

F.M.I
S01E02: THE LYING, THE BITCH AND THE BURNING WARDROBE

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FADE IN:

EXT. GREASY SPOON CAFE - DAY

A Cafe on the edge of an intersecting street, it's busy people pass by.

From inside, a confident, jokey voice speaks:

MARCUS (V.O.)
How you doing bruiser?

FADE IN SUBTITLE: LONDON 2009

INT. GREASY SPOON CAFE - CONTINUOUS

YOUNG DAVE SLOANE sits nursing a black-eye, he holds an icepack to his temple, he is sore and clearly not in a joking mood as he swirls a cup of hot black coffee in his free hand.

YOUNG DAVE
How bad is it Marcus?

Across from young Dave - sits MARCUS (mid 30's, over-confident type), he attempts to think of an answer that isn't bad.

MARCUS
Well... Uh...

YOUNG DAVE
That bad?

Marcus's smile fades, he shifts- tone more serious:

MARCUS
He's not pressing charges.

YOUNG DAVE
Not pressing charges?! It should be me who isn't pressing the charges... Fuck!

Marcus pulls a sheet of paper out his briefcase and slides it across the table to Dave,

MARCUS
I need you to sign this.

Young Dave looks the paper over - he knows what it is, but he want's Marcus to tell him.

YOUNG DAVE
What is that?

MARCUS
It brushes this under the carpet.

DAVE
(brow raised)
I thought he wasn't pressing
charges?

MARCUS
Yeah, before he "really" makes that
decision he needs you to sign it.

Young Dave looks down at the paper -

It's clearly a "NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT"

Young Dave bites his lip - a beat, he thinks it over, he
looks over to Marcus.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
(shrugs)
Protect yourself. Do the right
thing. This is the un-winnable
fight Dave.

Hesitant - Young Dave signs and slides it back to Marcus.

YOUNG DAVE
Okay so what's next?

Marcus puts the paper back into his briefcase, his tone,
agitated, hiding something.

Young Dave takes a firmer tone:

YOUNG DAVE (CONT'D)
Marcus?

MARCUS
(uneasy)
I'm sorry Dave. People talk and
cause you just signed that, you
can't.

A beat - Marcus takes in a deep breath.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
I'm sorry Dave I really am. But
I've also been instructed by the
boss to terminate you as our
client.

YOUNG DAVE
Are you fucking kidding me?
(leans in, defensive)
I- I didn't do anything.

Marcus necks back his coffee - puts the cup back down on the table.

MARCUS
(sincere)
You're a talented guy Dave. But as of now, in this industry, you are worthless.

YOUNG DAVE
Are you serious?

Marcus stands.

MARCUS
I like you Dave. I really do and I'm sorry. I wish you the best of luck.

Marcus walks away - pats Young Dave on the shoulder as he does.

Young Dave sits staring at the empty space in the booth in front of him - behind him Marcus leaves the busy cafe, the SLAM of the door loud enough that it echoes through Dave, the only sound, the noise of the cafe dullend to a buzz.

He takes a sip from his coffee, looks at the spot where the N.D.A was - the noise of the busy cafe fills a silence of a wound opening.

Young Dave takes in a deep breath, sighs loudly- it's over.

PAN IN ON DAVES EYES:

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

PAN OUT DAVES EYES:

DAVE SLOANE, (40's) sits at his desk, older, wiser, deep concentration in his eyes as he stares ahead at a computer screen.

CUE SUBTITLE: PRESENT DAY.

His phone RINGS - caller I.D - MR.F, a group family photo, Dave, Junior, Lizzy and Mr. F.

Dave's eyes roll towards the phones direction on his desk, he picks up the phone, sighs and answers- puts enthusiasm in his voice:

DAVE
Hey Mr. F! What's new?

MR. F (V.O.)
Are you in Mr. S?

DAVE
Well, uh- I'm just finishing up my pitch deck presentation for tomorrows meeting with my mate.

MR. F
Am I okay to pop in for a coffee?

Dave looks over to the clock on the wall -

The clock reads two-thirty.

Dave turns back to the phone, the hesitation in his voice.

DAVE
I got an hour till Juniors home so I can spare half of it sure.

MR. F
Great, I'm just parking up.

Dave stands - leans forwards looks out the FRONT WINDOW.

From window view: a WHITE VOLKSWAGEN TOUREG backs into Dave's drive.

Dave's expression drops - this isn't the time.

DAVE
I guess I'll get the kettle on then.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER

Dave sits at one end of the Dining table - MR. F (60's) at the other end, the tone is serious -

Mr. F cradles the hot cup in his hand - it's not easy for him to talk.

MR. F

So. As it goes we've been talking for a while and we've decided to meet over dinner.

Dave nods, holds his cup in one hand ready to take a sip.

DAVE

Good for you Mr. F.

MR. F

I thought so. Though she's only 35.

Dave taking a sip- chokes on his coffee, he quickly scrambles to clean himself.

DAVE

Thirty five huh? Wow.

(leans in)

You told Lizzy?

MR. F

No. Not yet. I want to see how it goes.

DAVE

Yeah. I get that. But it's a small town. People talk. I'd just let her know in advance. It might come as a bit of a...

(thinks for a beat)

Shock maybe.

MR. F

Well, I appreciate your valuable advice Mr. S as always.

(checks watch)

Oh it's half three. Where does the time go. I'd best be off then.

Daves simmering - times up Juniors due home, works not done.

DAVE

Cool. Thanks for coming over.

Mr. F walks through the hallway - Dave follows, he opens the front door - turns back.

MR. F

Good luck with your meeting tomorrow.

DAVE

Thanks Mr. F.

They shake hands - Mr. F leaves - the door closes behind him.

Dave takes in a deep breath - then bites on his fist.

FADE TO BLACK:

CUE MAIN TITLES: F.M.L

FADE IN:

INT. ALAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dave sits in a world of his own for a moment, he looks off out the window, a lifetime ago.

