the waves. Is she hearing it too?

She gains on the camera and then runs right into it: the lens obscured by her black top...

DISSOLVE TO:

3

EXT. A SERIES OF ROADS - NIGHT

3

Night. The stars come out like angelic children's heads. A starry, starry sky. Nothing can be bad on a night like this. An "It's a wonderful Life" sky.

Silence.

The camera PANS from the starry sky downwards to FIX on a lane. Brick cottages on one side, flat fields on the other. Ahead are three white Coastguard's cottages.

On sound we hear footsteps pounding up behind the Us/the camera. Older Colly is running up behind us. Her heavy breathing gets closer and closer. The hairs on the back of our neck feel her breath. She's heading for Us/the camera.

If we could we'd want to dodge out of the way.

With a SNAP she hits us/the camera from behind and we/the camera become her with a jolt.

We/the camera runs down the lane. Her sound now is our sound.

She/we/the camera run towards the white cottages and stop.

On sound the repeated dragging sound of the out-wave grows.

Quick INSERT of the jagged coast collapsing down onto the beach as a storm rages.

All sound DRAINS.

A light seems to be on in on of the cottages.

Closer. It's a kitchen light.

She/We/the camera step closer. Slowly , as if creeping up on the scene.

Inside a boy, [AX,11], wearing a head torch to light the table, sits at a kitchen table and writes/draws...

Blackout.

CUT TO:

4

GRAPHIC/ANIMATION: TITLE: THE BOOK OF DADS.

4

Fade up: CLOSE-UP on a sketch pad as if from Ax's POV. Illuminated by a torch. Ax's torch.

Ax's/our/the camera's hand draws, erases and re-draws a male face.

ANIMATION: In CLOSE-UP the drawn face takes on a life of its own as its features are erased and re-drawn.

On sound, the sound of the pencil and the rubber. The scrape of the pencil becomes...

MATCH CUT TO:

SFX: The noise of bats.

The CLOSE-UP of real man's face [that matches the drawing] from a low angle, [Ax POV height].

[This is CHRIS, 30's]

It's a night shot, the man's face is lit by a torch too. Chris is smiling and holding a black box up to the night sky. The box is picking up bat noises.

The camera TRACKS upwards diagonally [away from Ax' POV and back to Older Colly's] and the image fades...

CUT TO:

5 INT. AX'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

5

From Older Colly's POV She/We/the camera now look through the kitchen window, as Ax carries on drawing and re-drawing.

AX

(Voice-over)

The day that I knew that I could save my Mum was the day when I saved the pigs. I knew that I could help my Mum to be happy, because I saved them and that meant that I could do something like a plan and that meant I could change the way things were...

She/We/the camera BACK away from this. As She/We/the camera does the light in the kitchen fades, until Ax has faded away too.

BACK TO:

6 EXT. A SERIES OF ROADS - NIGHT

6

On sound rain. The road is suddenly wet. The moon is suddenly full. Now She/We/the camera PAN up to take in an upstairs window.

It is in darkness. Beat. The window quietly and meticulously opens.

A girl, [Younger Colly, 9] and AX [with different clothes and hair] climb out of the window and down to the ground, helping each other get down from the first floor.

They have socks on. They carry their shoes tied around their necks.

Ax holds out his hand to Colly.

SNAP to CLOSE-UP of the boy's hand from Colly's POV. Her/we/the camera takes his hand. Ax leads Her/us/the camera off. She/We/he camera let ourselves be led.

She/we/the camera creep up the road with Ax in front.

She/we/the camera PANS down and backwards to look at the wet sock prints the She/we are leaving in the road...

DISSOLVE TO:

7

INT. A BATHROOM - NIGHT

7

The camera PANS along wet footprints from a bath across a tiled floor to where Older Colly gets dry and dressed. The camera RISES to be at Older Colly's eye level.

Take in the bathroom which is spartan and stylish, like a hotel bathroom.

Older Colly gets dry and dressed. She is very precise in her movements. This is an obsessive routine. Things are picked up in a certain order and placed carefully back in their rightful place.

Older Colly isn't allowing any gaps in this routine for thinking or chaos, just like when she was running.

Behind the door is a huge mirror, but she does not look in it once. She brushes her hair. As she does the camera PANS away from her and to the right...

CUT TO:

8

INT. HALFWAY HOUSE BATHROOM [80'S] - DAY

8

...gradually the room changes from spartan modern bathroom to a dingy, chintzy B and B bathroom with a peach bathroom suite and lots of frills and cuddly toys.

The camera FALLS to the eye-level of a man sitting on the peach bed. [Justin]. There's a rucksack on the bed next to him, unpacked.

He looks out of place, too dark, too big, too clumsy, like an animal in a very wrong cage. He has red hair and freckles that seem high-lighted against the peachiness..

The man gets up and goes to the peach basin and begins to wash his face. As he washes he looks in the peachy plastic mirror.

He stares at himself. An unkind stare.

JUST

(Voice-over)

I don't feel new. I don't feel box-fresh. I feel like some wooden chip fork wedged between the boards on a pier.

On sound the gradual rise of children laughing and giggling uncontrollably.

MATCH CUT:

9 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT 9

Extreme CLOSE-UP of Older Colly's face. On sound the same children giggling and laughing.

The laughter becomes...

CUT TO:

EXT. AX AND COLLY'S GARDEN - NIGHT

Two women, JACKIE and SUE, sit in battered plastic garden chairs, drinking from bottles of alcopops. The floor around them is littered with empties.

They are laughing. That hysterical laughing that has been going on for a while.

JACKIE

Oh dear!

They both carry on laughing like drains.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLDER COLLY'S BATHROOM - DAY

The laughter from previous scene fades and the camera ZOOMS slowly out to see that OLDER COLLY is sitting on a chaise longue, watching herself in the mirror behind the door. Her children have moved it when they came into the room so that now she sees herself.

The two children clamber all over her, giggling and playing. [The children are roughly the same ages as Ax and Colly].

The bath water drains out of the bath and there is a gurgling noise, reminiscent of the choking sound.

MATCH CUT TO:

10 INT HALF WAY HOUSE BATHROOM - DAY 10

Just stares in the mirror. He lets out a single pitiful sob, then stops himself. He leaves the frame. The camera PANS in the opposite direction to look out of the window. beat. A car passes in the road. The camera PANS with it

FADE TO:

11 EXT. DUNWICH CAR PARK - DAY 11

The same stare as in the mirror, but now Older Colly sits in the same car, parked in a National trust car park. Through the window she watches walkers, bird watchers, families.

The light fades as she sits there in perfectly turned out walking gear. On sound the waves as before.

She watches out of the window impassive. On sound there is the FLASHBACK SFX noise of people gathering, crunchy kagoules, walking boots on gravel. The camera PANS to the right...

DISSOLVE TO:

12 EXT. DUNWICH HEATH - NIGHT 12

...to stop on, in the twilight, a group of about 10 adults gathering in separate chatting groups. The camera tracks towards them and DROPS slowly from their adult, eye level, until we are again at Ax's level and POV. [Thigh height]. He is tying the last of Colly's laces.

He/We/the camera look at Colly who is still holding his hand, as the camera/they weave in and out of the adults.

Then He/We/the camera look up at the man we saw earlier holding the strange box in the air. [Chris.] He grins at the camera, as if down at AX.

CHRIS

You look like handy assistants. Do you want to hold the bat monitor?

Chris grins again and then addresses the gathered group.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Okay folks. This is us about to start. When we reach the badgers set I'll give you the nod so you can all be as quiet as possible. It's their home so no sudden movements if you please. And no flash or video lights. Okay vamonos!

He smiles and then sets off up a pathway. Ax/We/the camera look at Colly. She's tugging on his sleeve.

COLLY

Psst! Ax. I've chosen already Ax.

Ax/We/ the camera search the group.

Quick INSERTS of several of the men's faces, from His/Our POV.

Ax/We looks at Colly.

AX

(O/S)

You're being rash. Wait until the end and then choose.

COLLY

But I know who I choose.

AX

(O/S)

At the end. Say then.

Colly looks at the camera.

COLLY

Why? I know...right this minute now.

The group sets off and the Camera/Ax leads Colly off in a sea of legs.

The camera stays FIXED on the frame once they have all left. Beat. Then it PANS up and away in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

13 INT. AX/COLLY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

13

Close-up as Ax sleeps in bed. The curtains flap in the breeze.

PULL OUT to see Young Colly standing by his bed staring down at him. She studies his face. She wants to wake him up.

But instead she gets into bed and pulls the covers up over herself and carries on watching his face.

As Ax stirs and opens his bleary eyes, Colly closes her eyes and pretends to be asleep.

Ax sits up, scratches his face, gets out of bed and looks out of the bedroom window towards the sea. He turns and wakes Colly up.

She pretends to wake-up. They stare at each other. Ax brushes Colly's hair from her face.

AX

We need to go to the beach.

Beat. Colly nods.

We track away from her face down the bed. The bobbles on the bedspread become PEBBLES.

