

Pro Patria

By

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FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN:

Various sounds of a violent storm: ocean waves and torrents of water crashing around, male screams rise among the sounds to an almighty crescendo...

Silence...

Title card reads: Pro Patria

EXT. COUNCIL HOUSE - DAY

An ELDERLY WOMAN bent over calling through a letterbox.

OLD WOMAN

Robert are you home, it's me, Nan.
I was just passing...

Silence.

INT. HOUSE - THAT MOMENT

A FIGURE in shadow. Extreme close shot of lips as a cigarette is placed in the lips and inhaled.

EXT. COUNCIL HOUSE - DAY

The woman knocks loudly on the front door.

OLD WOMAN

Robert?

INT - HOUSE THAT MOMENT

The lips exhale a thick plume of smoke.

Close up of fingers nervously drumming on the arm of a worn sofa.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. JOBCENTRE - DAY

A kind-looking British-Jamaican WOMAN sits at her desk opposite, a YOUNG MAN, 20, close-cropped hair, he is barely out of boyhood, yet his eyes betray a life-worn thousand yard stare. He drums his fingers on the table as the woman fills out the forms. This is ROBERT.

WOMAN

Now this is your booklet, which you keep updated with your key skills and what positions you've applied for that week.

Is there a particular area you're interested in? We can do a search if you like?

Robert stares at his hand, his fingers drum repeatedly. The woman looks at his hand and continues.

WOMAN (CONT' D)

Before you were in the army, was there something you wanted to be, other than a...

Robert stares into her eyes, the woman shifts in her chair uncomfortably.

ROBERT

Nights...

WOMAN

I'm sorry?

ROBERT

...Is there any work...night shifts I mean...I have trouble sleeping.

WOMAN

I can have a look.

The woman stares at her computer; she clicks her mouse repeatedly.
Close up on her fingers click the mouse.

WOMAN

Unfortunately only a fork lift
driver position and with...

ROBERT

...It's alright I'm sure something...

WOMAN

...Something will turn up, it always
does.

ROBERT

Is that everything then?

WOMAN

Yes, all you need to do now is
document your job searches, check
the website regularly and every
second Thursday report to box
number 3.

ROBERT

Ok then.

The woman smiles as Robert slides back from the desk revealing that
he is in a wheelchair and is an amputee

WOMAN

Good luck.

Robert nods and leaves.

INT. ROBERT'S FLAT - DAY

Robert sits watching TV, he is rolling a joint. Channel 4 news is
on John snow's voice echoes in the background; a debate about Obama
withdrawing troops from Iraq is heard. Robert's mobile rings, Bruce
Springsteen's Born in the USA resounds.

Robert answers.

ROBERT

Jimbo, mate are you outside? Yeah,
it's unlocked...let yourself in.

Rob hangs up and goes back to rolling the joint.

The front door opens and a YOUNG MAN, JIMBO and a TEENAGE GIRL,
KELLY, slide in.

JIMBO

Rob you sulky fucker how's things?

ROB

Not bad mate, you?

JIMBO

Not bad man, not bad...oh this is
Kelly by the way.

Kelly waves to Rob, he nods in acknowledgement.

KELLY

All right?

Jimbo and Kelly sit on the sofa. Rob lights his joint and inhales
deeply.

Kelly cannot take her eyes off of him.

Jimbo grabs the remote.

JIMBO

What's this, the fucking news?

He changes the channel.

ROBERT

Leave the remote, put it back.

JIMBO

C' mon Rob, who watches the news?

ROBERT
I said, put it back.

Robert stares deep into Jimbo's eyes. Jimbo backs down and flicks back to the news.

JIMBO
All right, all right you don't
have to be a wanker about it.

ROBERT
I wasn't.

(BEAT)

Rob offers the joint to Kelly.

ROBERT
Do you want some?

Kelly takes the joint between her fingers.

KELLY
Ta.

Rob watches her intently.

Close up on her lips inhaling.

Kelly fixes her eyes on Rob and exhales the smoke towards him.

Rob licks his lips.

(BEAT)

JIMBO
Kelly, did you know that our Rob
is a fucking war hero?

ROBERT
Shut up Jim.

KELLY
Really? That's amazing.

She smiles and plays with her hair self-consciously.

Rob watches her fingers travel through her hair, close up of her brown eyes.

ROBERT

I did a tour of Afghanistan that's all.

KELLY

Where were you?

ROBERT

Helmand mainly.

KELLY

Sorry, I don't know where that is.

ROBERT

It doesn't matter.

Jimbo steals the joint off of Kelly and slaps Robert on the shoulder.

JIMBO

He should have got a fucking medal for all those rag heads he shot.

ROBERT

Jimbo stop being a dick.

Kelly laughs and Robert laughs too, they share a moment.

Jimbo inhales deeply on the joint.

ROBERT

I hope you're not going to Bogart that...

JIMBO

There's probably only a couple of
tokens left so.

ROBERT

Oh that's all right then isn't it?

Jimbo blows Robert a jokey kiss and drops the butt into an empty
beer can on the coffee table. He checks his mobile.

