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Children of the Revolution

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Masters

in

Creative Writing

At Massey University, Manawatu

New Zealand

Joanne Paulsen 2017

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all the administrative staff at Massey's Manawatu campus for their kindness and consideration over the duration of this project. I would also like to thank my supervisors Stuart Hoar and Dr Ian Huffer for their invaluable feedback and support.

Abstract

In his critically acclaimed essay ‘Mario Montez, For Shame’, which documents the humiliation of actor and drag queen Mario Montez during the filming of Andy Warhol’s *Screen Test 2* and *Chelsea Girls*, Douglas Crimp (70) asks: ‘What’s queer about shame?’ In this thesis I demonstrate that shame - specifically, shame experienced in regard to non-normative sexuality or gender identity – is inherent within both the construction and destabilisation of queer identity. To achieve this, I explore the relationship between shame and queer identity in Todd Haynes’ *Velvet Goldmine* and Neil Jordan’s *Breakfast on Pluto* in the sociohistorical context of Britain in the early 1970s, a time characterised by glam rock, ‘gender bending’ fashion and fluid sexual identity. This is a period of particular interest to me, both in regard to the identity politics which are the subject of this research and as part of my own personal history.

My full length screenplay *Gathering Day* is structured as a tandem narrative, thus enabling me to depict both (re)constructions of the past, and the present. Through the writing process itself, I am able to explore some aspects the relationship between shame and queer identity.

Key words: Shame, queer identity, glam rock, Britain, sociohistorical context.

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Introduction

‘A Topsy-Turvy Sliver of Time’: Growing Up Glam

Research suggests that we are profoundly impacted by the music we listen to between the ages of twelve and twenty-two, a crucial period in the formation of identity. The soundtrack of my adolescence was glam rock, and during one of my favourite undergraduate courses (which analysed post-war musical genres and the youth subcultures that developed around them) I began to consider what it meant to have come of age in the seventies. Increasingly interested in the connections between music, representation and identity, I was further inspired by acquiring a new set of theoretical tools which addressed this directly – namely, an introduction to semiotics and the work of various academics and sociologists connected with the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies.

The first record I owned was T.Rex’s 1971 hit ‘Hot Love’, played non-stop and at full volume for the entire duration of my best friend’s eleventh birthday party. What we could not have known, a world away where television was still a one-channel black and white novelty, was that lead singer Marc Bolan’s performance of this song on *Top of the Pops* earlier that year - wearing a silver lurex jumpsuit, platform boots and stars drawn with glitter under his eyes - would come to be regarded by many as glam rock’s inaugural moment. Manager David Enthoven recalls:

As soon as we saw Marc on television we knew. As soon as the camera got hold of him it was obvious. He was very telegenic, but he was asexual, too. He looked like a girl but he was a boy. It captured the moment and it was just what the kids wanted. It was completely different to all the studious hippies that were around at the time. It was sexy (Middles and Novick 24).

It was, indeed, just what the kids wanted. Teenagers everywhere embraced glittering makeup and gender bending fashion as glam rock permeated every aspect of popular culture. In the late seventies spectacular youth subcultures were the subject of extensive and scholarly analysis, primarily from within the BCCS. Works such as *Resistance through Rituals* (Stuart Hall et al, 1977) and *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (Dick Hebdige, 1979) examined the inception and development of post-war British youth subcultures from the teds of the fifties (and their resurgence in the Seventies), mods, skinheads and punks. While their accounts of the 'lived experience' of the members of these working-class youth subcultures were both sympathetic and realistic, their locus was an understanding of subcultural allegiances as a unified (working) class-based resolution to the disruptions and uncertainties of social change.

As the first youth subculture to be widely disseminated through mainstream culture via television shows like *Top of the Pops* and *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, glam proved a difficult subject for such reductionist analysis. Hebdige acknowledged this in his analysis of the constructed image(s) of David Bowie, writing: 'at the more sophisticated end of the glitter spectrum, the subversive emphasis was shifted away from class and youth onto sexuality and gender typing' (61-62).

In her seminal book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), Judith Butler argues that 'there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performative, constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results' (25).

For Butler, there is a clear and fundamental divide between gender *performativity* – the everyday actions by which we constitute ourselves (and are constituted by interpellation or discourse) as ‘man’ or ‘woman’ – and gender *performance*, which Chinn (1997) describes as ‘the outrageous, self-conscious theatrics of gender’ (23).

Butler draws heavily on Althusser’s theory of Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs), which states that we are interpellated, or ‘hailed’ into subjectivity by commonly agreed practices reinforced by social institutions such as religion, education and the family; that our ‘placement’ within these institutions creates us as successful (or otherwise) subjects. Butler was also influenced by Foucault’s idea of discourse, and the function of discursive practices in creating and maintaining the socially acceptable: for example, the discourse of heterocentrism wants us to conclude that only relationships between two people of the opposite sex can be regarded as ‘normal’, and to live outside of those parameters can have painful – and embarrassing – consequences. In ‘*Queer Performativity*’, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1993) describes shame as ‘A bad feeling attached to what one is . . . the place of identity, the structure ‘identity’ . . . may be established and naturalized in the first instance ‘*through shame*’ (12).

In theorising how shame functions in regard to queer identity Sedgwick draws attention to the impact of a non-normative childhood with its punishments and humiliation, linking the propensity for shame with ‘the terrifying powerlessness of gender dissonant or otherwise stigmatized childhood’ (4). This idea is thematically significant for both of the films I have chosen to analyse, and within the body of my essay I discuss the ways in which the main characters’ queer identities are shaped by the ways in which they are shamed and subsequently positioned outside heteronormative discourse.

Todd Haynes' *Velvet Goldmine* (1998) tells the story of Arthur Stuart, a New York – based British journalist. Assigned to discover what happened to his former idol Brian Slade who – after briefly dazzling the world as his glam alter ego Maxwell Demon - disappeared after faking his own on-stage assassination, Arthur must reluctantly revisit his youth as a queer but closeted glam rock fan.

Neil Jordan's *Breakfast on Pluto* (2005) tells the story of Patrick 'Kitten' Braden, a transgender teenager who comes of age in Ireland against the background of the Troubles. Like Arthur, he suffers shame and humiliation in regard to his non-normative sexuality.

Gathering Day is a full-length tandem narrative screenplay set in both the present and in 1974. In writing this screenplay, one of my intentions was to explore through my own fiction some of the issues dealt with in the essay. In so doing I hope to convey some aspects of the 'lived experience' of those who like the characters in these films (and myself) came of age during this glitter- dusted 'topsy-turvy sliver of time'.

Shame and Queer Identity in *Velvet Goldmine* and *Breakfast on Pluto*

‘Nothing makes one so bold, as being told one is a sinner’ – Oscar Wilde

Velvet Goldmine (1998) director Todd Haynes – like Sedgwick – identifies shame as a powerfully creative force in queer childhood, a theme he also explores in *Dottie Gets Spanked* (1993) and *Poison* (1991). In an early scene in VG, eight year old Jack Fairy is brutally set upon at school because of his effeminate appearance and mannerisms as the narrator remarks:

‘Childhood, adults always say, is the happiest time in life. But as long as he could remember, Jack Fairy knew different.’ Standing in front of his parents’ bedroom mirror he demonstrates this creativity born from stigma by transforming the blood from his split lip into crimson lipstick, smirking knowingly at his reflection as the narrator continues: ‘One mysterious day, he would discover that somewhere there were others quite like him . . . and one day, the whole stinking world would be theirs.’

That day arrived with the advent of glam rock. In his online review in *The Cult Canon: Velvet Goldmine*, Scott Tobias describes glam as ‘an alien subculture . . . built on fluid identity and sexuality’ which, although fleeting, had a profound impact on the (predominantly queer) ‘outcasts whom it enchanted and inspired.’ VG is both an account of the history of glam and *almost* the story of David Bowie, whose career ascended into the stratosphere once he adopted his alien, bisexual Ziggy Stardust persona. Ziggy was, in Bowie’s own words, the ‘leper Messiah’, taking on the collective mantle of queer shame and transforming it through the

alchemy of electrifying, theatrical - and unabashedly queer - performance. As Sedgwick concludes in *Touching Feeling*: 'Shame, it might finally be said, transformational shame, is *performance*' (37).

Those 'quite like' Jack were Tobias's predominantly queer 'outcasts', the same disaffected youth alluded to in T. Rex's 1972 hit 'Children of the Revolution', rejecting both hegemonic and countercultural mores of conformity to join what in VG is described as the 'flash stampede' towards glamour, excitement and sexual fluidity. Jack next appears in his early twenties, a strikingly attractive androgynous figure calmly lighting a cigarette in the midst of a literal stampede towards the Slade/Maxwell Demon concert in London. Amongst the 'glitter kids' who pause to stare, whispering his name in admiration, is the shy, permanently embarrassed Arthur Stuart (Christian Bale), described by Bennett as 'scampering through the movie with a perpetual, heart breaking blush' (28).

This is first in evidence at the local record shop, where a tracking shot follows his perusal of a display of 'Top 20' albums. He stops at Brian Slade's *The Ballad of Maxwell Demon*, incongruously sandwiched between the latest offerings from mainstream artists such as Petula Clark, The Osmonds, Simon and Garfunkel and Gilbert O'Sullivan. Borrowing money from his brother to make the purchase he is forced to reveal the cover, which features Brian sprawled full length and naked, covered only by a length of fabric. His brother immediately accuses him of being 'disgusting' for liking 'those pansy rockers.'

Mortified, Arthur stammers a confused denial when his brother's friend aggressively derides Brian as 'a fucking poof.' His confusion and embarrassment are, of course, directly related to his own (queer) identity, which throughout the film is largely constructed via his

mimetic response to Brian. As Davis states, ‘Brian . . . seems to be pivotal in how Arthur becomes constituted as Arthur’ (91).

Accordingly, Arthur watches in rapt fascination as Brian (Jonathan Rhys –Myers) minces and pouts his way through a television interview where he declares that both he and his wife are bisexual. While his parents look on blankly, Arthur is so affected by seeing his own desires articulated – publicly and *without shame* - that he entertains a brief fantasy of leaping up in front of his stoic, unblinking parents and pointing to the television, shrieking ‘That is me! That’s me, that is! That is *me!*’ This scene echoes David Bowie’s infamous ‘coming out’ in a 1972 interview published in the *Melody Maker*: ‘I’m gay . . . and always have been, even when I was David Jones,’ he declared. Even if the interviewer wasn’t entirely convinced – ‘There’s a sly jollity about how he says it, a secret smile at the corners of his mouth’ (quoted in Middles and Novick 27) - the effect was profound. That Bowie later recanted his very public declaration of a non-normative sexuality and was almost certainly, as Dery (373) concludes, ‘disappointingly straight – or at least, only marginally bi-curious,’ is ultimately irrelevant; he may not have been gay, but his performances as Ziggy were emphatically, and publicly, queer. Boy George, lead singer of 80s ‘gender bending’ group Culture Club recalls:

For me, Bowie was a life-changer ... If you’re a kid living in an environment where you feel alien most of the time, and you suddenly see this guy on telly in a catsuit with no eyebrows putting his arm around another man, it’s incredible (Auslander 77).

Writer and *New York Daily News* rock critic Jim Farber concurs in describing the experience of travelling through the city on public transport to a concert with a friend, both dressed as Bowie-ites:

. . . Here we were, graced by a time (the mid-70s) and buoyed by a trend (glitter rock) that turned out to be golden – a time when the relationship between flouncy affectation and sexual orientation seemed tenuous at best . . . In such a topsy-turvy sliver of time, no-one had to know that I was precisely as gay my clothes might inform anyone from a later – or earlier – generation (Auslander 229).

In summarising the impact of glam, Auslander concludes:

Glam provided very public images of alternative ways of imagining gender and sexuality, images that audiences seized upon and from which they constructed the musicians' identities and articulated those identities to their own. The demand for the freedom to explore and construct one's identity, in terms of gender, sexuality, or any other terms, is glam rock's most important legacy (234).

This is clearly evident in VG as Arthur furthers his identification with Brian's queerness by listening to the album in his room and poring over images of Brian as both 'himself' and Maxwell; these activities allow a brief, euphoric respite from the 'bad feeling' he has about himself. Momentarily escaping his ultra-conservative parents and the stultifying atmosphere of his home, he walks through the high street wearing a skin tight purple top adorned with cherries, badges and sparkling brooches. His confidence, however, appears to falter as he passes through clusters of similarly clad teenagers. As Tobias states:

It's a classic coming-out scene for Arthur, but Haynes and Bale don't play it as strictly joyous. Instead, we witness a kid who's simultaneously liberated and terrified to put himself out there; even when he spots another pack of like-minded teenagers, he feels removed from them.

This aligns with Sedgwick's argument that shame is both unifying and sharply individuating, as it 'mantles the threshold between introversion and extroversion' ("Queer

Performativity” 8). Even while Arthur longs for the freedom of queer self-expression, he withdraws when confronted with those who appear to be ‘like-minded’.

Shortly thereafter, Arthur is discovered by his parents masturbating over images of Brian and his lover Curt Wild. In abject humiliation he stands weeping in front of his bedroom mirror, head bowed and shoulders slumped as his father rages: ‘You bring *shame* to this house! You bring *shame* to your mother and me! It’s a *shameful*, filthy thing you’re doing!’ Thus he leaves home in silent disgrace, both diegetic and non-diegetic sound muted as he boards a bus to London sharing a regretful, shame-filled glance with his mother as he disappears.

In London he befriends wildly flamboyant glam rock group The Flaming Creatures (Haynes’ nod to Jack Smith’s scandalously queer 1965 film), becoming their lodger. As the Creatures prepare to perform at glam rock’s swansong - the ‘Death of Glitter’ show - Arthur joins them, enthusiastically transforming himself into Maxwell Demon in a scene diametrically opposed to the one in which we last saw his reflected image; the heart breaking humiliation suffered at his parents’ house. Jostling for space in front of the mirror, he tells them: ‘I don’t think you should bother. I think I should go on stage tonight instead of you.’ This astonishing *volte-face*- both literally and figuratively – aligns with Crimp’s understanding of shame as ‘the switching point between stage fright and stage presence, between being a wallflower to being a diva’ (71).

In the film’s present – the bleak, dystopian (and distinctly Orwellian) New York of 1984 – we see a hegemonic recuperation of heteronormativity, which reflects both the right-wing political climate and the wave of fear, ignorance and moral panic that accompanied the awareness of AIDS. Accordingly, Arthur’s image is now that of a quiet, serious and buttoned-down journalist. When he objects to being assigned the task of investigating the fate of his

former idol, he is told that he was chosen ‘because he remembers’. In a wry voiceover, Arthur muses: ‘Because I remember . . . Suddenly I was being paid to remember all the things that money, the future and the serious life had made so certain I’d forget.’

In the stultifying and implicitly homophobic environment of America in 1984, what Arthur has been at such pains to forget over the past decade is his teenage stint as what Davis describes as ‘a full, gussied up participant in the . . . glittery specularisation of genderfuck and camp identity’(90) . In *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, Deleuze cites *Citizen Kane* as an example of how identity can be (re)created through ‘sheets of past’ (111). For Davis, Haynes’ structural adaptation of *Citizen Kane* allows for readings of ‘the self, of memory, of fantasy or desire and its relation to history . . . within its contemporary, queer frames of reference’ (89).

Thus as Arthur conducts a reluctant investigation into the whereabouts of Brian Slade through interviews with former manager Cecil, Brian’s ex-wife Mandy and rock star lover Curt Wild he reconstructs not only the events surrounding Brian’s fake shooting and disappearance, but also his own currently disavowed queer identity as all of their cumulative and conjoint ‘histories, memories and fantasies’ intertwine and connect.

In an example of (re) created identity which is pure fantasy, the alien baby Oscar Wilde is discovered on a Dublin doorstep with an emerald pin attached to his shawl. In an online interview with *The Onion*’s Keith Phipps shortly after VG’s release Haynes acknowledges the film’s multiple references to Wilde, stating: ‘In my research, all roads led to Oscar’. If, as Haynes suggests, Slade/Bowie was the patron saint of glam, then Wilde can surely be considered the patron saint of shame. Haynes draws a parallel between Wilde’s eloquent, provocative and public repudiation of Romantic ideals and ‘what the glam-rockers, particularly Bowie and Bryan

Ferry, were attacking in the earnestness of '60s culture. Trying to shock, but with wit, cleverness and homosexuality.'

The pin, significantly, changes hands several times throughout the film after being discovered with Oscar. A century later it is found by Jack Fairy as he lies in the dirt following his schoolyard beating; he wears it constantly until it is stolen by Brian, who then passes it to Curt. For Bennett, it signifies 'transhistorical bonds between those most prone to shame' (24), while Davis regards it as representing a 'queer form of parentage' (63). I suggest that it is also serves as a blazon for the agentive potential of stepping onstage and claiming your [queer] identity, as each character draws on their experiences of childhood abjection in acting out their queer identity on stage.

In a scene from his dour Birmingham childhood Brian performs 'Tutti Frutti' dressed as Little Richard, complete with makeup, in front of his shocked and disapproving family. Bowie, Bolan and many other artists have spoken of their desperation to escape the colourless monotony of suburban life and values; little wonder, perhaps, that Brian chooses to dazzle onstage by transmogrifying into a glittering, bisexual alien. Curt – after being found in a compromising situation with his older brother – was given electrotherapy in an (obviously failed) attempt to 'fry the fairy clean out of him,' which according to Brian's former agent had the unfortunate effect of 'sending him bonkers every time he heard an electric guitar.'

Curt's stage presence exudes raw, aggressively potent and deliberately provocative sexual energy. When Brian and Mandy first encounter him they watch, transfixed, as he simulates masturbation onstage in front of an outraged, howling audience. 'When you're abused like that', says Mandy, 'you know you've touched the stars.' Brian cannot conceal his jealousy – or attraction - as he replies: 'I just wish I'd thought of it.'

In contrast Jack Fairy is quiet, dignified and almost regal in his only on-stage appearance in the film, delivering a soulful rendition of Roxy Music's Humphrey Bogart tribute '2HB' at the 'Death of Glitter' concert. In both his performance and identity, shame manifests as 'the affective substrate necessary to the transformation of one's distinctiveness into a queer kind of dignity' (Crimp 72).

When Curt gives the pin to Arthur at the end of their interview 'for his image', a flashback returns him in memory/fantasy to a London rooftop where, after his exhilarating transformation at the 'Death of Glitter' concert he and Curt share an intimate tryst – Arthur's first queer sexual experience. In voiceover, the adult Arthur observes: 'He called it freedom. A freedom you can allow yourself. Or not.' As they make love the spaceship which delivered the alien infant Oscar to the Wilde's doorstep swoops over the rooftop, raining glitter down on the lovers like a benediction.

While in typically oblique fashion Haynes never reveals precisely what 'it' might be, it is surely reasonable to infer that he – and Curt - are referring to the physical expression of queer sexual identity. In 'becoming' Maxwell Demon, even if just for one night, Arthur stages his own performance and finally overcomes his shame to act on his queer desire. As the spaceship makes a final pass overhead, the teenaged Arthur whispers:

'Make a wish! And see yourself on-stage, inside-out, a tangle of garlands in your hair. Of course you were pleasantly surprised.'

‘Up and down the street in disgrace’ - Ma Braden, *Breakfast on Pluto*

Gender theorist and performance artist Kate Bornstein suggests that once a person has broken a taboo and dealt with the consequences – in other words, survived the shame of mis-performance – they become empowered. In an online interview for e-zine *enfemme* discussing her book *Gender Outlaw*, she states: ‘It’s like the position of the fool in the royal court. When you break a taboo and come to terms with it, then you’re free of the cultural whip called humiliation.’ (nd)

In Neil Jordan’s *Breakfast on Pluto* (BOP) this idea appears germane to the construction of Patrick/Kitten’s nascent queer identity; the frequent punishments meted out for his gender mis-performances both at home and at school appear to encourage rather than deter his exhibitionist behaviour. As an eight year old already operating outside heteronormative discourse, we see him wearing his foster mother’s shoes and his foster sister’s best dress as he applies lipstick – ‘Just the job! Cutex Coral Pink’ - in front of a mirror while watching *Les Girls*, which he obviously knows by heart. ‘Champers, darling? *Now* you’re talking!’ he tells his reflection, Irish brogue replaced by a clipped English accent.

Caught by an outraged Ma Braden he is thrust into a tub and viciously scrubbed clean of his ‘sin’. She berates him for his wickedness, striking him with the scrubbing brush and forcing him to repeat ‘I am a boy, not a girl’; an example of the ‘active punishment of inappropriate behaviours’ described by Chinn (29). She is encouraged by Caz, Patrick’s foster sister, who shrilly exhorts her to ‘Make him say it right! Teach him to wear my dress – give him the brush again!’ Spent, Ma Braden then threatens to march him ‘up and down the street in disgrace in front of the whole town’. Rather than being alarmed at this prospect, Patrick appears delighted. ‘Promise?’ he asks.

Bornstein has, however, been criticised for a utopian approach to the issue of queer identity. While breaking a social taboo may be liberating, emotional freedom from the sting of that ‘cultural whip’ does not afford protection from the potentially (particularly for LGBTQ persons) unpleasant and/or dangerous consequences of transgression. In *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), de Certeau describes the relational power structure operating within society in terms of *strategies* and *tactics* (xix). For de Certeau, a strategy is a force-relationship imposed by a ‘proper’ entity on that (or those) against which it defines itself, or seeks to control. While his examples include business, science and the military, it is appropriate to include those bodies of power which seek to control Patrick/Kitten throughout the course of the film; namely, the Catholic Church, the education system and the law.

Those over which this power is exerted must employ *tactics*, which de Certeau describes as frequently subversive “ways of operating” (xix) within and against a dominant and often hostile power structure. In BOP, Patrick/Kitten employs the tactics of fantasy, performance and speech in coping with the frequent humiliations and punishments to which s/he is subjected. In a scene shortly after the dressing up incident his foster mother seats him in front of a televised football game, thrusting a sports magazine into his unwilling hands as she declares: ‘Brother Barnabas says he’ll try you on the football team – and I want you to read this.’

Still smarting from his physical punishment Patrick wisely complies, but instantly subverts the images before him into a lively fantasy where he scores a goal for Ireland – wearing a full length silver lame evening gown. Throughout the film, rewriting his immediate (powerless) circumstances inspires a richly fabulated internal life of fantasy and desire; this affords brief, opportunistic respite from the ‘certain power’ to which he is subject.

Like Arthur in VG, his adolescence coincides with the advent of glam rock, and while the trend for feminised, gender bending fashion and non-normative sexual identities allows him hitherto undreamed of opportunities to indulge his desire for female clothing and adornment, as a pupil at a Catholic school Patrick's queer identity is fundamentally problematic. His appearance and behaviour frequently elicit punitive attention through the strategy of '*panoptic practice*' (de Certeau 36), whereby the weak are monitored and controlled through surveillance. In one example, when students are given the opportunity to ask a (supposedly anonymous) question about their changing bodies through a 'problem box' he breaks yet another taboo by asking 'Do you know any place there's a good sex change?'