ALAN sits opposite Dave - his desk cluttered with trophies, an open laptop and a pile of screenplays. He skims through a pitch deck - he is impressed.

ALAN

Wow, this is really vibrant. Great story, just from this -

He looks up and notices Dave in a daydream.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Hello? Earth to Dave?

Dave snaps out of it, he smiles.

DAVE

Sorry Alan. Late night last night. My damn legs been giving me some grief.

ALAN

Nothing serious I hope?

DAVE

No. Don't be daft, just a lingering reminder I still get to live each day. The gift that cancer left behind.

(deep breath, then)

So anyway, what did you think?

ALAN

I like them all. Can you give me a week or two to go through them?

DAVE
Hey sure thing. Take as long as you
need. I'm in no rush.

Dave looks around - the office set up nicely, modern, clean,
pristine, the walls covered in photo's of Alan shaking hands
with actors, directors and writers alike.

DAVE (CONT'D)
I like what you've done with the
office.

ALAN
Thanks. I figure a life in the
business always looks good to
potential investors.

A beat. It's awkward as Alan realizes Dave didn't get this.

ALAN (CONT'D)
Oh. I'm really sorry.

DAVE
What? Don't worry about it. It's
Some smart thinking there Al. I'll
give you that.

Dave grabs his crutch.

He stands - leans on the crutch for support.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Anyway. Look I got to dash. I'm on
Junior-watch this afternoon.
(smiles)
I really appreciate the opportunity
Alan, I really do. I hope you enjoy
the reads.

ALAN
I'm sure I will.

Alan extends his hand - Dave shakes it.

Dave goes to leave - the doors open, JOANNE enters.

JOANNE
Alan babe, I was hoping we could -
She stops -

Both her and Dave give each other a wide-eyed look of anger.

DAVE

Joanne.

ALAN

Ah. Dave you know Joanne?

Alan wraps his arm around her -

Realization hits Dave - his nemesis and his friend, together, he hides his disdain with a light tone, but his eyes say everything.

DAVE

Our kids go to the same school.

JOANNE

Yes. Which reminds me. P.T.A meeting. The first is tomorrow at six fifteen. Okay?

DAVE

Six fifteen.
 (beat, overly
 enthusiastic)
 Fantastic. Got it! I will be there
 and not square.

JOANNE

(almost confused)
 Okay?

DAVE

Anyway, absolute pleasure to see
 you. Have a great evening!

Dave exits he closes the door behind him.

EXT. ALAN'S OFFICE - HALLWAY

Dave walks the hallway, the smile drops, he bites his bottom lip - he stops, a beat as he processes. He then, looks up to the ceiling, muttering to the universe:

DAVE

You have got to be fucking kidding
 me?!

He shakes it off and hobbles down the hallway.

CUT TO:

EXT. SLOANE HOUSE/ STREET - DAY

Dave hobbles down the street, it's quiet with the exception of an UBER TAXI slowly creeping behind him.

Dave reaches the driveway of the SLOANE HOUSE, a semi-detached house with pristine driveway, complete with a clean, sparkling FIAT 500 and a low cut grass. He stops to catch his breath for a moment.

The taxi pulls up alongside Dave - The TAXI DRIVER gets out, goes to the back and takes out a TAKEAWAY BAG. He closes the backdoor - looks over to Dave.

TAXI DRIVER
Number eighty-one?

DAVE
Nah. Next door bud.

TAXI DRIVER
Okay. Thanks.

Dave watches as the taxi driver walks down his neighbours drive - the grass overgrown, rubbish all over.

The taxi driver approaches the front door, but a firm voice calls out from the FRONT WINDOW.

MICK (O.S.)
Over here Gaffer!

MICK leans out the front window, his vest dirty, his hair greasy, a grimace in his expression as he takes the takeaway bag.

MICK (CONT'D)
Next time; try not to be an hour
huh?!

TAXI DRIVER
I'm really sorry.

The driver walks away - Mick's attention turns to Dave.

MICK
Got something to say Crutch?

Dave narrows his eyes, he bites his bottom lip, resisting the urge to fight back, then shifts, his tone pleasant.

DAVE

No. But I'd maybe cut that grass.
We live behind allotments. Prone to
rats, just to let you know.

Mick scowls - he doesn't care - he SLAMS the window shut.

Dave adjusts his glasses.

DAVE (CONT'D)

(mutters)

Yeah cool. Fuck you too, you
scruffy cunt.

Dave continues on to his house.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

JUNIOR SLOANE sits at his computer - deep concentration face -
behind him another kid, DANIEL (9-11, wears large round
glasses) sits fixated on the television, the annoying sounds
of an overly excitable influencer on YOUTUBE play out.

The FRONT DOOR OPENS and Dave enters.

DAVE

I'm home!

He walks into the living room.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Hey Junior...

Junior nods from the computer.

Dave rolls his eyes, shakes his head and shrugs, his
attention turns over to Daniel.

DAVE (CONT'D)

And just who is this?

Daniel doesn't even look at Dave.

JUNIOR

This is my friend Daniel, he's come
over to play for a bit.

Confusion hits Dave - there's no playing going on.

LIZZY enters from the Kitchen - she holds a tray of food as
she shuffles past Dave kissing him on the lips.

LIZZY
Hello. How did it go?

DAVE
(eyes on Daniel)
Yeah, we'll talk about it in the
kitchen.

Lizzy put the tray of food down on the table.

Daniels attention snaps from the television to the table of food, he leaps out the chair, almost dancing as he comes to the table.

Dave looks over at Junior, who turns from his computer and approaches the table, he shakes his head.

DAVE (CONT'D)
On that note, I am going to have a
smoke.

Dave leaves.

Lizzy sets out the plates on the small fix-up table.

LIZZY
Right lads, we have a selection of
nuggets, fish fingers, pasta and
salad.