On sound the crunch of feet on pebbles

DISSOLVE TO:

14 EXT. THE SEA DEFENCES - NIGHT

14

PAN in the same direction some built up shingle sea-defences. The group of walkers for earlier walk along the defences, like a marching army. They are silhouetted against the sky, like characters in a Victorian fairy tale book.

The noise of pebbles falling down the defences as they walk.

Ax and Colly inter-weave themselves in and out of the crowd. At the front, Chris gives an eccentric commentary.

AX

(Young Ax voice-over)

We went on the walks, because I knew
if we chose a new dad I could make Mum
happy.

The crowd leave the frame as the TRACK stops.

Beat. Then Older Colly walks away from the camera, as if
emerging for it, and walks towards the shingle
defences. She clambers up and looks at the sea.

OLDER COLLY

(Voice-over)

I'll do the walk. And then I'll sleep.
Please let me sleep.

Now the camera FOLLOWS in her foot steps, but passes
her and heads down from the defences to the beach. [It
TRACKS down to Younger Colly's height.]

MATCH CUT TO:

15 EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

15

The sky seems lighter. The camera approaches Younger
Colly at her level as she stands on the beach looking
down at something. [In the same clothes that she was
wearing in the scene in the bedroom where she stared at
sleeping Ax.] Younger Colly steps nearer to what she is
looking at.

It's a collapsed dark green fishing tent right on the
edge of the waves.

Quick live Action INSERT of Just and Ax in the tent.
Just is making Ax laugh by putting maggots up his own
nose. On sound Ax's laughter.

Younger Colly steps nearer to the collapsed tent. A
fishing rod is caught up in the fabric and goes in and
out with each new wave.

Younger Colly sinks to her knees. There is a body
shape under the tent. A freckled hand sticks out from
the tent, wearing a faded, hand-made friendship
bracelet.

The waves break on it again and again. The waves
become.

CUT TO:

16 INT. THE PUB - NIGHT

16

A pint being pulled and handed to the Camera/Just.

CLOSE-UP on the pint as the foam fades. On sound talking and laughing. Two women laugh.

SUE and JACKIE sit at a table laughing and drinking pints of cider. As they chat, Jackie keeps looking over at the back of a person at the bar. He's in motorcycle leathers.

Sue notices her looking and nudges her to go over.

Jackie gets up and heads over to the back of the person at the bar. Jackie reaches out her hand, the person turns. It's Just, younger by twelve years. He blushes and smiles. Jackie smiles.

JACKIE

Thought it was you. You joining us?

Just looks over at the table.

JUST

Might as well.

Jackie wrinkles her nose, half grinning.

JACKIE

Doing us a favour are you?

Just looks down.

JUST

Don't mean that by it.

Jackie smiles and nudges his freckled arm.

JACKIE

I know what you mean.

JUST

You do?

JACKIE

Uh-huh. Always have.

There is the same friendship bracelet, but not so faded.

The camera PANS over to the window...

CUT TO:

17

EXT. OUTSIDE THE PUB. - NIGHT

17

...Where Older Colly stands looking through the window, in her walking clothes.

CUT TO:

Older Colly looks in at the pub. Now the bar is empty and the table where Jackie, Just and the friend were sitting is empty.

On sound a slow FADE-IN of a song from 1977. The door to the pub opens and Older Colly looks to her left to see who's coming out. The camera leaves Older Colly and pans to the pub door.

A gang of six or so teenagers tumble out of the pub laughing and joking. They walk towards the beach in a straggly gang. They're all singing and talking in different groups. The camera follows at their height.

They reach a doorway and one of the teenagers heads inside to loud goodbye's and jokes and kisses.

OLDER JACKIE

(Voiceover)

At school Just wasn't popular or unpopular. He just stood out like a big, red, sore thumb. No-one called him gingernut or anything. No-one teased him, but no-one got really chummy either. To me he always looked like he was waiting for a good thing to turn up.

But at the back of the group a boy with red hair [Younger Just] takes the hand of a girl, [Younger Jackie]. He drags her down some steps and the camera follows.

OLDER JACKIE (CONT'D)

(V/O)

I always wanted to be the good thing.

On sound the others are still saying goodbye and chatting to the girl's Mum who has come out to shhh them.

At the bottom of the stairs Younger Just kisses younger Jackie. She looks taken aback. He looks down in the same way Older Just did in the pub.

JACKIE

What was that for?

JUST

Might as well.

He walks backwards up the steps grinning. Younger Jackie follows him up and they re-join the group. The camera is FIXED as the group walks away up the lane. Younger Jackie watches Younger Just, as they walk, but he doesn't catch her eye.

As the group disappear, the camera PANS to the left to a gravestone...

CUT TO:

19 EXT. CHURCHYARD - DAY 19

SNAP to daylight around the gravestone in a graveyard. On sound birds are singing. Younger Ax and younger Colly come out from behind the camera and cross the Churchyard. They go inside the big wooden door. The camera FOLLOWS.

CUT TO:

20 INT. THE CHURCH - DAY 20

The camera PANS down the aisle of the church, past the church notice board past a photo of a smiling Haitian girl with a leprous leg in a leg brace. The camera stops on the girl. [It is at Ax' level.]

Beat. Then AX' hand touches the picture and picks at the corner.

The camera tracks down Ax' arm to see that he is watching Colly scabble to lift a floorboard in the children's area between two pews.

She waves her legs to balance as she pulls out a Supermarket bag. Inside are some coins wrapped in tinfoil to make them shiny, lots of paste/plastic jewels, bracelets and rings from bubble gum machines, an invisible writing spy pen and a school exercise book that has, "Colly's secret diary" written all over it.

MATCH CUT TO:

21 INT. AX/COLLY'S BEDROOM - DAY 21

PAN up Younger Colly's legs towards her head. She's lying on her stomach on the floor with her head under the bed. She's writing a diary.

YOUNGER COLLY

(Voice over)

The place I live is a very magical place. It does its own disappearing act every night. In Medieval times it was the biggest port in England, but every day now bits of it keep on and keep on getting washed away by the sea. This is called erosion. I think of it like when you lick a sweet and it gets smaller with each lick.

(MORE)

AX

Me and...

COLLY

Me.

CHRIS

You look like two bears coming out of hibernation. What you playing?

Colly looks down at the treasure and bites her lip.

COLLY

Your name's Chris, isn't it?

CHRIS

Sometimes. Sometimes it's Chris the beetle. Beetle, because I've got a very hard shiny back, I have.

Colly leans forwards to try and get a glimpse of Chris' back.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

And you are Spike and Rolanda.

AX

No.

CHRIS

Scar-face and Imelda?

Colly smiles.

AX

Ax and Colly

COLLY

Melanie. My real true name is Melanie.

CHRIS

That's names out of the way then. Although we have technically already met. I see you up on the heath walks don't I then?

Ax and Colly look at one another.

COLLY

We do those walks. Occasionally. With our mum.

Chris sits down in a pew and looks up at the ceiling nodding. He lets out a little sound and listens to the echo. He grins at Colly and Ax.

CHRIS
I'm thinking instead that you two come
on the walks on your own.

AX
That's a lie.

COLLY
Yes it is. The next time we really
will come with Mum.

Ax nudges Colly in the side. Chris winks at Colly.

CHRIS
Ah. There's the truth. I'll not be
telling no-one. Keep coming. I'll keep
an eye on you.

A pause and then Colly walks over and sits in the pew
next to Chris, really staring at him.

COLLY
We only need to come one more time. We
found Mum a new Dad.

Chris looks down at Colly. She beams a big smile at
him.

CHRIS
A new Dad? Why you want one of them?
The old one gone rusty?

Ax steps forwards now.

AX
How did you know that we were on the
walks on our own?

CHRIS
That would be because I have x-ray
vision and I saw right through you ot
the lie that lives in your tummy.

Colly looks at her belly as if she wants to see bones
and blood on her insides.

COLLY
Can you see my sandwiches right now?

Chris looks at her stomach.

CHRIS
Yep. And your bogies from when you
picked your nose this morning.

Colly giggles and holds up her leg and sandal straight
in the air.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

There was something you didn't know about the walks and that was how I found you out. When I have to do a walk I have to do a head count, I do. I'm not an ace at writing so's I count the heads of the people and match them against the number who have booked. When you two came, there was always two extra.

Ax nods as if he understands.

Chris sits down on the pew. Ax sits next to him, miffed that they have been found out. Colly walks along the pew behind them.

COLLY

Guess who our new Dad is going to be. Shall I give you some kind of clue?

Colly grins and starts to point her finger in all kinds of directions, like a mad fly.

COLLY (CONT'D)

Whoever my finger points at next....

Ax grabs Colly's hand as it points towards Chris. Chris looks down at them and then away at the alter again.

CHRIS

You've both still got a Dad far as I know.

COLLY

You can change a dad.

Behind them the sound of the big wooden door opening again.

The camera PANS away from Ax and Colly and towards the door, as it does it gets dark.

MATCH CUT TO:

24

INT. THE CHURCH - NIGHT

24

The 25 year old Just and Jackie, in the same clothes as the pub scene, creep in to the church. Just shuts the door carefully. They kiss. In the light of the windows we see them undress each other.