De Certeau contends that 'whatever [a tactic] wins, it does not keep' (xi) and while Patrick proves incorrigible in his constant efforts to express his queer identity, his victories are short lived; the 'question box' incident results in his expulsion from school. His foster mother feigns a heart attack, telling him that they are 'disgraced in front of the whole town', and his foster sister cruelly rejects his attempt at conciliation. Unlike the tortured Arthur in VG, Patrick shrugs his shoulders, packs his floral suitcase and hits the road, where he is picked up by the tour bus of glam rock band Billy Hatchett and the Mohawks.

Billy - archetypal 'hard' man and gun runner for the IRA - is gay, although the quintessentially queer styles and images on which glam was predicated mean that not even all of his band mates are aware of this. As they watch Billy and Patrick embrace, one mutters: 'I've seen it all now. I tell you, I've fucking well seen it all'. Another member of the band looks at him incredulously, asking: 'Where the fuck do you think he disappeared to when we were in San Francisco?' This reiterates the point made by Sedgwick that we can be affected by the shame of others; in this case, the perceived stigma of Billy's homosexuality.

In a scene shortly thereafter, Kitten takes the stage dressed as a squaw to perform an overblown, mawkish rendition of 'Sand' with Billy. Clearly mortified, the band can scarcely force themselves to play, while members of the audience jeer and throw cans at the stage.

Another example occurs when Kitten is working as assistant to magician Bertie, and he 'hypnotises' her into believing that total strangers and even inanimate objects are the 'Phantom Lady', her long-lost mother (and another favourite fantasy). Her friend Charlie, deeply embarrassed on her behalf, furiously intervenes, physically dragging her away as she cries: 'Bastards! Think you can make fun of her?'

Another tactic deployed by Kitten in the face of his ongoing, shame-filled exclusion from heteronormative discourse is what Butler describes as queered speech, i.e. 'speech returned to the original reciter in a changed form, re-uttered against the intended meaning and original purpose' (1997:14). When his childhood friend Irwin joins an IRA paramilitary group he walks alongside him as they march through the street, asking if he volunteered whether he might have pink sunglasses instead of their black 'Easy Rider' style issue. Stony faced, Irwin asks 'Can't you take anything serious?' to which he replies, 'Oh, serious, serious, serious, serious!' For Kitten, *serious* signifies a conflation of the power relations and strategies which attempt to coerce him - most often through shame - to take up a position within a binary gender system. His resistance, via the tactic of 'queering' expressions of gender difference (Mäntymäki 2009:284), results in him remaining, in Butler's terms, unintelligible .

An example of this is his response to the death of his childhood friend Lawrence, who is accidentally killed by the detonation of an IRA bomb. Immediately after Lawrence's funeral, Kitten disposes of the cache of guns his lover has stashed for the local paramilitary. Hurling them into a lake, he says to himself: 'Serious, serious. Time for some *serious* spring cleaning.' In

this scene, he engages two diametrically opposed ideologies; one of masculinity (the guns, representing masculine violence), and the traditionally feminine associations of spring cleaning. Deeply unsettled by their inability to frighten or intimidate him into revealing the whereabouts of their weapons the gun runners resort to shaming him, calling him a ‘mental Nancy boy’ not worth the bullet required to kill him. Kitten objects to being singled out – ‘you kill everyone else!’ – pleading that they spare a bullet as he has ‘nothing left to live for in this stupid, serious world.’ According to Mäntymäki, this exchange with the paramilitaries both undermines their hegemony and proves the efficiency of Kitten’s strategy of queering. (For de Certeau, this would not be a strategy, but rather a tactic.)

Although Kitten rarely shows any concern for his safety, as a trans person his position outside of heteronormative discourse carries very real risks. Peil (1995) states, ‘Situations where trans people are revealed usually become dangerous and may result in physical violence. . . It is not always clear whether the men who hit on her realise she is not a woman-born-woman’ (59). Even when not explicitly dangerous, such encounters are invariably humiliating. Entering a London pub in full drag he is almost immediately approached by a man who makes a sexual advance to him, only to recoil in horror on realising that he is physically male. This embarrassing rebuffal causes Kitten to retreat again into fantasy, and he asks another (apparently oblivious) man with whom he is dancing to pretend to be singer Bobby Goldsboro.

When the pub is torn apart by an IRA bomb and medical attention reveals the truth of his physical gender he finds himself in a truly ‘serious’ situation, arrested on suspicion of being a terrorist. For six days he is humiliated, harassed and beaten in the hopes of getting him to confess to planting the bomb which killed eleven people. Eventually he ‘confesses’ in a wildly fictional, erotically charged statement in which he again queerly positions himself as an outsider to the

dichotomy of gender, invoking the ideological extremes of Semtex (a plastic explosive favoured by bomb makers) and his 'secret anti-terrorist spray' which is, in fact, the über-feminine iconic perfume Chanel No. 5. This impossible fabulation finally convinces the two interrogating detectives of his innocence and one carries him almost tenderly back to his cell. Just as with Kitten's other tactical successes, however, victory is short lived and he is soon ejected from his 'sweet little cell' back into working the streets.

While he is thus engaged the more violent of the two detectives pulls up alongside him, admonishing him over the dangers of his lifestyle. When Kitten asks if the detective has come to avail himself of his services, he warns that he could have Kitten arrested. In de Certeau's terms this is the deployment of another strategy, and serves as a reminder that he represents the law, one of the power structures to which Kitten (by soliciting) is subject, telling him: 'It's a lot more serious than that, Patrick.' His reply: 'Well, of course it is. Of course it's serious. Everything's serious,' acknowledges his position of weakness, in terms of relational power if not agency. Reiterating the dangers described by Peil, the detective warns: 'Oh, you're gonna die out there, Paddy!'

Mäntymäki describes BOP as 'a narrative of resistance against the regulatory regime of heterosexuality' (119), and Patrick/Kitten's queer identity, predicated on shame, is also firmly rooted in his persistent refusal of classification. He remains a subject outside of, rather than bound by (or even located between) sexual or gender binaries. Again, this renders him 'unintelligible', a position which holds significant subversive and agentive potential. Within the safer working environment of the prostitutes' collective his 'peep show' performances exemplify Sedgwick's definition of queer in *Tendencies* as a "continuing moment, movement, motive – recurrent, eddying, troublant" (1993: xii). His feminine clothing (peach silk Carole Lombard-

style negligee) often dissonantly exposes his masculine body, but Kitten does not always attempt to present a more cohesive, 'readable' image; when a punter expresses disappointment at his lack of 'bazoozums', she tells him that she is a 'svelte gamine.'

Throughout the film Kitten utilises the shame of his gender dissonant childhood, constructing his queer identity by the indefatigable deployment of tactics; namely, performance, speech and fantasy. By the film's end Kitten, her father the priest, Charlie and Charlie's baby have formed a highly functional (queer) family unit, which although not viable in Tyreelin (enraged Catholic housewives burn down the Manse after their protests against Kitten and the unwed, pregnant Charlie living there are ignored by the Bishop) looks set to continue within the relative anonymity of London. For Mäntymäki (122), such configurations signify 'what is most fascinating about queer, its disrespect of essence, stability and even its resistance to definition'.

Conclusion

Both *Velvet Goldmine* and *Breakfast on Pluto* represent gender, sexuality and identity as fluid and unstable, with the potential to be repeatedly constructed, dissembled, and re-constructed. Haynes and Jordan portray characters who draw upon the trenchant force generated by queer shame - which Sedgwick refers to as a 'near-inexhaustible source of transformational energy' (1993, 4) - within the context of a sociohistorical setting which briefly highlighted the constructedness and inherent instability of identity, in particular gender identity.

In unpacking 'queer' and its relational affect to identity, Crimp states that . . . 'shame is what makes us queer, both in the sense of having a queer identity and in the sense that queerness is in a volatile relationship to identity, which it just as readily disrupts or subverts as it constructs' (70). The divergent role of shame in relation to queer identity is clearly evident in both films, as I have demonstrated by exploring the ways in which the main characters transit, in Sedgwick's (1993, 135) words, 'From shame to shyness to shining - and, inevitably, back, and back again'.

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GATHERING DAY

A screenplay by

Joanne Paulsen

05009316

FADE IN

EXT. WELSH COASTLINE - DAY (1974)

A summer morning. GARETH EVANS, 15, skinny and bespectacled with an unruly mop of dark hair, and SEREN JONES almost 14, petite with long, straight, platinum blonde hair, walk along a picturesque beach toward a narrow, ancient looking jetty. A red and white border collie trots beside them.

Gareth points toward a small fishing boat painted white with orange and turquoise trim, and as they get closer we can see the name 'Dolphin' painted in black italic lettering on the side. Standing on the deck unloading a case of fish is RHYS EVANS, 15, slightly built, green eyed, sandy haired. He jumps down from the boat to join them.

RHYS

Have you been through the village?
Did you see? They are coming -
they're playing at the Ffarwel Haf
(Goodbye to Summer) dance!

SEREN

Oh my God! They're never!

Her face falls.

SEREN (CONT'D)

I'll never be allowed to go!

GARETH

Who's coming? What are you two on
about?

Rhys jumps down from the boat to the jetty, tossing a fish to the dog.

RHYS

There you go, Jess.

SEREN

I told you, Gareth - Gerry L'amour
and the Lovers! It was in the paper
last week!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RHYS

Come on, I'll show you the poster.
Seren, just tell your Mam and Da
that Gareth will be there to
protect you.

Gareth and Seren roll their eyes in unison, and Gareth punches Rhys on the arm.

RHYS (CONT'D)

Ow! Watch it!

GARETH

Maybe I don't want to go to a
stupid dance.

RHYS

Come on now, you know full well
you'll be there. If it was the top
brick of the chimney she was
wanting, you'd be away getting a
ladder this minute.

Gareth grabs him from behind, frog-marching him to the edge of the jetty.

SEREN

(Laughing) Gareth, don't! You know
he can't swim!

After pushing Rhys one step closer to the water, Gareth releases him.

GARETH

A fisherman who can't swim. Now
that's ironic.

RHYS

Yeah, well, maybe I'll learn one
day - but you'll never be able to
dance.

The three of them head along the jetty toward towards the village. The dog, agitated with the commotion, is barking and weaving between them.

EXT. WELSH COASTLINE - DAWN

Sunrise over the same beach. In a small cove where steep green hills covered in yellow gorse rise high above the shore, two uniformed policemen stand thigh deep in water. Gareth watches anxiously at the water's edge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

From behind a small outcrop of rocks a tightly bound sheaf of wheat floats into view. Wedged into it is a burning candle. The policemen wade towards it and the one in front shakes his head, looking sombre.

GARETH

Seren!

He falls to his knees as Seren's lifeless body is lifted from the water. A middle-aged couple - her parents, IFOR and BRANWEN - rush to him and the three cling together, weeping.

FLASH FORWARD
TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY (PRESENT)

Gareth, now in his fifties, places a bunch of pink lilies on a grave. The headstone reads 'Seren Lowri Jones, 6th July 1960 - 3rd August 1974. Beloved youngest daughter of Branwen and Ifor, and dearest sister of Angharad. An angel sleeping.' The card attached reads 'Happy Birthday. Love you forever. Gareth.'

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY

An Essex co-ed secondary school, noisy and rough. SEREN JONES, fourteen, named for her great aunt and bearing a striking resemblance, heads to class with her friend ALEXIS. Statuesque and red haired, Alexis has rearranged her uniform to show a large expanse of fishnet tights. An extremely good looking black youth, FRANKIE DUVAL, waves from across the yard.

FRANKIE

Seren!

Seren waves, looking flustered. Alexis nudges her.

ALEXIS

He is totally into you!

They are joined by their friend LIA, who is ordinary looking in every way - brown hair, hazel eyes, average height, medium build.

SEREN

What have we got next, Lia?

Lia pulls a timetable out of her bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIA
Your favourite! Double art.

SEREN
Nooo!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The girls file into their classroom. There is no teacher and the noise is deafening. Hip hop MUSIC plays and at the front of the room Frankie teaches a couple to 'dougie'.

ALEXIS
Woohoo! Go Frankie!

She looks speculatively at Seren.

ALEXIS (CONT'D) What's the deal with you two, anyway? Has he asked you to the dance?

SEREN
(Shrugs) He kind of - mentioned it.

LIA
That's to make sure you're not going with anyone else! He's so going to ask you.

Alexis looks less than pleased.

ALEXIS
You think so, Ophelia?

LIA
Don't call me that! You know I hate it. It's totally minging.

She looks down at Alexis' tights.

LIA (CONT'D)
Anyway, Alexis, you'll be sent home before lunch.

Alexis dumps her backpack on the desk beside Seren.

ALEXIS
That's the plan.

She turns to Seren.

ALEXIS (CONT'D) What's your problem with art, anyway? Mr. Paget lurves you!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

That is the problem! Ever since he found out about Gran it's like he's watching me all the time, just in case I suddenly show some talent!

LIA

But you do have talent. Your drawings are beautiful.

SEREN

Not like Gran.

ALEXIS

(Imitating Mr. Paget) Oh my God! Angharad Jones? The Angharad Jones?

SEREN

Yes, Alexis. I remember.

ALEXIS

Believe me, the whole class remembers.

MR. PAGET - tall, thin and serious - enters the room, and the noise abates. On seeing Alexis' tights he sighs and hands her a referral slip from his desk. She brandishes it above her head and blows kisses at the girls - and a mortified Mr. Paget - then 'dougies' towards the door, accompanied by cat calls and whistles from the rest of the class.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

(To Seren) Text me about tomorrow!

INT. BATHROOM - ESSEX - DAY

CLOSE UP of Seren's face underwater. Her eyes are closed and her hair floats around her face. The camera pulls back slightly to reveal that she is in a bath. She suddenly sits bolt upright in a cascade of water as the door flies open and her nine year old brother HARRI bursts in. Dripping and indignant, she scrambles to cover herself with a towel.

SEREN

Harri! What did I tell you?

Harri is short for his age, chubby and bespectacled. He is wearing 'onesie' pyjamas and clutching a grubby and bedraggled soft toy, a black and white cow. He frowns, thinking hard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRI

That - um - that if I needed something I should ask Dad. (Crestfallen) And I should always knock first. But I need a fire element Skylander, and I can't find Spyro.

Seren wraps yet another towel around herself and sits on the edge of the bath.

SEREN

What's Dad doing? You're not supposed to play Xbox till after dinner. Have a look for Spyro in your dressing gown pocket. Now, scoot!

She playfully shoos him away and he runs out of the room, laughing.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

In a modern, modestly furnished room Harri sits in front of a large screen TV playing Skylanders on his XBox. JENNIFER JONES, mid thirties, not as pretty as her daughter but platinum blonde and fashionably dressed, looks anxiously at the clock on the wall.

JENNIFER

Harri, please! We're going to be late getting to Nan's - look at you, you're not even dressed!

Harri ignores her completely. She tries again.

JENNIFER (CONT'D) Sweetheart, please. Nan's expecting us -

HARRI

(Eyes still fixed to screen) Don't want to.

ALUN JONES, mid forties, bespectacled, dark hair with a grey streak in the fringe, walks in from the kitchen holding a phone to his ear and looking worried.

ALUN

(Welsh accent) Okay, Gareth. Thanks. Chwedleua atat 'n ebrwydd (I'll talk to you soon.)

He puts the phone down, frowning, and Jennifer looks at him quizzically.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALUN (CONT'D)

Mam's not answering her phone. I've asked Gareth to go over and check on her.

Seren appears, carrying Harri's clothes. Jennifer is visibly relieved.

SEREN

Come on, Maggot. Put these on and maybe we'll get to stop for an ice cream on the way home.

HARRI

Chocolate ice cream?

JENNIFER

Double chocolate!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NAN'S HOUSE

In a small, cluttered, kitschy room sit Jennifer, Seren, Harri and NAN, who is in her late fifties, slightly overweight and squeezed into a dress meant for somebody considerably younger and slimmer. Jennifer looks tense and miserable, Seren is texting. Harri begins drumming his heels against his chair.

NAN

That's enough of that, young man!
Cost me a fortune, those new slip covers. Got them out of a magazine.

Harri's drumming increases.

NAN (CONT'D)

I said, stop it!

She reaches across and slaps him on the leg. The blow is not hard but he roars in protest, jumping up and tipping over the coffee table. A plate of biscuits scatters across the floor.

JENNIFER

(Nervously) Mum, you shouldn't -

NAN

Shouldn't what? Look what he's done, little beggar! That's his problem, Jennifer, no discipline. You're too soft.

Seren glares furiously at her grandmother.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

Come on, Harri. Let's go for a walk.

Harri's sobs subside to a sniffle, and they leave.

NAN

Spoiled, the pair of them.

Jennifer rights the table and picks up the biscuits.

JENNIFER

For God's sake, Mum, he's not spoiled. He has Asperger's.

Her mother looks unimpressed.

NAN

Huh! Never had nothing like that in my day.

She plumps up the cushions on the couch, then sits down.

NAN (CONT'D)

No prizes for guessing where it came from, either. Nothing wrong with anyone on our side of the family.

Jennifer opens her mouth as if to argue, then simply shakes her head.

NAN (CONT'D)

You look right peaky. Doing too much, as usual. That husband of yours has got a lot to answer for, sat at home all day while you work all the hours God sends.

JENNIFER

Leave off, Mum. He looks after Harri most days, and this new publisher sounds really keen. Soon as he's published -

Nan shakes her head.

NAN

Argue black was white, you would. Always been the same, ever since you could talk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jennifer slumps back in her seat, closing her eyes in resignation.

INT. SEREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In a bedroom with several posters of horses on the walls Seren lies in bed awake. OS her parents are arguing. The door opens and Harri appears.

SEREN
What is it, Maggot?

Harri edges closer to the bed, blinking.

HARRI
They're too noisy. Moo can't sleep.
And there's a creeper under my bed.

Seren sits up, moving over to make room.

SEREN
You've been playing Minecraft on
Dad's laptop again, haven't you?

Harri nods, but doesn't move.

HARRI
And Moo?

SEREN
(Sighing) And Moo. What are they
arguing about now?

Harri frowns, considering.

HARRI
What's a Welsh witch?

SEREN
Did Mum say it?

Harri nods.

SEREN (CONT'D)
That'll be Gran.

HARRI
And what's a (thinks carefully)
'God forsaken hell hole'?

SEREN
Wales. Or Gran's place. Probably
both.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A modern kitchen with very few personal touches. Alun and Jennifer face each other across the table.

JENNIFER

We weren't supposed to go for another fortnight! Annie's still on maternity leave - I can't just walk out of the salon!

Alun adjusts his glasses and pushes some history texts to one side.

ALUN

When Gareth went over this morning Mam wouldn't let him in. She didn't know who he was.

His shoulders slump, and he runs his hands through his hair.

JENNIFER

(Voice rising) If Angharad would sell up and move here we could keep a proper eye on her and not have to keep making this bloody annual pilgrimage! And if you'd taken the job at Hillesden maybe we could afford a real holiday, like other people!

ALUN

For God's sake, she hasn't lived in England in over thirty years - she wouldn't even come to her last exhibition! And I told you, I'm just waiting to hear from Routledge again - they've practically guaranteed me a contract!

He moves to the window, where he stands in silence for a moment. Jennifer begins to move towards him, but appears to change her mind.

ALUN (CONT'D)

And just for the record - that 'bloody pilgrimage' is the highlight of my year.

He picks up his jacket and walks out. After a BEAT we hear the front door close with a decisive CLICK.

INT. - SEREN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

It is barely light. Harri charges into the bedroom and launches himself onto the bed, landing squarely on Seren's chest and knocking the breath out of her.

HARRI

Wake up, Happy Birthday! Wake up!

He pushes a card - and Moo - into her face. She splutters, and sits up.

SEREN

Get off, Maggot! What time is it?

Harri's face falls.

HARRI

I made you a Happy Birthday card!

Seren hugs him, and picks up the card. It has a squiggle of letters and a misshapen star, outlined in silver glitter, on the front.

HARRI (CONT'D)

It's a star, look, just like your name! And a fourteen!

SEREN

So it is! I love it. Thank you, sweetheart.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jennifer, heavily made up and dressed just a little too young for her age, stands outside the closed bathroom door. She looks tense and miserable.

JENNIFER

Harri, please come out. Your hair's fine, truly. Come on now, we don't want to be late for Seren's birthday tea, do we?

Harri emerges from the bathroom, wearing his best clothes and clutching Moo. His hair is spiked into a mohawk, stiff with hair gel.

Jennifer steers him into the kitchen.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

There now! All ready. Look, Daddy, what do you think of his new shoes?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Now he'll want to run around
outside just like all the other
boys.

HARRI

I don't like outside. And I don't
like pizza.

JENNIFER

Of course you do!

Alun, wearing a shirt and tie, looks up from the papers he is
reading at the table.

ALUN

Actually, he doesn't. That's why I
suggested Thai.

Jennifer's grip on Harri's shoulders tightens. He tries to
pull away.

HARRI

Ow! Too tight, Mummy!

She releases him abruptly, taking a step back.

JENNIFER

(Quietly) Sorry, darling. Go and
tell your sister we're ready.

INT. PIZZA RESTAURANT - NIGHT

An upmarket, trendy pizzeria. At the table are the family
plus Alexis and Lia.

Alexis, loud and raucous, is earning disapproving looks from
the middle-aged couple at the next table. Alun and Jennifer
pointedly ignore each other, and Harri pushes pizza around
his plate.

HARRI

I don't like pizza.

JENNIFER

Please just try some, Harri.

Harri slams down his knife and fork.

HARRI

No! You didn't eat yours!

Jennifer leans across and strokes his hair, trying to avoid
the heavily gelled spikes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNIFER

Mummy doesn't feel so good today, poppet. There's a bug going round at work, and I think I might be coming down with it.

Seren gets out of her seat and kneels beside Harri.

SEREN

Come on, Maggot. If I take the tomato and capsicum off, will you have some for me?

Harri nods, and Seren removes the offending toppings before returning to her seat.

LIA

Why? -

SEREN

He hasn't eaten anything green for months, but since last week it's nothing red, either.

Jennifer's eyes fill with tears which she hastily blinks away.

JENNIFER

What a pair! No meat for Seren, colour-coded for Harri. We should have stopped in and had chip butties.

Alun continues to eat in grim silence. Alexis bursts into loud snorts of laughter as she reads a text. The couple at the next table beckon a waitress over, pointing to an empty table some distance away.

INT. SEREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Seren is sitting up in bed, cell phone pressed to her ear.

SEREN

(Whispering) I am not joking, Alex. Gran's sick, and Dad has to go early. Harri and me have to either go with him or stay with Nan. Yes, I know it means I'll miss the dance. Of course I'm gutted! Okay, text me tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Harri appears, standing silently beside her bed. She moves over to make room for him before switching off the light. For a BEAT the room is pitch dark, and totally silent.