Daniel eyes it over- he doesn't like it, he speaks almost like an influencer:

DANIEL
Hmm. Yes, well you probably don't
know this but I am a fussy eater
and this just isn't appropriate.

Lizzy is stunned - a beat, then.

LIZZY
Sorry.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Dave stands at the open BACK DOOR, he smokes a joint, having a moment to himself.

The still stunned Lizzy enters -

Dave turns his head around, he keeps his voice lower.

DAVE

Well. He's a character isn't he?

LIZZY

The food wasn't to his liking.

DAVE

Are you serious? What kid doesn't like chicken nuggets or pasta?

LIZZY

That one apparently

She opens the fridge and grabs, sandwich meat out and some salad.

DAVE

Wow. So. He new around here?

LIZZY

No. He's been there a while, they've just started hanging out as they go to the drama club.

DAVE

Ah. Well. he's definitely theatrical.

Lizzy starts making a sandwich.

LIZZY

So. How did it go?

DAVE

Yeah. Alan and Joanne, queen of the PTA are hooking up.

LIZZY

No-one says hooking up anymore.

DAVE

Yeah, well they are and it's gross and it's probably going to kill my chances with Alan now.

LIZZY

You know you're being overly dramatic right now?

DAVE

Why have you got to be that way?

LIZZY

Cause you love me this way.

DAVE

Ah that is true. So, what are your plans?

LIZZY

My dad called. He wants to go for something to eat and a catch-up.

A beat. Dave knows something, but he can't say anything, he plays it off- casually.

DAVE

Ah. Cool. Well, that is nice for you. I got to write Jacks script for his next show. I'll go work upstairs, leave Dastardly and Mutley to it.

Lizzy cuts the sandwich she passes Dave the plate.

LIZZY

Well, have fun. Can you take this into Mutley for me.

DAVE

Of course I can.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Junior sits back at the computer, he talks with Daniel who is stood behind him, looking over his shoulder.

JUNIOR

So the idea of the game is to hide -

Daniel's attention is gone, he busts into a dance move as Dave enters behind him.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

And then the monster will come through the level looking for you.

Dave stops his brow raised.

DAVE

(mouthes)
What the fuck?

Daniel snaps back to attention.

DANIEL

Yeah, that's alright is that Junior.

DAVE

Lads. I got sandwich here.

Daniel turns looks at Dave even though he's short it's as if he's looking down at Dave.

DANIEL

Yes. That will do.

Dave passes him the plate.

DAVE

Well. Alright then.

Daniel walks away, leaving Dave stunned, Dave shakes it off.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Right. I've got a script to write.
I'll be up in the bedroom. If you
need anything knock me.

Junior raises his hand - swats Dave away.

Dave turns and leaves, he walks up the stairs muttering to himself.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Yeah. Cool. "Thanks Dad". Oh you
know it's cool I'll just go -

A beat - he stops, thinks better of it.

DAVE (CONT'D)

And do some work.
(lowers voice even more)
And fuck myself.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Lizzy sits with MR. F in a busy Chinese restaurant, the mood is light, the tone is happy.

LIZZY

So, I really don't know how Dave is
going to play that one.

MR. F

He'll be alright. If anyone's good
with sticky situations it's Dave.
(MORE)

MR. F (CONT'D)

Speaking of, has he had anymore news on that scumbag producer since his arrest?

LIZZY

No. He doesn't mention it. He gets on and he's got this opportunity with his old friend so that's something, he seems a bit more hopeful lately.

Mr. F laughs to himself and takes a sip of his drink.

MR. F

He's a good lad. He did well to land you.

LIZZY

He sure did.

Lizzy takes a sip of her water.

MR. F

You not drinking that wine?

LIZZY

It seemed like a good idea. But, I don't know, I just enjoyed lunch without it.

Lizzy softly smiles at Mr. F.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

Thank you so much for this dad it's been really nice.

MR. F

I know, I've really enjoyed myself too. We don't get enough time together do we?

LIZZY

No. I know. I'm sorry.

MR. F

Hey, don't be sorry. That my dear is life, time is precious only because there is never enough of it.

LIZZY

That's some wise thinking.

MR. F
No. Just what was on the back of my
fortune cookie.

Lizzy chuckles.

LIZZY
So. You said we had something to
talk about?

A beat - Mr. F wipes his mouth, he thinks his words through
then speaks.

MR. F
As you know it's been a while since
Maggie passed. I'm not trying to
disrespect her, but I've been
talking with someone recently.

LIZZY
(surprised)
Oh. Okay... That... That's great
dad. Good for you.

Lizzy takes a sip of her wine - still processing.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Wow. That is some amazing news.

MR. F
Are you sure? You seem a little
surprised?

Lizzy just stares at Mr. F - a deer caught in headlights.

CUT TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. LIZZY'S CAR - DRIVETHRU - NIGHT

Lizzy sits behind the wheel, shes frustrated and venting,
behind her Junior nods along to music through his ear buds.

LIZZY
I mean I'm happy that he's dating.
But I don't understand why I feel
so weird about it.

In the passenger seat next to her - Dave, stoned, chilled
out, his eyes shift in her direction.

DAVE
Cause you hate change maybe and
this is a big one.. To a degree.

The car pulls up next to a P.A System.

SERVER (V.O.)
Welcome to Burgerville can I take
your order?

LIZZY
Yeah. I would like two Big meals
two cokes, one chicken spicy wrap
and a sprite please.

DAVE
And I'm really glad he's finally
told you. I have hated sitting on
that one.

Lizzy's jaw drops - she's speechless

SERVER (V.O.)
Is there anything else with that?

A beat - it's silent.

SERVER (V.O.)
Hello?

DAVE
Lizzy?

LIZZY
No, that's fine thank you.

SERVER (V.O.)
Okay. Come on to the next window
please.

Lizzy winds up her window - she takes in a deep breath.