Jackie takes Just's trousers down and begins to give him a blow job.

SNAP to Jackie's POV as she gives Just the blow job. She/We/the camera looks up at his face. His eyes are shut and he is trying to control himself.

CUT TO:

25 EXT. THE BEACH - DAY 25

Ax stands in exactly the same position that Colly stood in, looking at the collapsed tent and his Dad's hand coming out of the tent.

He looks around at Colly who is standing a little behind him.

AX

Stay there. It's done. I did it. Okay?
Okay Colly? I did it.

Colly looks away, back up the beach. A figure walks along the sea-defences above them. Away from them and down. The camera follows...

CUT TO:

26 EXT. DUNWICH HEATH - NIGHT 26

...It gets darker as the figure walks away and up onto the heath. The camera seems to chase the figure along the footpath, the light from the figure's head-torch illuminating only a section of the undergrowth and path.

The figure stops in their tracks.

OLDER COLLY

I have to S.O.R.T this. S.O.R.T this.
S.O.R.T this out.

She raises her head up and the torch shines up into the trees. The leaves blow in the wind. On sound the noise of the waves, gradually mixing in with crying.

CUT TO:

27 INT. AX AND COLLY'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. - NIGHT 27

The same crying, coming from behind a bedroom door. It's Mum's crying. Ax lies in a sleeping bag outside the door. His head propped up against the door. Listening.

The camera PANS away from Ax as he listens and stops at the window.

Outside the window we hear the group of walkers go past again.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. THE NIGHT WALK - NIGHT

28

The camera is at Colly's height. From her POV the camera traces through the crowd. A sea of legs. The legs part like curtains as Colly makes it to the front. Ax looks at the camera/Colly/us as he too navigates the crowd.

And there are the badgers. Ahead. A family. Father, mother and two little ones, sorting through some bins. The whole crowd is hushed as they watch. The camera/Colly/We pan along the crowd. Some people are looking sentimental. Some people film. Some are not interested. Then Colly/We/the camera HALTS on Chris' face as he watches.

There is wonder in his face. Love and wonder. Colly/the camera/we close in on Chris. The camera/Colly looks at his hand and then Colly puts her hand in his.

Chris looks down and grins at the camera.

CHRIS

Never get bored of it, I don't.

The badger babies make little cries to their parents and then in a flurry they are gone into the hedge.

CUT TO:

29 INT. AX/COLLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

29

It's quiet and still in the room. A fox baby cries somewhere. It sounds like a human baby's cries.

Ax lies wide awake, staring at the ceiling. Light from the window on his face.

AX

(Voice-over)

It's like my arms and legs are made of honey and are dripping off the bed and onto the floor And I don't know where I'm dripping away to. It's a slow falling. And I might go between the floorboards and all end up under the floor and no-one would know where I was. In the morning there would just be an empty bed. No me left.

Ax's breathing get louder and faster. In her bed, Colly sleeps on, unaware.

The camera leaves Ax, but his breathing can still be heard as the camera leaves the room through the open door.

A second in the hallway. The sounds of a house at night.

MATCH CUT TO:

30

INT. THE HALLWAY - NIGHT

30

The hallway at night. It's dark and silent, only regular house creaks.

The door to Ax and Colly's room opens and Ax and Colly creep out. They are in the clothes they were wearing in the first walk scene.

AX

(in whisper)

We have to leave like Panthers. So Mum and Dad can't hear.

Colly nods.

COLLY

Okay. What's a pamfer?

Ax looks irritated for a second and then leans in closer towards Colly.

AX

(in bigger whisper)

It's a type of cat Col. We have to leave like a type of cat so Mum and Dad don't hear us. Okay?

Colly nods.

COLLY

Are we allowed to have that torch?

AX

(in whisper)

No, Coll. No torches. But I'll hold your hand all the time.

Ax holds out his hand and Colly grabs it.

COLLY

Tight.

AX
 (in whisper)
 Sooper-scooper tight.

Ax opens the hall window with one hand, still not letting go of Colly.

COLLY
 And you'd better not let me fall
 anywhere at any time.

Ax nods and begins to climb out of the window. He helps Colly out.

They exit the frame.

Beat.

Then a light goes on under a door. Dad comes out of his room. He sees the window open and shuts it. He pads downstairs to the kitchen.

The house creaks.

CUT TO:

31 INT. HALF WAY HOUSE. - DAY

31

CLOSE-UP on Just as he sits at a kitchen table in a cheerful looking kitchen. The camera is at his eye level.

JUST
 (to camera)
 I feel...I feel like shit. And before you get excited: Not shit that can be saved. I thought I'd feel new. Somehow shiny. I thought I'd wake up in boxfresh white trainer land. But I look at myself and the scratches and scars are all still here you know. Here, where I caught my wedding ring in a car door...

Just holds up the scars to the camera as he describes them..

JUST (CONT'D)
 This one, where I caught my fist on some geezers gold tooth. This one...

He puts his leg on the table and rolls up his jeans.

JUST (CONT'D)
 Football spike.

He puts his leg down. Sips his tea. Calm and quiet looking. He doesn't look at the camera anymore.

JUST (CONT'D)

My toes still jam up in the night. It hurts when I piss. My lungs are like two supermarket bags. My eyes are up the swanee....I'm shit tied up with string.

Paying the price wasn't what I reckoned it would be. 'Cos what you've done is a huge, big, hairy fucker sitting on your back with it's claws sticking into you... and this hairy, old fucker needs to be fed.

He looks up and smiles at the camera. Defiant.

CUT TO:

32 INT. AX/COLLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

32

Ax and Colly sit in their room. They look at each other. Neither of them speak throughout this scene.

The only light is from a blue flashing light from outside, that lights up their faces each time it flashes.

On sound we hear what is going on downstairs.

Dad is being arrested and is resisting being taken away. There is a kerfuffle as he lashes out and calls Jackie every name under the sun. Then he says sorry. Then he goes very quiet.

Ax starts to sing to Colly. Colly joins in.

CUT TO:

33 INT. AX AND COLLY'S HOUSE KITCHEN. - DAY

33

Ax and Colly have breakfast at the table. Mum does not sit down but orchestrates the eating and the clearing up and the washing. She looks very tired.

AX

So there is this walk on the heath. Friday night. So can we go Mum? A night-time walk?

COLLY

Yay! A night-time walk. I want to go too.

JACKIE

Is it free?

COLLY

Yes. And we can walk there and back both. We won't be scared and you're a grown up.

Ax nudges Colly who eats some more cereal.

JACKIE

I'm knackered. Okay. If you're good..

Ax looks at Colly and breaks off a bit of toast. Colly kicks him under the table.

AX

But Mum. What if we're not? What if something happens that we have no control over and we have to be bad?

COLLY

That could happen, Mum. Events beyond our control.

Jackie stops cleaning up. She looks at her kids.

JACKIE

Then it won't be really bad will it?

Ax and Colly look at one another.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Eat your Frosties. You are both very, very weird.

Ax and Colly start to eat. Beat.

COLLY

I'm eating this all up Mum, but I really want to go on that walk.

AX

We might see bitterns and glow-worms and bats.

COLLY

We always see them...

Ax kicks Colly.

AX

We always see them in books...and we want to see them live and close up.

JACKIE

Will you crunch those crunchers!

They both eat again. And crunch loudly.

AX

They are so rare that they might be
all extinct by the time I'm old
enough.

COLLY

And me.

Jackie takes away their bowls of cereal.

JACKIE

Blah! Blah! Blah! Starve then!

Ax and Colly both look at one another.

AX

So we can go...and you'll come too.

Jackie looks at her kids and then wearily nods.

CLOSE-UP of Colly's eyes as she looks at Ax.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. THE HEATH - NIGHT

34

Big CLOSE-UP on Older Colly as she breathes in and out.
Her breath is pale and smoky.

QUICK flash of the waves hitting the green tent in
rhythm with her breathing.

And slowly rising too the sound of choking in water.
And this time another layer: a child whimpering.

The choking becomes more mechanical and synthesised
CHANGING to...

35 EXT. THE HEATH - DAY

35

...The sound of a man making robot noises and Star Wars
light sabre sound effects.

CLOSE-UP of a wet toad next to a rambling pink rose.
Shapes move in the background.

PULL FOCUS to see Just, Ax and Colly running and
playing in the pink heather. Just fights Ax with light
sabres. Colly hangs on her Dad's legs as he fights.

They are all giggling and laughing.

They fight out of shot.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. THE HEATH - DAY 36

Just stands in the heather up to his waist. It looks like he is sinking.

He grins at the camera, which is at Colly height.

JUST
(mock urgent)
Save me!

He grins. Beat. Then his face clouds.

JUST (CONT'D)
(irritated)
I said....

He looks down at his feet in the heather.

Then he grins again at the camera. The sun hits him as he does and backlights him.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. THE HEATH - DAY 37

Ax, Colly and Just fall backwards, one by one into the springy heather.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. THE HEATH - DAY 38

PAN along a acid yellow gorse bush. The camera is at Ax's height. Colly stands giggling close to the flowers. Just is next to her.

JUST
Sniff the lovely coconuts..