JIMBO

Well I'm going to fuck off to the
crown for a beer, who's up for it?

Robert looks at Kelly, she tucks her hair behind her ears.

ROBERT

Maybe later, I just want to chill
for a bit, might watch a film.

JIMBO

Suit yourself. Kelly?

KELLY

Actually a film sounds nice.

JIMBO

Ha I wouldn't be expecting any
fucking chick flicks Kel, it's all
Apocalypse Now and yippikia
motherfucker with this guy.

KELLY

I don't mind.

(BEAT)

ROBERT

As I said Jimbo, maybe later eh?

JIMBO

Sure I get it and because I'm such a good mate, I got that ten bag you so fucking pestered me about at 3 o' clock this morning.

Jimbo tosses Rob a small plastic bag of weed.

ROBERT

Yeah, sorry I was roasting.

JIMBO

LOL. Later then.

ROBERT

Sure...laters.

KELLY

Bye.

Jimbo leaves.

CUT TO BLACK

INT ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rob and Kelly are sitting on the sofa a rug is draped over them. Rob is drinking a beer and Kelly is smoking a cigarette and drinking a bottle of WKD.

An old war movie plays on the TV, the sounds of explosions and missiles pours into the room. Robert watches the film intently. Kelly watches Robert watching the film. Robert mutters under his breath, barely audible.

ROBERT

Fucking fakers...fucking fakers..

(BEAT)

Kelly downs the rest of her drink, places it on the coffee table and self-consciously slides over to Rob.

KELLY
Did it hurt?

Robert doesn't here her, he is lost in his own world.

Kelly slowly reaches out and touches Robert's arm.

He flinches.

KELLY (CONT' D)
Shit, I'm sorry...

Robert looks at her. She looks at him they pause, an exchange passes between them. They dive at each other, mouths lock, tongues lash at each other, Rob's beer can spills onto the floor.

Rob pulls at Kerry's top; he yanks at her straps and bites her neck. Kelly's hand moves down to his crotch, she starts to massage him through his jeans, but feels there is nothing happening and withdraws her hand.

Rob pushes her hand back to his crotch and kisses her with more vigour, but nothing is happening. He stops kissing her and slumps on the sofa.

ROB
Fuck!

Kelly draws the rug up around her.

KELLY
It's all right.

ROB
It's not fucking all right.

KELLY
Rob. I get it.

ROB
No you don't.

KELLY
Some guys can't get it...

(BEAT)

ROB
...Look just fuck off ok.

KELLY
I was only.

ROB
I said fuck off, what are you deaf?

KELLY
Fine, I didn't want to do it with a cripple anyway.

ROB
You fucking bitch!

Kelly jumps up from the sofa and heads for the door.

Rob grabs the beer can and throws it at Kelly, it misses and it hits the wall.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

Rob sits alone in the dark; the TV lights him. Tears stream down his face.

A fox screams outside.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Time-lapse photography of clouds passing the sun.

EXT. FOOTBALL PITCH - DAY

Rob watches a group of boys having a kick about.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Rob sits in his chair on the promenade watching the waves crash against the beach, he wraps his scarf tight around his face, a desperate attempt to shield himself from the cold wind coming off the waves.

Laughter echoes in the distance. He sees TWO GIRLS trudging up the beach, he turns around and squints for a better look...one of them is Kelly.

They edge closer and stop. Kelly looks at Rob, her face drops. Kelly's friend says something inaudible to her.

KELLY (TO HER FRIEND)

I'll just be a minute ok?

Kelly walks over to Rob: the waves crash at the shore between them.

KELLY

All right?

ROB

Yeah not bad.

KELLY

Nice day isn't it.

ROB

Yeah, a bit cold though.

KELLY

Yeah it is.

ROB

Actually, it's fucking freezing.

KELLY

Yeah it's freezing.

ROB

Feel like my balls are going to drop off.

They both laugh.

KELLY

You're funny, you know that?

ROB

Thanks, you're quite funny yourself.

KELLY

I'll take that as a compliment.

ROB

Good, I will too.

Kelly kicks at the pebbles with her trainer. Rob eyes her up and down without her realizing it.

KELLY

About the other night, I just wanted to say...

ROB

...No hard feelings eh? Things have been pretty messed up for a while and I didn't mean to scare.

KELLY

You didn't scare...you were right, I was being a bitch.

ROB

It's no biggie, I've heard worse.

KELLY

I was out of order.

ROB

It's cool. I was thinking maybe, if you wanted a drink then you know where to find me.

KELLY

Thanks, I'd like that.

ROB

Me too.

(BEAT)

They hold each other's gaze, the world goes quiet...silence.
Kelly blinks. The sound of crashing waves envelopes the scene.

KELLY

I'd better be going, my mate's...

Kelly gestures to her friend down at the water's edge.

ROB

Sure. I'll see you then?

KELLY

Definitely.

Rob watches Kelly skip down the beach to her friend; she looks back and smiles.

Rob waves.

The waves crash at the beach.

FADE TO BLACK:

The sound of the waves builds and builds.

THE END