LIZZY
You knew already?

DAVE
He told me yesterday about it. Came
over in the middle of the
afternoon, hence why I was working
into last night. I told him he
should tell you about it. He asked
me not to tell you until he spoke
to you.

LIZZY

Dave!

DAVE

(confused)

What?

(beat, then defensive)

He asked me as a friend. I love you Lizzy and I know we don't keep secrets, but he is also your dad and I'm pretty sure he could have me killed if he wanted to.

LIZZY

This is not the time for a joke.

Dave sits up in his chair - this is not great.

DAVE

Lizzy. What do you want me to say?

LIZZY

You swore you wouldn't keep secrets.

DAVE

And I don't. But this wasn't my business and I don't know anymore than what you've just told me.

Lizzy's eyes burn, she is angry, she rolls her eyes and looks out her window. It is silent in the car.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Liz?...

Still silence.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Oh. We doing this are we? Okay. Fine. Let's not talk about it rationally. You sleep on it.

Dave rolls his eyes and looks out his window.

Junior pulls his ear bud out, he leans forward into the middle, he's happy.

JUNIOR

Hey, where the food at? This boy is hungry.

The bag is past through the window to Lizzy, she throw's it over to Dave, a milk shake inside explodes up him.

Dave - coated in milk shake stares out, while Junior holds back a laugh and Lizzy looks pissed off.

DAVE
That answer your question kiddo?

CUT TO:

EXT. RADIO STATION - DAY

A half full car park, the lit up sign for GBZ RADIO.

Jack's overly, enthusiastic voice kicks in:

JACK (V.O.)
And that is this weeks "Talkin'
trash with Jack Nash"

INT. RADIO STATION - RECORDING BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

JACK NASH sits behind the control desk, he wears earphones as he's leant into the microphone, big beaming smile as he looks to the booths window to the PRODUCERS ROOM.

JACK
And next week, don't forget it's
listener call-in week. We love to
hear your rants.

INT. RADIO STATION - PRODUCERS ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Dave stands over LEROY who operates the controls he has a headset on and talks into a microphone.

LEROY
Alright Jack cue, exit song.

DAVE
Ah I feel like such a dick Leroy. I
mean, it wasn't my secret to tell.

Leroy turns up the dials- a jingle plays out. Jacks voice comes out through the speakers.

LEROY
(to Dave)
Ah I get that mate. It sounds
rough.

DAVE
Was you even listening?

JACK (V.O.)

Don't you go nowhere, we got the top forty coming up. Peace!

LEROY

Nah mate. I was working the show. Sorry.

DAVE

Leroy, this is why I love you. That brutal honesty. Don't you dare leave Jacks side.

Dave fist bumps Leroy.

Jack enters from the RECORDING STUDIO.

JACK

Dave! You're still here? Damn. It must have been an argument.

DAVE

No. It's not even an argument. She's just not talking to me.

JACK

Then simply you need to buy her flowers and apologize.

(to Leroy)

How's them figures looking?

DAVE

Apologize? For what?

LEROY

Steady thirty-thousand listeners boss.

JACK

Nice.

(to Dave)

And that is why, you'll be sleeping in that doghouse tonight.

DAVE

Eat a dick. Mister, my longest relationship was three weeks,

JACK

Wow. You are touchy.

A beat - Dave adjusts himself, clings to his leg- he aches and is getting grumpy.

DAVE

No. I'm just tired, it's been a long week, I don't have "young man energy" anymore.

JACK

Did you ever?

DAVE

(to Leroy)

See, this is why I have to write his material for him.

Leroy holds back a chuckle.

JACK

Either way. She's a woman. You're the one in the wrong.

DAVE

And that there is why his relationships don't last longer than three months.

JACK

I'll have you know that I've got a date tonight thank you very much.

DAVE

And what recess of tinder did you find her.

JACK

Same place Mr. F found his.

DAVE

Touche.

CUT TO:

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

ANDREA pours a coffee - Lizzy sits behind her eating a pot of noodles.

ANDREA

He isn't in the wrong here Lizzy, you know that right?

LIZZY

I can still be mad at him.

ANDREA

Oh. It's Dave, I'm not doubting you got stuff to be mad at him about, but this is not one of them.

Andrea takes a seat at the table next to Lizzy, she sips her coffee and puts it down on the table - she leans in and looks Lizzy in the eye.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

So?

LIZZY

What?

ANDREA

What are you really mad about here? Cause it's not Dave.

Andrea leans in closer- Lizzy uncomfortable sits back.

LIZZY

Alright fuck. No, I'm not mad at Dave, I'm mad cause my dad went to him first and not me.

ANDREA

Ouch.

(beat then -)

Okay. Well. Look at it this way. Your dad chose to speak to his friend over drinks about this. It just so happens that friend is also your other half. There is no problem here is there?

LIZZY

No. I guess I just have a problem with it. It was the same when Eugene was around.

ANDREA

Your brother?

LIZZY

Yeah. Dad goes to him first as he's the oldest. Me, they wrap in cotton wool. It just pisses me off is all. I too am an adult.

ANDREA

I know. But that's parents, they're always going to see you as "the kid". And you're the youngest.

(MORE)

ANDREA (CONT'D)

I was a middle child, my folks let me do whatever.

LIZZY

And look at the beautiful deviant you've grown into.

Andrea smiles - she likes this praise.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - DUSK

A quiet scene, a few cars in the car park, the playground is empty.

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY

Dave hobbles down the hallway towards a meeting hall at the end, he stops - looks up -

A leak drips down onto the floor, just ahead of Dave.

He raises his brow, looks over to a wall-hanging clock -

It's ten-past-six.

Dave confidently smiles as he approaches the double doors of the meeting hall.

INT. SCHOOL - HALL - CONTINUOUS

The double doors open and Dave enters, he stops -

The meeting is in full swing, a group of about TEN PARENTS of all different backgrounds; sit around the table at it's head Joanne - she holds back a smirk, turns it to a scowl and takes a huff from her vape pen.