COLLY
(laughing)
But you'll...

JUST
This time I won't.

COLLY
But that's the game..you promise and then you do it anyway.

JUST
This time I won't

AX
(Off screen laughing)
He will!

Colly wrinkles her nose up and then giggles and leans in towards the flowers and makes a big show of sniffing.

Beat then Just pushes her face into the flowers.

Colly giggles and chases her Dad out of shot.

COLLY
Lovely coco-nuuuuuuuts!

CUT TO:

39 EXT. THE HEATH - DAY

39

Just stands on what looks like an edge. He makes a show of falling backwards off it.

Beat. The camera is still at Colly height.

Ax walks into shot a few paces.

AX
Not falling for it dad.

No more noise. Ax steps closer.

AX (CONT'D)
We don't believe you.

Ax looks back at the camera for support.

COLLY
(Off screen)
It's not a cliff!

AX
It's nothing like a cliff.

Ax reaches the edge and peers over. He looks back at the camera.

AX (CONT'D)
There's nothing.

Then a shout from the left and Just rushes in, wailing like a banshee, and rugby tackles Ax to the ground.

Just stays on the ground and laughs. Ax doesn't. He gets up and moves away, nursing his elbow.

AX (CONT'D)
That hurt.

JUST
Baby!

AX
Owwww!

He stares at his Dad. He looks down at his elbow.

Ax walks out of shot. The camera stays on Just looking at Colly/the camera with a helpless, vulnerable face.

CUT TO:

41 EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND. - DAY 41

AX and another boy knock seven types of shit out of each other in slow motion. Close-up on their red stained faces.

CUT TO:

42 EXT. THE PUB GARDEN - DAY 42

Colly is on a swing in the pub garden. She swings towards the camera which SNAP REVERSES to become her POV. She/we/the camera swing and watch Jackie who's sitting at a picnic table with Sue.

Sue is giving Jackie money. She's embarrassed to be giving it and Jackie is embarrassed to be getting it. It happens quickly and then they both looks over at Colly on the swing, smile and wave.

JACKIE
Ta.

SUE
Get yourself....sorted.

Jackie nods.

CUT TO:

43 INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY 43

The light is fading outside as Ax and Colly sit at the kitchen table. Ax watches as Colly butters two slices of bread carefully. She looks at him as she finishes.

Ax nods and then gets a plastic bread bag out from under his shirt.

Inside are fungus/toadstools. Colly passes Ax a rubber washing-up glove and he puts it on. He gets the toadstools out and places them in the sandwich.

Then Colly carefully empties a bag of yew needles over the toadstool bits.

Colly puts some ham over the top of them and pats it down. Then she puts the top slice of bread on.

Ax tears off some tinfoil and wraps the sandwich up.

They both stare at the sandwich.

COLLY
Better put it all under stuff.

Ax takes the rubber glove off and pushes it down into the bin.

Colly looks in the bin.

AX
Better wash our hands.

Ax and Colly go to the sink and wash their hands. As they do, there is the sound of the front door.

Both of them jump.

CUT TO:

44 INT. AX AND COLLY'S HOUSE. HALLWAY. - DAY 44

Tight shot on the front door from inside. A key opens it. Just stands there with the same rucksack he had in the bed and breakfast. He stands in the hallway.

Beat. Jackie comes out of the kitchen and stands at the other end of the hallway.

JACKIE
Tea?

Just smiles and nods. Jackie heads back to the kitchen. Just stays put. He looks back out of the open door at the fields.

CUT TO:

45 INT. FISHING TENT/THE BEACH - NIGHT 45

A green canvas fishing tent. Outside the wind and the waves. The camera looks up at the roof of the tent. It's someone's POV. Someone lying down.

The tent is lit by a tiny hurricane lamp that makes a constant hiss. The light flickers as the sides of the tent flap.

AX
(off screen)
I can't feel my toes.

JUST
(Off screen)
Siss.

AX
(Off screen)
I can't.

JUST
(Off screen)
Then you're a wimp. Go home.

Silence as the lamp hisses and the tent sides flap.

The sound of drinking.

AX
(Off screen)
What will we catch?

JUST
(Off screen)
Sod all.

AX
(Off screen)
Really though?

JUST
(Off screen)
Bass. Whiting. Pollack. S'too windy.

Beat. The sound of sleeping bags rustling.

AX
(Off screen)
And cold.

JUST
(Off Screen)
Stuck record. Go home.

AX
(Off screen)
I can take it.

JUST
(Off Screen)
Tough are you?

AX
 (Off Screen)
 That's my name. That's why you call me
 my name. Axe.

Pause. More rustling of sleeping bags.

JUST
 (Off screen)
 Yeah right.

AX
 (Off screen)
 What?

JUST
 (Off screen)
 S'not why.

AX
 What?

JUST
 There's a different reason.

AX
 No there isn't.

JUST
 Want to know?

AX
 (Off screen)
 No there isn't.

Beat.

JUST
 (Off screen)
 Suit yourself.

Into the sound of the waves dragging on the shore. On
 sound also someone fidgeting in their sleeping bag.

Pause.

AX
 (Off screen)
 What then?

On sound a beery burp.

AX (CONT'D)
 (Off screen)
 Why am I called it then?

Still there is no answer.

AX (CONT'D)
 (Off screen)
 See. That is why I'm called it.

Pause.

JUST
 (Off screen)
 It's Ax for accident.

On sound the wave noises stop. All other sound falls away except for Ax's breathing.

AX
 (Off screen)
 What accident?

JUST
 (Off screen)
 You were.

There is a silence, except for Ax's breathing.

JUST (CONT'D)
 (Off screen)
 We didn't mean you.

The light fades out and we are left with the blackout and the silence.

CUT TO:

46 INT. AX/COLLY'S BEDROOM - DAY

46

Morning. Ax slowly unpacks his rucksack. He carefully puts his things away. Colly lays on the bed reading from her diary.

COLLY
 "In March every year, without fail"...that's what you say when you mean really every year...."the toads come. Not the same day of course, but usually after lots of big rains. Dunwich High Street is damp with them. And at night when you go out they fan out from your plimsolls or from the rays of your torch like big splashes from a puddle. They make sticky noises, like a glue that is alive. Toads come to the same place every year to have their children. They are like homing pigeons. So every year I might see the same toads, but because they all look so alike to us I would never know.

(MORE)

COLLY (CONT'D)

And toads have simply hundreds and hundreds of babies every year, but they do not expect all of them to live. If they did, they would be upset every year because the same hundreds and hundreds of them, die before they are adults in accidents. Sometimes you see them squashed in the road and they dry out with the sun and become like mummies without any bandages on, in the road"...

Colly looks up at Ax who has stopped unpacking and is staring at Colly.

COLLY (CONT'D)

Mrs Pidgeon said I made her laugh with that last bit and I was a silly, but she gave me a good mark anyway.

Ax nods, but he is miles away. Back at the tent with his Dad.

On sound the sound of the hurricane lamp hissing.

CUT TO:

47

EXT. THE HEATH - NIGHT

47

On sound the sound of feet crunching on pebbles. Muffled talking. Jackie, Ax and Colly pass a parked car that looks like the one used by Older Colly at the beginning.

Jackie is in a bright pink-fringed cardigan, sparkly trainers and combat trousers. Everyone else is in respectful forest shades.

Jackie walks tentatively up towards the crowd gathered for the night walk. She stops towards the back of the group. A little removed and uncomfortable. Ax and Colly look at one another and then Colly pulls on her arm and drags her forwards towards the front. Towards Chris.

COLLY

I can't see...

Jackie drags her feet as Colly and Ax pull her. She stops as she nears the front of the group.

Chris sees Ax and Colly. He grins at them and makes little shivering motions with his arms. Then he mock 'freezes', becoming rigid.

Ax and Colly look up at Jackie to see if she has noticed. Jackie is smiling as Chris unfreezes. He steps towards them.

CHRIS

Hi Jax.

Colly shoots a puzzled look at Ax.

JACKIE

I feel a pillock.

CHRIS

You look one.

They both laugh.

Jackie looks down at Colly and Ax.

JACKIE

This is Chris. We were at school together.

Colly frowns at Chris.

COLLY

(Cross to Chris)

You never said.

Jackie looks down at Colly, puzzled. Chris grins and turns to the crowd.

CHRIS

Right. Time to meet the glow-worms.

CUT TO:

BIG CLOSE-UP of Ax, Chris and Colly's faces. They are close to the ground. Lit only by a very faint glow-worm glow.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

(reverent)

It's a single night long burn. A mating call. Research says there is a chemical release with the glow. She'll be lit up all night and then fade tomorrow.

In the distance Jackie looks on.

JACKIE

Sounds familiar.

Chris smiles.

CUT TO:

48 INT. AX AND COLLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

48

Ax gets into his pyjamas. Colly has tied a torch to her front. In the darkness, she turns the torch on and off. The only light in the scene.

COLLY

He lied to us.

AX

But it's even better if they know each other. They might already have chemistry.

COLLY

I want to be a glow worm.