SEREN (CONT'D)
Happy Birthday to me.

EXT. WELSH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

It is early summer, and wild roses and elder bushes are in full bloom everywhere. Alun and Seren stand on a long drive in front of their car attempting to undo the ropes and chain which have been used to bind two broken gates together. Alun looks worried. Harri is asleep in the back seat of the car.

SEREN
Dad, how long since anyone's been here? Or Gran's been out?

Alun finally gets the rope and chains untangled, and drags the gates apart.

ALUN
Gareth or Bethan check on her every few days, but they come by the cliff path on the other side. God knows when she last went out.

They get back into the car, then drive through the gates before pulling them back together and continuing on their way.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

They turn a corner and arrive at a beautiful stone cottage surrounded by what has been a spectacular garden but is now completely overgrown, almost obscuring the bottom storey windows. Seren and Alun get out of the car; Harri is still sleeping.

SEREN
Bloody hell!

Alun looks about to reprimand her but is distracted by the effort required to navigate to the kitchen door. He knocks, then tries the handle; it is unlocked.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

A typical farmhouse kitchen with wooden dresser, scrubbed pine table, drying rack suspended from the ceiling. Several cats scatter at the intrusion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The room is in disarray, dirty dishes and piles of newspaper everywhere. They stand in silence regarding the chaos.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Seren follows Alun along a narrow, overgrown brick path which leads from the back of the farmhouse to a small, ramshackle whitewashed building. As they reach the door, Seren hesitates.

SEREN

Dad, you don't think -

Alun flinches.

ALUN

I'm sure your grandmother's fine.

Just fine.

He pushes the door open and they step inside.

INT. - ANGHARAD'S STUDIO - DAY

Whitewashed inside also, the studio is flooded with light. There are piles of boxes and a free standing closet at one end, and in another corner ANGHARAD JONES paints at an easel which has one leg propped up with a brick. Mid sixties, she has been beautiful and still looks imposing in spite of her unkempt appearance. She appears oblivious to Alun and Seren's arrival.

ALUN

Mam? Mam, It's Alun.

His mother looks at him uncertainly, then something seems to register.

ANGHARAD

Alun. What are you doing here?

Alun is about to reply when Angharad notices Seren. She becomes visibly shaken, almost fearful.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

Seren? Is it really you?

Seren frowns.

SEREN

Of course it's me, Gran. Who - oh.
Her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Harri appears, clutching Moo and still looking sleepy.

ALUN

(Gently) My daughter Seren, Mam.
Your granddaughter. Not your
sister.

Angharad stands up. She looks distressed, but less confused.
She is frail, and unsteady on her feet.

ANGHARAD

Of course. Of course. It's just -
she looks -

Harri edges closer, regarding his grandmother with interest.

HARRI

Hello, Gran. You smell. Did you
have an accident?

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - DAY

In the 'other Seren's' bedroom, Seren rifles through drawers
and the wardrobe. The room is shabby and faded, but has been
pretty. There are some posters of 70's pop stars on the
walls, and a collection of horse ornaments on top of a
bookcase. Harri sits on the bed. The window frames an
impressive view of a hillside covered in yellow flowers.

SEREN

Oh my God, it's like a freaking
time capsule in here! Look at this
stuff!

She has pulled out some flared denim jeans and a sheepskin
lined vest, a pair of slippers like tiger's paws and a pile
of magazines, 'Jackie', 'Tiger Beat' and 'Popswop'. To
Harri's amusement, she puts the slippers on and pretends to
be a tiger, chasing him around the room before pouncing on
him and wrestling him to the floor.

HARRI (Laughing)

Don't eat me!

SEREN (CONT'D)

Okay. Not this time, anyway.

As Harri stands up he notices a picture on the bedside table.
He picks it up.

HARRI

Is that you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It is a photograph of the 'other' Seren, smiling happily into the camera. The resemblance is uncanny. She shakes her head, replacing it on the dresser.

SEREN

No, I told you. It's Gran's sister, the one I was named after. Shall we have a look outside while Dad's making dinner?

He throws his arm around her legs in an affectionate tackle.

HARRI

Yes!

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

The garden is a jungle - Seren holds Harri's hand as they explore. A brick path winds through the wilderness, leading them to the remnants of a kitchen garden laid out in the shape of a wheel. On the other side of this is a disused chicken coop.

INT. CHICKEN COOP - DAY

It is dark and dusty. Harri, fascinated, examines the perches and nesting boxes. Seren walks into a huge spider web and jumps back, squealing and batting at her face.

SEREN

Ugh! Let's go, Maggot. We'll explore some more tomorrow.

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Seren, in track pants and T-shirt and wearing the tiger slippers, is blow drying her wet hair. As she switches it off she tilts her head, frowning.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Seren crosses the hallway, hesitating outside the bedroom opposite hers. The door is open just enough for her to see Angharad sitting up in bed. In a chair beside her is Gareth.

ANGHARAD

You'll take me? You won't forget?

Gareth reaches across and takes her hand.

GARETH

I promise. But you have to start eating properly!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Angharad shrugs impatiently.

ANGHARAD

I know, I know. I've had a lecture from Alun. I just - forget. I used to eat anything! Seren was the picky one.

Gareth chuckles, plumping up her pillows.

GARETH

I've never known anyone with such a sweet tooth. She would have happily lived on Hobnobs and Walnut Whips -

Angharad has closed her eyes. Gareth leans down to kiss her cheek.

GARETH (CONT'D)

I've tired you out, Alun will have my hide. I'll be back tomorrow.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gareth steps into the hallway and almost collides with Seren. His face registers shock and pain at the sight of her, and he gasps audibly when he sees the tiger feet slippers.

GARETH

I'm sorry! I didn't expect - and you're wearing -

Staring at her feet, he puts his coffee cup down carefully on the hall table.

SEREN

(Shrugs) It's okay, I'm used to it. Gran does it every time she sees me. Or else she cries.

GARETH

It's just - you have no idea how much - sorry. Do you still ride? Bethan has sprained her ankle, and she's fretting about her Charlie not getting any exercise. She wanted me to say you're welcome to ride him.

SEREN

Seriously? That would be fantastic!

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

A beautiful early summer morning. Seren and Harri are exploring the garden again. Seren puts her fingers to her lips and points to a small purple butterfly drying its wings in the sun. Suddenly a rabbit bolts across their path, and they both squeal with fright. They then hear OS what has startled the rabbit - the sound of a horse approaching.

Gareth's grandson MAX, also fourteen and with the same dark unruly hair that we first saw on Gareth, appears riding a solid dark bay horse. A red and white border collie trots beside them.

MAX

Hi! I'm Max.

The dog lies down in the grass, panting. Harri edges closer to investigate.

MAX (CONT'D)

Gareth's grandson?

SEREN

I'm Seren - and this is Harri.

HARRI

What's your dog called? Will it bite me?

MAX

That's Gus. The only thing he bites is his dinner.

Max dismounts, handing Seren the reins. She takes them, stroking the horse's neck lovingly. Harri sits down beside the dog, which licks him enthusiastically.

HARRI

Look! He likes me!

MAX

(To Seren) I hear you've volunteered to keep Charlie out of trouble while Mam's laid up.

SEREN

I'm so excited! Not about your Mum, of course - I mean -

She stops, totally embarrassed. Max looks amused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

Should I put him in the home paddock, or are you going to go for a ride?

SEREN

Oh! A ride, but - I'm not sure where to go. And how will you get home?

MAX

I'm going to walk back the other way to check a fence; Dad thinks some sheep might have got out.

That's why I brought Gus.

They walk towards the farmhouse, Seren leading the horse and Harri glued to the dog's side.

MAX (CONT'D)

You should ride up the cliff path to Bryn Melyn. The views are amazing.

HARRI

I know what that means! Yellow hill!

Max turns to look at him with interest.

MAX

Areithi Cymraeg? (You speak Welsh?)

Harri nods.

HARRI

Gwna namyn Seren ewigod mo. (I do, but Seren doesn't.)

MAX

Chwaer ydy iawn 'n bert namyn gwisga t ddeud 'i ddeudaisreaches fel. (Your sister is very pretty, but don't tell her I said so.)

HARRI

(Laughing) Addawa! (I promise!)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As they reach the farm house Alun and Angharad appear. Angharad looks unwell, and frightened. She allows Alun to steer her towards the car.

ALUN

Max! Good to see you. Tell your mother I'll be over soon.

SEREN

Dad! Is it okay if I go for a ride?

ALUN

Just be careful. I'm taking Gran to the doctor's. Harri, you come with us and we'll get some sweets in the village.

HARRI

Okay. But no red or green ones.

Max looks quizzically at Seren, who shakes her head.

SEREN

Don't ask.

EXT. WELSH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Seren rides up the cliff path at a brisk canter. At the top the vista opens up to a steep slope covered in yellow gorse and purple heather, with a panoramic view of the sea and sandy beaches below. She brings the horse to a halt, enchanted. On a nearby gorse bush alights a butterfly the same as the one that she and Harri admired in the garden earlier.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Seren enters the kitchen, flushed and happy. Alun is making himself a cup of coffee. He looks sombre.

SEREN

Dad! I had the most amazing ride - what's wrong? Where's Gran?

ALUN

Upstairs, resting. The doctor's worried about her weight loss and confusion, but we'll know more when the test results come back.

INT. ANGHARAD'S BEDROOM - DAY

Like Seren's bedroom, this is pretty but faded. Seren has brought Angharad a tray, and she cautiously approaches the bed.

SEREN

Gran? Dad thought you might like something now.

Angharad sits up with some effort.

ANGHARAD

There you are! Have you been riding?

Seren puts the tray down beside the bed.

SEREN

It was amazing! I rode right to the top of Bryn Melyn, it's so beautiful up there -

Angharad sits up a little, picking up her cup.

ANGHARAD

That's a funny thing to say.

SEREN

Why?

Angharad takes a sip of her tea.

ANGHARAD

You sound like a visitor, not someone who's seen it every day of her life! Did you drag poor Gareth up there again? I don't know why that boy puts up with you, I really don't.

There is a sharp intake of breath from Seren as she realises that Angharad thinks she is speaking to her sister.

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Seren is sitting in bed, holding her cellphone at different angles in a vain attempt to find some reception. Harri appears beside the bed, Moo under one arm.

SEREN

There's no Creepers here, Harri.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Harri pulls back the covers and climbs in beside her.

HARRI

I know that! Moo just misses you.

Seren smiles, pulling him close to her.

SEREN

Moo does? Really?

Harri nods vigorously.

HARRI

Moo loves you. A lot.

SEREN

Oh! Well, I love Moo. In fact, I love Moo -

She plants a kiss on Harri's forehead

SEREN (CONT'D)

More than anything.

INT. BEAUTY SALON - ESSEX - DAY

An ultra-modern salon. Jennifer is styling the hair of a tackily dressed, bored looking young woman in her early twenties.

CLIENT

So I sez to him, I don't care if we're split, turning up to my sister's wedding with my ex best mate is well out of order, yeah? And he sez -

The salon door swings open to reveal a short, plump woman in her early thirties with an adorable 'mini-me' baby girl in her arms. Jen's face lights up and she hurries over to embrace mother and baby warmly.

JENNIFER

Annie! I can't believe how much Mia has grown! God, I've missed you. When are you coming back?

She takes the baby, who beams at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE

Soon as I can. Rob's mum is still here, and I cannot take another day. I'm going to ask Inga if I can come in tomorrow.

Jen kisses Mia and hands her back.

JENNIFER

Are you sure? I was going to ask if I could start my holidays early - Alun and the kids are in Wales already. Do you think you could cover for me?

ANNIE

Honest, you'd be doing me a favour. And maybe some fresh air would do you good, 'cos frankly babe - you ain't looking so great.

JENNIFER

Cheek!

She returns to her client.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

He turned up at your sister's wedding? With your ex besty? That is seriously out of order.

The young woman waves a magenta-taloned hand in the air.

CLIENT

I know, right? I told him, I sez, Jason, who does that? And he sez -

INT. CAR - DAY

Jennifer drives through a small village in the pouring rain. Stopping in the high street, she steps out of the car and straight into a deep puddle. Mouthing a silent obscenity, she hurries into a nearby tearooms. Emerging with a takeout coffee she shelters under the shop awning, looking cold and miserable. She takes a sip of her coffee before grimacing in disgust, binning it in the nearest rubbish tin and resuming her journey.

EXT. WELSH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Seren is riding across the top of Bryn Melyn. She brings Charlie to a halt, reaching into her jeans pocket and retrieving her cellphone. Her face lights up when she sees that there is reception, and she hastily keys in a number.

SEREN

Lia? It's me! What? Of course, really! You're not going to believe what I'm doing right now - Alexis did what? Lia? Lia! Oh, you cannot be serious -

She looks disbelievingly at her phone, which shows the message 'out of range'.

SEREN (CONT'D)

I hate this freaking place!

Preoccupied, she hasn't noticed Max approaching.

MAX

Hey, it's not that bad.

SEREN

Rubbish cell phone reception and no internet at Gran's - it's like living on another planet!

MAX

(Laughing) You can use my laptop

anytime.

MAX (CONT'D)

And the reception will come right - they're working on the tower outside Penmarthen. Mam sent me to ask you all over this afternoon, she's dying to see you.

INT. GARETH'S KITCHEN - DAY

In a modern, fitted kitchen a pretty dark haired woman in her early thirties is pouring tea. Her lower left leg is strapped. This is BETHAN EVANS, Gareth's daughter and Max's mother. Alun sits at the table, Harri is on the floor playing with Gus. Seren is using Max's laptop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETHAN

Da and Max won't be long, there's a couple of ewes due to lamb across the hill they needed to check on.

ALUN

You look great, Bethan. No regrets about coming home?

Bethan hands him his tea, then manoeuvres herself into a chair.

BETHAN

Not one. I hated living in town. Max was never happy at his Dad's old school, and he needed a fresh start after last term.

ALUN

Trouble at school?

BETHAN

Yep. Broke up the power couple of the year, head girl and captain of the football team.

ALUN

Those things are such a big deal when you're young -

Bethan shakes her head.

BETHAN

Max got a very nasty and very public outing. The other boy denied everything, and went back to his girlfriend.

ALUN

Bloody hell. Poor Max.

BETHAN

He'll be fine at Penmarthen - they've got an active LGBT community and he's already been to a couple of their get-togethers. What about Angharad? Is she feeling better?

Alun puts down his cup, running a hand through his hair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALUN

Still confused, but threatening to scalp me if I touch her painting stuff. I wanted her to come but she's shut herself in her studio; at least now I'll be able to finish cleaning up the kitchen.

He stands, putting on his jacket.

ALUN (CONT'D)

I should get back. It was great to catch up.

Bethan gestures towards the living area, where Seren is engrossed with Max's laptop and Harri is delightedly throwing a chew toy for Gus.

BETHAN

Dad can drop the kids back later - Max wanted to see Seren, and Harri's having such a good time.

ALUN

If you're sure -

There is a small GASP from Seren, unheard by the others; a CLOSE UP of the laptop screen shows Alexis' Facebook page. Her status reads: 'In a relationship with Frankie Duval'.

Seren flicks back to her own page, where there is a message from Frankie: 'Soz Babe. You weren't here.'

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

A car door SLAMS, we hear a chorus of 'goodbyes' and Seren and Harri walk towards the farmhouse. Harri, Moo under one arm, is beaming. Seren looks as though she is fighting back tears.

HARRI

Did you see how Gus bought the ball back to me every time? Bethan says that's 'cos he trusts me, and did you see -

Seren bends down to hug him, dropping a kiss on the top of his head.

SEREN

Why don't you go find Dad? He said you could have an hour on the Xbox when we got home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Harri wriggles out of her embrace, looking at her curiously.

HARRI
You sound funny.

SEREN
I think I'm getting a cold. Tell
Dad I'm going to check on Charlie,
okay? See if you can get to the
next level before I get back.

Harri scurries inside. Seren walks through the garden, stopping outside the chicken coop and pulling out her cellphone.

SEREN (CONT'D)
Lia, pick up!

After a several rings we hear it cut to voice mail. Seren leans against the door of the coop and bursts into tears.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Alun sits at the table, head in his hands. The door opens and Jennifer walks in.

ALUN
Jen!

Jennifer is wearing no make-up, and looks pale and tired.

JENNIFER
I didn't expect to get away so
early. Annie was dead keen to come
back.

They sit in silence for a moment.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
How's Angharad?

Alun gets up and walks to the cooker, where the kettle has come to the boil, then puts it back down.

ALUN
Confused. Plus she was malnourished
and dehydrated, so she's weak.
Bethan had been sending meals over
with Gareth, but she kept
forgetting to eat them.

He stands, staring out of the kitchen window. Jen gets up and makes the coffee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She moves to comfort him, but his expression is closed, distant. She pats his arm awkwardly and they drink their coffee in silence. After a moment Jennifer pulls a face, gets up and empties her cup into the sink.

EXT. HOME PADDOCK - DAY

Seren grooms Charlie. She stops to check her cellphone, which shows 'no new messages'. She puts his saddle and bridle on, opens the gate, mounts then checks her phone again before cantering towards the cliff path.

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DAY

Seren slows to a walk as Gareth approaches, a newborn lamb tucked inside his jacket.

SEREN
Oh! Can I see?

Gareth opens his jacket a little and Seren reaches down, stroking the tiny face and ears.

SEREN (CONT'D)
It's so tiny! Will it live?

Gareth stares at her, then pulls himself together with a visible effort.

GARETH
He will if Bethan has her way. We haven't lost a lamb since she's been home.

SEREN
What happened to him?

GARETH
(Still staring) Rejected. It happens, sometimes.

SEREN
You're staring again.

Flustered, he takes a step back.

SEREN (CONT'D)
It's okay. I know it must be weird for you, and for Gran.

A long BEAT of silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARETH

She loved riding up here. It threw me, seeing you come over the rise like that.

Seren slides off Charlie and sits on the ground.

SEREN

What was she like? I know she looked like me, but what was she like?

Gareth's face softens. He carefully rearranges the lamb inside his jacket.

GARETH

Funny, and clever, and kind. She was the best friend I ever had. She loved music, loved to dance - those slippers you were wearing, I bought those for her fourteenth birthday. There was a song called Tiger Feet, and she was always trying to teach me the dance to it.

Gareth pats Charlie, turning to look out at the sea.

GARETH (CONT'D)

I never did get it right.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - DAY (1974)

Seren and Gareth attempt the frenetic dance to Mud's 'Tiger Feet'. As they shoulder shimmy towards each other Gareth misses the timing and collides with Seren, knocking her to the floor.

GARETH

I'm sorry! Are you okay? I'll never get the hang of this!

Seren picks herself up and removes the 45 from the record player, putting it on her dresser.

SEREN

I'm beginning to think you might be right.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN (CONT'D)

Tell you what - if you learn it by my birthday I'll buy you a Walnut Whip next time we go into the village. Deal?

GARETH

Deal!

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Seren moves around the room trying to get reception on her cellphone and Harri is playing his Xbox. She stops, frowning, at the sound of raised voices and opens the door. Her parents are arguing upstairs.

ALUN (O.C.)

He's better off at home! I'm a teacher, for God's sake - do you not think I'm capable of educating a nine year old boy?

JENNIFER (O.C.)

This is not about you! The specialist said it would be good for him, and he's entitled to a teaching assistant. I want him to go!

Seren closes the door and looks across at Harri, who is still engrossed in his game. The voices become louder.

ALUN (O.C.)

It's a forty minute drive, who'd be doing that? Not you!

JENNIFER (O.C.)

That's your problem? It might cut into your busy day?

Seren crosses to the couch and picks up a pair of headphones which she plugs into the controller and places on Harri, whose eyes never leave the screen.

SEREN

There you go, Maggot. Much better.

She ruffles his hair and drops a kiss on his forehead, which elicits an anguished WAIL.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRI

Why did you do that? You made me die!

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Seren reaches the top of the stairs as a door SLAMS, followed immediately by another. Loud Welsh choral MUSIC begins to play. Seren walks towards her bedroom, hesitating outside the bathroom where she hears Jennifer quietly crying. She stands for a moment with her hand on the door, but instead of going in she crosses the hallway to Angharad's bedroom.

SEREN (O.S.)

Gran, what's wrong? Can you hear me? Dad! DAD!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Angharad lies hooked up to a an IV and several monitors. Jen, Seren and Harri are sitting around the bed, while Alun paces between the bed and the window.

JENNIFER

For goodness sake, sit down!

Alun picks Harri up and sits down with him on his knee.

HARRI

Is Gran dead?

ALUN

What? No! Sometimes, when people are very poorly -

He stops as a tall, thin, extremely youthful looking DOCTOR appears at the door, gesturing for him to step outside.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Alun re-enters the room, looking sombre. Gareth and Bethan have arrived in his absence. Bethan gets up to hug him.

SEREN

What's wrong with her? What did the doctor say?

Alun sits down, looking stunned.

ALUN

It's almost certainly some type of dementia.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALUN (CONT'D)

Once she's stable they'll take her
to a specialist unit for
assessment.

Seren stifles a sob, and Gareth squeezes Alun's shoulder.

HARRI

If Gran's not dead why is everyone
sad?

INT. REST HOME - DAY

Angharad reclines, eyes closed and fully dressed, on the bed
in a drab, depressing room. A large, imposing looking
caregiver stands at the end of the bed, hands on hips.

CAREGIVER

Come along, Miss Jones. The
residents always have afternoon tea
together, it's a great chance to
make some friends.

Angharad opens her eyes.

ANGHARAD

I am not one of your inmates, and I
have no desire to make friends with
anybody.

The caregiver looks at her watch.

CAREGIVER

Miss Jones, we encourage even our
respite care patients to -

Seren appears in the doorway, wearing a backpack and carrying
a large bunch of flowers.

CAREGIVER (CONT'D) A visitor! Perhaps your - granddaughter,
is it? - can persuade you to join us while I find a vase for
these.

She takes the flowers from Seren and leaves the room.

SEREN

Gran, you're dressed! Are you
feeling better today?

Angharad sits up, with some effort.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGHARAD

I was, until that dreadful woman started hounding me to join the fossils in the dining room. She has the most annoying voice I have ever heard, and a better moustache than my father's.

The caregiver re-enters the room, stony-faced, putting the flowers on the bedside table before turning on her heel and leaving without a word.

SEREN

Gran! She heard you!

ANGHARAD

I do hope so, dear. The voice is unfortunate, but I'm sure she could do something about the moustache.

She reaches out to touch a pink lily.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

Stargazers. Seren's favourite.

Seren picks up her backpack.

SEREN

I brought you a few things from home, just what was on your dressing table.

She retrieves an old fashioned mirror and brush set, a few toiletries and a silver-framed photograph, placing them beside the vase. Angharad picks up the photograph, a black and white close-up of Seren, smiling into the camera with her arms around the neck of a grey horse.