JOANNE

Ah. Dave Sloane. Better late than never. I guess.

Dave adjusts his glasses - slightly recoils.

DAVE

(confused)
Late? I was told quarter-past-six.

JOANNE

No. Every meeting starts at a quarter-to. Please bear that in mind if you could and take a seat, we've a lot to get through and this is costing time.

Dave takes this in - he's not happy, but he's not showing his cards.

DAVE

Hmm.

He takes a seat next to STUART, (mid 30's, bubbly guy).

STUART

Hey, how you -

JOANNE

(cuts off)

Anyway, we were discussing this years fund raising options. As we all know we're lacking in funding.

DAVE

You're telling me. Ceilings leaking back there.

JOANNE

Yes well, we also have the year six prom, field trip and day-out planned after the sats. So, fundraising options.

Dave narrows his eyes, his focus on Joanne.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

I think we should amp up bake sales this year. Last year we made nearly two thousand pound in donations.

Dave shakes his head and scoffs - This catches Joanne's attention.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

Do you have something to add here Dave?

Dave sits back in his chair- she's caught him on the spot and pushed a little too hard. He takes in a deep breath, sits forward and shrugs.

DAVE
How about we stop rinsing the
parents here?

JOANNE
I beg your pa-

Dave stands- his tone, confident.

DAVE
(cuts in)
I believe I have the floor Joanne.
(beat then)
Anyway. Look, I want to help, we
all want to help...

He looks around the room -

The faces of parents who are also tired of endless fund
raisers.

DAVE (CONT'D)
We live in a small town, with a big
community. So why not take it to
the streets. We're not all made of
cash...
(jokingly)
Kind of why we send our kids
"here", right?

Dave takes his seat - looks over to Joanne, smirks.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Sorry. Floors all yours again
Joanne.

Joanne- temper boiling, holds back.

JOANNE
Well, aside from safe-guarding
issues for one. Look, this is
ultimately a "worthless"
conversation.

This hits Dave - he sits forwards, looks confused, is not
taking this laying down.

DAVE
Safe guarding issues? I'm not
talking about sending the kids out
like street urchin's I'm talking
about "us" as a group here, making
a difference.

Stuart- bursting to say something- throws it out:

STUART

We could also look at a school play, that could involve the kids, we could stand on the doors. Invite the community along.

Impressed - Dave nods over at Stuart.

DAVE

This guy gets it.

Joanne shoots Stuart a dead-eyed look.

Stuart sinks back into his chair, like a kid in trouble.

Across the table - LAUREN, (mid 20's, glamorous, wannabe influencer), pipes up.

LAUREN

I could do a bake drive with our Wednesday market.

The parents start chatting amongst themselves - Joanne doesn't like this, she slams down the gavel - then:

JOANNE

If we could all take a breath for a moment here people, this is a lot.

DAVE

A lot of options. We should all give ourselves a round of applause.

The room erupts into light applause, everyone looking proud of themselves all but -

Joanne, who scowls at Dave- she's already processing vengeance, she slams the gavel again harder - the room falls to nervous silence.

JOANNE

Very well. Mr. Sloane, if you think this is the way forward, I am going to put you and Stuart in charge of the play. I understand that you have writing experience.

Dave bites his lip - he knows this is time consuming, but he isn't letting her win this.

DAVE
 You know what. Sounds absolutely
 delightful.
 (turns to Stuart)
 What do you say big man? You in?

Dave offers Stuart a fist bump -

Stuart is elated, this isn't his usual kind of interaction,
 he throws energy into the fist bump.

Dave recoils shaking his hand.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Damn dude, you an underground
 fighter or something?
 (to Joanne)
 Looks like the dream team is
 assembled.

Dave leans back in his chair raises his hand in the air and
 pulls it down over his face.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 And Scene.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALL - LATER

Dave stands at a table decked out with cakes and coffee -
 behind him the other parents are talking amongst themselves
 in groups.

Dave adds sugar as Stuart approaches from behind.

STUART
 Hey. Uh - Dave?

Dave turns, he offers back a kindly smile.

DAVE
 Hey there uh- Steve?

STUART
 Stuart.

DAVE
 That's it. Sorry, I get a little
 brain foggy sometimes, names are
 one of "those" things. How are you
 doing? What can I do for you?

STUART

I just got to say, the way you spoke back to Joanne...

A beat - Stuart nervously looks around, checks the coast then:

STUART (CONT'D)

It's been a long time coming. She's ruled this PTA with an iron fist for three years.

DAVE

And what's with that gavel huh? Judge Judy the executioner or what?

Stuart chuckles.

STUART

I'm looking forward to working with you on the play.

DAVE

Yeah, it sounds like it's going to be a blast. Plus, it'll be a great opportunity to prove our kids aren't all assholes.

STUART

(taken back)
Excuse me?

DAVE

That's all I see on the community Facebook page these days. I know our kids are better than that.

Stuart smiles, this is honesty on a level he's never heard.

STUART

I know right.

Stuart extends his hand - Dave shakes it.

STUART (CONT'D)

Well, I have to go. But I'll be in touch tomorrow if that's okay?

DAVE

Hey man, anytime.

Stuart walks away - he stops and turns back to Dave, beaming a happy smile:

STUART

So great to have another man
finally on the PTA.

Dave raises his cup - smiles politely.

DAVE

Sure thing.

Stuart approaches a tall WOMAN, (mid 30's) who stands with Daniel waiting at the halls entrance - Stuart greets them with a hug and a kiss as they walk away, Stuart's arm around the womans shoulder, Daniel falling back behind.

Dave watches on - realization hits.

Daniel busts into some dance moves behind his parents back.

Dave sips his coffee, he shakes his head, chuckles to himself and sighs:

DAVE (CONT'D)

(mutters)

Ah. Fuck my life.