AX

They talked to each other at the end.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. THE COASTGUARDS COTTAGES - NIGHT

49

AX and Colly's house from outside: The camera at Chris height. Through the upstairs window we see Colly's glow worm torch go on and off.

Older Colly walks away from the camera and the camera follows. Behind we/the camera see Chris standing in the road looking up at the upstairs windows.

YOUNGER COLLY

(Off screen)

But they didn't kiss.

AX

(Off screen)

Kissing takes time.

YOUNGER COLLY

(Off screen)

Do glow worms kiss?

AX

(Off screen)

They don't have lips.

YOUNGER COLLY

(Off screen)

I think our plan didn't work. Perhaps Chris likes badgers.

Pause, in the camera track, as Older Colly stops by the deserted seaside cafe.

YOUNGER COLLY (CONT'D)

(Off screen)

We don't have long. Dad might be doing
good behaviour and come home any day.

Older Colly looks at the deserted cafe. On sound the
daytime noises of the cafe.

And talking...we can hear Colly's excited giggles and
Ax describing the type of ice cream he is going to
order..

CUT TO:

50 EXT. A COUNTRY PATH - DAY 50

Ax and Colly stand in the central verge of an overgrown
pathway.

They are sniffing the air. Ax gently, Colly
exagerratedly.

CUT TO:

51 EXT. A COUNTRY PATH - DAY 51

Ax and Colly stand in a different grouping and in
different clothes on the same overgrown pathway.

Again they sniff the air.

AX

(Voiceover)

We let the pigs decide. The next pig
poo day.

CUT TO:

52 EXT. A COUNTRY PATH - DAY 52

Ax and Colly look at one another. They are again in
different clothes and a different grouping on the path.

They look at one another.

They don't move.

The wind rustles the trees and bushes around them.

CUT TO:

53

INT. AX AND COLLY'S HOUSE: KITCHEN. - DAY

53

[The camera is at Ax and Colly's height.] A frenzy of giggles and clothes as Ax and Colly race to see who can get out of their clothes and into their pyjamas first. Colly is chucking her clothes off and winning but she slows down to let Ax catch up and win.

She looks at a line of sunburn along her arm.

COLLY

I've been burnt!

She shows Jackie, who is peeling potatoes and also has a sunburnt face.

JACKIE

You'll live, pickle.

As Jackie cuddles Colly the front door opens and closes.

Jackie instantly goes back to peeling the potatoes. Ax and Colly go to the door.

COLLY

He's not lost!

Just comes in through the doorway. He is drunk but covering it up very well. His red-headed skin is glowing.

AX

We looked all over.

JUST

Busy, weren't it.

Just puts his hands in his pocket and pulls out four knotted bands.

JUST (CONT'D)

I got you these. Like mine. Friendship bracelet thingies. I reckon we're a gang.

Just pulls Colly in towards him and holds up the bracelets.

JUST (CONT'D)

Which one you like?

Colly points to one and Just ties it around her wrist. Colly poses and flaps her wrist. Now Just shows the remaining one's to Ax.

Ax picks one and Just ties it around his wrist. A bit too tight.

Ax looks down at his wrist.

AX
It's not really a bracelet, is it?
It's a for everyone thing.

Just stands up and goes over to Jackie with the remaining bracelets.

Ax looks down at his wrist.

CUT TO:

54 INT. THE HALLWAY - DAY

54

Ax walks through the door and unties the friendship bracelet and re-ties it less tightly. [The camera is at his level.]

On sound the sound of a new song on the radio. [**Song to be decided.**]

Ax looks at his wrist as he walks back into the kitchen.

The camera becomes his POV as he does. On sound the music gets louder.

He/we/the camera stops in it's tracks.

Just is shouting and has Jackie on the ground and is pushing her face into an old dog bowl full of water. She scrabbles and splutters. But all we hear is the music on the radio, like a sound track. Not what Just is shouting, not Jackie's chokes. Just the music.

Her wrist, with the bracelet on it, flails around.

On sound the song continues to act as a sound track. Jackie is obviously trying to speak, but in this version we can't make it out.

Dad stops trying to choke Jackie and then punches her in the back. He stands up and looks in the direction of Ax. The screen freezes on his look.

The music won't go away.

CUT TO:

55 EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

55

WIDE ANGLE SHOT. High focus. Layers of vision. The sky. The marsh grasses. The inland estuary. The pebble beach. The waves.

It's only after studying this landscape that we see that Ax and Colly sit in a small corner of it. They are wedged into a gap between the wooden sea jetty and the pebbles. They sit there talking to each other, but we can't hear it. They throw stones at a target that Ax has set up.

Over the sound track of the waves, the grasses, the birds, the pebbles all interfere with each other. Then comes the nearing sound of a police siren.

CUT TO:

56 INT. AX AND COLLY'S BEDROOM - DAY 56

The siren sound continues on sound, as Ax sits on the floor of his room. The camera PANS up past his toes, knees, legs, back and head. Then it becomes his POV.

His hand draws a cartoon. ON sound is the loud sound track from the Dog Bowl scene. As he rubs the pencil to smudge it, it ANIMATES...

MATCH CUT TO:

57 **ANIMATION:** 57

A child's drawn version of the Dog Bowl incident. But this time Ax animates a re-write with himself as a superhero. He becomes taller and stronger in front of our eyes. And in this version he returns his dad's stare with a death ray stare that knocks Just out of the window and into the receding distance in the sky.

Just is punched over a rainbow.

Jackie looks at Ax and holds him close, as he returns to normal size and powers.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. THE PLAYGROUND - DAY 58

Ax's POV as he has a fight with Pelham at school.

The reality of fighting as a contrast to the animated version. Two boys get really hurt and damaged.

The camera is pulled off by a Teacher. Who looks at Ax with compassion.

Pelham is crying and has blood over his nose. Ax isn't crying.

59 INT. HEAD'S OFFICE AT SCHOOL - DAY

59

Jackie and Ax sit on one side of the head's desk. The camera/the head sits on the other.

Both Ax and Jackie have bruises. Ax's on his face and visible. Jackie's on her back and neck, but she has made an attempt to hide hers.

Both fidget uneasily. Like they are both in trouble.

HEAD

(Off screen)

It's worrying. It's a worry to us here. Joshua here is such a strong pupil. So this is...quite..a worry. But we do understand. We understand this. We'd like to help in this. At this time. So whilst what Josh did was wrong. You understand that don't you?

Both Jackie and Ax nod.

HEAD (CONT'D)

So while we have to factor in that. We do..understand. and we know that you are taking steps. So let's work together on this, and take each day....

The head trails off as Jackie and Ax look at each other and nod.

CUT TO:

60 EXT. THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL - DAY

60

Ax and Jackie walk home from school. Neither speak. They get to a road and Ax takes his Mum's hand. He looks up at her and she looks down at him.

CUT TO:

61 INT. SCHOOL TOILETS - DAY

61

Big Close up on Pelham, the boy that Ax had the fight with. This is from Ax's POV

Pelham has big greeny blue black eyes.

PELHAM

They look like glasses.

He grins.

AX
(Off screen)
I didn't mean to.

PELHAM
I like it. I'm getting ice cream, like
when I had my tonsils cut out.

Ax reaches out and touches Pelham's face where the
biggest, purple bruise is.

PELHAM (CONT'D)
It feels massive, like I'm a goldfish.

Ax carries on touching the bruises, until Pelham shrugs
him off.

CUT TO:

62 INT. JACKIE'S BEDROOM - DAY 62

Jackie sleeps in her bed spooned up with Colly. Colly
has her head turned and is watching her Mum's bruised
face as it sleeps. She reaches out and touches the
bruises, just like Ax did with Pelham.

Jackie stirs and kisses Colly's head.

On sound Jackie's Music is playing. It becomes...

CUT TO:

63 EXT. THE GARDEN - DAY 63

Jackie, with headphones on, hangs out the washing. We
hear the music she is listening to: Kate Bush Hounds Of
Love. in her head she is running away.

64 INT. AX'S KITCHEN - DAY 64

The camera is at Young Colly's height. It's looking at
Ax as he stands stock still in the doorway.

On sound we can hear the choking noises that Jackie is
making, that Older Colly can't stop hearing.

And now we hear in the gurgles and chokes that Jackie
is trying to speak.

JACKIE
(broken)
Go!....C..c...olly....get....ou....

She carries on shouting to get Colly to leave as she
chokes.

The same music that Ax heard is playing, but in this version it is only a background. We can also hear Just screaming at Jackie.

The camera PANS away from Ax, away from what is happening by the dog bowl. It focuses on some drawings that Ax and Colly have done that are pinned to the fridge.

One is of a field with some pigs and piglets in it.

The choking becomes the sound of squeals.

CUT TO:

65

EXT. THE PATH TO THE HEATH/PIG FARM - DAY

65

Ax, Young Colly and Jackie walk along a path. Ax is hiding behind trees and stalking his Mum and sister.

Jackie is picking blackberries. Colly has a stick and is hitting plants to break them in half.

COLLY

I can see you!

Ax ducks behind a tree. Colly eats a blackberry from Jackie's hand by hovering it up.