SEREN (CONT'D)

She looks so happy.

ANGHARAD

This was taken on her fourteenth birthday, just before she died. My parents gave her the horse, and she's wearing the brooch I sent her from London.

She places it back on the table with shaking hands.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D) She never took it off, but it wasn't with her when - when they found her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Seren sits down on the end of the bed.

SEREN

I don't know what I'd do if anything ever happened to Harri.

ANGHARAD

After the funeral, after I'd gone back to London, I got so angry. People were out everywhere, enjoying the sunshine. I used to look at them and wonder how they could act so normal when this terrible thing had happened.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

The doctor tells me I have Korsakoff's Syndrome.

SEREN

What's that?

ANGHARAD

After what happened, I sometimes drank to forget. Eventually that caused some damage and now, when I can't remember, my brain makes things up to fill the gap.

Seren leans forward, taking her hand.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

I've been thinking about Seren so much lately, and I can't be sure if what I remember is even real. I thought - I was so sure she'd come to stay with me in London, but Gareth tells me that didn't happen.

SEREN

I'm so sorry, Gran. I wish there was something I could do.

ANGHARAD

You can tell me about yourself. What do you like to do? Is there a boyfriend? You've grown up so much since last year.

Seren shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SEREN

No boyfriend. I like to ride and I used - I used to like to draw. Horses, mostly. I drive my art teacher crazy. He's probably your biggest fan.

Angharad waves a dismissive hand. The caregiver, pushing a desiccated elderly man past in a wheelchair, pauses to glare before carrying on.

ANGHARAD

I stopped caring about what people thought of me or my work years ago. I don't even bother with my exhibits, I leave all of that to Gerald now. An agent should do something to earn their commission, and I believe I have put all three of his obnoxious children through a very expensive education.

Seren suppresses a giggle. Angharad manoeuvres herself upright with some difficulty.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

Do you think you could manage helping me outside? I feel like I've been trapped in here forever.

EXT. REST HOME - DAY

Angharad and Seren slowly make their way through the gardens. As Angharad pauses to admire a flower, a blue butterfly alights on it.

SEREN

My teacher thinks you're amazing. He watches me like a hawk, in case I suddenly show any sign of talent. It kind of puts me off.

Angharad watches the butterfly go from one flower to the next, then fly away.

ANGHARAD

I'm guessing you already showed some. Don't let anybody tell how to express yourself. Do what matters to you. If it hadn't been for what happened to Seren I would have wasted years on what I thought I should be painting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She stops, spent from the effort of both walking and talking. Seren steers her gently towards a nearby bench, and they sit.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

I couldn't pick up a brush for months afterward, and when I did - it was different, because I was different. Landscapes weren't popular, but suddenly they were all I wanted to paint. Mostly this place. I loved it so much but after what happened I hated it, too. After six months I held my first exhibition, and every painting sold that night.

Seren stands and helps her to feet.

SEREN

Come on Gran, you're tired. I'll help you back and find you a cup of tea.

Angharad take Seren's arm and they make their way slowly back through the garden.

ANGHARAD

I thought I'd kept a box of Seren's things, but I get so confused - maybe I just imagined it.

SEREN

Would you like me to try and find it?

ANGHARAD

We wrote often, I'm sure there were letters - perhaps I threw them out. Oh, I hate this! She used to illustrate them - she was very good.

Seren takes Angharad's arm, tucking it through her own.

SEREN

Don't be upset, Gran. I'll have a look, okay? Let's get you back before the dragon lady over there comes after us.

EXT. REST HOME - DAY

As Seren and Angharad make their way inside Angharad's caregiver and a very young man wearing the same uniform lean against the side of the building, smoking.

YOUNG CAREGIVER

Don't worry about it. Right old bat, that one. They're easier once they're completely doolally.

The older woman says nothing but takes another long drag of her cigarette, self-consciously touching her upper lip.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Seren, Max and Harri are sitting on the lawn, taking turns to throw a ball to Gus. Harri picks up the ball and runs, Gus bounding after him. Max stands up, peering across the lawn to where Harri is still being joyfully pursued by Gus, then sits beside Seren again.

MAX

So she doesn't know whether what she remembers actually happened or not? That sucks!

Gus comes galloping up to them, tries to lick both their faces, then races back to Harri. Seren wipes at her face with the back of her hand.

SEREN

She hates not knowing if what she remembers about her sister is true, and now she's worried she might have forgotten something that would help her understand how she died.

MAX

I thought Pop said she fell from one of the cliffs.

He reaches down and offers Seren a hand, pulling her to her feet and they walk across the lawn towards Harri and Gus.

SEREN

Gran says no-one ever understood why she was up there at night. There was lots of talk about it not being an accident.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

Mum's got an appointment for her ankle this morning. Why don't you come to town and have a look in the library? All that kind of stuff would have been in the local paper.

SEREN

You think there might still be something there?

MAX

(Shrugs) What have you got to lose?

Seren's cellphone starts to ring, and the screen reads 'Alexis calling'. She hesitates for just a second, pushes 'dismiss' and shoves it back in her pocket.

SEREN

Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

EXT. OPEN ROAD - DAY

Gareth drives a battered farm truck past a sign which reads 'Penmarthen - 5 Miles' in both English and Welsh. Bethan is in the passenger seat and Seren and Max sit with Gus in the open cab at the back, laughing as they are battered by the wind and jolted by the unsealed road.

EXT. PENMARTHEN LIBRARY - DAY

Gareth pulls into a park. Gus barks in protest as Max and Seren get out.

BETHAN

We'll pick you up in about an hour, okay? Dad's going to look at tractors while I get my ankle seen to.

Gareth gives Bethan's hair a playful tug.

GARETH

Come on then, let's get you to your witch doctor.

Bethan slaps him off.

BETHAN

For heaven's sake, Dad - it's Reiki, not the Dark Arts!

Seren and Max wave as they drive off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

You should talk to Pop. It sounds like her knew her better than anybody.

SEREN

I know, and I will, it's just - I think I make him uncomfortable. Sad.

They make their way toward the library doors.

MAX

It must be weird for him that you look so much like her.

Seren stops, turning to look at him incredulously.

SEREN

Did you ever think it might be weird for *me*?

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

In a small anteroom Seren stands at a long desk piled high with folders of ancient newspapers. She closes one, sighs and opens another. Behind her an entire wall of shelves is filled with similar folders. On the other side of the room Max is sitting at a computer.

MAX

Have you found anything?

Seren closes the folder with a bang, earning a stern glare from an elderly, well dressed man reading a newspaper in another corner.

SEREN

I can't even find the Seventies!

This is a complete waste of time.

Max gets up, joining her at the desk and lifting down a huge folder.

MAX

There has to be something; it would have been big news when it happened. Look, the Seventies start here.

He passes Seren another folder and they sit, poring over the pages.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

In a small, old-fashioned supermarket Jen pushes a trolley through the aisles with a scowling Harri hanging off the side. She puts a tube of toothpaste in the trolley, which Harri promptly puts back.

HARRI

Not that kind, the blue one. And that's the wrong cereal! I want the one with the monkeys!

An angular, bespectacled middle-aged woman pauses from stocking shelves to cluck in disapproval. Jennifer makes a visible effort to control herself as they continue down the aisle, stopping at the feminine hygiene products. About to reach for a box of tampons she frowns, flips open her cellphone and brings up the calendar. She stares at it for a long moment.

HARRI (CONT'D)

Mum!

She reaches for a pregnancy test, looking completely dumbstruck.

JENNIFER

I heard you, Harri. Monkeys.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

The elderly man glances up at an old fashioned clock, folding his newspaper neatly and placing it on a side table. Neither Seren nor Max, totally engrossed, look up as he leaves. Seren suddenly lets out a SQUEAL of excitement.

SEREN

Max! Look!

Max hurries to join her, leaning over her shoulder. We see a CLOSE UP of the screen:

Penmarthen Gazette, August 31st 1974.

'The funeral service for Miss Seren Jones was held yesterday, attended by family, friends and a large section of the local community.

Miss Jones, 14, was the youngest daughter of Mr Ifor and Mrs Branwen Jones and younger sister of Angharad, 24, a student at the prestigious St Martins College of Art in London. She is believed to have been killed in a fall from the cliffs of Bryn Melyn some time on the evening of Saturday, August 3rd.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her body was found soon after she was reported missing by her parents the following morning. Sergeant Williams of the Penmarthen constabulary confirmed that an inquiry to establish the facts surrounding this tragic incident is ongoing, and urges anybody who may have seen Miss Jones on that evening, or who has any relevant information, to come forward.'

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DAY

Seren and Max are walking the cliff path. Seren leads Charlie and Gus walks behind. They pause at the top and look out to sea, where several small fishing vessels are chugging into shore.

MAX

That weather's about to turn. I need to move some sheep.

Seren peers at the horizon.

SEREN

How can you tell?

Max shakes his head, smiling.

MAX

You are such a city girl. Wind's changed, fishing boats are heading back in - that means there's already a swell at sea. And look at the clouds building up behind those hills; you should probably head straight home.

Seren gives Gus a pat and swings herself into the saddle.

SEREN

Thank you for today. I would never have thought of it.

MAX

Why don't you come over in the morning and talk to Pop? Bring Harri.

SEREN

He'd like that. Mum's dragged him into the village to go shopping; I'm surprised you didn't hear him from your place!

INT. SEREN'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Seren rifles through the wardrobe. Rain lashes the windows, making her glance up anxiously as lightning flashes across the sky. Standing on a footstool she peers into the top compartment, discovering a stack of vinyl records. As she reaches behind to pull them forward, her fingers brush against something else. She curses softly underneath her breath, unable to reach or see. She then jumps off the footstool with the records and removes an ancient portable record player from the bedside cabinet which she then drags to the wardrobe. With the extra height and reach she retrieves a cardboard box, which she gingerly lowers onto the bed.

INT. FARMHOUSE BATHROOM - EVENING

This is even more dated than the rest of the house - art deco pedestal basin, fan-shaped mirror, green and black tiles. Jen sits on the edge of the massive claw foot bath, pregnancy test in her hand. As rain hammers furiously against the window, she watches two blue lines appear.

INT. SEREN'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Seren removes the lid from the box and lifts out a fringed suede shoulder bag, some rosettes and ribbons emblazoned with 'Penmarthen Pony Club' and an artist's folio. She empties the bag, which contains some hair clips decorated with cherries, blue glitter eye shadow, strawberry lip gloss and a Walnut Whip wrapper. She takes the top record from the stack - David Essex's Gonna Make You a Star - and places it on the turntable of the record player before tentatively plugging it in. The turntable begins to spin, and she watches in fascination as the arm moves across and drops the needle to the vinyl.

As the MUSIC plays she settles cross-legged on the bed and opens the folio. A sheaf of pencil sketches flutters out, and Seren picks up a copy of the head and shoulder shot of David Essex on the cover of the record. She spreads out the others; horses, dogs, people and one of a a gypsy vardo. There is also a photograph of Seren laughing into the camera, with Gareth and Jess in the background. The music suddenly get LOUDER as her hand comes to rest on a bundle of envelopes tied up with string and addressed to Angharad.

SEREN

Here you go, Gran. Just like you said.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She carefully unties the string and removes one of the letters.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. SEREN'S BEDROOM - EVENING (1974)

The same MUSIC is playing loudly. Seren is sitting cross-legged on the bed, writing a letter while eating a chocolate bar. The sketch of David Essex is beside her.

SEREN (V.O.)

Dear Angharad, I'm trying what you said about shading faces on a sketch of David Essex - I hope it works! Oh, and thank you so much for the brooch, I love it. You'll never guess what else I got . . .

INT. CHICKEN COOP - MORNING

Seren is sitting on top of the nesting boxes, sketching a rearing horse. There is a chicken beside her. She lifts her head as somebody calls her name.

WOMAN (O.C.)

(Welsh accent) Seren! Come along, lovely! I need those eggs for your breakfast!

She gives an impatient sigh, puts down the sketch pad and climbs carefully down. There are half a dozen other chickens in the coop, and a basket with several eggs on the floor. She picks up the basket and lets herself out of the coop.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Seren walks towards the house. The garden is in full bloom, picture-perfect, the herb wheel overflowing. Against the opposite wall is a magnificent stone lion. The flagstone path winds through a glorious display of summer flowers.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

A short, plump woman in a floral apron is frying bacon at the stove; it is Seren and Angharad's mother Branwen.

BRANWEN

There you are! Post's been, and there's a parcel from London for you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANWEN (CONT'D)

Looks like your sister remembered
your birthday. Open it, then, and
let's see!

A large mixed breed dog lies in a basket underneath the
table. As Seren approaches, its tail thumps heavily against
the flagstone floor.

Seren unwraps the parcel, which contains a diamanté brooch in
the shape of a shooting star.

BRANWEN (CONT'D)

Look at that, now! Aren't you the
lucky one? Put it on and sit
yourself down, and I'll bring your
breakfast.

Seren's father, a solid, kindly looking man with greying
beard and moustache enters the kitchen.

IFOR

There's the birthday girl! Do you
have a kiss for your old Da?

He swoops down and plants a whiskery kiss on Seren's cheek.
Branwen brings two plates to the table.

BRANWEN

Now, there's lovely!

IFOR

That's grand! Are you sure you
won't have some cockles?

Seren looks at his plate, horrified.

SEREN

Da, they're disgusting!

Ifor chuckles, spearing a couple on his fork.

IFOR

All the more for me! I suppose
you're wondering where your present
might be?

SEREN

Well, I don't - I mean -

Ifor tucks into his breakfast.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IFOR

Well, it was too big to wrap, see?
So it's outside. You can have it
soon as you've a decent breakfast
inside you.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Branwen and Seren are at the back of the farmhouse, in front
of the home field.

BRANWEN

Close your eyes!

Seren does as she is told and Ifor leads a beautiful grey
Welsh cob into view.

IFOR

Happy Birthday!

Seren opens her eyes.

BRANWEN

You have to promise to be careful,
now. She's a mind of her own.

SEREN

Oh my God! If this is a dream, I
hope I never wake up.

She walks up to the horse, which is saddled and bridled.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Does she have a name?

IFOR

Tanwen. You can change it if you
like.

Seren takes the reins, running her hands down the horse's
neck.

SEREN

White fire! No, it's perfect. Can I
take her for a ride?

IFOR

Not too far, mind, not til you get
used to each other.

EXT. CLIFF PATH - DAY

Seren urges the grey horse up the cliff path, reining in at the top. In the distance a figure is heading towards her; she stands in the stirrups and waves excitedly.

SEREN

Gareth!

She pushes the horse into a canter, closing the gap between them. Gareth has a wrapped gift under his arm.

GARETH

Happy Birthday! Looks like you already got your wish.

Seren leans forward, stroking the horse's neck.

SEREN

Isn't she perfect?

He looks at her quizzically.

GARETH

(Laughing) You're asking the wrong person, Seren-dipity!

He hands her up the parcel, holding the reins while she tears it open to reveal the 'tiger feet' slippers. She bursts out laughing, gets off the horse to hug him and they head back down the cliff path together.

BACK TO PRESENT

Seren gives a start as a flash of lightning lights up the sky, then gently re-folds the letter and unfolds the other. The top of the page is illustrated with a pencil sketch of a handsome, dark eyed teenage boy with a head of curls.

SEREN (V.O.)

I finished the sketch of David Essex, and it looks amazing! You know he's a gypsy, right? Well, some real life travellers are camped on Fenton's Acre, and I've met them! I was out riding . . .

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. TRAVELLERS' CAMPSITE - DAY (1974)

Seren rides towards the travellers' campsite, an open piece of ground adjacent to the shore. Washing flaps on makeshift lines strung between brightly painted caravans, several piebald horses graze loose by the roadside, and a large group of young children are playing a noisy game of tag. Tanwen snorts and sidesteps, tossing her head nervously.

As Seren leans forward to reassure the horse an enormous, shaggy black lurcher rushes at them, barking furiously. Tanwen shies violently, dumping Seren unceremoniously onto the dirt road before galloping across to the other horses. MEIRION, the younger of the motorbike riders, comes running towards Seren, shouting at the dog.

MEIRION

Samson! Get back here, you mangy
good-for-nothing -

He stops abruptly where Seren, winded, has struggled into a sitting position. Frowning, he kneels beside her. Samson, panting and with tail wagging, pushes his large hairy head against her leg, which makes her yelp.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

Are you all right? Samson here has
the devil in him today.

Seren, still struggling to get her breath, nods her head.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

My name's Meirion. I saw you
yesterday, in the town.

SEREN

(Gasping) I'm Seren. I need to find
Tanwen -

MEIRION

Your horse? She's fine, see? Over
there.

He points across the scrubby patch of dirt to where Tanwen is now grazing beside the other horses.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

She's a beauty. Maybe a bit high
strung, though.

Seren can finally breathe again, and now takes a moment to look at Meirion more closely. He has dark curly hair, olive skin and intensely blue eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

I haven't - haven't had her very long. I suppose we're still getting used to each other.

She looks down at her jeans, which are torn. Blood is starting to seep through from a scraped knee, and there is gravel embedded in her hands.

MEIRION

That needs cleaning. I'll tie Samson up and then you'd best come inside and let my Gran take a look.

INT. GYPSY VARDO - DAY

Seren is seated at a tiny table covered in a bright checkered cloth. Meirion's GRAN, a small elderly woman with dark eyes and long silver-grey hair worn loose, is cleaning the gravel from Seren's grazed hands. She takes a small bottle from a shelf and adds several drops of dark green liquid to the water. Seren draws back but the older woman shakes her head emphatically and immerses her hands in the bowl before gesturing to Meirion to sit down, speaking quietly and rapidly to him in Romani. He listens intently before turning to face Seren.

MEIRION

Gran only speaks a few words of English, but she understands it pretty well. She says not to worry, this is only sage. It's a natural disinfectant.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

Some of that gravel went deep. She wants you to take your jersey off so she can have a better look.

Seren hesitates, but complies. She is wearing the shooting star brooch pinned to her shirt, and when this is revealed we hear a sharp intake of breath from Gran. She shakes her head and again speaks to Meirion in quiet, rapid-fire Romani.

SEREN

What? What's the matter?

Meirion replies sharply to his grandmother and she abruptly leaves the table, returning with a steaming mug. Seren wrinkles her nose at the smell, but the older woman pushes the mug into her hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRAN

Drink. Please.

Seren looks across to Meirion.

MEIRION

It's a pain tonic, willow bark and St John's Wort. Gran's a *drabarni*, a healer. It's completely safe, she makes it for us all the time.

Gran leans forward and touches Seren's hair, speaking directly to her for the first time.

SEREN

(Looking at Meirion) I'm sorry, I don't -

MEIRION

Your hair. She say's it's like starlight.

EXT. TRAVELLERS' CAMPSITE - DAY

Meirion holds the reins while Seren attempts to mount. She is stiff and sore from her fall and Tanwen is still unsettled, snorting and fussing and refusing to stand still. After several futile attempts Meirion swings her up into the saddle, at the same time managing to steady Tanwen with his other hand. The horse rears as soon as he lets go, almost unseating Seren again; her injured hands mean she has trouble holding the reins properly.

MEIRION

Do you have far to go? I don't know if you should ride again today.

SEREN

I'll be fine, truly. If Mam finds out about this I won't be riding again for the rest of the year.

Meirion unties a lead rope from a wooden post and turns to face the piebald horses. He emits a low whistle and the largest of the horses immediately lifts its head and begins trotting towards him, whickering softly. Seren watches, fascinated, as the huge animal kneels for Meirion to mount.

SEREN (CONT'D)

That was amazing! Did you teach him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MEIRION

I did. It took a long time - he'd been badly treated as a youngster, so it took a while for him to trust me.

SEREN

So how did you get him?

Meirion looks hesitant for a second, then grins.

MEIRION

I won him in a bet.

SEREN

A bet? Really?

Meirion leans forward, stroking the huge animal's neck.

MEIRION

The farmer whose land we were camping on was beating the daylights out of him because he was too tired and hungry to work any harder. So I bet him that if he didn't hand Badger over right then and there me and Cai would rearrange his face, and Gran would put a curse on him so he'd never lie with a woman again.

Seren's hand flies to her mouth as she realises what he means, and she bursts out laughing.

SEREN

You didn't!

She pauses for a moment.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Your Gran - could she actually do that?

This time it is Meirion who bursts out laughing.

MEIRION

Of course not! But we're gypsies, some people still think we can curse them or put the evil eye on them. Look, what if I ride back home with you? Tanwen might quiet down with some company.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As Seren glances down at her hands, which are still obviously painful, Tanwen shies again as two of the children run past laughing and shouting.

SEREN

If you're sure it's no trouble -
we're just on the other side of the
hill.

Meirion leans forward, tying the unsecured end of the lead rope beside the clip under Badger's chin to form makeshift reins.

MEIRION

No trouble at all. Badger hasn't
been out since we got here.

He sits back upright, and turns to smile at Seren, who is transfixed.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

Come on then, Lady Starlight. Let's
get you home.

They turn and start off along the track towards Bryn Melyn. Riding slightly behind, Seren is wearing a huge smile.

BACK TO PRESENT

Seren is lying on her back reading another letter.

SEREN (V.O.)

I'm sorry it's been so long since I
wrote. Meirion has been helping me
with Tanwen, he is so good with
horses - did I tell you he looks
just like Davis Essex? There's a
dance in the village, and Gerry
L'amour and the Lovers are playing!
Da's working on Mam to let me go -

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY (1974)

Branwen is standing at the kitchen sink peeling potatoes. Behind her Seren is struggling to get a chocolate biscuit out of the packet without her mother noticing - difficult with her sore hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANWEN

Now don't you be spoiling your dinner with those, miss! I'll have a lovely mutton stew on the table in half an hour.

Safely out of sight, Seren mimes putting her fingers down her throat and gagging.

SEREN

Just one, Mam. You know Hobnobs are my favourite.

BRANWEN

Just the one, then. After dinner I'm going to get your Da to go up and have a look where you slipped over. Maybe there's some loose rocks up there that need seeing to.

Seren chokes on her mouthful of biscuit.

SEREN

No! It was an accident. I just missed my footing. There's nothing up there, nothing at all.

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - EVENING

Seren lies on the bed reading a teen magazine, the now almost empty packet of Hobnobs beside her. An untouched meal sits on her bedside table. Several posters of pop stars are pinned on the wall - Slade, Sweet, Alice Cooper. The article which has Seren's attention features a large colour picture of David Essex and bears the caption 'My Gypsy Roots: David Essex talks about his Romany heritage'. A closer view reveals a striking resemblance to Meirion. Seren helps herself to the last biscuit then carefully removes the picture - again hampered by her hands - from the magazine, pinning it above her bed.

BRANWEN (O.S.)

Bring your plate down, lovely! I'm about to do the washing up.

Seren picks up the plate and crosses the room, opening the window and leaning out.