Joanne appears in front of Dave - he recoils back.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Joanne. Sorry. My spider-sense tingled. Evil must be near, what can I do for you?

Joanne narrows her eyes - she's not buying Dave's bullshit.

JOANNE

Dave Sloane. I'm watching you.

DAVE

You can watch me all you want.
Cause I ain't going nowhere.

JOANNE

We'll see. You've got till the end of summer to pull this off. You'll need to raise your own budget and find a suitable play.

A beat - Joanne smirks.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

One that will have to be agreed upon by all the PTA.

Dave remains calm - confident:

DAVE

Well, I can't wait for you to be eating that humble pie.

Dave looks up -

Mr. F stands at the doorway, he waves to Dave.

Dave's attention turns back to Joanne.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Anyway. Gotta run. Carpe Diem and all that bullshit.

Dave hobbles away, leaving Joanne at the table.

DAVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Have a lovely evening Joanne.

CUT TO:

INT. VOLKSWAGEN TOUREG - MOVING - DAY

Dave looks sullen as he sits in the front passenger seat - he groans as realization kicks in.

DAVE

Ugh. What the fuck have I just done?

MR. F

It sounds like something positive for the kids Mr. S.

DAVE

Ah, I know. But, she's given me it knowing that I've just sent a script over to Alan...

(looks over to Mr. F)

The guy she's seeing just to clarify.

MR. F

Oh so she knows that you'll be busy.

DAVE

She's counting on it.

Agitated Dave flicks through a range of emotional faces, he shakes it off.

DAVE (CONT'D)
It's a tomorrow problem. Now I have
to fix home.

MR. F
Why what's up?

DAVE
Oh.. Uh- noth...

A beat - Dave is done keeping secrets.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Lizzy is mad at me. I think shes
annoyed I didn't tell her you had a
date. But it wasn't my place.

MR. F
Oh. So I've dropped you in it then?

DAVE
No... A little. But it's okay. I
know I did the right thing. It
wasn't my place. Have you told
Eugene yet?

MR. F
No. He's coming back home in a
couple of weeks, so I'll tell him
then. He's a busy lad.

DAVE
He's a jackass.

A beat. Dave realizes what he's just said - shifts his eyes
to Mr. F.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Sorry. That was a bit uncalled for.

MR. F
No. I know Eugene has a way with
people.

DAVE
You can say that. Have you spoken
to him at all?

MR. F
No. I tried ringing him, but I get
a message just saying "he's busy,
call me later"

DAVE

Well. On the bright side Mr. F you still got me around.

(scoffs)

For now.

Mr. F smiles, he takes a soft, humouring tone with Dave:

MR. F

Hey. You're not going anywhere my lad.

(a beat, then)

But I am sorry for any trouble.

DAVE

Don't worry about it. I appreciate the lift home. Can you do me a favour though?

MR. F

What's that?

DAVE

Stop off at the florist on the way home?

Mr. F smirks.

MR. F

Sure.

CUT TO:

EXT. SLOANE HOUSE - EVENING

The VOLKSWAGEN TOUREG pulls up outside of the semi-detached SLOANE HOUSE in the middle of a suburban neighbourhood.

Dave gets out the car, he fumbles with his crutch and a bunch of flowers as he does so.

DAVE

Good luck tonight Mr. F.

The car horn SOFTLY HONKS TWICE - the car pulls away. Dave hobbles towards the house - he stops at the gate and looks over at his neighbours front yard -

a BROKEN SOFA and BED now fill the driveway, the grass still long.

Dave rolls his eyes - this is beyond a joke.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 (mutters)
 You've got to be fucking kidding
 me?!

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - HALLWAY

Dave enters - it's quiet, the kitchen door ahead is closed.

DAVE
 Hello?

LIZZY (V.O.)
 (calls out)
 I'm in the kitchen.

Dave takes his coat off - hangs it up, places his crutch in the umbrella holder.

DAVE
 (mutters to self)
 Okay, you got this.

Dave limps to the kitchen door - flowers in hand.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Lizzy cuts up some peppers - Dave enters in behind her, he takes an easy approach.

DAVE
 Hey.

Lizzy turns - she see's the flowers in his hand.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 I want to be clear. I'm not
 apologizing. I did the right thing
 here.
 (beat, then)
 But. That being said. I still
 believe we shouldn't keep any
 secrets. I even told your dad as
 much.

LIZZY
 So. You're saying those are for me.
 But not an apology.

DAVE
 Exactly that.

Lizzy approaches Dave she kisses him on the lips and takes the flowers - she eyes them up, a bright, colourful bouquet.

LIZZY
They are beautiful.
(sighs)
But. You should know. I am sorry.

DAVE
You are?

LIZZY
I wasn't mad at you. I was mad because I felt like the last to know.

DAVE
Yeah, well you're not. Eugene doesn't know yet.

LIZZY
What?

DAVE
Yeah. Your dad's going to tell him in a couple of weeks IF he swings down by.

LIZZY
Oh.

DAVE
See. You're not the last to know. Now, can we please stop fighting? It kind of sucks.

Lizzy preps the flowers- she cuts the tips.

LIZZY
How did the PTA meet go?

DAVE
Well. I'm now in charge of the school production for the end of summer. I got to arrange the budget, costumes and convince the kids.

Junior enters - camcorder in hand, he's filming the interaction.

JUNIOR
Sucks to be you dawg!

DAVE

It does. Even more so to be you.
Cause defacto, you're helping.

JUNIOR

What?

DAVE

Well, I'm trying to prove the local
kids aren't assholes. A play can do
that and since you want to do
drama, this is a good way into
that.

JUNIOR

But.. Woah. Hang-on.

DAVE

Dude. You're helping. End of.

Junior lowers the camera. He's not impressed by this.

JUNIOR

I don't do drama plays.

DAVE

You could fool me whenever you
through a tantrum.