COLLY (CONT'D)

Still can!

Ax runs between trees and jumps into a ditch.

Then Colly sees something up ahead. She points frantically.

COLLY (CONT'D)

Look!

The camera SNAPS to Ax POV from the ditch.

He/we/the camera see that there are six piglets running in a confused pack along the hedge on the path. They are squealing.

Ax/we/the camera run along the hedge and then catch glimpses of the mother on the other side of the hedge.

COLLY (CONT'D)

(Off screen)

The mother's lost them.

The mother becomes more frantic. She snorts at the hedge. The piglets circle and squeal.

Ax/we/the camera see the gap in the hedge where they got through. It's a small hole in the wire.

COLLY (CONT'D)
 (Off screen)
 They've run away.

AX
 (Off screen)
 They're scared!

SNAP to the camera becoming the piglets POV as Ax gently opens his arms like wings. He's concentrating, but very gentle as he ushers the piglets together, like a shepherd.

AX (CONT'D)
 Don't worry. This will work. This way.
 That's it piggies. Clever piggies...

Ax walks towards us and the piglets/we/the camera move towards the hole. Ax ushers us through the hole.

The piglets/we/the camera make it through and the mother pig snorts down at us.

The camera now SNAPS to Jackie's POV

Ax blocks up the hole in the fence and then stands up.

Colly and Jackie clap.

JACKIE
 You saved them!

COLLY
 They will always remember that.

Ax makes a bow and then blushes

COLLY (CONT'D)
 And that should be your job. Saving things. A fireman!

Ax looks at his feet and shuffles them in the dirt. he's chuffed.

JACKIE
 Hooray hero!

CUT TO:

Ax runs along the sea defences. The camera tracks along side him, keeping him centre frame, as he runs.

[Antoine Doinel style.] A big smile on his face. This is jubilation as a run.

AX

(Voiceover)

The day that I knew that I could do a big thing to save my Mum was the day when I did the thing with the pigs.

Ax carries on running down the beach and away from the camera until he disappears up and over the sea defences.

Beat. Then the camera PANS 360 degrees to the left and it becomes dark. Older Colly walks along the beach towards the camera.

CUT TO:

66a EXT. STATION - DAY

66a

An older Ax [17ish] gets on a train to London. Has a rucksack. He does not look back.

The train pulls out and into a tunnel. He is gone.

CUT TO:

67 INT. AX AND COLLY'S KITCHEN - DAY

67

The kitchen after the dog bowl incident. Ax slowly puts the room back to how it was before: picks up the chair, and the cutlery, puts the cushions back, mops up the water from the floor. The only thing he does not touch or put right is the dog bowl itself. The rest he obsessively returns to how it was before.

He looks at the room when it is finished and exits the room.

CUT TO:

68 INT. AX AND COLLY'S HOUSE KITCHEN. - DAY

68

TRACK around the same table. Ax, Young Colly, Just and Jackie have a Chinese dinner. When the camera reaches Jackie's back it SNAPS to become her: the sound re-aligns to hear what she is hearing.

AX

Can we get seconds.

Just grins

JUST
Seconds from the Forbidden Palace?

AX
Uh-huh. Seconds from the Forbidden
Palace.

Just smiles. Ax grins and anticipates the answer.

Just pulls a face and does a very bad Chinese accent.

JUST
(bad accent)
No....is Forrrrrr.

AX/COLLY/JUST
...bidddden!

Colly, Ax and Just laugh. Just, nervously, flicks a glance at Jackie/Us/the camera. He's doing okay.

There are bright pinks, yellows and oranges on their plates. Colly mixes the sauces on her plate to make a picture.

Ax and Just are stuffing prawn balls into their mouths to give themselves big cheeks.

AX
I'm a hamster.

Just laughs and stuffs another prawn ball into his mouth.

JUST
Iph hurph.

Just spits out the balls. Colly grimaces.

Jackie/We/the camera look down at the empty plates.

Colly adds some more coloured sauce on her plate. Without looking up

COLLY
What was the food like in prison?

Ax stiffens. Just pauses.

JUST
Not as nice as this.

COLLY
Like our school dinners but with bars around them.

Colly laughs. Ax is looking at his Mum/Us/the camera.

JACKIE
 (Off screen)
 That kind of talk
 is...Forrrrbiddddddennn!

Just grins and eats.

But the table falls into silent eating. On sound
 Jackie's music fades in and drowns out the rest of the
 meal.

CUT TO:

68a EXT. THE HEATH - DAY

68a

A hand [Chris] paints a sign about the dangers of the
 cliffs.

CHRIS
 [V/o] I knew about Jackie and about
 Just. We all kind of knew. But it's
 that first step. It's a bit hard to
 mention. I could have made it better
 earlier. But I didn't.

CUT TO:

69 EXT. THE SEA DEFENCES - DAY

69

The camera is FIXED on a low view of the landscape. The
 camera is looking over the edge of the sea defences
 down to the shingle and the sea. Wide angle and huge
 depth of field focus brings all the detail into relief

Terns fly parallel with the sea. Their wings clip the
 water.

[This is a POV shot, but we don't know who's POV.]

COLLY
 (Off screen)
 And I bet you he will have loads of
 chocolate too. Yes, I want Chris to
 have a chocolate river running through
 his house.

AX
 (Off screen)
 Life isn't like a book Coll. We just
 want a Dad who's...better to Mum.

COLLY
 (Off screen)
 A night walk along a chocolate river.
 Yum. Yum.

AX
 (Off screen)
 With glow sweets...

COLLY
 (Off screen)
 And bat jellies, red like blood.

A family of swans fly in from the sea. The camera PANS up to watch them fly overhead. They are low and you can hear their wings.

Beat.

AX
 (Off screen)
 Dad's going to come home.

COLLY
 (Off screen)
 I wish with all of my wishes he would go away. Do you wish that? I do.

Pause.

AX
 (Off screen)
 With all of my wishes.

Someone throws some pebbles into shot.

AX (CONT'D)
 Chris is bigger than Dad. If they had a fight...

COLLY
 (Off screen)
 We could help Dad to go away. Make him go away.

AX
 Coll!

COLLY
 (Off screen)
 But we could. There's a tree in the church that is poisonous. It makes you go away. Nothing grows under it. Mrs Pidgeon told us.

Some more stones are thrown into the shot.

AX
 (Off screen)
 Mum has to choose Chris and then Dad might go away anyway.

More pebbles are thrown into shot.

COLLY
 (Off screen)
 Okay.

CUT TO:

70 INT. HONEYBEES CAFE - DAY

70

The camera is at Colly and Ax level as they sit at a table in a hippy cafe.

Colly looks up at a huge hot chocolate with ice cream on top of it. Ax gets one too and grins at her. Jackie looks at them and smiles. Then her smile travels away from them and over their shoulders. Ax turns to see where she is looking.

Chris is there, grinning down at them.

CHRIS
 Nice to see you AGAIN.

Chris winks. Jackie giggles. Colly joins in. Ax is trying to read the situation and pretends to study his ice cream.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
 Glad you could all make it.

Colly munches on a cherry.

COLLY
 We didn't know you'd be here.

CHRIS
 I'm a gift.

Jackie starts to fumble in her bag.

JACKIE
 (to Chris)
 Coffee?

Chris looks at the hot chocolates.

CHRIS
 One of them, please.

Jackie heads up to the counter and Chris sits down next to Ax.

AX
 Is this a date?

CHRIS
 Why do you fancy me?

COLLY
[About Ax] He's a BOY!!!

Chris takes a cherry from Ax's ice cream.

CHRIS
No Ax it's not a date, but this is a
cherry.

Jackie comes back with a huge hot chocolate and puts it
in front of Chris.

Chris and Jackie look at one another. They smile. Not
saying a word.

Ax notices and taps Colly on the arm.

AX
I bet you I can eat my hot chocolate
more quicker and more quieter than
you.

Colly wrinkles her nose and then puts her spoon into
competition mode.

COLLY
Ready, steady go...!

Colly starts before 'steady'. Ax watches her and starts
too.

SNAP to AX' POV as he looks at his ice cream and eats
it with a spoon. CLOSE-UP.

In the background the blurred image of Colly eating her
hot chocolate in a frenzy too.

On sound: the sounds of the spoons, the eating noises.

In the background, on a lower level, Jackie and Chris'
conversation.

JACKIE
(Off screen)
It feels like a new...but then I've
said that before.

CHRIS
(Off screen)
No, I know.

JACKIE
(Off screen)
Course you do.

CHRIS
(Off screen)
Is this it?

JACKIE
 (Off screen)
 You tell me.

CHRIS
 That's not for anyone else.

JACKIE
 (Off screen)
 Wish it was. I wish it would just work out.

CHRIS
 (Off screen)
 Yep. It might. But more than likely it..

JACKIE
 (Off screen)
 Well if it does....

CHRIS
 (Off screen)
 Did they see?

Jackie smiles at him.

JACKIE
 Which time?

Chris looks shocked. On screen Ax scrapes his spoon on the sides of the glass and the conversation is drowned out. In the background Colly finishes her glass too and celebrates her victory.