SEREN

(Quietly) Rex! Where are you? Oh, good boy! That's it, come here!

She empties the plate out of the window.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN (CONT'D)

Good dog!

She closes the window and heads for the door.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Coming, Mam!

EXT. TRAVELLERS' CAMPSITE - DAY

Seren rides towards the campsite, coming to a halt beside Gran's vardo. Badger is tethered on a long rope grazing nearby. Meirion appears, a small child on his shoulders and SAFIR, a sulky looking teenage girl, beside him. She is verging on plump and extremely pretty, with long black curly hair and blue eyes. Meirion waves and swings the child, a little girl also with a head full of dark curls, down to the ground. She stares at Seren for a moment before scampering away.

A gust of wind catches the washing strung between the vardo and a nearby tree and Tanwen shies. Meirion takes hold of the reins and talks quietly to the horse in Romani, rubbing her gently between the ears until she lowers her head.

MEIRION

Are you all right?

Seren nods, fighting back tears.

SEREN

I don't think she's ever going to settle down.

MEIRION

Sure, she will. But you being so nervous is making her jittery.

Tanwen is now completely calm and letting Meirion rub under her chin.

SEREN

I'll try. But she acts like she's going to take off any minute.

MEIRION

That's because you're holding her back all the time. Look - Oh, this is Safir, Cai's betrothed. Safir, this is Seren.

Seren smiles but the other girl barely nods, regarding her with a mixture of curiosity and hostility.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MEIRION (CONT'D)

I was going to take Badger out -
why don't you come? I just have to
chop a bit of wood for Gran. Safir
will keep you company for a minute.

He picks up an axe from outside the vardo and disappears,
leaving the two girls together in awkward silence.

SEREN

Betrothed - does that mean you're
his girlfriend?

The other girl regards her for a long moment.

SAFIR

It means we're to be handfast.

Seren looks totally confused.

SEREN

Oh! Right.

Another awkward silence ensues and both girls look visibly
relieved when Meirion reappears, whistling cheerfully and
carrying a lunge rope.

MEIRION

Come on, I've had an idea. Safir, I
reckon Gran could use a cup of tea.

Safir immediately turns on her heel and heads to the vardo.

SEREN

Aren't you the bossy one!

Meirion looks genuinely surprised.

MEIRION

What, me? Never! Now come on, I
want to try something.

He unties Badger and heads out into an open area in the
middle of the campsite. Seren follows. He attaches the lunge
rope to Badger's halter and begins lunging him in a circle.
After several minutes he brings him back to a walk, then a
halt, before turning to Seren.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

Right. Come here and I'll give you
a leg up.

Seren shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SEREN

No way! He's too big, and he's not even saddled and bridled! I'll fall off!

Meirion clicks his tongue and Badger begins walking to the centre of the circle.

MEIRION

That's your problem. You've got to relax, and start actually thinking about your horse. Feel what their doing, and then you won't have to worry about it. Come on, you've seen how good he is. I'll have him the whole time, I promise.

Seren dismounts apprehensively. Meirion steadies Tanwen with one hand, and with the other gives her a leg up onto Badger. He then runs up Tanwen's stirrups and ties her reins to them before using a quiet word and a click of the tongue to get Badger moving back out on to the circle.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

I'm going to tell him to trot now. Just relax, and hold on to his mane if you need to.

Seren clutches a handful of mane as Badger breaks into a trot, but soon relaxes. After a couple of circuits Meirion gives him the command to canter. By the time Meirion brings him back to a walk, she has a huge smile on her face.

SEREN

That was amazing!

Meirion winds up the lunge rope, unclipping it from Badger's head collar before helping her dismount.

MEIRION

What did I tell you? Now we're going to try it with Tanwen.

Seren's smile disappears immediately.

SEREN

I - I don't want to.

Meirion gives Badger a slap on the hindquarters and he ambles off to where the other horses are grazing

MEIRION

How about if I ride her first?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Seren shrugs, stepping back. Meirion adjusts the stirrups before mounting and urging her forward on a completely loose rein. Meirion urges her to trot and then canter before coming quietly back to a walk.

SEREN

I can't believe she did that!

MEIRION

Come on. Your turn now.

Seren mounts, still looking anxious. Meirion attaches the lunge rope to Tanwen's bridle and ties the reins in a knot so that Seren is unable to use them. Tanwen continues to respond to Meirion's confident handling and direction until he brings her to a halt, untying the reins and handing them back.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

You just have to remember to ride her forward. The more you try and hold her back, the more she'll fuss.

SEREN

Thank you, I'll try. You're amazing
- I can't believe how good she was!

Meirion smiles at her, and from her expression it is clear that she is quite smitten. His smile disappears as Cai approaches from the vardos on the other side of the field.

CAI

What's this, now? I didn't know
you'd started a riding school.

Meirion is silent for a BEAT.

MEIRION

Not at all. Just giving a hand.
Cai, you remember Seren.

Cai gives Seren a long, appraising look.

CAI

How could I forget such a beauty?
Gran sent me to tell you to come
and have something to eat. Seren,
too.

Another BEAT as Seren hesitates briefly. She looks uncomfortable but is obviously reluctant to pass on the chance to spend more time with Meirion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SEREN

If you're sure it's no bother -

CAI

Not at all. I hope you know you're honoured - Gran must like you. She doesn't usually have much time for gorja.

INT. GYPSY VARDO - DAY

Cai, Safir, Meirion and Seren are squeezed shoulder to shoulder around the tiny table. Gran carries in a large cast iron pot from the wood fire outside and begins to ladle casserole into bowls. Seren looks at hers cautiously before tasting a tiny amount.

The others regard her with some amusement - except for Safir.

SEREN

That is so good.
What is it?

CAI

It's rabbit, with wild onions and herbs. What did you think we ate?
Dog, maybe?

Gran speaks sharply to Cai, who mutters what might be an apology. Safir is watching Cai closely, and does not look happy.

SEREN

Can you tell your Gran thank you?
She's a great cook.

Safir stands, clearing the plates from the table.

SAFIR

All Romani women are good cooks.

SEREN

My Mam's okay, except for her mutton stew, but my friend Gareth's Mam -

Her hand flies to her mouth.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Oh my God - Gareth!

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DAY

Seren canters up the track towards the top of the hill, where we see a solitary figure standing. As she gets closer we can see that it is Gareth, and he does not look pleased. Seren brings Tanwen to a halt and dismounts hurriedly, out of breath.

SEREN

I completely forgot - I am so sorry!

Gareth straightens his glasses, frowning .

GARETH

Where on earth have you been? I was starting to get worried.

There is a BEAT of silence before Seren replies.

SEREN

I was schooling Tanwen down by the beach, and I just lost track of time. I'm really sorry. Is Rhys out on the boat today?

Gareth nods, looking out to sea.

GARETH

We'll probably see him coming in soon. You can always pick the Dolphin out by the colours.

Seren runs up her stirrups and ties Tanwen to a stile which interrupts a long gorse fence in full, bright yellow bloom. Gareth stretches out in the grass. Seren joins him and they lie in companionable silence, looking up at the sky.

GARETH (CONT'D)

Do you think there's anything up there?

SEREN

I don't know. Maybe.

Gareth sits up, pulling on an Arran jersey.

GARETH

I read an article in The Scientist that said it makes no sense to think that we're the only life in the universe.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARETH (CONT'D)

Do you think those people really
saw UFOs over Berwyn Mountain?

Seren sits up as well. She stretches, and shrugs.

SEREN

Lots of people saw it, so I guess
it had to be something. We should
go; Top of the Pops starts soon.

Gareth grins and stands up, reaching down and pulling Seren
to her feet.

GARETH

Who are you hoping for tonight?
Sweet? Slade? David Essex? They're
the only stars you're interested
in, Seren-dipity.

SEREN

David Essex, definitely. Are you
ever going to get sick of calling
me that?

Gareth appears to give it some serious thought.

GARETH

No. No, I don't think I am.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - EVENING

Seren sits at the kitchen table toying with her dinner.
Underneath the table, Rex is enjoying what Seren is quietly
slipping to him from her plate. Branwen is tidying up the
remains of the meal.

SEREN

There's a dance next Wednesday, in
the village. Can I go?

Branwen dries her hands on her apron.

BRANWEN

In the village? I don't know,
lovely. I don't want you out at
night with those travellers about.
I hear they caused trouble outside
the Golden Lion just the other day.

SEREN

People are always blaming them for
stuff they didn't do! Anyway,
Gareth's going. And Rhys.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Branwen looks unmoved.

BRANWEN

Mrs. Jenkins saw it herself - a terrible fight, she said. All over them and their thieving.

Seren jumps up from the table, sending the dog scurrying out of the way.

SEREN

I'm never allowed to do anything!
No wonder Angharad got out of here -
I can't wait until I can, too!

She heads outside, SLAMMING the door behind her.

EXT. GARDEN - DUSK

Ifor, tending the garden, looks up as Seren approaches. She sits down beside him, stroking an ornamental stone lion which is crouching in the border.

IFOR

Better stop before I start pulling up my seedlings! Now then, what's got you looking like you dropped a shilling and found a ha'penny?

SEREN

Mam. There's a dance next Wednesday and she doesn't want me to go. She treats me like a baby! No wonder Angharad ran away.

Ifor puts down the trowel and rubs his jaw.

IFOR

Don't be upset with her, cariad. She took it hard when your sister left.

Seren kicks at the edging of the brick path.

SEREN

I miss her too, but Mam's trying to stop me from growing up - it's not fair! Gareth and Rhys are going - can I please go with them? Our favourite band is playing. Please?

Ifor puts his arm around her shoulders and they head back towards the house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IFOR

I'll talk to your Mam. Now, what do you reckon to this peculiar weather we've been having?

Seren frowns at him, puzzled.

SEREN

What? The weather's been perfect!

Ifor smiles, pulling her close.

IFOR

Well, it's the strangest thing - the other night when I was sat at the kitchen table I just happened to look out the window and would you believe - I could have sworn it was raining mutton stew!

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Alun is standing at the stove frying bacon, singing softly and off-key in Welsh. He puts two plates in front of Harri and Seren, who are seated at the table. As they are eating Jennifer appears, looking pale and tired. She has no makeup on and her hair is pulled into a ponytail. She drops a kiss on each of the children's heads; she and Alun do not acknowledge each other. She pours herself a cup of tea and sits down. The tension is palpable, and Seren looks quizzically from one to the other.

ALUN

The rest home called earlier. Mam's not good, they said she's confused and agitated. Keeps talking about her sister, insists she's been there to visit. They've got her sedated, so no visitors today.

SEREN

Is it my fault? Because we talked about her yesterday? I'm so sorry, I didn't mean -

Alun puts his hand on her shoulder.

ALUN

It's her illness, Cariad. Some days she'll be fine, and others -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

I was going to show her what I found - I thought she'd be happy -

ALUN

Another time, maybe. Take it to Gareth, it's sure to mean something to him.

He sits down, looking directly at Jennifer.

ALUN (CONT'D)

The doctor I spoke to made it quite clear she can't continue to live alone. We have some decisions to make as a family.

Jennifer takes a drink of her tea, still refusing to look at Alun.

JENNIFER

I have a couple to make myself.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Alun and Jennifer wave to the children as they set off towards the cliff path.

JENNIFER

Be careful! Text when you get there, okay?

Seren gives an exasperated eye roll, and a 'thumbs up' before turning Harri firmly in the direction of the path. Alun and Jennifer stand in silence, watching them retreat.

ALUN

We need to talk.

Jennifer turns to face him, arms folded across her chest.

ALUN (CONT'D)

We're going to have to decide what to do about Mam. I - I want us to stay here and look after her.

JENNIFER

What? You mean, move here? For good? You're joking, right? If you think I'm leaving my home and my job to live in this God-forsaken hell-hole -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALUN

Jen, please, just hear me out! The kids love it here - Harri is so much better, you must see that! I think it would be wonderful for all of us.

Jennifer turns away, her hand resting briefly on her stomach.

JENNIFER

What about my job? And the house? Seren's school? And I wanted Harri to start next term -

Alun lifts his shoulders.

ALUN

People move all the time, Jen. There are two salons in Penmarthen, I'm sure one of them would be glad to have you.

Jennifer says nothing but turns and walks back into the house, SLAMMING the door behind her. Alun stares at it helplessly.

INT. HARRI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jennifer folds Harri's pyjamas and places them under his pillow, phone tucked under her chin.

JENNIFER

No, nothing's the matter. I just thought I'd call. Yes, I know it's expensive. Yes, the children are fine.

She walks to the window. In the distance, Seren and Harri are almost at the top of the cliff path.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Okay, Mum. Enjoy your outing. I'll see you when I get home. I'm - I'm not sure. You, too. 'Bye.

She puts down the phone and sits on the end of the bed, picking up Moo and hugging it to her chest.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

(Whispers) Mum, I don't know what to do.

EXT. CLIFF PATH - DAY

Seren and Harri are climbing the cliff path. Seren pulls off her backpack, retrieving two bottles of drink. She takes the top off one and hands it to Harri before opening her own.

HARRI

I'm hot and this is too far!

SEREN

Not much further, Maggot! Remember, Bethan said you can give the lamb a bottle. I can't believe it's so hot after that storm last night!

Harri acquiesces, still grumbling, and they begin the descent to Gareth's property. Behind them, the butterfly darts back and forth.

INT. GARETH'S HOUSE - DAY

Seren and Gareth sit on a couch. Gareth rifles through the folio, looking at the sketches. He stops, picking up the photograph. We see a CLOSE UP, which shows Seren laughing into the camera. A dark-haired teenage boy and a dog just like Gus are slightly to one side.

GARETH

Seren's Da took this. Jess wouldn't settle because the chooks were out, and Seren was annoyed because we were off to meet our friend Rhys and she didn't want to wait.

SEREN

But she looks so happy!

He smiles, putting the photograph gently on the coffee table.

GARETH

She was laughing because Ifor had just stepped back into one of Branwen's flower beds.

A CLOSE UP of the photo, which then DISSOLVES into action.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY (1974)

Ifor is aiming a camera at Seren and Gareth. Seren is scowling and Gareth is trying to hold on to Jess, who is barking and struggling to escape.

SEREN

Quiet, Jess! And Da, hurry up!
We'll be late meeting Rhys.

IFOR

Almost done, my lovely. Just stay
still and -

He steps back to take a shot and overbalances, landing in a flower bed and crushing several rows of planting. Seren bursts out laughing as the shutter clicks and he leaps back on to the lawn, looking dismayed.

IFOR (CONT'D)

Your Mam's begonias! She'll have my
hide - what's so funny?

SEREN

(Laughing) You are! I hate begonias
anyway, nasty fleshy looking
things. Tell Mam the chooks ate
them. I'll be back for dinner,
okay? Gareth, come on!

She grabs Gareth's hand and they run towards the gate, Jess barking and chasing after them.

BACK TO PRESENT

Seren hands the photo back to Gareth. He looks at it for a long BEAT before putting it back in the box.

GARETH

I can't believe how young we were.

SEREN

Your friend - do you think he might
remember something? Are you still
in touch?

Gareth shakes his head.

GARETH

His name was Rhys Davies. I only
saw him a couple of times - after.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARETH (CONT'D)

He left that Christmas, and I haven't seen or heard from him since. The police questioned us both for hours. He hadn't seen her since the dance, and I hadn't seen her since that morning. Even if I knew where he was, I don't think he could help.

SEREN

I still think we should try.

INT. RHYS'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

A modern, luxuriously appointed room. Rhys sits at an architect's table poring over plans and sketches. Behind him, French doors overlook a beautiful garden and beyond that, a breathtaking sea view. A closer shot shows a wedding ring, and on the desk there is a recent photograph of him and a younger, dark haired man - his partner MARCUS - standing with their arms around a tall, fair haired teenager. This is Marcus's son JED, who at that moment puts his head around the door.

JED

Dad's taking me now. See you

Monday!

Rhys looks up from the plans.

RHYS

Have a good weekend. Tell your mother the plans for her kitchen are almost ready. And tell your father to drive carefully!

Jed grins, and disappears with a 'thumbs up'.

MARCUS (O.S.)

I heard that!

Smiling, Rhys returns to his work. There is the 'PING' of a Facebook notification from his iPad. He glances at it, then does a double take of utter shock and disbelief, sending several measuring instruments CLATTERING to the tiled floor. Close up of the screen reads: 'Message from Seren Jones'.

INT. RHYS'S LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Another elegant and beautifully decorated room. Open French doors lead on to a paved patio, where Rhys is sitting staring out to sea. House lights are twinkling across the bay. Marcus appears, carrying two drinks. He hands one to Rhys.

MARCUS

Did you call Gareth?

Rhys nods and takes a hefty swig of his drink.

RHYS

We're meeting tomorrow.

MARCUS

It was over forty years ago! How much could you possibly remember?

Rhys takes another drink as he walks to the open doors. A long BEAT of silence as he looks out towards the lights.

RHYS

Everything. I remember everything.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. VILLAGE HIGH STREET - DAY (1974)

Seren and Gareth are sitting on a bench outside the newsagent's, both eating ice cream cones. Jess sits at their feet, tail twitching and looking hopeful. Rhys appears, still wearing his fishing gear including gumboots. He sits between them and they each move hastily to the respective far ends of the bench. He reaches into his jeans pocket and pulls out a fish, which he throws up in the air for Jess to catch. The other two look on, horrified.

SEREN

You did not just do that.

She goes to take another bite of her ice cream, but is overcome by the fish smell and gives it to Jess. Gareth does the same, and they both glare at Rhys.

RHYS

What?

SEREN

Whoever marries you will have to have absolutely no sense of smell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARETH

Which could be difficult, 'cos
they'd already have to be blind.

Rhys opens his mouth to reply when there is a sudden
COMMOTION outside the pub across the street.

EXT. 'GOLDEN LION' - DAY

A pretty, Tudor style pub with hanging baskets of flowers and
tubs of bright geraniums at the door. A scuffle has broken
out between a group of locals and several of the travellers.
A table full of drinks is knocked over, there is SHOUTING and
CURSING and a dog is barking furiously. The fight then spills
across the narrow footpath into the road. The dog - Meirion's
lurcher Samson - is terrified by the noise and bolts, almost
knocking over a young mother and her child before
disappearing down a side street. There is a loud sound of
BREAKING GLASS

GARETH

We should get out of here, now.

SEREN

No, wait, that was Samson! He's
scared, he'll get himself run over!

Without warning she dashes after the dog. The boys look at
each other in astonishment, but start running in the same
direction.

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

Gareth and Rhys run around the corner to see Seren kneeling
beside the huge dog, which is panting with stress but sitting
quietly as she strokes and calms it. From the other end of
the street two young TRAVELLERS approach. Dark haired and
wiry, and so similar looking they could only be brothers,
they appear to be in their early teens. They do not look
happy.

TRAVELLER

Oi, gorja! That's a traveller dog.
Leave it be.

Gareth, visibly bristling, steps forward. After a BEAT, so
does Rhys.

GARETH

What did you say?

Seren scrambles to her feet, keeping one hand on Samson's
collar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

No, it's okay, it just means -

As Gareth eyeballs the first traveller, the second one edges closer. Rhys slowly slips his hand into his pocket and withdraws a small fishing knife.

GARETH

I know what it means.

TRAVELLER

Leave the dog be, Blondie. It belongs with us.

Rhys, although obviously afraid, steps between Seren and the second traveller.

RHYS

Just - back off, okay? Leave her alone.

The travellers look Gareth and Rhys up and down, as if assessing the likely outcome of a fight. The first traveller spots the knife in Rhys's hand.

TRAVELLER

You'd better be ready to use that, gorja boy.

There is the sound of RUNNING FOOTSTEPS and Meirion and Cai appear. Samson pulls away from Seren and leaps up at Meirion, ecstatic. Meirion pushes him down and strides towards the two younger travellers, who no longer look quite so sure of themselves. He grabs the first one by the collar before cuffing him sharply across the back of the head.

MEIRION

What the hell do you think you're doing?

TRAVELLER

Ow! She had your dog - you should be thanking me!

Meirion growls something low and menacing in Romani before releasing the boy and pushing him roughly away. The pair slink off, dejected and muttering. Cai cuffs the other boy as they pass him, causing a sharp YELP of pain. Meirion then turns to face Seren.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MEIRION

You're all right?

SEREN

I - I thought Samson might get run over. I'm sorry, Meirion. I didn't mean to cause any trouble.

The four young men stand in silence, eyeing each other up and down.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry! These are my friends, Gareth and Rhys.

Meirion turns to face Gareth, who is closest, offering his hand. Gareth takes it with some reluctance.

MEIRION

I'm Meirion, and this is my brother Cai.

Cai, taller and heavier built than Meirion - but not as handsome - nods curtly. He regards Seren with an odd expression which Gareth, focussed on Meirion, doesn't notice - but it is picked up by Rhys, who frowns.

MEIRION (CONT'D)

Seren and I met the other day. Her horse -

Seren flashes him a panicked look.

SEREN

Tanwen picked up a stone in her hoof on the road by Fenton's Acre. Meirion helped me get it out.

Meirion raises his eyebrows, but says nothing.

RHYS

What happened outside the Lion? Looked like you two were right in the thick of it.

Cai's face darkens. Meirion looks as though he is about to say something, then thinks better of it.

CAI

Same thing as always. Something bad happens, your lot blame us for it.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAI (CONT'D)

Billy Morgan didn't want to pay me for fixing his tractor, reckoned his new chainsaw went missing right after I'd been there. He called me a dirty, thieving tinker so I took a swing at him.

MEIRION

They stopped fighting when Dai Parry remembered he'd borrowed it to cut up a tree come down in the wind.

Seren bends down to pat Samson, who is nudging her leg.

SEREN

My Da says Billy Morgan is a good-for-nothing drunk who wouldn't know his arse from his elbow.

RHYS

He's my Da's best mate. And your Da is dead right.

Meirion smiles but Cai still looks angry. Gareth reaches down to pat Samson, then smacks his forehead with his hand.

GARETH

Jess! She's still tied up outside the newsagent's!

SEREN

(To Meirion) We'd best get going.

MEIRION

See you round, maybe. Thanks for watching out for Samson.

The three turn and head back towards the high street.

GARETH

A knife? Seriously? For the first month on the boat you cried every time you had to gut a fish!

RHYS

And you're never going to let me forget it, are you?

Gareth looks at him in astonishment.

GARETH

Now why would I want to do that?

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. PENMARTHEN HIGH STREET - DAY

Jennifer gets out of her car and walks along the street towards the jetty. Several young families are enjoying the beach, and groups of children are happily digging for crabs, exploring rock pools and building sand castles. She stands and watches, fingers again moving across her stomach. A small flaxen haired boy scampers past, his attractive young mother in hot pursuit with a sleeping baby girl under one arm.

She sweeps the toddler up in her other arm, showering him with kisses as he shrieks with laughter.

JENNIFER

Looks like you have your hands full there!

The young woman grins, swinging her son on to one hip and blowing a wayward dark curl out of her face.

YOUNG MOTHER

Honestly, it doesn't stop from the minute his feet hit the floor! I love it, but these days my favourite sound in the world is my partner's key in the door! We've come to meet him for fish and chips on the beach - look, Owen, there's Daddy come to find us!

She waves to a suited, bespectacled young man in the distance before turning back to Jennifer.

YOUNG MOTHER (CONT'D)

Enjoy your day. We love it here, it's fantastic for the kids.

She hurries to meet her partner, who lifts the little boy on to his shoulders. Jennifer watches as they walk along the beach.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Jennifer tidies the kitchen, stopping frequently to peer out of the window. As she hangs up the tea towel, a cellphone begins to buzz on the kitchen table. She glances at the screen, which shows 'Sally - Agent'. She hesitates for a moment, letting it ring a several times before picking it up.

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

In a small book-lined office Alun's agent SALLY WESTCOTT sits at a large old-fashioned desk, typing with one hand and holding a phone in the other.

SALLY

Jennifer! Just wanted Alun to know I've submitted to a university press and an American biography publisher. I still can't believe Routledge turned it down, but we will find a home for it. Yes, tell him I'll keep him posted.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Jennifer sits down, carefully replacing the phone on the table.

INT. CHICKEN COOP - DAY

Seren sits on top of the nesting boxes holding her phone, which reads 'seven unread messages'. She deletes them unread before removing both Alex and Frankie from her contacts list. She pushes 'Lia' but the call goes to voice mail. She gives a YELP of fright as Harri crashes through the door, Moo clutched under one arm.

HARRI

I wanted to show you my score and you were gone!

SEREN

Sorry, Maggot. Is Dad back from seeing Gran?

He stands on tiptoe, peering up at her.

HARRI

No, and Mum won't give me any chocolate. Why are your eyes red?

Seren pulls a bedraggled tissue from her jeans pocket, blowing her nose.

SEREN

Hay fever. And too much chocolate is bad for you.

With some help Harri scrambles up to sit beside her. They sit in silence for a moment, then Harri puts a hand on her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRI

Doesn't feel like you've got a fever.

Seren grabs him in a bear hug, squeezing and tickling him. Wriggling and squealing in protest, he knocks an old wicker egg basket to the floor. As they lie breathless and giggling, Seren notices that something else has fallen with the basket. She clambers down and picks up a small yellowed sketch pad.

SEREN

Oh. My. God.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Seren is holding Charlie's reins in one hand. With the other she carefully zips the pad into her jacket pocket before turning to Harri.

SEREN

Listen, Maggot. I have to show this to Gareth, okay? It's really important.

HARRI

I want to come too!

Seren swings herself into the saddle.

SEREN

Go inside and wait for Dad. Ask him to bring you in the car, and we'll come back together.

Harri shakes his head.

HARRI

I'm coming with you!

SEREN

Harri, get inside NOW or I'm going to let Gus chew up all your Skylanders!

She spins Charlie around and canters off. Harri kicks at the gravel, scowling, before taking a few steps towards the house. He stops, turning to watch her ride away.

HARRI

Moo says you are really mean!

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Gareth and Rhys walk along the jetty past two burly men unloading a lone fishing boat. Dozens of gulls wheel and call overhead.

GARETH

What happened to the Dolphin?

Rhys pauses to scoop up a handful of stones, throwing one into the water.

RHYS

Tomos sold her after Dad died, and the new owner ran her aground on a sand bar. You never left the farm?

A long BEAT of silence.

GARETH

I did, for a while. Mari and I were having problems, and I thought maybe it was because she'd not long had Bethan and needed her family. I put a manager in, we moved to Swansea and I got a job labouring.

They reach the end of the jetty where they lean against the railing, looking out to sea.

GARETH (CONT'D)

She was happy, but after six months I felt like I was dying. I was homesick, and - I guess she just wasn't right for me.

Rhys throws another stone in the water before turning to face Gareth.

RHYS

You mean she wasn't Seren.

Gareth gives a short, harsh laugh.

GARETH

That's exactly what Mari said the day I left.

He straightens, buttoning his jacket against the wind.

GARETH (CONT'D)

Where did you go - after?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RHYS

London. Couldn't get there quick enough. I used to think it must be the most exciting place in the world.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. JETTY - DAY (1974)

Seren and Rhys sit with their bare feet almost touching the water. The Dolphin bobs at its mooring. Rhys is cleaning fish, and Seren moves slightly away.

SEREN

Poor Gareth, fencing in this heat! He'll be melted by now.

RHYS

I'd swap! I've still not finished cleaning this fish, and Da will kill me if it's not done by the time the Lion closes.

Seren turns around to face him.

SEREN

Why can't you do something else, like Tomos?

Rhys shrugs.

RHYS

Tomos was at the factory before Mam died, she stopped Da from forcing him on to the boat. But he can't make me do this for ever. I'm gonna save until I have enough to get out of here, and I'm never coming back.

SEREN

I'm going to live with Angharad in London as soon as I'm old enough. In her last letter she said she saw Marc Bolan, just walking along the street! I would die!

Rhys stands to tip the guts and bones over the side of the jetty, then throws the empty bucket back onto the boat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RHYS

London! I'd be there in a heartbeat. Do you know they have shops and pubs and restaurants that never close? And people do what they want, wear what they like - nobody cares!

Seren frowns, heaving a huge sigh.

SEREN

Angharad wants me to go down for Bank Holiday - the train from Penmarthen goes right to Liverpool Street - but Mam's making a fuss 'cause Gareth told her it's dirty, and dangerous.

Rhys grins, reaching down to pull Seren to her feet. Arm in arm, they begin walking back along the jetty.

RHYS

Mams are supposed to fuss. And our Gareth spends entirely too much time with sheep.

BACK TO PRESENT

Gareth and Rhys are walking back along the jetty.

RHYS

You were right. It was dirty and dangerous.

Gareth chuckles, putting a hand on Rhys's back.

GARETH

So were you. Entirely too much time with sheep. Come on, I'll buy you that drink.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Jen is still seated at the table. Alun comes through the door, waving a Welsh language magazine at her.

ALUN

There's an article in here about Harri Web! It says there's been a resurgence of interest him, and -

Jennifer snatches the magazine and throws it on the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALUN (CONT'D)

Hey!

JENNIFER

How long?

He takes a step back.

ALUN

What? I don't -

Jennifer jumps to her feet, slamming the chair back against the table.

JENNIFER

Routledge. How long have you known?

A BEAT of silence before Alun slumps into a chair.

ALUN

Six weeks.

Another BEAT of silence as Jennifer processes this information.

JENNIFER

The job at Hillesden - you already knew when you turned it down.

Trembling with rage, she wraps her arms around herself.

Alun slumps further.

ALUN

You don't understand - Routledge said it was brilliant, and if I cut the early chapters and focus on his later work then another publisher -

Jennifer holds up a hand to silence him.

JENNIFER

I spend fifty hours a week on my feet, I hardly see my children, we have no money and you turn down head of department at a fantastic school on the strength of a great rejection?

Alun stands up and reaches for her, but she shrugs him off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALUN
I know, I know, but I am so close,
and Harri needs me -

Jennifer turns on him furiously.

JENNIFER
No - you need Harri so you can sit
at home playing the Great Author
while I support us and Seren raises
her brother! She's *fourteen*, Alun!

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Harri stands unnoticed at the open kitchen door clutching Moo. After a moment he turns, running back through the garden.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

ALUN
Jen, please - it will be fine, I
promise! I'll get a contract soon
and everything will be different!

Jennifer walks away, pausing at the door into the hall. She doesn't turn around.

JENNIFER
Everything is already different.
I'm pregnant.

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DAY

Harri, Moo under one arm, struggles up the cliff path. Behind him, a blue butterfly darts back and forth. He pauses at the top, out of breath, before continuing down the other side towards Gareth's house.

INT. GARETH'S KITCHEN - DAY

Seren and Max sit at the table, the sketch pad between them. Bethan frantically rifles through her handbag, then her pockets.

BETHAN
Where are my keys? I had them this
morning!

Max sighs, rolling his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

(To Seren) They were in the peg
basket last time.

Bethan grabs Max by the shoulders, planting a kiss on his
cheek.

BETHAN

Genius! I used the light on my key
ring when I tightened a screw in
the washing machine. Let's go, we
might catch Dad and Rhys at the
pub.

EXT. GOLDEN LION - DAY

A pretty Tudor style pub with paved courtyard and lots of
pots and hanging baskets. Rhys is seated at a small table.
Gareth approaches with two pints of lager. They sit in
silence for a moment.

RHYS

It hasn't changed much.

GARETH

You haven't been inside yet. Pink
velvet couches and big screen tvs.

Rhys pulls a face.

RHYS

So - you have a daughter?

GARETH

And a grandson, Max.

He puts his pint on the table and looks directly at Rhys.

GARETH (CONT'D)

When he came out last year, I
thought about you a lot. About how
hard it must have been. I wished -
I wish I'd been a better friend,
Rhys. I didn't always make things
easier, and I'm sorry.

A long BEAT of silence. Rhys puts his glass down beside
Gareth's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RHYS

You were a good friend, Gareth. You never turned away, and just hanging out with you made me less of a target. Probably saved me from a good kicking most days. Not that you would have noticed - you didn't see anything except Seren.

Gareth picks up his glass and takes a large drink, glancing across the road as a family emerges noisily from a small shop. Rhys frowns.

RHYS (CONT'D)

Didn't that used to be -

GARETH

The newsagent. What was his name?

RHYS

Renwick? No - Ransome?

GARETH

Randall! It was Mr Randall.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. NEWSAGENT'S - DAY (1974)

Gareth, Rhys and Seren stand in front of the newsagent's window, pressed up against a poster advertising the 'Ffarwel Haf/Goodbye to Summer' dance featuring glam rock idols Gerry l'Amour and the Lovers. They turn in unison at the sound of

MOTORBIKE ENGINES.

Two motorbikes appear, ridden by two good looking dark haired young men wearing jeans and leather jackets. As they ride slowly past the shop and back again the newsagent, MR. RANDALL - short, plump, balding and worried looking, comes to the door.

MR RANDALL

There's trouble, mark my words. Them gypsies, they're all the same. Wouldn't trust a single one of them, I wouldn't. They've taken up on Fenton's Acre, pestering all the farms for work- it's not right. Not right at all. Beggars and thieves, the lot of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

None of the three comment - Gareth is staring intently at the bikes, Rhys and Seren at the boys.

BACK TO PRESENT

Bethan, Max and Seren spill out of the farm truck. As they approach the table Rhys stares at Seren, completely stunned and then almost overcome with emotion.

GARETH

I should have warned you. I keep thinking I'll get used to it, but I never do.

EXT. GOLDEN LION - DAY

Gareth, Rhys, Seren, Max and Bethan are all seated around the table in silence. At the centre lies the sketch pad. Gareth reaches out and picks it up.

SEREN (V.O.)

Dear Angharad, I don't even know where to start! I'm still riding with Meirion most days, and Tanwen is so much better . . .

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY (1974)

Seren and Meirion ride bareback along the water's edge. Samson is playing in the surf. Without warning, Meirion turns and rides Badger into the sea.

MEIRION

Come on!

Seren hesitates, looking anxious, but Tanwen is pawing at the water, eager to follow. Seren lets her have her head and she strikes out in to the waves. Seren gasps and splutters, immersed up to the waist as the horses surge through the water.

SEREN

Oh my God, it's freezing!

MEIRION

You're soft, you are. Come on then, we'll head back. I said I'd help Cai organise the games for next Saturday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Seren's teeth are chattering as they ride out of the water.

SEREN

Wh - what's happening on Saturday?

Meirion takes off his denim jacket and passes it to her, putting a hand on Tanwen's reins to steady her as Seren puts it on.

MEIRION

It's Calan Awst; Gathering Day, where you give thanks for a successful harvest. There's a lot of eating and drinking, and dancing, and games. We're going to have a bonfire at the top of the hill.

SEREN

On Bryn Melyn?

MEIRION

(Nods) We're having it this Saturday because there's a full moon.

Seren, still shivering, buttons up the jacket.

SEREN

And then?

MEIRION

And then we'll be gone.

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - EVENING

Gareth is sitting on a chair in front of the dressing table as Seren attempts to put eyeliner on him.

SEREN

Sit still! I'm nearly finished. I still can't believe we're going!

Gareth peers into the mirror.

GARETH

Are you sure about this?

SEREN

Everyone there is going to look like this. It's Gerry L'amour and the Lovers!

Gareth slumps back in the chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARETH

Is Rhys meeting us there?

Seren frowns, squinting as she tries to get the line straight.

SEREN

Must be. I thought he'd have rung, though. Tomos is supposed to be dropping us all home after.

Appearing satisfied with the eyeliner, she dips a brush in a small pot of silver glitter and draws a star on his left cheek before standing back to admire her handiwork. Gareth stares at his reflection, fascinated.

SEREN (CONT'D)

There. Perfect!

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - EVENING

Branwen makes a pot of tea. Ifor sits at the table attempting to read the evening paper. He takes his glasses off and on, placing them at various angles on the bridge of his nose. There is a loud CLATTER of heels on a hard surface and a lot of GIGGLING as Seren and Gareth burst in. Seren wears denim flares, a striped tank top and cherry clips in her hair. Her star brooch is pinned to the top, along with several other sparkly bits of jewellery. She also sports blue glitter eye shadow. Gareth wears flared jeans and a yellow satin shirt, but it is his makeup which Ifor is fixated on.

SEREN

We're going to walk down to the road. Gareth's Da is giving us a lift to the village.

Gareth, aware of Ifor's scrutiny, squirms uncomfortably.

GARETH

We should probably go.

Branwen hands Ifor a cup of tea. With a visible effort, he clears his throat and tears his gaze from Gareth's face.

BRANWEN

And young Tomos is dropping you home after?

SEREN

Yes, Mam. I told you. See you later!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She drops a quick kiss on both of her parents' heads, and they are gone. The front door SLAMS behind them.

EXT. DANCE HALL - EVENING

A banner above the entrance proclaims 'Ffarwel Haf - we welcome Gerry L'amour and the Lovers!' A large crowd of noisy, excited teenagers is waiting outside. Seren clutches Gareth's arm, searching the sea of faces.

She finally locates Rhys coming towards them and rushes forward, grabbing hold of him.

SEREN

Oh, my God! Let me see! You look amazing!

EXT. STREET - EVENING

From across the street Meirion watches the three of them. A little further along, Cai is watching him. Their eyes meet, and Cai gives him a look which seems full of disapproval.

Meirion looks away, ignoring him. The doors of the hall swing open, and there is an EXPLOSION of noise as the crowd stampedes inside.

INT. DANCE HALL - EVENING

At the opening GUITAR RIFF of Sweet's 'Hell Raiser' the crowd explodes again. Seren grabs Rhys's hand and they rush towards the front; Gareth stands frozen like a deer caught in headlights. The entire dance floor is a kaleidoscope of colour and sparkle. As the song ends a TOWN COUNCILLOR - a portly middle aged man in an old fashioned, ill fitting suit - walks out on to the stage, trying to make himself heard over the noise.

COUNCILLOR

Good evening! On behalf of your local council it is my great pleasure to welcome you all here tonight, and I know you will want to join me in also extending a very warm welcome to a talented group of lads who have done Wales proud. Ladies and gentlemen, without further ado I give you Swansea's answer to the Glitter Band - Gerry L'amour and the Lovers!

The curtains behind him part, and the band goes straight into a cover of the Glitter Band's JUST FOR YOU.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Seren and Rhys are dancing ecstatically. Gareth watches, his feelings for Seren plainly written on his face. Suddenly Meirion appears beside him. They can only smile and nod - the music is far too loud to allow conversation - and they stand together in silence, watching. Finally the band stops for a break and Seren and Rhys return, breathless. Seren's face lights up at the sight of Meirion - which is noticed with displeasure by Gareth.

SEREN

Meirion! You remember Gareth, and Rhys?

MEIRION

Of course.

There is an uncomfortable BEAT of silence.

GARETH

I'll go and get us something to drink.

Seren, Rhys and Meirion negotiate their way to the back of the hall, where they manage to squeeze around a tiny table. Gareth returns with a jug of lemonade and four glasses. Rhys produces the vodka and surreptitiously unscrews the lid, pouring the contents into the lemonade.

RHYS

Drink up, everyone - this round's on my good old Da!

Meirion helps himself straight away. After a moment's hesitation Seren follows, then a reluctant Gareth. They quickly down their drinks and refill their glasses until the jug is empty. They repeat the process, laughing and getting sillier as the evening proceeds.

INT. DANCE HALL - EVENING

The lights dim, and a spotlight hits the stage. Gerry steps forward, the glitter in his hair creating a sparkling halo.

GERRY

It's almost time to say goodbye, just as we've come tonight to say ffarwel haf, farewell to summer. But don't worry, summer will return - and so will we. Until then, here's something to finish off the evening. Goodnight, and thank you for having us. We love you!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is tumultuous applause, stamping and cries of 'We love you too!' As the band begins to play LADY STARLIGHT, a special light creates the effect of thousands of stars slowly spinning across the ceiling. Meirion reaches across and touches Seren's arm.

MEIRION

They're playing your song, Lady
Starlight.

Seren looks puzzled for a moment then smiles, touching her hair. Gareth stands up abruptly, grabbing Seren's hand and pulling her to her feet.

GARETH

Come on, then. I did promise you.

RHYS

You can't dance!

Gareth shrugs.

GARETH

I think I can handle it.

He leads a slightly unsteady Seren on to the dance floor, which is full of young couples doing a slow shuffle. As they hold each other awkwardly and sway to the music, a shower of silver confetti rains down from the ceiling. It catches the lights as it falls, illuminating everything. Seren puts her arms around Gareth's neck, leaning back and watching as the confetti dusts everything with silver.

GARETH (CONT'D)

Seren -

She tightens her arms around his neck and puts her head on his shoulder.

SEREN

I love you. You're my best friend
in the whole entire world, and you
always will be.

Gareth wraps his arms around her, his face full of emotion. At the table, Meirion drains the last of his drink.

MEIRION

Are they? -

Rhys laughs, shaking his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RHYS

Those two? No. He worships the ground Seren walks on, but she can't see it.

EXT. DANCE HALL - EVENING

Rhys, Meirion, Gareth and Seren emerge to join the large crowd that is milling around outside, still hyped from the performance. The sound of MOTORBIKE ENGINES being revved suddenly drowns out the excited laughter and chatter, and the group that was previously drinking at the Golden Lion ride right into the crowd. Several people scatter to avoid being knocked over.

A tall, thin youth with frizzy hair, whose girlfriend has fallen in the scramble, pulls one of the riders off his bike. BALLROOM BLITZ plays as a fight breaks out, which rapidly becomes a chaotic free-for-all.

RHYS

Quick, round the back! Tomos said he'd park outside the off-licence.

EXT. SIDE STREET - EVENING

They run - as best they can with two of them wearing platforms - but as they turn into a side street they find themselves trapped. The exit is blocked by three of the bikers. Rhys looks panic stricken.

RHYS

Ah, crap.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. GOLDEN LION - EARLIER

The doors are open and there is a group of older men drinking outside. As Rhys approaches, several of them stop talking and turn to look at him.

FIRST MAN

What the hell is that?

SECOND MAN

Jesus - isn't it one of Dai's boys?

A noisy group of young biker types in jeans and leather vests spill out from the pub carrying pints. On seeing Rhys they erupt into CATCALLS and WOLF WHISTLES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIKER

All right, darling? Fancy a drink?

Rhys pauses, then turns to face them.

RHYS

Way out of your league, mate.
Didn't your Da teach you about not
punching above your weight?

He walks away to the sound of LAUGHTER and APPLAUSE. As he continues on his way he begins to see other teenagers dressed in similar attire, obviously also en route to the concert. As more and more appear, he starts to smile. Soon, he simply disappears into the glittering, platform-heeled crowd.

RETURN TO PRESENT

BIKER

Well, if it isn't the Queen of
Sheba. What was it you were saying
before about punching above your
weight?

Rhys looks him up and down, courage fuelled by adrenaline and alcohol.

RHYS

You know the difference between you
and me? I can go home and take this
off. In the morning, you'll still
be stupid - and ugly.

The biker dismounts from his bike and moves towards Rhys.

BIKER

I think Lady Muck here needs to be
taught some manners.

Meirion pulls Seren behind him and Gareth.

MEIRION

We don't want any trouble -

BIKER

Don't make me laugh. Gypsies are
trouble. That's why you're never
welcome anywhere. Steal anything,
you lot, even our women.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns his attention to Seren.

BIKER (CONT'D)

Stick to your own, lass. There's a name for girls who knock about with the likes of them. You don't want people thinking you're a -

Before he can finish the sentence, Gareth lands a decent right hook to his jaw. Everybody looks stunned - including Gareth - but the biker recovers quickly, delivering a punch which knocks Gareth to the ground. The two other bikers look at each other anxiously.

SECOND BIKER

Come on, they're just kids -

THIRD BIKER

Yeah, and I'm going to cop serious GBH to the ear'oles from my old lady if I get in any more strife with the Old Bill.

BIKER

Okay, okay.

He turns to Gareth, who is sitting on the footpath. His nose is bleeding copiously and Seren is trying to staunch the flow with her handkerchief.

BIKER (CONT'D)

You've got bottle, kid, I'll give you that. Must have some balls hidden in them fancy pants after all. But you wanna find some better company than tinkers and queens.

He spits on the ground in the general direction of Rhys and Meirion, gets on his bike and the three disappear with a ROAR of throttle. Rhys and Meirion help Gareth to his feet. As she stands - with some difficulty - Seren notices a piece of paper on the ground. She picks it up and reads it before quickly slipping it into her pocket.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - EVENING

A small black car pulls up. Seren gets out to a chorus of 'goodbyes', and she waves for a moment before making her way unsteadily towards the house. Rex bounds up to greet her, and she almost overbalances as she bends down to pat him.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN

The house is in darkness, and Seren closes the door quietly behind her. She is carefully picking her way across the kitchen when the lights are switched on. Branwen's hands fly to her face as she is confronted with the sight of her daughter dishevelled, liberally spattered in blood and quite obviously intoxicated.

BRANWEN

Sweet Jesus! Ifor, come quickly!

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - MORNING

Seren is asleep on top of her bed, still fully clothed. She opens her eyes and sits up, wincing. Suddenly she thrusts her hand into her jeans pocket, retrieving the note she picked up from the ground last night. She uncrumples it and we are able to read it too: 'Meet me at nine o'clock on Saturday night at the shepherd's hut on the other side of the hill. M.'

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Seren is sitting at the table, head resting on her arms. Branwen is at the kitchen sink, with her back to Seren. Ifor is hovering in the doorway.

BRANWEN

I knew we shouldn't have let you go to that dance! When I think of what could have happened to you -

She shakes her head.

IFOR

I tell you, my heart fair stopped when I saw that blood.

SEREN

(Muffled) I said I was sorry.

Branwen turns to face her, drying her hands on her apron.

BRANWEN

Your Da and I - we've decided you're to stay home for a week, and that means no riding, either. The tack shed is locked, but your grooming gear and halter are at the paddock gate.

Seren lifts her head. She looks terrible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

You can't do that! Please - it
won't happen again, I promise!

IFOR

I'm sorry, lovely, but that's an
end to it.

INT. CHICKEN COOP - DAY

Seren sits on top of the nesting boxes. Several chickens are pecking at the ground below, and one large one is perched close to her.

She is drawing on a sketch pad, and as the camera closes in we can see that she is drawing Gerry L'amour. As we get even closer, although the clothes are those Gerry wore on stage, the face looks very much like Meirion's. The note is tucked inside the top corner of the page. Suddenly a dog BARKS, and the hens scatter in panic. Seren clutches the sketch pad as the hen beside her SQUAWKS and flaps its wings.

GARETH (O.S.)

Jess! Get back here!

Gareth appears at the door.

GARETH (CONT'D)

Sorry. I told her to find you.

Seren quickly slides the sketch pad under an egg basket.

SEREN

Hold on.

She makes her way tentatively down off the nesting boxes. Jess is whining outside, scratching at the door.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Hush, Jess. I've got the worst
headache.

As she pulls open the door she almost steps on one of the hens, which SCOLDS her loudly. She picks it up and pushes it none too gently into one of the nesting boxes.

SEREN (CONT'D)

You've got a lot to say for someone
who's lined up to be Sunday's
dinner.

EXT. CHICKEN COOP - DAY

There is an awkward BEAT of silence; neither seems to know what to say. Seren bends down to pat Jess.

GARETH
Are you in much trouble?

SEREN
Yep. You?

GARETH
Enough.

She stands up, peering at his face.

SEREN
Does your nose hurt?

Gareth raises his eyebrows.

GARETH
That guy was built like a hod
carrier. Of course it bloody hurts!

She looks stricken, and he is immediately contrite.

GARETH (CONT'D)
Sorry. My head's killing me, too.

SEREN
I'm going down to the home paddock.

Come for a walk.

EXT. HOME PADDOCK - DAY

Seren is grooming Tanwen, Gareth is lying on his back in the grass, and Jess is looking for rabbits at the edge of the paddock.

GARETH
You can keep your big cities and
your posh restaurants; I can't
imagine anywhere more perfect than
this.

Seren pauses in mid stroke, cleaning the brush.

SEREN
What, you want to live in your
parents' house and chase sheep
round the hills forever?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gareth sits up, looking serious.

GARETH

Would that be so terrible?

Seren unties Tanwen, putting the halter and brushes into a canvas bag with a rope handle before sitting down on the grass beside Gareth.

SEREN

No, not terrible, but - don't you ever just want to get away? See new places, do something different? Angharad makes it sound so exciting.

GARETH

I'm going to take over the farm when Mam and Da retire in a few years. They reckon they'll head up north, near my aunt.

SEREN

I don't want to end up like Mam - she's never been out of Wales, and Da was the only boyfriend she ever had. You couldn't rattle round there all by yourself, it's enormous!

Gareth squares his shoulders, takes a deep breath and reaches out to cover her hand with his.

GARETH

Maybe one day you'll come live there with me.

Seren pulls her hand away and scrambles to her feet.

SEREN

Gareth -

Gareth also gets up. Jess, sensing the change of atmosphere, paces anxiously at the gate.

GARETH

Why not, Seren? Why not me?

Seren looks bewildered, and close to tears.

SEREN

You're my friend, Gareth, my best friend!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GARETH

Maybe that's not what I want any more.

SEREN

There's lots of girls out there!
You're just used to me -

He kicks savagely at a stone on the ground.

GARETH

Don't tell me how I feel! I bet it would be different if I was that gypsy. I've seen the way you look at him, and I saw you on the beach with the horses -

SEREN

On the beach? Oh my God, now you're *spying* on me? Meirion's been helping me with Tanwen, he's amazing with horses and - and this is ridiculous!

She turns her back and starts to walk away. Gareth puts his hand on her shoulder, pulling her around to face him.

GARETH

You know what's ridiculous? Me wasting any more time hoping that you - maybe that biker was right. Maybe I shouldn't be hanging around with gypsies and queens.

SEREN

What the hell is wrong with you? You don't own me, Gareth! And that biker was about to call me a -

Gareth looks straight at her, and the word hangs unspoken between them.

Seren gasps.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Just go away, and leave me alone! I never want to see you again!

Gareth turns without another word and walks away. Jess bounds after him. Seren watches him for a moment puts her arms around the horse's neck and cries into her mane.

INT. CHICKEN COOP - DUSK

Seren is sitting back on top of the nesting boxes, sketching on a small pad. It is obvious that she has been crying.

BRANWEN (O.S.)

Come inside, lovely! You've not had any dinner!

Exasperated, Seren climbs down and opens the coop door.

SEREN

I told you, Mam - I'm NOT HUNGRY!
I'll be in soon, okay?

BRANWEN (O.S.)

Not too late, then. It'll be dark before long.

Seren looks out at the sky, which is still almost completely light, and shakes her head. She climbs back onto the nesting box and picks up the sketch pad. She has drawn herself, Gareth, Rhys and Meirion in the clothes they wore to the dance. She gazes critically at her handiwork for a moment, then carefully turns the page and begins to write.

SEREN (V.O.)

So even though I was perfectly fine, I'm grounded. Completely unfair. Meirion and the travellers are having their celebration for Gathering Day tonight, and I'm going anyway. And tomorrow I'm going to find Gareth and tell him I'm sorry. We've never had a fight before, and I hate it. Mam's always saying he's a saint for putting up with me; I don't know about that, but I do know I'd be lost without him. Maybe one day when I've been to London and Paris and had a million adventures I'll come back here and ride my horses while he chases his daft sheep round the hills. I'll finish this in the morning, so I can tell you all about tonight! Your loving sister, Seren.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. GOLDEN LION - DAY

Gareth puts the sketch pad on the table, lays his head on his arms and weeps.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Alun sits at the table, the magazine still in front of him. He turns a few pages, then pushes it away. Seren bursts through the door, brandishing the sketch pad.

SEREN

You won't believe what I found - look! It's a letter from Seren to Gran - can you take me to see her?

Jen enters the kitchen. It is obvious she has been crying.

JENNIFER

What's all the commotion?

SEREN

I found - what's wrong with you?

Jen shakes her head, reaching into her pocket for a handkerchief and blowing her nose.

JENNIFER

Nothing. Hay fever. I get it every time I come here.

Seren goes to the fridge, pouring herself a glass of juice. The tension between her parents is palpable, and she frowns as she looks from one to the other.

SEREN

Anyway - now we know why she went up to Bryn Melyn that night! This was under the egg basket, and when Harri - where is he, anyway? Don't tell me he's still on the Xbox.

Alun and Jennifer look at each other in horror.

SEREN (CONT'D)

What? What's the matter?

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DAY

Seren urges Charlie towards the top of the hill. Max is approaching from the other side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

Anything?

Seren shakes her head.

SEREN

I told him to go inside! It's all my fault - what if something's happened to him?

Max reaches up, patting her arm awkwardly.

MAX

He's got Gus with him. And of course it's not your fault! Your parents were both right there - Harri just decided to go walkabout. Come on, we'll try the other track.

SEREN

You take the track, I'll ride down the other side of the hill in case he's lost his way. Charlie can get places you can't.

MAX

Okay, but be careful.

He sets off on the track and Seren begins the steep descent down the hill, letting Charlie pick his way between the gorse and rocky outcrops. She pulls him to a halt and stands in the stirrups. There is the faint but unmistakable sound of a dog barking.

SEREN

Gus! Where are you?

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DAY

Harri has dropped Moo onto a ledge dangerously close to a sheer drop and is reaching down in an attempt to retrieve it. Gus, sensing danger, is barking furiously. Seren rides towards the sound, freezing in horror as she sees them. Harri wriggles a little further, sending a shower of loose stones over the edge.

SEREN

(Making a huge effort to sound calm) Harri, stay still. Just don't move, sweetheart, and I'll come and help you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRI

I have to get Moo!

Seren quickly dismounts and makes her way towards him, leading a reluctant Charlie.

SEREN

I know, and we will. Just wait for me, okay?

Keeping hold of the reins with one hand, she kneels down and reaches towards him.

SEREN (CONT'D)

Okay, now wriggle backwards, really slowly. Slowly! And now turn around a little bit, and take my hand. That's it.

She pulls him up to her with her free hand, bursting into tears as he throws his arms around her neck.

HARRI

I knew you'd come!

SEREN

Oh my God, what were you doing? Why did you come up here?

HARRI

I went to go inside, like you said. But Mum and Dad were shouting. So I walked to Gareth's all by myself to find you and you were gone! So I got Gus and came to look for you.

Seren hugs him hard.

SEREN

Oh, Harri. Come on, we need to get home.

Harri shakes his head.

HARRI

I can't go without Moo.

Seren edges forward a little, leaning over to look at where Moo has fallen. She still has hold of Charlie, who snorts and tosses his head at being asked to move closer to the edge. The view is dizzying, and Seren shuffles hastily backwards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SEREN

I'm sorry. I don't think I can do it.

Huge tears begin to roll down Harri's cheeks.

HARRI

I can't leave Moo! I can't!

SEREN

Okay, okay, I'll try! You just sit really still.

She inches forward again, and almost manages to retrieve the toy before losing her nerve. She takes a deep steadying breath and tries again, this time leaning out a little more and managing to grasp it. Just as she does, the extra pressure on the reins causes Charlie to take a step forward onto some loose stones. He panics and pulls back, wrenching the reins from Seren's hand. She scrabbles frantically backwards, sending a shower of stones over the edge as Max appears and grabs her, pulling her to safety.

MAX

I heard Gus barking. Are you okay? What the hell do you think you're doing?

SEREN

I - I had to get Moo.

Max shakes his head, leaning down to pat Gus.

MAX

You're crazy. You know that, right?

Seren hands Moo to Harri, and helps him to his feet. She then hands Charlie's reins to Max.

SEREN

Can you ride Charlie home? I'll walk with Harri.

EXT. CLIFF PATH - DAY

Seren and Harri walk slowly towards the farmhouse. Harri has Moo clutched firmly under one arm, and with the other is holding Seren's hand tightly.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Gareth and Jennifer stand on either side of Angharad, helping her walk towards Seren's grave. The pink lilies that Gareth left on her birthday are still there.

ANGHARAD

I haven't been up here for years.
Thank you for taking care of her,
Gareth. Just like you always did.

She puts her hand briefly over his, and he is about to reply when his phone suddenly receives a text. He reads it, frowning.

GARETH

Sorry, that was Max to say a ewe
has died and left twin lambs. Let
me get them home to Bethan and I'll
be straight back for you.

ANGHARAD

Off you go. Jennifer will look
after me.

Gareth heads back towards his vehicle. Angharad and Jennifer stand at the grave in silence.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

Alun tells me you may be going back
to Essex.

Jennifer looks away.

JENNIFER

I haven't decided. Things haven't
been very good between us lately.

ANGHARAD

I feel responsible. You shouldn't
have to be looking after me.

JENNIFER

Oh, no, you mustn't think that!
We've been having problems for
ages. I don't want to upset the
children, but -

She looks away, overwhelmed.

ANGHARAD

Alun's not perfect, but he didn't
have much of an example.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

I was a terrible parent, Jennifer.
Self indulgent and self absorbed. I
let my grief over losing Seren stop
me from loving anybody else
properly, even him.

She wraps her cardigan around herself.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

Shall we walk a little way? I'm
getting cold, and if I stand too
long there's a good chance I may
seize up completely.
Jennifer takes her arm, and they
begin to walk. The sea BOOMS far
below.

JENNIFER

Alun adores you - you can't have
been that bad!

Angharad shakes her head.

ANGHARAD

I was, believe me. He hardly knew
his grandparents, because it hurt
me to come here and be reminded.
And when his father found out about
him when he was nearly two, I
wouldn't let him be part of our
lives. I deprived Alun of a father
because it didn't fit in with the
plans I had for my life.

She stops, out of breath, and shakes her head.

ANGHARAD (CONT'D)

So many mistakes. And now Alun
thinks that he has to get this book
published to be successful. I wish
I could convince him that once he
gets to my age, none of that is
important. It's people that matter.
He's already achieved so much more
than I did.

They begin walking back to Seren's grave. Gulls wheel and
call out above them, and in the distance a lone fishing boat
heads towards the shore.

JENNIFER

I don't know what to do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

There is a long BEAT of silence.

ANGHARAD

I have no right to offer advice to anybody. I made a complete mess of my personal life. Alun told me what he did, and you have every right to be angry. All I ask is that you don't punish him for my mistakes. He loves you and the children very much.

Gareth's truck rolls over the hill. Harri scrambles out clutching something in his arms, and as he hurries towards Jennifer and Angharad we can see that it is a puppy, a tiny replica of Gus.

HARRI

Mum! Gran! Look what I've got!

JENNIFER

Oh, my goodness! Who's this?

HARRI

He's mine! Gareth said I took such good care of Gus I should have a dog of my own! I'm going to call him Spyro!

Jennifer raises her eyebrows at Gareth.

GARETH

I hope you don't mind - I did ask Alun. He thought it might be good for him, get him off the XBox for a bit.

Jennifer is silent for a beat, then takes the puppy in her arms.

JENNIFER

Harri, a puppy is a big responsibility. Are you sure you are going to be able to take care of him?

Harri nods emphatically.

HARRI

Gareth told me. He has to have four dinners every day and lots of trips outside.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARRI (CONT'D)

And he has to have his own toys so
he doesn't chew anything precious.
I can do it, Mum.

As Jennifer and Harri fuss over the new arrival, Gareth and Angharad stand together at the grave.

ANGHARAD

Thank you. I thought I needed to
say goodbye - but Seren's not here.
She never was.

GARETH

I couldn't stand thinking that I
had somehow let her down, that
there was something I could have
done. And that she had died angry
with me.

Angharad reaches out to touch his arm.

ANGHARAD

But she didn't. She loved you,
Gareth. She loved us all. We've
both punished ourselves for
something we had no control over,
and it's the very last thing she
would have wanted.

Gareth stands for a long BEAT of silence, then picks up the lilies from the grave. He hands one to Angharad and walks to the cliff's edge, closing his eyes and releasing them into the swirling water below. Angharad does the same. Gareth puts an arm around her shoulders.

EXT. RHYS'S COTTAGE - LATE AFTERNOON

Rhys and Marcus stand outside the fence. The cottage has been badly neglected, paint peeling and the garden overgrown, but a patch of earth has been dug over, a pair of colourful hanging baskets frame the front door and there are cheerful floral curtains flapping on the line. Rhys puts his hands on the palings, looking tense and uncomfortable.

MARCUS

Are you okay?

Rhys shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RHYS

I keep expecting Tomos to come whistling round the corner, or Dad to fetch up on his bike three sheets to the wind and shouting abuse at me.

MARCUS

Was he always like that?

RHYS

After Mam died his drinking got really out of hand, and he took everything out on me. He told me more than once he'd rather I was dead than gay. I would never have survived without Tomos.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. RHYS'S KITCHEN - EVENING (1974)

In a tiny ancient galley kitchen Rhys's older brother TOMOS is frying bacon and eggs. At nineteen, he is a larger, blonder version of Rhys.

INT. RHYS'S SITTING ROOM

A small, shabby room overcrowded with worn and old fashioned furniture. A large television sits incongruously in one corner. As the opening chords of the theme song from Top of the Pops - Led Zeppelin's WHOLE LOTTA LOVE - begin to play, Rhys bursts in through the front door, his arms full of shopping bags.

TOMOS (O.S.)

Don't panic! It's just started, you haven't missed anything.

Out of breath, Rhys throws the bags on to the dining table and slumps onto one of the ugly, overstuffed chairs. Tomos brings in their plates and they begin eating in companionable silence as Pan's People perform a scantily clad and cheesily choreographed routine.

TOMOS (CONT'D)

Which one would you have?

Rhys pauses between mouthfuls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RHYS

What?

TOMOS

Them girls. Which one would you have? I like the dark haired one at the back. Legs up to her armpits.

Rhys ducks his head in embarrassment and confusion.

RHYS

Dunno. Um - maybe the little blonde one?

Tomos regards him curiously for a BEAT.

TOMOS

It's not a test, you plonker.

Rhys is saved from having to reply by the appearance of Slade. Lead singer Noddy Holder is wearing a tartan suit with an oversized top hat covered in mirrors, and guitarist Dave Hill is wearing glittering Cleopatra makeup and what can only be described as a white bird suit with mirrored wing tips, plus silver platforms almost a foot high. Half of the audience are wearing imitations of Noddy's hat.

TOMOS (CONT'D)

Bloody hell. Have they gone mental?

They used to be skins!

RHYS

It's - it's just the fashion. The one playing the violin - I bought a shirt like that to wear to the dance on Saturday night.

TOMOS

You never!

Rhys grins, standing to pick up the bags from the table.

RHYS

I did. Trousers and shoes, and all.

TOMOS

This, I have to see. Go put them on and I'll start the washing up.

INT. RHYS'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Small and cheerless like the rest of the house, Rhys has decorated the walls of his bedroom with posters from pop magazines. In pride of place, beside the mirror, is a large poster of the cover of David Bowie's Aladdin Sane album. In front of the mirror, Rhys is adjusting his new clothes; a pale blue lurex shirt with huge lapels and a rainbow embroidered across the breast pocket plus midnight blue high-waisted satin flares. Finally satisfied, he carefully climbs into his blue and silver striped platform shoes. Momentarily unbalanced, he teeters to his doorway.

RHYS

Oi, Tomos! Cop this!

When there is no reply Rhys make his way out onto the landing. He almost collides with his father DAI, average height but stocky and with the ruddy complexion of a heavy drinker. He looks very much the worse for wear. Rhys freezes, terrified. His father looks him up and down in disgust and disbelief, then lunges towards him.

EXT. RHYS'S COTTAGE - EVENING

Tomos is putting rubbish into a bin, and giving some scraps to a small tabby cat. Suddenly he hears his father's roar of anger followed by cries of pain from Rhys. Dropping the rubbish, he runs back toward the house.

TOMOS

Shit!

INT. RHYS'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Tomos bursts in to find Dai attempting to rip Rhys's shirt off.

Rhys has a split lip and there is already a bruise forming under his right eye. Tomos grabs Dai from behind and pulls him roughly away.

TOMOS

Get off him! What the hell is wrong with you?

Dai struggles furiously, but is no match for his son.

DAI

Look - just look at him! Dressed like a girl and pictures of half-naked men all over his walls!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAI (CONT'D)

I won't have any son of mine
dressing like a poofter!

Rhys is sitting slumped against his bed, crying quietly. The Aladdin Sane poster has been ripped off the wall, and his shirt is torn and stained with blood from his split lip.

DAI (CONT'D)

You're a disgrace! You make me
ashamed to be your father! I'm only
glad my Betryst isn't here to see -

With one swift movement Tomos grabs his father by the throat, pushing him hard up against the wall.

TOMOS

Don't you dare say that, ever! And
if you ever lift a finger to him
again, I'll take you out forty
fathoms deep and feed you to the
fishes. That's a promise.

INT. RHYS'S BEDROOM - DAY

Rhys is lying on his bed staring at the ceiling. The room is still in disarray from the night before. There is a TAP on the door, and Tomos enters carrying Rhys's new shirt. He sits on the end of the bed. Neither is able to make eye contact.

TOMOS

I washed your shirt. The blood came
out.

Rhys is silent, still looking at the ceiling.

TOMOS (CONT'D)

And I fixed it, see? I figured it
couldn't be much different to
mending a net.

Rhys sits up. His bottom lip is still swollen and the bruising under his eye is now livid.

RHYS

(voice breaking) He hates me. And -
and he thinks
Mam would hate me, too.

Tomos takes his shoulders, turning him around to face him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOMOS

You listen to me. He's a miserable old drunk who doesn't know what day it is most of the time. Mam thought the sun shone out of you, and nothing would have made her think any different. D'you hear me? Nothing. And anyway - like you said, it's just the fashion. Only got to watch The Sweeney or Z Cars to see blokes got up like that every day.

Rhys lies back down, but this time he is smiling.

RHYS

It was almost worth it, to see the look on his face. I thought he was going to have a heart attack!

Tomos stands, leaning over to ruffle Rhys's hair.

TOMOS

Ah, well. Better luck next time, eh?

BACK TO PRESENT

Rhys takes another long look at the house then turns away abruptly, heading back up the steep track towards a sleek black car.

MARCUS

You were so lucky, you had the best music growing up.

Rhys smiles.

RHYS

It's hard to even describe how amazing it was. I'll never forget the first time I saw David Bowie and the Spiders do 'Starman' on TV. I can't remember if it was Top of the Pops or The Old Grey Whistle test. The song was incredible, but he was like this beautiful, sparkly alien, and when he put his arm around Mick Ronson I literally stopped breathing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RHYS (CONT'D)

On TV, in front of the whole world!
I couldn't believe it.

MARCUS

Okay, now I'm completely jealous!
My first album was New Kids on the
Block. My parents gave it to me for
Christmas.

Rhys clutches his chest in mock agony.

RHYS

Stop! You're killing me.

They reach the top of the incline where the car is parked,
both slightly out of breath.

RHYS (CONT'D)

The first time I met Seren we were
both waiting outside the
headmaster's office - I'd been
bunking to avoid the bullies, and
she was there for wearing make up.
Marc Bolan had been on telly the
night before, and she'd come to
school with glitter on her cheeks.
We started arguing about who was
better, Bolan or Bowie.

He turns around, looking back down at the house.

RHYS (CONT'D)

Glam changed everything for me.
Growing up in that house - Bowie
and the others made me feel like I
wasn't alone, that somebody
actually understood me. I knew what
I was, but the only words I had for
it were bad. And then everyone
started doing it - the dressing up,
the makeup. Most of them looked
terrible, like navvies in drag. But
what it meant was that suddenly
what you looked like didn't
necessarily have anything to do
with who - or what - you were. You
can't even imagine how powerful
that was.

He sits, emotionally spent, still looking at the house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARCUS

This has been hard for you. Too many memories.

Rhys shakes his head.

RHYS

I pushed all that pain aside for years, all the terrible things my father said to me and how they made me feel - but I'd pushed aside all the good things, too, my friendship with Seren and Gareth and what an amazing, incredible time it was. It feels good to remember; it's what made me who I am.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. RHYS'S SITTING ROOM - EVENING (1974)

Dai is passed out in a chair, snoring loudly. Rhys is reading the newspaper. He throws cushion at his father, which makes him splutter and begin breathing normally. Rhys returns to the paper but after a moment Dai begins his sonorous snoring again. Rhys abandons the paper in disgust. As he crosses the room he pauses at a small framed photograph of an attractive redhead smiling down at two small blond boys. He reaches out and gently touches a fingertip to his mother's face before heading up the stairs.

INT. RHYS'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Rhys is taping the Aladdin Sane poster back to the wall. He looks at his face in the mirror; the bruising and split lip are still quite obvious. His new clothes are laid out on his bed, and he looks at them for a moment before hanging them up carefully in his wardrobe. He sits dejectedly in his chair in front of the mirror, touching the bruises. Then he looks at the poster again.

INT. RHYS'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Rhys sits in front of the mirror, staring at his reflection. He has cut his hair - which is now red - into an exact replica of Bowie's and copied the makeup down to the last detail, right down to the pool of gold spilling over the hollow of his clavicle. The orange and blue lightning flash completely covers the bruising beneath his right eye, and the pink lipstick conceals his damaged lip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He slowly closes his mascara-enhanced eyes and lowers his head, becoming a literal mirror image of the poster.

INT. BUS - EVENING

Two TEENAGE GIRLS in glam gear are in the back of the bus, giggling and whispering to each other. One has a small transistor radio on her lap, and is twiddling the dial in an attempt to get some reception.

FIRST GIRL

Stupid thing! Why can I only get
BBC One? Could have sat home with
my Nan and listened to that!

SECOND GIRL

No, there you go! Turn it up, I
love this!

OH YES, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL plays as the camera tracks backwards down the bus. Seated near the front Rhys is also enjoying the music. Opposite him, an ELDERLY COUPLE in buttoned-down conservative clothes stare with a mixture of incredulity and disapproval. They continue to stare as the bus stops and Rhys gets off.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

As the bus pulls away, Rhys glances up to see that the elderly couple are still staring. After beginning to walk in the opposite direction he suddenly stops, turns around and blows them a kiss. Outraged, they mouth insults and shake their fists at him. Looking cheerful, he continues on his way.

BACK TO PRESENT

Marcus sits down beside him. He says nothing, but puts an arm around Rhys's shoulder.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Alun sits on an old deck chair watching Harri and Seren play with the puppy. A little further back, Jennifer watches them all. After a moment, she takes a seat beside him. A long BEAT of silence.

ALUN

Have you decided what to do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNIFER

I think so. My bags are packed.

Alun looks stricken.

ALUN

Already? I hoped we could talk -

JENNIFER

I don't know, Alun. I'm hurt and I'm angry.

ALUN

And I am so, so sorry. I had absolutely no right not to talk to you first.

They are interrupted by loud SQUEALS as the children romp with the puppy.

ALUN (CONT'D)

We'll go back to Essex, if that's what you want. I just want you to be happy.

JENNIFER

What would make me happy is being able to trust my husband to look after us. You're going to have to start pulling your weight, Alun. Especially now. I thought for a little while that I might not want this baby - but I do. Very much.

Alun takes her hand. She doesn't snatch it back.

ALUN

I'll do whatever it takes, okay? After thinking I'd lost you - and what could have happened to the kids the other day -

Seren 'canters' past, piggybacking Harri and pretending to be a horse as he LAUGHS with delight.

ALUN (CONT'D)

We have amazing kids, you know that? I can't believe we're going to have another one!

They follow the children back towards the house, Harri still on Seren's back and the puppy scurrying back and forth between them.

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DAY

Seren and Max descend the cliff path towards Gareth's house. They look hot, tired and dirty. Max wears a large backpack with a small hose and gun at the side.

MAX

Thanks for helping. I would never have got them all done without you.

SEREN

You could have told me how sheep feel about being drenched. I'm going to have a bruise the size of a dinner plate where that heinous ewe kicked me.

Max chuckles.

MAX

Sorry. I'm going to pick up a part for my laptop later, I'll take you for a burger.

Seren looks at him speculatively.

SEREN

Another computer part? This wouldn't have anything to do with the good looking guy behind the counter, by any chance?

Max looks startled, then embarrassed.

MAX

I didn't think it was that obvious.

SEREN

Don't worry, only to me. Is it a secret?

MAX

Not for me, for Ranjit. His parents are really traditional, it's going to be a big deal when he comes out to them. He's waiting 'til his older sister gets home from University so he has some moral support.

Seren sighs, leaning down to scratch Gus's head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

Why are relationships always so complicated?

MAX

Has Jed not called yet?

SEREN

What?

Max adjusts the backpack and gives her a friendly pat on the shoulder.

MAX

Don't worry, it's only obvious to me.

INT. GARETH'S KITCHEN - DAY

Seren and Max sit at the table, a pitcher of lemonade between them. Bethan bustles through the door, arms full of groceries which she dumps on the table before pouring herself a drink.

BETHAN

Goodness, it's hot! Did you manage to get the sheep done?

Max indicates Seren's upper arm, where an impressive purple bruise is forming.

MAX

With a few casualties. You should see the sheep. Ow!

He bends down to rub his ankle, which Seren has kicked sharply.

MAX (CONT'D)

That was harsh.

BETHAN

Oh, Seren! Let me put some arnica on that.

Max looks at his mother with fond amusement.

MAX

You are *such* a hippie. How was the Reiki? Are all your chakras realigned? Did Linda cleanse your aura?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bethan frowns as she applies bright yellow ointment to Seren's arm.

BETHAN

Linda wasn't there; some family emergency. Someone came to fill in for her.

She replaces the lid on the jar and places it on the table. There is a long BEAT of silence.

BETHAN (CONT'D)

Her name was Safir.

EXT. GARETH'S GARDEN - DAY

Seren sits alone, sketching. A CLOSE UP reveals likenesses of Max, Harri and Charlie. Jed approaches, crouching beside her.

JED

Hey, they're really good.

Seren pulls a face, embarrassed.

SEREN

I can only ever see what's wrong with them.

Jed is about to protest when the sound of VOICES interrupts and Gareth, Rhys, Bethan and Max appear. Gareth indicates for them to join the group and they walk down towards a lone figure standing at the edge of the beautiful, landscaped garden, looking out to sea.

Safir's hair, still long and black, tumbles in the same ringlets down her back. She turns around as the others approach. Still pretty, she looks much younger than her age. Her eyes widen briefly at the sight of Seren.

GARETH

Thank you for coming. It must have seemed very strange -

Safir shakes her head.

SAFIR

No. I have been waiting for this.

She turns her attention to Seren.

SAFIR (CONT'D)

So like the other one, and yet - not.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She glances at the sketch pad, which Seren promptly thrusts into her back pocket. Rhys looks back towards the house.

RHYS

Let's go and sit on the patio,

Marcus has made coffee.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

The stone-paved patio is lush like the garden, with many containers, pots and hanging baskets overflowing with flowering plants. Marcus serves coffee at an elegant outdoor dining table, instigating a long awkward BEAT of silence. Safir takes a sip, closing her eyes and inhaling the aroma appreciatively before carefully setting the cup back down. All eyes are on her.

SAFIR

Cai and I married the year after Seren died. We were happy, most of the time, but he was never the same after that night. Last winter he said he'd heard the hag o' the mist, and he needed to tell me something before it was too late.

Bethan raises her eyebrows, but the others look blank.

SAFIR (CONT'D)

It's an old, old legend - Welsh, not just Kale. She calls your name to warn you that your time is coming soon.

She takes another drink of her coffee, her hands shaking slightly. Gareth stands abruptly, frowning and running his hands through his hair.

GARETH

Your time? You mean -

Safir turns her intense blue gaze on him, composed once more.

SAFIR

Of course. Your time to die. We were living in Cornwall, and Cai was running a small fishing boat. The weather was due to turn but he thought he'd get one more trawl in before heading home. He didn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETHAN

I'm so sorry. That must have been terrible for you.

Safir closes her eyes for a moment and takes a deep, steadying breath.

SAFIR

The week before, he told me that he had heard her call his name, and needed to tell me something. I was terrified; I think a tiny part of me always suspected he might have known something.

This time it is Rhys who gets to his feet.

RHYS

You're not saying he -

SAFIR

No, no! You've all read the letter - Seren had decided to watch the harvest celebration, even though she wasn't supposed to. What Cai wanted to tell me was what happened when she got there.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DUSK (1974)

Riding bareback and with just a halter Seren canters towards the top of the hill, clutching Tanwen's mane. In the distance the travellers are building a bonfire, and as Seren pulls Tanwen back to a walk - with some effort - the sound of laughter and music drifts across. Unnoticed, she veers off onto a narrow track which zigzags down the other side of the hill.

Coming to a halt beside a tree, she tethers the horse and walks towards a tiny dilapidated stone cottage. The sky is darkening and a huge harvest moon is beginning to rise. Seren stops a short distance from the cottage and looks back at Tanwen; just as it appears her nerve might fail her a soft light, such as from a candle or lantern, appears in the window and she continues.

EXT. COTTAGE - DUSK

Seren reaches the cottage door - which is ajar - and hears lowered voices coming from within. Stepping close enough to see inside, she freezes in shock before turning on her heel and running as fast as she can.

INT. COTTAGE - DUSK

Meirion sits cross legged and shirtless on the floor, talking to someone we cannot yet see. Laughing and animated, he focusses intently on his companion. Mott the Hoople's ALL THE YOUNG DUDES plays softly, becoming louder as the shot widens to reveal the young roadie we saw him with just prior to the dance. He is also shirtless, lying on the floor with his arms behind his head. Their proximity and body language portray intimacy, and it is obvious that this is a lover's tryst.

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DUSK

Seren runs back to Tanwen, her breath coming in sobs. She attempts to untie the rope until a sudden noise in the trees beside her startles her into silence. She stands for a moment looking scared, then her effort to untie the rope becomes more urgent. There is another rustle, making Tanwen snort and sidestep.

Seren gives a whimper of fear and flees in blind panic, FOOTSTEPS and LOUD BREATHING right behind her. Suddenly, a man's hand covers her mouth and pulls her into the undergrowth. She is dragged further through the undergrowth and then thrust into the open space of a small clearing. Cai is holding her as she struggles wildly, his hand still clamped over her mouth.

CAI

It's me, Cai! Shut up, I'm not going to hurt you. Shhh, listen!

He removes his hand and she takes a breath to protest, but he puts a finger to his lips, pulling her to the ground. We hear several FEMALE VOICES giggling and whispering.

FIRST GIRL

He ran this way - he can't have got far!

SECOND GIRL

Safir, have you got the water?

SAFIR

Yes, I told you before. Hurry up, or he'll get there before us!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FIRST GIRL

Yes, come on!

There is more RUSTLING and GIGGLING, which fades into silence. Cai keeps Seren pinned to the ground for another moment then slowly gets to his feet, releasing her.

Seren scrambles to her feet, furious.

SEREN

What the hell are you playing at?
You nearly scared me to death!

Cai removes what looks like a bunch of wheat from inside his shirt.

CAI

I'm sorry! It's a harvest game,
caseg fedi - I cut the last sheaf
of the harvest, so it's my job to
get it to the bonfire. The girls
have to try and catch me and get it
wet so it won't burn.

Seren looks pale and shaken.

CAI (CONT'D)

Come on, I'll walk you back to your
horse. I really am sorry I
frightened you.

EXT. COTTAGE - DUSK

As they reach Tanwen Seren glances anxiously toward the cottage but the light has been extinguished. She finally manages to untie the lead rope and begins leading Tanwen to the track. Cai walks beside her.

CAI

No saddle or bridle? You're as daft
as Meirion.

She shrugs.

SEREN

Long story.

He looks at her curiously.

CAI

Is that why you're up here? Were
you looking for him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEREN

No! I mean - no, he mentioned the bonfire and the games the other day. I just wanted to see.

CAI

And did you? Did you see?

By his tone it is obvious what he is asking, and by her expression it is obvious that she understands. She looks away, blinking back tears.

SEREN

No. I didn't see anything.

Cai looks at her with compassion.

CAI

It wouldn't have made any difference in the end. When you wake up tomorrow, we'll be gone.

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DUSK

Cai and Seren have reached the top of the track. The light is fading and across on the other side of the hill the bonfire has been lit and is burning brightly. Again, the SOUNDS of the celebration drift across.

CAI

Next year, that will be my wedding feast.

SEREN

Do you think it will be here?

Cai shakes his head.

CAI

Who knows? We could be anywhere. We're not tied to anything - except each other.

SEREN

Safir's not much older than me - I mean, I can't even imagine -

Cai shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAI

It's different for us. All our girls want is to get married and have their own families, and all we want is to look after them. Life on the road's not easy, we all have to look out for each other. Safir's a good girl, we'll manage fine.

He tucks the sheaf of wheat underneath one arm, glancing across at the celebrations which have become noisier.

CAI (CONT'D)

I should head across before they send a search party. Do you want a leg up?

Seren nods, and as Cai moves closer he leans down and kisses her, expertly and thoroughly, before helping her on to the horse.

CAI (CONT'D)

You're a beautiful girl, you know that? And I've a feeling you're not going to waste too much time fretting over my little brother. *Devlesa*, Seren. Take care.

SEREN

Goodbye, Cai. And - thank you.

He grins, bowing deeply.

CAI

Believe me, the pleasure was mine.

Still upset, she attempts a smile and turns to ride the last few feet onto the narrow path at the cliff's edge. Meirion appears, out of breath and shirt unbuttoned, pushing past Cai to reach her. Tanwen, sensing his agitation, snorts and fusses.

MEIRION

Seren, I'm sorry! I didn't mean for you -

SEREN

What? You didn't mean for me to see you with your boyfriend?

She fights back tears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MEIRION

I'm not - not interested in girls
that way. I never have been.

SEREN

Okay. I get it. I have to go home
now.

She urges an increasingly unsettled Tanwen forward.

MEIRION

Please, don't go like this. Come
across to the bonfire -

He steps toward the horse, reaching for the reins.

SEREN

Meirion, just LEAVE ME ALONE!

Meirion's attempt to grab her and Seren's shouting cause the horse to panic. She rears and spins around. Cai, who had been walking away, turns at Seren's cry, freezing in horror at the sight of Meirion standing as if poll-axed at the edge of the cliff beside a riderless Tanwen. He races to them, peering over the edge to the rocks far below but Seren is gone, swept into the churning sea.

BACK TO PRESENT

The group sits in stunned silence. Safir looks completely drained.

SAFIR

Cai told Meirion to go back to the others, and say nothing. He argued, but Cai knew that nobody would believe that it was an accident. They would probably both have ended up in prison. At the very least, the truth would have destroyed Meirion. He would have become an outcast, shunned by our whole community.

Gareth's coffee cup crashes to the patio floor, smashing into pieces.

GARETH

Are you saying they just left her?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAFIR

No, no, of course not! Cai got down to the beach as quickly as he could and tried to find her, but she was gone. Even if she had survived the fall, she would have been dragged under by the rip tide and pulled out to sea straight away.

She looks directly at Gareth.

SAFIR (CONT'D)

Just as it returned her the next morning.

Gareth looks away, overcome. Rhys, also emotional, puts a hand on his shoulder.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BEACH - DUSK (1974)

Cai emerges gasping from the water beside the rocky outcrop directly below where Seren has fallen. Waves crash against the rocks before surging away on a powerful outgoing tide, almost pulling him off his feet.

He is about to try again when he is caught by the next incoming wave and knocked against the rocks. He just manages to find his feet before the next one comes in and with a last anguished look he struggles back to the beach. Breath coming in ragged sobs he paces in a helpless circle, head in his hands.

EXT. BRYN MELYN - DUSK

Cai quietly approaches Tanwen, who is still grazing at the spot where Seren fell. As he takes hold of her halter he notices the wheat sheaf which he was supposed to protect lying on the ground. He picks it up and places it carefully inside his jacket before leading Tanwen to a large rock which he uses to get on her.

EXT. BEACH - DUSK

Cai rides Tanwen at a walk towards the small inlet. He dismounts, walking to the water's edge where he brings the wheat sheaf, a small candle and some matches out from his jacket, wedging the candle firmly between the stalks of wheat before lighting it and setting it afloat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He vaults back on to the horse, watching the candle flame retreat into the gathering darkness before turning and riding away along the beach.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

SAFIR

He rode the horse back to the farm and put it away. Then he returned to the others and said we should start packing up camp. By morning, we were gone.

An extended BEAT of silence. Bethan puts her arm around Seren.

RHYS

I don't know if I believe any of this. I remember the way he looked at her. Maybe he tried to -

SAFIR

He was convinced he was about to die - he could have said nothing, or confessed if he or Meirion had harmed her! His guilt was for her family, that they had spent all these years not knowing.

GARETH

The candle - I know that was true, it was floating right beside her body. But - why did he do it?

Safir walks to the edge of the patio, again looking out to sea.

SAFIR

It's an old custom, putting a lit candle on the final sheaf of the harvest to locate the body of someone who has drowned.

Marcus appears with more coffee, but Safir shakes her head.

SAFIR (CONT'D)

Thank you, not for me. I need to walk. Seren, you will come with me?

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Safir and Seren walk along the track at the bottom of Gareth's garden. Safir stops at a seat positioned to take in the stunning view, and gestures for Seren to sit beside her.

SAFIR

You have questions.

Seren is silent for a moment, looking out to sea.

SEREN

You didn't like her.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. TRAVELLERS' CAMPSITE - DAY (1974)

Safir and Cai watch Seren being lunged by Meirion, bareback and with only a halter. Cai seems fascinated with Seren and after a moment Safir, looking upset, turns on her heel and walks away. Cai continues to watch.

EXT. GYPSY VARDO - DAY

Seren brings Tanwen to a halt where Safir is hanging out washing. A couple of toddlers are playing with a basket of wooden pegs nearby. Safir says nothing, but lowers the basket of washing to the ground.

SEREN

You were watching my lesson.

Safir remains silent for another long BEAT, then continues to hang the washing on the line.

SAFIR

There's enough bad feeling around here already. A pretty blonde gorja hanging around us isn't going to help.

She turns to face Seren directly.

SAFIR (CONT'D)

Anyway, the harvest is almost over.

We'll be gone soon.

SEREN

Oh! I - I didn't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Safir shrugs.

SAFIR

We're travellers. It's what we do.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY - PRESENT

SAFIR

She was spoiled. (Smiles) And far too pretty! I was jealous - Rhys was right, Cai could hardly take his eyes off her. But I didn't dislike her.

SEREN

Sometimes I think I do. My name, my face - they were hers first! When Gran and Gareth look at me, it's her they see - and now Rhys, too. I hate it!

Safir reaches out and gently turns Seren's face toward her.

SAFIR

This is why you deny your talent? So you will have one less thing in common with her? Your gift is your own. You cannot be happy if you do not embrace it. I avoided healing for years. I did not want to walk in others' footsteps, but in time I found my own path.

Far below, waves CRASH onto the shore. A butterfly lands on a flowering shrub beside Seren.

SAFIR (CONT'D)

Cai carried the guilt of that decision every day. He told me he knew it was the reason we were never blessed with children. If he did wrong, he suffered for it.

SEREN

And Meirion? Who had she seen him with?

SAFIR

I don't know his name. Cai said he was a roadie for the group that played at the dance in the village.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. THEATRE - EVENING (1974)

In a darkened hallway two people are in a passionate clinch. One has his back to us, his size obscuring the other, a huge coiled cord slung over one shoulder.

ROADIE

I'd better get ready for sound check. I didn't think you'd come - you said it was too dangerous after we nearly got caught at Lluddno.

He steps back, revealing Meirion.

MEIRION

Maybe that's what I like.

The roadie grins, then hurries away. Meirion walks a few steps down the hallway, pausing outside a slightly open door bearing a crudely painted sign that reads 'dressing room'.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - EVENING

In a makeshift dressing room, Gerry L'amour and the Lovers are preparing for the concert. Gerry's hair - which is lavender - is in a Bowie cut, and he sprays the top with hair spray to make it stand up. He is beautiful, androgynous. Behind him, two of the Lovers - MICK and EDDIE - jostle for mirror space as they apply makeup. Large and muscular, the effect is more panto than glamorous.

MICK

Oi, did you nick my eye liner?

Eddie pauses in the process of dusting his cheeks with glitter.

EDDIE

Piss off! Yours is rubbish.

Mick is now applying lipstick. He stands back to assess the effect.

MICK

I don't think that's my colour. Sod this, I need a beer.

Gerry runs some glitter through his hair and stands up. He is wearing a silver lurex jumpsuit with a large satin heart on the front.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GERRY

You can always go back to doing the rounds of the Swansea boozers with your skiffle band.

Eddie sits down and begins pulling on a pair of towering platform boots.

EDDIE

Not me, mate. I could hardly get a bird to look at me in them days. The punters used to throw their beer cans at me - now it's the girls throwing their knickers. Wall-to-wall crumpet!

He stands, and carefully makes his way over to pick up his guitar.

MICK

Watch it, mate. Fall off them and you'll be getting traction, not action!

Gerry pauses as he shoulders his own guitar, which has been modified into a silver heart.

GERRY

Makes you think, though. I used to get seven colours kicked out of me nearly every day on me way home 'cos I didn't chase girls or play football. Now I make a fortune for dressing like me sister.

He reaches into his back pocket, handing Mick a handful of plectrums.

GERRY

Come on, funny man. We're on.

BACK TO PRESENT

SEREN

And what about - after?

SAFIR

He went to America, but never really settled.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAFIR (CONT'D)

He wrote in the early eighties that he was homesick and wanted to come home, but six months later we heard from a hospice in Baltimore that he had died there, alone. Cai was heartbroken.

Fighting tears, she turns away to look out to sea. There is a BEAT of silence as she takes a steadying breath.

SAFIR (CONT'D)

I think - I think he would be glad, to know I had done this.

The butterfly rises in the air, then swoops low to circle above their heads before disappearing.

EXT. - LIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Lia retrieves a letter from her letterbox, tearing it open eagerly and leaning against the gate to read it.

EXT. BEACH - DUSK

LADY STARLIGHT plays as Alun and a very pregnant Jennifer, Gareth and Safir and Rhys and Marcus walk along the water's edge. A little further back Angharad, using a stick, walks with Bethan, Harri and Spyro. Far ahead Seren, Jed and Max throw sticks for Gus.

SEREN (V.O.)

I can't believe you'll be here soon! I wish you could stay more than a week. College is great - our art teacher is Italian and he's never heard of Gran! Jed has finally asked me out, and we're going to the movies tonight with Max and Ranjit. Tell you everything when I see you! Love, Seren.

Harri and Spyro run toward the teenagers. Max and Jed pick up a shrieking Seren and carry her to the water's edge, threatening to dunk her as Gus barks furiously. As Harri reaches them and the boys put Seren down between them, a shooting star flashes across the sky.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BEACH - DUSK (1974)

A shooting star flashes across the sky and LADY STARLIGHT continues to play as Seren, Gareth and Rhys run laughing along the water's edge, throwing sticks for Jess. Gareth points it out and the three stop and watch for a moment before continuing towards the jetty, where the 'Dolphin' bobs gently at her mooring.

FADE OUT