Junior glares a Dave eyes burning.

Lizzy turns- she notices the tension.

LIZZY

How about we both take a breath for
a second here?

DAVE

Why do I need a breath?

LIZZY

Dave!

DAVE

Sorry.

Junior shakes his head. He puts the camcorder down on the
kitchen side and storms out the kitchen.

Dave turns to Lizzy stunned.

DAVE (CONT'D)

What the fuck?

LIZZY
You did kind of just throw him in
it there.

DAVE
I thought he wanted to act?

LIZZY
He does. But on his own terms. He's
also ten, prepubescent and trying
to figure himself out. You was that
kid once.

DAVE
No. Do you even know who my mum is?
That shit would not be going down.

LIZZY
You always say you're not your mum
Dave. Talk with him, least try and
get him to understand your side of
things and let him do the same for
you.

DAVE
Can't I just buy him flowers?

LIZZY
Go.

DAVE
Yes boss.

Dave limps to the kitchen door. He picks up the camera and
leaves.

DAVE (CONT'D)
When I get back you can tell me
about your day.

Lizzy shakes her head and smiles, she continues to trim the
flowers.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Dave slumps up the stairs, he clutches his left leg - it's
getting heavy.

He approaches the closed door to JUNIORS ROOM - greeted by
gaming posters and a keep out sign.

Dave takes in a deep breath, knocks then:

DAVE
Junior? Can I come in buddy?

JUNIOR (O.S.)
It's a free country isn't it?

Dave rolls his eyes and enters.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - JUNIORS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dave enters - the room dimly lit, clothes all over the floor, the walls contain shelves of built lego models.

Junior sits on his bed playing on his phone, he doesn't even look to Dave.

Dave steps in, takes a soft approach.

DAVE
Can we talk?

Junior nods at the end of the bed, he moves his feet, Dave sits down.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Son. Look. I'm sorry. I shouldn't of just said you're doing it without asking you.

Junior stays quiet- his eyes move from the phone to Dave.

DAVE (CONT'D)
I also know you've got a lot going on yourself. A year till high-school, drama club. That game you're building.

JUNIOR
So. Do I have to do this?

DAVE
I'm going to ask you to think about doing it... Please.

Dave looks down at the floor.

DAVE (CONT'D)
A long time ago. Before you were born, when I got blackballed. I had an agent, the day they fired me they told me I was worthless.

JUNIOR
But you're not.

DAVE
(smiles)
Oh. I know that. But Today. Joanne said I was being worthless to the meeting. It triggered something in me and I wanted to shove those words right...

JUNIOR
Down her throat?

DAVE
Yeah sure, we'll go with that. Anyway. I want this to succeed. Not for me. But for you guys. It's my battle not yours. Okay.

Junior gives Dave a hug.

JUNIOR
I get it dad.

He pulls back.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
I'll help.

DAVE
(smiles)
I appreciate that kiddo.

He kisses Junior on the head.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Oh. And I'm going to be doing it with Daniels dad. So that'll be cool for you, right?

Junior slumps back into the bed, he goes back to his phone.

JUNIOR
Meh. Daniels been a bit crazy today. I don't know if I'm going to hang with him for a while.

DAVE
Oh. Wanna talk about it?

Junior rolls his eyes, sighs, then smirks:

JUNIOR

Well...

CUT TO:

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jack gets out his car - on a busy popular, night spot street, illuminated by the welcoming signs of bars and takeaways.

He talks on his phone as he clicks the key fob.

JACK

I know. I know. Beef Chow Mein,
extra pancake rolls. I'll be about
half an hour so make sure the hot
tub is ready.

Jack enters the restaurant.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Jack enters the restaurant, he is greeted by KARL (30's, asian, speaks clear English, with a slight accent) who stands behind the counter, behind him - a large glass wall looking in to a busy restaurant.

KARL

Hey Jackie Nash!

JACK

Karl. What's new my amigo? How's my
order coming along?

KARL

Be about five minutes. That good?

Jack bumps Karl's fist.

JACK

That is amazing, as always.

Jack looks over Karl's shoulder -

JACK (CONT'D)

Damn. Busy night tonight.

KARL

Oh yes. Can't complain though.
(laughs)
I got one for your next show.

JACK
Ah yeah. What's that then?

KARL
(nods over shoulder)
The one about the player and the
only fans model.

Jack looks over -

Through the glass, deep in the restaurant Mr. F sits at a table with KARINA (30's, glamorous, but wears a lot of makeup) they chat to each other, it looks light. Karina giggles.

Jack's eyes widen.

JACK
Holy-fucking-shit. No way.

KARL
I know right. My jaw hit the ground, I'm a subscriber to her page.

JACK
Say what now?

Karl takes his phone from his pocket, he taps on the screen and shows Jack.

On the phone screen: Karina's profile, provocative, suggestive and all there on screen.

Jack can't keep his eyes away, he's well and truly speechless.

CUT TO:

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dave, Lizzy and Junior sit around the table it's a cosy small dining room, but the mood is light everyone is enjoying their meal. Dave puts his knife and fork down on his plate - wipes his mouth with a napkin.

DAVE
That was amazing, thank you so much.

JUNIOR
Yes mother, this food was delectable.

DAVE
Still practising those big words
huh?

Junior gives Dave a cheeky look.

Dave's phone starts to vibrate - he pulls it from his pocket
and checks the display -

On screen: Jack Nash calling, a photo of Jack sat at his
radio desk.

Dave clicks it off.

DAVE (CONT'D)
That can wait.

LIZZY
Jack?

The vibrating stops.

DAVE
Yeah. Date night, probably ringing
to brag.

JUNIOR
Can I go work on my game please?

LIZZY
Sure.

DAVE
You got any homework little man?

JUNIOR
Nah. Miss. Clay doesn't believe in
it.

DAVE
Course she doesn't. Go on then.
Show me the level when your done.