CUT TO:

71 INT. AX AND COLLY'S HOUSE; THE BATHROOM - NIGHT

71

Ax sits on the edge of the bath in a towel. He is watching Just, who is getting his tablets ready.

He takes the tablet packets out of a rumpled green pharmacy bag.

He pops the different pills out of their bubbles and puts them onto the bathroom shelf.

JUST
 I'm up to my eyeballs in this stuff.

AX
 What do they all do?

JUST
 Rub things out.

Just swallows the handful of pills in one swallow and puts his face under the tap.

His drinking is a choking/gurgling sound. Ax watches him.

CUT TO:

72 INT. SHOP - DAY 72

Jackie shops with her headphones on. Kate Bush again. She is buying treats for herself and the kids.

73 EXT. THE HEATH - DAY 73

Just walks ahead of Ax towards the camera. Ax is behind him swishing at the nettles with a stick and beheading them.

AX/DAD

(V.O)

I was bullied at school. They called me ginger nut.

CUT TO:

74 EXT. THE HEATH/THE HIDE - DAY 74

CLOSE-UP PAN across Dad and Ax's faces. The afternoon light from behind lights up their both of their ginger hair like halo's.

Just looks at Ax and grins.

CUT TO:

Their joint POV. A disused bird hide that Just has been and done up. On the door is a sign he has made: 'Club for Ginger's'

JUST

(o/s)

This is for me and for you. Just us. next time anyone calls you names you remember you got a club. Right?

AX

(o/s)

Yep. We've got a club.

Just opens the door. Inside he has put a little table and some posters of football teams. Ax grins.

CUT TO:

75 INT. INSIDE THE HIDE - DAY 75

Two shot through the window of the hide at Young Colly level, of Just and Ax as they put salt and vinegar crisps on top of fruit pies and eat them.

CUT TO:

75a INT. KITCHEN - DAY 75a

Jackie and Colly look at a cream cake selection on the table. Between them they pick the cake they want. They both bite into them. Squirt of jam and bulge of cream. Colly gets jam on her nose. Jackie gets sugar on her cheeks.

COLLY

Is this a club? For girls?

Jackie nods. They eat some more.

CUT TO:

76 INT. INSIDE THE HIDE - NIGHT 76

Just sits in club hide alone. Only lit by the light from outside. He's sitting there, lifeless.

He looks big and clumpy in here.

CUT TO:

76a EXT. OUTSIDE THE HIDE - NIGHT 76a

Older Colly looks in at the hide, lit by her head torch. The windows are all cobwebby and she can't see in.

CUT TO:

77 EXT. ROAD TOWARDS COTTAGE - DAY 77

Ax and Jackie walk down the road towards the coastguard's cottages. Ax has his school bag. The camera is Colly's POV as her level as she/we/the camera darts in and out of her mother and brother.

JACKIE

Two weeks. Then a week in the half way house. And then home. Back here.

Ax nods and takes his Mum's hand.

AX

It was nice to see Chris. He knows such a lot about all the plants and animals. We thought we saw a bittern, but it was just a log. A brown log sticking up in the water.

JACKIE

Uh-huh.

AX

And he showed us all the mushrooms that we could eat and then the one's that we shouldn't even touch.

Jackie swings AX around her as she walks.

AX (CONT'D)

Is Chris nice?

COLLY

(Off screen)

If a nice mushroom even touches a nasty one, sometimes the nice ones turn nasty too.

JACKIE

His teeth stick out in two different directions. Like they've had an argument.

AX

Is that a bad thing?

JACKIE

What? And his hair...he looks like a monk.

AX

He's medieval man.

JACKIE

It's not good or bad is it. It's him.

AX

So you like him?

JACKIE

He's nice.

AX

Will you be friends now. We like him too.

JACKIE

Mmmm.

AX

We do.

Jackie starts to get her keys out.

JACKIE

Who can say.

Ax nods as if he understands. Jackie opens the door for Ax and Colly/we/the camera to go in.

The camera fades.

FADE OUT.

78 INT. JACKIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

78

Fade up. The camera is at low level as Ax, Colly or both watch Jackie get ready to go out. They are watching through a crack in the bedroom door.

Jackie plaits her hair into two bunches as she sits on the bed. Then she puts make-up on. Not looking in the mirror, just with instinct and speed. She sprays perfume on her neck and smells her own wrist.

She smiles as she smells her wrist. She flattens her jeans and fiddles with her cardigan. She walks past the mirror without looking in it.

The camera fades.

FADE OUT.

79 INT. HALF WAY HOUSE. - DAY

79

Just makes a coffee in the half-way house kitchen. It's light and full of pine. The camera/we/the therapist is seated at a table.

JUST

(to camera)

When was I most happy? Not here. Half way between home and prison. Living and dying. Good and bad.

Just pours water from the kettle. Looks at the camera and sighs.

JUST (CONT'D)

(to camera)

A day of mucking about and no one hurt. Me and Eddie Bristow half-inched these massive potatoes from Dave the cabbage, whose wife was a cabbage.

(MORE)

JUST (CONT'D)

Later we actually found a fiver on the floor of the flats and tore it in half and swore to spend it half each. Went to Woolworths and actually paid.

It got dark and we broke into the outdoor swimming baths and jumped into the cold water with a bit of sunburn where my t-shirt sleeves ended. Two bracelets of red. You know when it itches?

He scratches his arms at the sleeve line.

JUST (CONT'D)

(to camera)

So I was happy then. Cold on my skin, the pool all lit up by the moon. And me looking shiny and white under the water. And anything making us giggle. The potato in the pocket of my trousers on the side. We ripped the door off a locker and set light to it with some lighter fuel, and roasted the potatoes by the pool. Except we couldn't wait and had these half-cooked one's that tasted like a cow's hoof.

Just drinks his tea and looks at the camera.

FADE TO BLACK.

80

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

80

Extreme slow fade-up. A close-up on the forest floor. There is a red cap mushroom. With an insect nibbling on it.

AX

(Off screen)

We'll need two.

COLLY

(Off screen)

I'll look for one.

AX

(Off screen)

Don't! I'd better.

COLLY

(Off screen)

I won't touch it.

AX
(Off screen)
No, but I should do that bit.

COLLY
(Off screen)
Why?

AX
(Off screen)
In case we get caught. Then you can say you were an accessory.

COLLY
Like a handbag?

AX
No. It means it was all my idea.

Beat, while the ant crawls over the top of the toadstool.

COLLY
(Off screen)
But it was my idea.

AX/COLLY
It was mine!

AX
(Off screen)
It was mine Colly. You have to say it was mine. Whoever asks you. Ever. It was me.

Beat and then a hand reaches out in a rubber glove and picks the toadstool.

The camera PANS away from the toadstool and across the forest floor. CLOSE-UP on pine needles that become...

MATCH CUT TO:

81 INT. BEDROOM/BATHROOM - DAY

81

...CLOSE-UP TRACK of freckles on a body. As the camera tracks a hand comes into shot with a pen, joining the freckles up.

On sound, faint music.

JACKIE
(Voice-over)
He was a fire. His skin was a war between white and red.

CUT TO:

Overhead shot of a messy bed. Younger Jackie joins up Just's freckles. His body is a spiders web of biro lines.

CUT TO:

Jackie scrubs Just clean in the bath. The water takes on a blue tinge with the ink.

CUT TO:

Just draws on Jackie's bum as she tries to see what he's writing. He finishes and she looks in the bathroom mirror.

He's written 'I love you' in mirror writing.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

I knew you did.

JUST

I might be lying.

JACKIE

Nope. I know you.

The bath water gurgles down the plug as she smiles at him. Like the choking to come.

CUT TO:

82 INT. THE BATHROOM - DAY

82

Jackie and Just kiss in big close-up. The camera in there with them.

OLDER JACKIE

(Voice-over)

I miss him. His kisses and the warmth of his body. And his grin. Even though I have days where the happiness overwhelms me, I miss him. Can't shake the feeling that he was right for me, even though it went so wrong and we were so fucked up.

On sound the bathwater gurgles.

CUT TO:

83 EXT. OLDER JACKIE'S GARDEN - DAY

83

Older Colly sits at a table in a country garden. In the distance her two children are looking at plants in pots with their Dad, her husband.

CHRIS

(Off screen: flashback)

Now these babies are ones to leave alone. Anamita's. One little chew on this and you get bad and then you get worse.

AX

(Off screen)

Does blood come out of your face and your skin?

CHRIS

(Off screen)

No but your heart beats faster and faster and faster until you stop.

COLLY

(Off screen)

Yuk. But they've got nibbles out of them.

CHRIS

(Off screen)

Certain insects can eat them and be fine, but you're not an insect.

AX

(Off screen)

You're Chris the beetle.

COLLY

No-one we know is an insect.

Older Colly looks up into the sunlight as Older Jackie comes and sits next to her. She looks the same only more radiant and glowing with health and happiness.

She puts a glass of wine next to Older Colly.

OLDER JACKIE

So?

OLDER COLLY

It's not anything.

OLDER JACKIE

Not anything you want me to know about?

OLDER COLLY

I can do it.