Junior leaves the table - takes the plate with him.

JUNIOR
(walks past)
Will do.

Dave's phone starts vibrating again.

LIZZY
You want to take that?

DAVE
I guess I'm not going to get a
choice here am I?

Dave stands up, he picks up his plate - shuffles out the room
kissing Lizzy on the head as he leaves.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Dinner was amazing thank you again.

Dave stops and turns around.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Franklin - I appreciate you!

He smirks and leaves.

Lizzy softly smiles.

EXT. SLOANE HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Dave steps out the back door - puts a joint to his mouth and
looks over -

In his neighbours yard - Mick loads up a fire pile, he
smashes a wardrobe - loads it in, on top of bulky plastic bin
bags.

Dave rolls his eyes, lights his joint.

DAVE
(yells)
Hey yo! Burning plastic, great job
for the environment!

Mick sneers - loads the wardrobe door whole on top of the
pile.

MICK
Mind your business and go back to
smoking weed Shaggy.

DAVE
Yeah, you have a good night too,
you prick.

Dave's phone VIBRATES - he takes it from his pocket- answers,
slightly frustrated:

DAVE (CONT'D)
This had better be good. I was
eating.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JACK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jack sits behind the wheel of his car - real uneasy.

JACK

Hey Dave. You remember that show you wrote me a few weeks ago? The one about those girls who sleep with the three-hundred guys.

Dave sits on his bench - he takes a pull from the joint, thinking back and chuckles.

DAVE

Yeah. Don't tell me. You got a date with Bonnie Blue tonight?

Jack's eyes shift to the restaurant.

JACK

Uh- me no. Mr. F however.

Dave leans forward in the chair - he chokes on the smoke, he doesn't believe it.

DAVE

Get fucked Jack. That's not funny.

JACK

Yeah, I wish I was kidding. Check your messages fuckwit.

Dave taps the SPEAKERPHONE on, he examines the screen:

DAVE

Hang on. You're on speaker so keep it clean alright?

JACK (V.O.)

Whatever prick.

Dave sees the messages:

The only fans profile, then the picture of them together.

The joint falls out of Dave's mouth.

DAVE

Holy-fucking-shit!

JACK
That's what I said.

DAVE
(mad)
Why the fuck did you have to send
me this? I can't keep it from Lizzy
and like fuck do I want to be the
one that tells her. She'll have a
fuckin-

BOOM -

The fire from next door explodes - a wardrobe door flies in
the air - comes crashing down in Dave's backyard -

Dave sits back - brows raised.

DAVE (CONT'D)
(yells)
What the fuck?!

He looks over to his neighbours yard -

A gap where the fence was - a lit fire and a smouldering Mick
holding a Jerry can - shocked - speechless.

MICK
It was... just some remote
controlled toys.

Dave goes back to his call:

DAVE
Jack. I'm gonna have to call you
back.

Dave hangs up - he stands, his anger boils - he stamps,
limping down the garden.

DAVE (CONT'D)
(to Mick)
What the actual fuck?!
(notices Jerry can)
Oh. That best not be fucking red
diesel you cheap bastard!

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A scared, Junior comes rushing into the room - wraps his arms
around Lizzy who stands watching through the blind to the
back window.

JUNIOR
Mummy. What was that?

LIZZY
I think next door just blew up some
batteries.

JUNIOR
Is daddy okay?

LIZZY
Oh yeah. He's just setting next
door right about what they did
wrong.

From the window: Dave rants at next door, his arms swing as
he talks.

Lizzy pulls the blind back.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
I'd best go de-escalate the situat-

Lizzy's phone RINGS - she picks it up from the arm of the
sofa - answers, a confused, happiness in her voice:

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Eugene?

EXT. SLOANE HOUSE - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Dave stands in his garden - he yells through the new hole in
the fence:

DAVE
And if you think I'm paying for the
damage you can suck a fuck! You're
lucky I'm not calling the police
you absolute fucking idiot.

Dave looks Mick up and down.

Mick - a smouldering mess - softly whimpers.

Dave still angry - talks through gritted teeth curbing his
temper.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Do you want me to call you a
fucking ambulance?

Mick just shakes his head - like a child told off.

Dave looks over to his neighbours backdoor -

ALISON (wears dirty tracksuit, food around her mouth) holds a small CHILD in her arms, she too looks shocked.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Are you alright?

Alison musters a nod.

Junior comes from out the backdoor and rushes to Dave.

JUNIOR
Daddy. Mummy needs you quick, she's had a phone call. She's upset.

Dave turns to Junior -

Junior looks scared.

Dave's temper simmers, he takes a breath, then -

DAVE
(to Junior)
I'm coming.
(to Mick)
Count yourself lucky this is more important. This isn't over.

Dave turns and limps back towards the house.

Behind him a wardrobe door smoulders in the garden.

DAVE (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Fucking clowns. As if someone let them have a kid. Fucks sakes.

INT. SLOANE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dave enters - he sees Lizzy on the couch sobbing.

DAVE
(softly)
Hey.

He takes a seat down next to Lizzy - wraps his arm around her, ready to diffuse the situation:

DAVE (CONT'D)
Look. Jack just rang me and told me. I'm guessing your dad told you he's dating an only-fans model.
(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
(trying to make a
positive)
But hey, he's enjoying life, that's
what you want remember.

Lizzy stops sobbing, her expression drops- shock, horror, her
voice coarse, she musters some words:

LIZZY
What?

DAVE
Oh. You weren't upset about that?

LIZZY
No. But I am now!

DAVE
Then, what are you upset about?

LIZZY
Eugene just called. My mums been
taken into hospital. Breathing
issues.

Lizzy starts to uncontrollably sob.

Horrified - Dave realizes that he's just made the situation a
lot worse.

DAVE
Oh. Oh snap.

Dave whilst trying to be supportive sinks into himself - the
sound of FIRE ENGINE SIRENS draw closer.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END.