OLDER JACKIE

Yep. But you don't have to.

OLDER COLLY

This is making it worse.

OLDER JACKIE
I'll leave it then.

OLDER COLLY
Perfect.

The two women watch the kids.

OLDER JACKIE
Chris did that with you.

OLDER COLLY
Yes.

OLDER JACKIE
Remember any of it?

OLDER COLLY
Bits.

Older Colly drinks her glass of wine. Her mother stands up and goes over to Older Colly's husband and the kids. She kneels down to join in.

Older Colly looks away, the PAN around the garden becoming...a hedge full of plants and berries and wild flowers.

CHRIS
(Off screen)
Burdock. Have a nibble.

OLDER COLLY
(Off screen)
Tastes like porridge. Boil it up as a vegetable.

PAN along the row of plants.

OLDER COLLY (CONT'D)
Wood Sorrell.

CHRIS
(Off screen)
Lemony taste. Right tasty with fish.

YOUNG COLLY
(Off screen)
Yuk, this one tastes like pineapple.

OLDER COLLY
(Off screen)
St John's Wort. Lighten the mood.
Hawthorne.

AX
(Off screen)
It's called bread and cheese.
(MORE)

AX (CONT'D)

The leaves taste of dough and the berries taste like cheese. In the war, kids used to eat it to get their vitamin C.

OLDER COLLY

(Off screen)

Willow. Chew the leaves. It's where aspirin comes from. Stops headaches and pain.

CHRIS

(Off screen)

The Blackthorn is the door to the fairy world.

OLDER COLLY

(Off screen)

The roots of the spruce are like veins. Pull one up and you can dry it and split it to make really strong string.

The PAN ends on a clump of toadstools.

CHRIS

(Off screen)

Now don't muck about with these. I know what's good and what's bad and I still don't take chances with these.

OLDER COLLY

(Off screen)

Don't muck about with these.

AX

(Off screen)

Don't muck about with these.

COLLY

(Off screen)

These are bad.

Older Colly's kids feet run past, chased by their Dad's feet and Older Jackie's.

CUT TO:

84

INT. FISHING TENT/THE BEACH - NIGHT

84

On sound, the waves and a faint radio. Just sits in the mouth of the tent, looking at two lines he has set up that have florescent floats on them.

He drinks from a can of lager. Then he ruffles in his rucksack and gets out tinfoil wrapped sandwiches.

He unwraps the sandwiches. And bites into one without looking. He swigs the beer and chews.

Then his face wrinkles and he spits out the contents of his mouth into his hand. He stares at it and then opens the sandwich up.

He looks down at the squashed toadstools.

SNAP with the breath to his POV as he/we/the camera look down at the contents of the sandwich again.

On sound the lager fizzes. The tinfoil crackles. Just can hear his own breathing. And one of the fishing lines reels out. But all he/we/the camera does is look at the sandwich.

CUT TO:

85 INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

85

Colly shadows her Mum around the kitchen. Trying to be as close as possible and as helpful as possible. Ax is having pasta and watching her. [The camera is from Ax's POV.]

JACKIE

(adamant)

Coll! You're under my feet. Piss off!

Colly backs off from her mum and the screen fades.

CUT TO:

86 EXT. PHONE BOX - DAY

86

Jackie enters the phone box, wearing her headphones. She takes them off, gets out some money and dials.

JACKIE

(to person at the other
end)

It's me.

Sue's voice answers, but we can't hear.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Not good. I'm...Chris wants me
to...I'm not sure. No, it's not money.
I'm fine. How are you?

The music from the headphones keeps on playing tinny and blurred.

CUT TO:

Just sprawls on the sofa watching the TV. Colly plays in and around him with her toys. She has a little dialogue going with them. Just is fidgeting as he is trying to concentrate on the game. His foot taps.

JUST

Take it upstairs, Coll.

Colly takes her dolls and moves them out of the way. But she carries on talking to them and giggling away.

Just takes his eyes from the TV and watches her playing.

He gets up and leaves the room.

Colly carries on playing.

He comes back in with a roll of clingfilm.

JUST (CONT'D)

We're playing a new game.

Just grabs Colly and starts to wrap the clingfilm around her body.

JUST (CONT'D)

It's a Houdini game. Know who he was? Only the best person ever at escaping from things. You have to try to escape.

He carries on wrapping the clingfilm around her. Putting her arms close to her body.

She's laughing.

COLLY

Okay.

Just wraps more and more cling-film around her and gets to her head. He holds her tightly and wraps it around her face.

COLLY (CONT'D)

Not there, Dad.

She looks instantly worried. Just carries on and puts a second wrap around her face. CLOSE-UP on her face as the cling film squashes it.

She wriggles in his arms. Just watches her as the cling film is sucked in as she breathes.

She wriggles more and more.

JACKIE

Stop!

Just looks down at Ax/we/the camera and then steps round Jackie and walks quickly towards Chris.

Ax/we/the camera watch as Just walks up to Chris and stops him in his tracks. Chris looks over at Ax, Colly and Jackie, just as Just grabs his jacket and swings him round. Chris' jacket goes up over his head and Just starts to punch his head and back.

Chris comes out of his jacket and looks over at Ax. Colly and Jackie. Just grabs him again and knocks him to the ground. He starts to kick Chris who squashes up in a ball. Ax/we/the camera watches as Jackie runs across the road, dodging a car to pull Just off Chris.

The shot is constantly being obscured by people crossing in front of it, and of people starting to gather in a group to watch the fight.

As Jackie reaches Just, and tries to pull him off, Chris starts to fight back. He grabs Just and starts to hit him. Hit him hard and fast. Just reels back from the punches. He makes a space between them. Chris gets up and looks at Just. Chris moves towards him and Just moves back.

Then Chris picks up his jacket and looks over at Jackie. He smiles. As if has been a victory.

She shakes her head. She turns and walks away in the opposite direction.

Away from both men. Away from her kids. Ax and Colly watch her go and then run after her, but keep their distance.

FADE TO BLACK.

90

INT. AX/COLLY/S LIVING ROOM - DAY

90

Close-up on Colly's face as she cries and sobs. Her face has dirty streaked tears and snot on it.

The camera is Just's POV. His hand smooths her hair as she cries.

JUST

(Off screen)

There pickle. It's just a graze. Look it's the shape of a bird. It's okay. It'll go. I won't leave you.

Just/we/the camera continues to soothe Colly as she carries on crying.

CUT TO:

91 EXT. THE HEATH - NIGHT 91

PAN across the night heath. All that is visible is the moon and the regular flash of the Southwold lighthouse. Like a heart beat. Three flashes every thirteen seconds.

The camera is at sitting height. It reaches Older Colly who sits on a mossy bank sobbing. Her sob's mix with the sobs of younger Colly.

The sobs stay on sound.

CUT TO:

92 INT. AX AND COLLY'S BEDROOM - DAY 92

Ax and Colly are under the bed in their room. Colly is drawing in her diary. Ax is reading a book. He looks at her as she writes.

AX

I'll look after you Coll. For the rest of your life. You know that don't you? I'm the oldest. I'll look after you.

Colly smiles, as she carries on writing in her diary.

CUT TO:

93 EXT. FISHING TENT/THE BEACH - DAY 93

Ax looks at the collapsed tent on the beach as the waves wash in and out. Colly is by his side. Some Police run down the beach towards it. Jackie is scrambling down the sea defences with them. She stops dead when she sees the collapsed tent. Her face contorts. Ax and Colly look at one another.

AX

(Voice over)

It was me Colly. Remember. Okay. It was me. You tell everyone it was me. Okay? Okay? Okay?

Colly looks down at the tent and nods.

CUT TO:

94 EXT. THE GARDEN - NIGHT 94

Jackie sits in the garden on a plastic chair in the rain. She's listening to Kate Bush and talking to herself.

95 INT. THE PUB - NIGHT 95

Just walks into the pub. He puts the tinfoil with the fungus sandwiches in it on the bar. He's in his fishing gear and looks deathly white.

He goes up to the bar and orders a beer.

He takes the beer and drinks it.

Then he sees Chris in the corner of the bar. They look at each other. Just looks away and drinks his pint.

He looks over at the barmen

JUST
Make it to go, Bri.

Just takes his beer and with a last look at Chris, heads to the door. At the door he turns.

Chris and Just stare at each other.

CUT TO:

96 EXT. FISHING TENT/THE BEACH - NIGHT 96

Just sits in the tent drinking his take-away beer. In the shot the tinfoil packet of sandwiches made by Ax and Colly filled with mushrooms and yew needles.

CUT TO:

97 EXT. JACKIE'S GARDEN - DAY 97

Older Jackie and Older Colly's husband play with Older Colly's children in the garden. They look like a happy family.

On sound the uncontrollable giggles of the kids.

CUT TO:

98 EXT. THE HEATH 98

The camera is at Older Colly's POV. Older Colly sits in her car.

Watching the sun come up over the coastline and the decaying coast. Her breath meets the windscreen and it mists up.

Gradually, over some minutes the view is obscured.

Older Colly hums to her Mum's Kate Bush Song.

BLEACH TO WHITE: