WHAT WE DID ON OUR HOLIDAY
(w/t)

Written by

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* This script is shorter than it looks because much of the fast, naturalistic dialogue will involve interruptions, people talking over each other, simultaneous dialogue (etc.)

* Anything in **bold & italics** is an improvisation. Sometimes we have written out dialogue to give a feel of what kind of improv it could be, sometimes we have just given a general description.
INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE – LANDING – DAY

We open on a grey background, which gradually gains focus and texture. We are also becoming aware of a muddled soup of sound - distant voice, thumping footsteps, distorted music from a TV somewhere.

Now the grey background is no longer filling the frame. We realize that is a low-shot of a stone.

Suddenly, the stone rolls alarmingly towards camera, making us jump. A small 4-year-old girl - JESS - is rolling the stone down an upstairs corridor.

INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE – LOUNGE – DAY

The air is filled with the heroic chords from the theme to the 1958 Kirk Douglas movie “The Vikings”.

We are on a C/U of a wide-eyed, 6-year-old, transported boy. He is sitting on the back of a sofa, totally rapt, as on the TV lots of Vikings fight an epic battle. We can hear his mother calling in the distance.

ABI (OOV)

Mi-ckey!

INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE – VARIOUS – DAY

C/U, fast-cut, rapid-fire succession of plugs being pulled from sockets.

ABI

I won’t say it again, no snails indoors!

INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE – LANDING – DAY

JESS, is, with some difficulty, continuing to roll her grey stone along the floor.

DOUG

We should have left two hours ago!
(etc)

INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE – HALL – DAY

Fish food is being dropped into a fish tank by a rather serious-looking 10-year-old LOTTY.

ABI

OK, no problem, I’ll just quickly build a time-machine (etc)
6 INT. MILK-BOTTLES - DAY

C/U of a cluster of clinking empty milk bottles being carried towards the front door, one of the bottles has a note on it.

DOUG
I’m just saying, that’s all (etc)

7 INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - DAY

MICKEY is still hypnotised by the Vikings.

ABI (OOV)
Mickey, mo-ve!

(MICKEY remains transfixed as someone’s midriff crosses the doorway behind him)

ABI (OOV) (CONT’D)
...And don’t sit on the back of the sofa!

MICKEY
(Half turns) Eh? Wha-?

He overbalances and plummets backwards, landing with a thump behind the sofa.

8 INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE - CUPBOARD - DAY

A finger is stabbing at the numbers 1066 on a keypad.

DOUG (OOV)
(Puzzled) Battle of Hastings isn’t working.

ABI (OOV)
No, that’s too guessable, I changed it.

9 INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE - BACK DOOR - DAY

C/U rapid-fire sequence of bolts being latched. LOTTIE is doing this.

DOUG (OOV)
So what is it now?

ABI (OOV)
Er, I’ll do that, you do the herding.
INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE – LANDING – DAY

For the first time, we see the face of an adult – DOUG – as he comes up the stairs, chuntering to himself.

DOUG  
And we’ve hit the rush-hour, just as I...

He spots JESS on the landing, with her bag, he turns very cheery and positive.

DOUG (CONT’D)  
Come on, Jessypie, we need to get a move on, eh? Scottish Grandad and his puppies are waiting for us. Come on, I’ll carry your… (He picks up her bag and nearly gives himself a triple hernia) Je-eez! What the - (He looks inside the bag. We see the large stone that she was rolling earlier.) Oh for - what’s that?

JESS  
That's Eric.

DOUG  
Eric.

JESS  
Yes he wants to come to Scotland too.

DOUG hesitates for a moment, not sure how to play this one.

INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE – HALL – DAY

With a clump – clump – clump, ABI, the Mum, is bustling along the hall carrying three bags, as we hear MICKEY still fighting imaginary Vikings.

ABI  
Mickey… shoes! Now!

A piercing car alarm goes off.

DOUG (OOV)  
That's our car alarm!

ABI  
(to herself as she ferrets for her car keys.) Yes! Thank you Sherlock!

She bumps and bustles to the front door and tries to turn off the alarm with the fob, but it won't co-operate.
DOUG is trying to sweet-talk JESS, it feels like he's walking on eggshells – very fragile eggshells.

DOUG
The thing is darling, Eric is quite heavy and why don't you take one of your lighter friends like - hang on (He has delved further into the bag) Wha - there's...?

JESS
(Looking into the bag) That's Norman.

DOUG
That's ... half a breezeblock. How the hell did you - (He starts to take the breezeblock out of the bag)

JESS
I can't get to sleep without Norman.

DOUG
... You sleep with a breezeblock in your bed.

JESS
No, that'd be stupid. Only the soft stones go in my bed. Norman goes under my bed. He stops the bad stones getting in. I can't sleep without him, he - (Jess explains why she has to take all the rocks to Scotland despite DOUG'S protests)

LOTTIE watches her frazzled Mum trying to turn off the car alarm.

MICKEY charges in and starts gathering up his favourite Viking action toys and pockets them, along with a short length of rope. A huge poster of Odin covers one wall.

DOUG is trying to draw a line in the sand.
DOUG

No I’m sorry, sweetheart, but you can’t take Norman to Scotland - or Eric.

JESS

Right. Then I’m going to hold my breath.

DOUG

(Suddenly very alarmed) No, don’t do that. (She's already started) Jess? Jess, stop that! ... Jess, you... OK, fine, they can come, it's OK, look, see? ... They're coming. (He is stuffing Eric and Norman back in the bag.)

INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE - MICKEY’S ROOM -DAY

MICKEY is rapidly hunting - he finds a toy sword. The car alarm goes off again outside, ABI exclaims, upstairs JESS yells, it's a wall of noise, which peaks when MICKEY raises his toy sword triumphantly above his head, with a cry of “For Odin!” and then hurtles towards the camera shouting “CH-A-A-A-RGE!”

EXT. HIGHLAND LOCH - DAY

Hard cut to the silence of a loch. Mist swirls over the water and the mountains beyond.

On the loch is a small boat, with a figure sitting in it, an elderly man in his seventies with a fishing rod. He is scruffy and unshaven, but has a style and presence. This is GORDIE.

We linger a little to take in the silence, the grandeur, the tiny figure in the boat.

The idyll is punctuated by the trill of a mobile phone. GORDIE lets out a weary groan, helob the blanket over it, muffling the sound.

EXT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE - DAY

ABI is throwing a football and an armful of teddies into the back seat of the family car. DOUG is loading up the bags.

DOUG

So, her best friends are stones now.

ABI

(Adjusting the child seat) Not all of them, some of them are bricks.
DOUG
Well, have you... y'know...

ABI
(Still fighting the child seat)
Have I what?

DOUG
Have you spoken to anyone about it?

ABI
What, like a geologist? (Still struggling with the car seat) This thing hates me!

DOUG
I'm just saying this... obsessive collecting is rather abnormal behaviour for a child to -

ABI
(Laden with sarcasm) Oh she's behaving abnormally is she? I wonder why.

DOUG
Oh for Christ's sake, Abi, just -

They discover that LOTTIE is standing right behind them, and instantly snap into smiley mode.

DOUG (CONT'D)
OK, sweetie?

ABI
Everything alright?

LOTTIE
I just need a list.

DOUG
... A list?

LOTTIE
Yes, a list of the lies we have to tell. In case I forget one.

DOUG and ABI look at each other.

EXT. HIGHLAND LOCH - DAY

Water laps gently against the side of GORDIE’S boat as he fishes on the loch. His face is a picture of contentment, until he catches a glimpse of something. At the far end of the loch a shiny Range Rover comes over a rise and then disappears. It is heading his way. GORDIE mutters something - probably obscene.
CONTINUED:

Cut a big w/s of the boat on the loch. GORDIE is a tiny figure.

Something big runs very quickly across frame in the foreground. Was that an ostrich? Surely not.

INT. DOUG AND ABI’S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

ABI enters at speed, with LOTTIE dogging her steps. MICKEY has his length of rope and is practising tying knots.

MICKEY
That’s a clove hitch (etc)

ABI
Come on! In the car! Has anyone seen my house-keys?

ABI disappears deeper into the house. LOTTIE takes the responsibility of changing MICKEY’s pullover, which he’s put on the wrong way round. Outside, DOUG is trying to close the jam-packed boot of the car.

MICKEY
Why aren’t we flying to Scotland?

LOTTIE
Because the volcano in Iceland has erupted again which means –it’s too expensive

JESS
I like planes. Planes have films in the seats. And ladies with lots of teeth who bring you stuff. And they have those men who take away your toothpaste.

ABI returns, hurrying up the hall, calling into the house while hunting for her keys.

ABI
Keys… keys.

Now DOUG is approaching from the car, checking his phone.

DOUG
M25’s up the spout.

LOTTIE
A list would be really helpful, so that—
Look, it's perfectly simple, darling, it's Grandad's 75th birthday party and we don't want to upset him because he's been a bit poorly, so -

But he's getting better now.

There is just the briefest flicker of an awkward look between DOUG and ABI.

Yes that's right, but - (The car alarm goes off again.) Je-sus H. Christ!!

You're not supposed to shout Jesus's name like that.

(Hunting for the fob) It's alright, darling, I'm just asking for his help.

To stop the car alarm?

Yes.

Coincidentally, the car alarm stops itself.

... See? (Looks up) Thank you, Jesus.

JESS is looking at her suspiciously.

Come on, all aboard!

The little ones race for the car and start climbing in.

Have you got your key?

(Pointedly) No ... I gave you my key... remember?

Oh... yeh... well, um, I -
DOUG
We can't leave the house unlocked.

ABI
Yes, I am aware of -

LOTTIE
(by the car) Don't start.

ABI
We're not starting, darling, you go supervise the little ones, that'd be great.

DOUG
(Sudden thought) Jess hasn't had Kelvin round to play, has she? (Abi's face drops and he realises the answer is yes) Oh for - Kelvin, the key-hider. We agreed, never again. (They start to argue.)

JESS
(Calling from the car) Don't start!

ABI
(Calling back) Nobody's starting, sweetheart. (DOUG heads off) Where are you- ?

Lucy

DOUG

LOTTIE
(Calling from the car) Mu-um! She won't let me put her seatbelt on!

ABI is approaching the car to sort it out. JESS is sitting with her piece of breezeblock next to her.

MICKEY
I've told her she'll be thrown through the windscreen and cut into tiny pieces when you crash.

ABI
Yes, thank you, Mickey.

JESS
I don't like seatbelts, they're stupid (etc.)

ABI
(Brightly) I know, why don't we ask Eric if he'll -

JESS
That's Norman.
ABI
Why don't we ask Norman if he'll help you put it on?

JESS looks at her.

JESS
...He's a breezeblock. He's got no arms, so how could he possibly -

ABI
(Her patience snaps) I'm putting it on.

JESS
Noooo!

It all kicks off. LOTTIE tells everyone to 'keep calm'. ABI tells LOTTIE to stay out of it, but all this is in the background, as we find DOUG who is now standing on next door's doorstep. Their neighbour LUCY opens the door.

DOUG
Oh hi Lucy... um, Abi's managed to lose her keys somewhere... and I need to lock up, so could I just borrow the spare?

He holds his hand out, but there's a wary embarrassment in Lucy's eyes.

DOUG (CONT'D)
(Perplexed)... If you could just give me the sp- (He realizes that she's been instructed not to hand him any keys)... Oh.

LUCY looks hesitantly towards ABI for reassurance. It takes ABI a moment to register what's happened.

ABI
(Calls) Oh no, it's OK, Luce, it's fine.

LUCY
Oh right. (Relieved, she takes the keys off a hook) So... you're off on your travels.

DOUG
(V. hacked off) Yes... to visit my Dad.

LUCY
(Wearing a painted smile) Oh right, so... you're driving all the way to Scotland.
DOUG
...That's right... Yes.

LUCY
... Together.

DOUG
(Too quick) Yes.

EXT. MOTORWAY - DAY

The roar of traffic announces a big W/S as the family car heads past a sign for THE NORTH. We can hear DOUG and ABI talking over each other. DOUG is driving.

ABI (OOV)
We cannot drive to the Highlands in one day.

INT. CAR - DAY

MICKEY is practising his knot-tying in the back.

DOUG
I told Gavin we’d be there by tonight.

ABI
We haven’t a cat’s hope in-

DOUG
We can share the driving.

ABI
What, with Jenson Button?

DOUG
Look-

LOTTIE
Please don’t argue.

DOUG
We’re not arguing, darling, we’re discussing.

LOTTIE
This is how it starts. You start off discussing, then you end up shouting and screaming.

JESS
(Quiet, looking out of the window)
... And then the policeman comes.

DOUG and ABI share a guilty look.
CONTINUED:

... That was just a misunderstanding, sweetheart.

CUT TO:

23A EXT - MOTORWAY

Car still heading up the outside lane.

DOUG (OOV)
Sometimes when grown-ups... discuss things... very loudly... people get the wrong idea.

MICKEY (OOV)
He let me play with his tazor.

DOUG
Well... he didn't let you.

24 EXT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - DAY

JESS (OOV)
So, we're all going to have a little holiday together?

25 INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - LADIES' TOILET - DAY

LOTTIE is waiting outside a cubicle, listening anxiously to the conversation that's going on inside, between ABI and JESS.

ABI (OOV)
That's right, it'll be lovely, won't it?

26 INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - CUBICLE - DAY

JESS is sitting on the toilet with ABI in attendance.

JESS
So does that mean Daddy's coming back to live with us again?

ABI
No, sweetheart, we've been through this, haven't we, eh, and the important thing to remember is that Mummy and Daddy...
INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - GENTS' TOILET - DAY

DOUG
(To MICKEY)...both love you very much, but sometimes a Mummy and Daddy reach a point where, well, things change, and one of them finds they don't really love the other one like they used to, and then maybe, because of that, the other one makes a mistake.

MICKEY
(Finishing off at urinal) Like Lloyd's Dad?

DOUG
Well... that was quite a big mistake... running over Lloyd's Mum with their car... that was - I'm talking about a smaller mistake, where someone does something that is...

INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - CUBICLE - DAY

ABI
(Starting to help JESS dress) ... a little bit silly and selfish, with someone at work, which makes things a bit awkward and difficult between the Mummy and the Daddy, so that they find they're having rows and getting cross, and so...

INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - GENTS' TOILET - DAY

DOUG
(Now doing up the Velcro tags on MICKEY'S shoes)...one of them goes to someone called a solicitor, and sometimes, if one of them is getting angry...

INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - CUBICLE - DAY

ABI
(Finishing dressing JESS)... one of them tells his solicitor to just keep saying no to everything even though they know they're in the wrong, so even though the Mummy and the Daddy love their children...

Cut to LOTTIE outside the door, who quietly joins in.
ABI / LOTTIE
Very much and always will...

Cut back to ABI inside cubicle.

ABI
...they just keep getting crosser and crosser..

INT. MOTORWAY SERVICE STATION - GENTS' TOILET - DAY

Doug pulls on the Velcro tags with increasing vigour, the anger really bleeding through

DOUG
...until the Mummy and Daddy start blaming each other for every tiny thing even though none of this would be happening if the other one had just listened to him in the first place.

He finishes doing up the Velcro tags

MICKEY
Dad?

DOUG
Yes, Mickey?

MICKEY
(in pain) These are a bit tight.

EXT. HIGHLAND LOCH - DAY

The Range Rover GORDIE was watching earlier skids to a halt, beside the loch. A brisk, busy, crisply dressed man of about 40 gets out with a hesitant woman hidden behind a lot of knitwear - his wife, MARGARET.

GORDIE
(mutters) Chase me round the loch on water skis why don't you...

GAVIN
(calls) Dad! Da-ad! We’ve brought your twelve o’clock pills!(no response)...Only you left them behind!(still no response)... And it’s twelve o’clock!

GORDIE
(Calling back) Leave them on the shore by the dead sheep.

GAVIN and MARGARET look at each other, a little thrown. In the boat GORDIE starts to swear, mutter and gesticulate.
GAVIN
(As he heads back to the car) With his heart he’s supposed to stay calm. I mean, how can anybody get so worked up about fishing?

In the boat GORDIE is looking down at something on the seat at the other end. He’s got a tiny TV with him and he is watching the racing.

EXT. A MISTY HILLTOP - DAY

Five fearsome Vikings are charging, axes raised to strike, towards the camera. It’s impressive and terrifying.

INT. CAR - DAY

MICKEY wakes up. It takes him a moment to come round.

MICKEY
...Is this Scotland?

EXT. MOTORWAY - DAY

The car is stationary in a traffic jam.

ABI
No, darling, this is Watford.

INT. CAR - DAY

ABI is at the wheel, DOUG is asleep. The radio is carrying various reports of rioting in English cities.

MICKEY
When Dad wakes up, are you going to go 'I told you so' about the traffic congestion?

ABI
No, darling.

The car moves forward at a crawl.

JESS pokes DOUG hard. He lurches awake.

JESS
She's not going to say, 'I told you so'.

DOUG
Wha...? Je-ss! Why did you...(He sees the traffic)
LOTTIE
It’s not polite to just wake someone up like that.

DOUG
That’s right. God. Look at this lot.

ABI’s phone rings and from force of habit DOUG reaches for it.

ABI
Leave it.

DOUG answers it anyway.

DOUG
(He answers) Abi’s phone… (To ABI)
It’s Leon…

ABI
I’ll call him back.

DOUG
She’ll call you back.

DOUG looks hard at her, but says nothing.

JESS
I feel car-sick, can I sit in the front?

ABI
Next time we stop… if we’re allowed to.

JESS
(Perplexed) We’re stopped now.

The SAT NAV pipes up.

SAT NAV
In 50 metres, turn right.

DOUG
We can’t bloody turn right, ‘cos there is no bloody right turn.

MICKEY
She can’t hear you. She’s a robot.

MICKEY and JESS start speculating about whether she’s a really tiny robot - what if she turns evil, etc. DOUGIE’S mobile rings.

DOUG
Oh God… Gavin.
ABI
Doug, accept it, there’s no way we’re going to get there tonight.

DOUG
(In denial) The traffic always gets better after the Leeds turn-off. (Answers phone) Hi Gavin...

ABI
Tell him we won’t make it today.

DOUG
Yes it is safe me talking to you ‘cos Abi’s driving... Because in England we let women drive.

ABI
Tell him...

DOUG
No, we will make it tonight but probably quite late... OK (hangs up)

ABI stares at him.

SAT NAV
Continue straight ahead.

CUT wide to the immovable traffic jam.

MIX TO:

36 EXT. ROAD - DAY

Pouring rain. A dual carriageway. The car is on the hard shoulder. ABI and DOUG are outside. Though we can’t hear them over the rain and the cars and lorries hammering by, they are obviously screaming at each other.

Inside the car MICKEY is reading but LOTTIE and JESS’s faces are pressed against the window watching. From the children’s POV, we see their parents silently screaming and shouting as the rain pours down. MICKEY stops reading and watches as well.

36A EXT. GAVIN’S HOUSE - ESTABLISHER - DAY

37 INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY

MARGARET has a big planning board with all the tables on it and colour-coded name-tags for all the guests. GAVIN comes in talking on the phone, while updating the table-plans on his tablet.
GAVIN
(To phone) I wondered if Sir Donald was in? ...Thank you.

MARGARET
We’ve got three bulimics... Do you think we should put them next to the buffet or a long way from it?

GAVIN
Near the toilet's probably more important. But, do you know, I think Doreen would be... more comfortable away from the top table...

MARGARET
Well maybe we should let your Dad decide, because she is...

She peters out as GAVIN ignores her and moves the name tag to another table. He starts talking to the phone again.

GAVIN
Sir Donald... Gavin here... Gavin McLeod... I hear you finally got that hole-in-one. (etc) (He starts canvassing him about the captaincy of the golf club.)

KENNETH, their bookish 15-year-old son, walks in. MARGARET does not see him.

There’s a wasp buzzing up and down the window pane.

MARGARET picks up a newspaper and whacks it.

She hasn’t killed it. She bashes it with the paper again... and again... and again and again in a furious assault. She stands there breathing heavily, but becomes aware of KENNETH standing, perplexed, watching her. She instantly brightens.

MARGARET
Well, he won’t be bothering us again.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

A small pretty British town. A lot of hanging flowers, thatch and half timbering. The family come out of a hotel. JESS and MICKEY are arguing cheerfully over who was sick the most.

ABI
Jess, OK... but I never thought Mickey was going to be sick as well did you?
DOUG
No...

ABI
Certainly not that much... And not that far... You may as well throw that shirt away.

DOUG
Mm.

ABI
Thank you for stopping for the night.

DOUG
I... just want to get there as soon as possible.

ABI
I know.

JESS
I quite like being sick... it's like being a fountain.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY
It's deserted.

GORDIE puts his head around the door. He goes over to the planning board and peers at the top table where he is sitting.

GORDIE
Oh Jesus Christ No!

He takes a couple of names off it and puts them at distant tables, then thinks again and puts one of them in the bin.

EXT. TOWN - DAY
ABI and DOUG are walking down the street. Ahead of them, the kids are still arguing about whose sick had the most carrots in it. ABI stops, there's something on her mind.

ABI
Listen, Doug...

Her phone rings. She quickly glances at who it is and then turns it off, as DOUG watches her. She regroups.

ABI (CONT'D)
... why... why are we putting ourselves through all this? Maybe we should just tell your Dad the truth.
DOUG
No, no, it’s too big a risk, it could really upset him, the idea of us… splitting… you’re a big favourite of his…

ABI
Well, he’s a big favourite of mine, but…

We hear LOTTIE talking to MICKEY and JESS.

LOTTIE
(To the KIDS) Look, let’s just call it a draw… you both produced an enormous amount of sick.

DOUG
Abi, please… he can’t have long… let’s just… let him have his party.

They manage to smile at each other.

INT. TOWN - CAFE - DUSK

The FAMILY sits at a table. We see them from across the café and for a moment they look like a happy family. JESS is joining up straws to make a fantastically long straw. MICKEY’s in animated conversation with his Mum; LOTTIE with her Dad.

DOUG
(to LOTTIE, over the babble) For the last time, Lottie, no one’s going to ask you if Mum and me are living in the same house.

LOTTIE
(taking out her notebook) OK.

DOUG
Why are you writing that down?

LOTTIE
So you can’t say you didn’t say it if someone does ask me.

LOTTIE looks at her watch and writes down the time and date.

DOUG
(Turning to MICKEY and JESS) OK. Kids, just to remind everyone, what we’re saying is that when we get to Scotland… nobody must tell anyone that me and Mum are living in different houses… OK?
MICKEY
Can we tell them you accidentally walked in on the headmistress when she was doing a poo?

DOUG
Well...

_Improv on what they can and can’t say, which includes one of the little ones asking why they can’t tell anyone about the parents living in separate houses._

LOTTIE
It’s lying.

DOUG
It’s not lying, it’s... not mentioning something.

LOTTIE
But what if someone asks me ‘are your Mum and Dad getting divorced?’

DOUG
Lottie, you’re visiting your Grandad... you’re not going on the Jeremy Kyle Show.

An animated discussion begins.

EXT. HILLTOP - DUSK

An amazing, almost unnatural sunset.

KENNETH is with GORDIE, who is sitting in an old deck-chair. They are not entirely comfortable together. GORDIE offers KENNETH a beer, but he declines.

KENNETH sounds 20 years older than he is.

KENNETH
Quite a sunset... (GORDIE nods) It’s volcanic dust in the air refracting the low level sunlight.

GORDIE
Ah, I thought it was those new pills they’d given me... Do you want a couple of packets of the blue ones... I bet you could make a tidy profit selling them at school.

It’s a joke, but KENNETH doesn’t react.

GORDIE (CONT’D)
Play something then...
KENNETH has his violin with him. He starts to play some classical music.

GORDIE (CONT'D)
No, no, the proper stuff... I know you like it... Ah, Kenny, you need to cut loose...(KENNETH hesitates)... Go on, go mental.

KENNETH
...Dad says I need to concentrate on my exam pieces.

He resumes the classical piece. GORDIE quietly shakes his head.

INT. TOWN - CAFE - DUSK

They have just paid, and in the background, ABI is trying to stop JESS and MICKEY shouting out her pin number. LOTTIE is talking to her DAD.

LOTTIE
So you'll tell Grandad about you and Mum splitting up when he's better...

DOUG
(A little hesitant)Yeah... Yes.

LOTTIE
And is there anything you've not told me about anything?

DOUG
No, no... we've told you everything.

LOTTIE gets out her book to write this down.

DOUG (CONT’D)
(He turns to ABI) I’m glad we stopped. It’s actually quite nice here.

They come out a door into the high street.

EXT. TOWN - DUSK

They walk into a wall of noise.

The pretty country town high street has transformed into an alcohol-fuelled Saturday night orgy of drinking, shouting and fighting. Fat men stripped to the waist, drunk girls on very long heels having slanging matches, police restraining a man, ambulance lights flashing (etc).
ABI, JESS and MICKEY join LOTTIE and DOUG. They stare in amazement and horror.

LOTTIE
Is this another riot?

DOUG
No, this is a Saturday night.

ABI
(to the kids) OK... stick between me and Dad, and don’t make eye-contact with anyone.

They compress into a protective huddle and start to move out of frame, but the appalled LOTTIE lingers a moment and is left alone in shot. DOUG’s arm reaches into frame and pulls LOTTIE out of shot, just as a YOUNG WOMAN vomits copiously into the space where LOTTIE had been standing.

Cut to further down the street as the family scuttle along the pavement towards the sanctuary of their hotel.

ABI (CONT’D)
Come on kids, stay close (etc)

The kids are fascinated/appalled. We glimpse elements of the debauchery through their eyes, e.g. a woman swaying with her pants round her ankles, drunks being wrestled into police vans.

JESS
Is this what grown-ups do after we go to bed?

One drunk shouts at MICKEY.

DRUNK
What are you staring at?

ABI
... He’s six.

FEMALE DRUNK (OOV)
Sorry love, he’s mixed cider with stupid.

They have now reached the entrance to their hotel.

JESS (TO DOUG)
That man and woman on the front of that car... are they doing sex?

DOUG
(as he ushers her inside) Not quite yet... give it another 30 seconds.

A car alarm goes off.
JESS
(as she disappears inside) Are car alarms to tell you when someone’s doing sex on your car? (etc)

As they go inside, MICKEY is lagging behind to watch the debauchery.

DOUG
(calling from inside) Come on, Mickey, there’s nothing to see.

MICKEY
Yes there is, this is better than the zoo!

DOUG
Mick-ey!

MICKEY is ushered inside. DOUG and ABI exchange a half-amused shake of the head.

INT. TOWN - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT.

DOUG is lying awake on a camp bed. Outside, the Saturday night mayhem sounds just as horrendous as before.

He glances across to a bed where ABI is fast asleep, with JESS curled up next to her. DOUG feels a sense of loss, excluded. He looks across to the sleeping LOTTIE, who’s on a camp-bed. The bedlam outside gets louder, cries of ‘Leave him, he’s not worth it!’ (etc) A blue police light can be seen flashing, as DOUG stares disconsolately at the ceiling. He will not sleep tonight.

[DELETED SCENE]

[DELETED SCENE]

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Hard cut to their car going along a straight section of dual carriageway.

INT. CAR - DAY

ABI’s in the back with LOTTIE and MICKEY. All three are asleep. DOUG is driving. He has fallen asleep at the wheel.

JESS sits in the front seat next to him. She calmly has one hand on the steering wheel keeping the car steady.

The SAT NAV speaks.
SAT NAV
At the next junction turn left.

JESS wrinkles her brow. She can't remember which is left.

JESS
Left?

But she goes to move the steering wheel. DOUG's eyes flicker open. He realises he's driving and jerks awake.

DOUG
Jesus!

Everyone wakes up. JESS smiles at him.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Why didn't you wake me up?

JESS
You said it was rude...

DOUG
Not when I'm driving!

ABI
(Waking) What's happening?

JESS
Daddy didn't like me driving while he was asleep. (etc)

EXT. ROAD – DAY

ABI (OOV)
What?! You were asleep! (etc)

W/S OF THE FAMILY CAR PROGRESSING AS THIS DIALOGUE CONTINUES.

We see the car turn left and a W/S develops into a spectacular mountainous vista, as the family head into the heart of the Highlands. Music starts to swell.

MICKEY (OOV)
Is this Scotland?

ABI (OOV)
You actually fell asleep?

DOUG (OOV)
Not really. (Changing subject) These are the Highlands, Mickey.

MICKEY (OOV)
How high are the Highlands?
DOUG (OOV)
Couple of thousand feet.

JESS
How high is that in elephants?
(etc)

They are disappearing into the hills.

The car is speeding along a scenic coastal road. It turns left, away from the sea.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY

House out in the wilds (or semi-wild)

You can see across to a loch and the spectacular mountains beyond. It’s about as far away from London as you can get.

DOUG drives their car up a track and parks. GAVIN and MARGARET come out to meet them. The CHILDREN tumble out of the car.

This is all being watched from a window in the old house.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

GORDIE watches out of the bathroom window. He looks dreadful… pale and sweating.

His head ducks down and there is the sound of vomiting.

He comes back up. The children are running, laughing across the lawn, shouting “Where are the puppies?”

MIX TO:

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

Everyone except GORDIE is there.

MARGARET
So Mickey… belated birthday present. (MARGARET hands him a wrapped helmet shaped thing with two horn-shaped spikes sticking out of it) I expect you can guess what it is.

DOUG
Is it a bicycle?
MICKEY
(Joining in the guessing game) Is it a giant rabbit head?... A giant rabbit head with the bottom half chopped off? Is it a joke cushion that stabs you in the bottom? Is it a DVD in a really funny box?

ABI and JESS join in with some guesses. The family are having a good time. Suddenly they hear a familiar voice.

GORDIE
Is it a cow pie?

They all greet GORDIE, as he comes bounding in. At first glance, he seems fit and energetic, but we sense he is putting on an act. Everyone tries to say hello at once.

DOUG
(Nervous) How’s things, Dad?

GORDIE
Oh good, yeh, fine, and how’s things with you?

DOUG/ABI
(Overdoing it) Brilliant / Great/ 100% / Yeh, no, great! (etc)

DOUG has put his arm around ABI’s shoulder, which she just has to endure. GORDIE is ever so slightly thrown by their effusiveness.

GORDIE
...Right... good.

LOTTIE steps forward.

LOTTIE
I did you a birthday card, Grandad.

She gives him a hand-drawn card, he responds with a big hug. There’s a special relationship between them.

GORDIE
Thanks, Lottie. (To DOUG and GAVIN) She’s got something of your mother, hasn’t she? Around the eyes.

Suddenly all the screens around the room – of which there are many – flicker into life, much to GAVIN’s bewilderment.

GAVIN
What the-

MICKEY has installed himself at a computer.
GAVIN (CONT’D)
(To DOUG) Can he not play with that?

ABI
Mickey…

MICKEY
Sorry, I just wanted to show Grandad the badger in the revolving doors. (GAVIN looks at him, bemused) … and the nun with two heads.

GAVIN
(Appalled) … Nobody wants to see a nun with two heads.

GORDIE
I do

GAVIN
Look, that computer’s not for kids, it’s-

GORDIE
A synergised system.

GAVIN
Yes, that’s right, in fact the whole house is virtually wireless… it’s more than an iCloud, it’s…

GORDIE
(Quietly) iFog

GAVIN
It’s called empathetic connectivity. Let there be light!

He claps his hands and the lights come on. He looks incredibly pleased with himself.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
Now then… clan of McLeod. (He heads for the hall) If you’ll excuse me, I’ve just- … Where are the keys? … They were there a moment ago?

GAVIN is looking at the key-hooks on the wall. DOUG and ABI share a worrying thought. Is JESS actually the key-hider?

DOUG
(Whispers) Too high.

Then they spot a kitchen chair left beneath it. They look at JESS who just smiles back at them.
GAVIN
(Bewildered) They can’t all have
gone. (To DOUG and MARGARET) Who
could have taken them?

ABI
... Dunno ... Magpies?

GAVIN bustles out. MARGARET goes to check a drawer.

DOUG
(To ABI)...‘Magpies’?

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - BASEMENT STAIRS - DAY

GORDIE is leading LOTTIE down some stairs, then through a
door. The house changes character, from sterile and spotless,
to chaotic and eccentric. LOTTIE takes in the Aladdin’s cave
of ancient furniture piled with old books and newspapers, a
cabinet full of exotic minerals, masks and statues from
Africa.

GORDIE
This is my bit. Only special people
come here.(LOTTIE is delighted)

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

DOUG and ABI face JESS, who is holding her breath.

DOUG
Jess, this is insane, I’m not
accusing you... I only asked you
where the keys were, I...

ABI indicates that she should handle this.

ABI
Jess, just breathe...

MARGARET comes by carrying a big cork board.

MARGARET
She holds her breath?

ABI
Yes.

MARGARET
Still, she can't do herself too
much harm, eh?

ABI
Well... actually...
56  INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

GAVIN is checking the planning board against the colour-coded schematic on his tablet. MARGARET’s propping up the cork board.

    GAVIN
    Until she blacks out… unconscious?

    MARGARET
    That’s quite extreme, isn’t it? To hold your breath that long.

    GAVIN
    She can always become a pearl diver… (He looks for a lost name card) Where’s Sir Donald gone?

    MARGARET
    Have you noticed anything odd about Doug and Abi?

MICKEY runs through wearing the helmet – only now the horns are missing.

    GAVIN
    Hey, what have you done to that helmet?

    MICKEY
    (As if it’s obvious) I took the horns off. (He runs out)

    GAVIN
    London manners… (Looking at his board) Doug can’t control them… and as for her… that’s what happens when you marry someone too clever.

MARGARET is looking away but she registers this, GAVIN is still preoccupied with his board.

57  INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - GORDIE’S ROOM - DAY

We open on C/U of a 1950s cigarette card of a footballer ‘Gordon McLeod – Aberdeen’

    GORDIE
    That’s me, when I was twenty… only I had slightly less orange skin.

    LOTTIE
    (points at an old battered photo) Is that you with the monkey?
GORDIE
Yeh, that’s me on my 30th birthday…
in Northern Rhodesia… Zambia now…
we were looking for silver.

MICKEY has come in looking for something. He wears the
plastic Viking helmet with the horns ripped off.

MICKEY
(in his own world) “Yield before
mighty Odin” … do you not get
birthdays after you’re 75?

GORDIE
Eh?

MICKEY
Dad said to Mum, “This is going to
be Grandad’s last birthday” …I
heard him… oh cool! Blu-tack!

LOTTIE looks at GORDIE. She has understood the grim truth.

GORDIE
Mickey, can you go check on the
puppies… See if they’re OK.

MICKEY
Sure. (Going) I’m building an epic,
big longboat.

GORDIE turns to LOTTIE.

GORDIE
You’ve heard of cancer… I’ve got
that.

LOTTIE
But you will get better.

GORDIE
Well they can’t actually make me
better, and the treatments they
were giving me have been putting
too much of a strain on my heart.

LOTTIE gets out her notebook. She puts a hard angry cross
next to one of the things she wrote down. GORDIE watches her,
concerned.

GORDIE (CONT’D)
Right now though, right this
second, I feel brilliant.

LOTTIE is now writing furiously still crossing out.

GORDIE (CONT’D)
…honestly… What is this?
LOTTIE
It’s my notebook. For making my notes.

GORDIE
Right… y’know, Lottie… a lot of life doesn’t look very good written down.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

ABI
(Humouring Jess) So, ‘Kenneth’ is the one who took the keys.

JESS
Yes, he's very naughty isn't he?

ABI
And where did ‘Kenneth’ put them?

JESS points down to a metal grill over a big drain.

ABI (CONT'D)
Right...

GAVIN comes over carrying a football.

GAVIN
You lost something?

ABI
No.

DOUG
No.

It sounds very suspicious.

JESS
Kenneth's been very-

DOUG
(Loud) So ready for that game of football?

ABI's phone rings. She answers.

ABI
Hello Leon… (She walks away) No, still very keen...

DOUG watches her intently. GAVIN bounces the ball off DOUG's head and catches it.

GAVIN
Come on then...(He does it again) Oh, nice header.
GORDIE is trying to reassure LOTTIE about why her parents lied to her.

**GORDIE**

*Maybe your parents just lied to protect you...*

*Improvisation where LOTTIE and GORDIE talk about when it’s acceptable to lie. It ends with...*

**LOTTIE**

So is it better to lie to some people sometimes?

**GORDIE**

Hard to know. (He points at a photo) Take him... that’s George Judd... when we told him he had an elephant leech attached to his bollocks, he fainted.

LOTTIE giggles, as GORDIE intended.

**GORDIE (CONT’D)**

(Remembers) Mind you, when he got a letter saying his wife had run off with an Italian acrobat... not a flicker... shot a lot of buffalo, mind.

LOTTIE looks at a photo of a YOUNG BOY on a beach with a handsome TEENAGER with his arm on his shoulder.

**LOTTIE**

(Points at the teenager) Is that you?

**GORDIE**

No, the wee one’s me...

**LOTTIE**

So who’s that?

She points at the older boy.

**GORDIE**

Oh well... um... (Changing the subject, he reaches in a drawer) Hey look, Toblerone!

As LOTTIE takes the Toblerone, he quietly slides the photo to one side. We sense he’s trying not to burden LOTTIE.
They're playing football on a homemade pitch. GORDIE, GAVIN and KENNETH (with GORDIE in goal) versus DOUG, MICKEY, LOTTIE and JESS. MARGARET and ABI are spectating, next to GORDIE's goal.

As we join them GAVIN is going on a run, self-commentating.

GAVIN
Oh, and he's clean through, he's...

DOUG fells him with a brutal tackle.

GORDIE
(quiedy) ... And so it begins.

DOUG and GAVIN are berating each other, they've regressed.

MARGARET
... I'm not sure this is a good idea.

DOUG has come away with the ball, and in an effort to be conciliatory, passes it to LOTTIE, who just boots it moodily into her own goal, and then stomps off towards the loch. DOUG looks at ABI, as if to say 'What's all that about?'

ABI
(calling after her) ... Lottie?

DOUG hurries down to the loch to fish out the ball, slowly catching up with LOTTIE.

GAVIN
(Shouts) Scotland one, England nil.

DOUG
(Calling back) We're not England.

As he reaches the ball he overtakes her.

LOTTIE (HISSES)
You're a liar! You said you told me everything!

DOUG
Well we...

LOTTIE stomps away again. DOUG doesn't know what to do.

GAVIN
(calling) Any time this year.

DOUG kicks the ball to MICKEY, who whacks it back to DOUG. KENNETH steps out of the way of the ball.

GAVIN (CONT'D)
Oh for Christ's sake, Kenneth!
Meanwhile, MICKEY is running up the wing, roaring and brandishing his sword.

DOUG
(Looking to pass) Mickey, your ball.

MICKEY
I'm a Berserker!

DOUG
Yeh, can you just stop being a bers-

GAIVN hits DOUG with a very hard tackle. They battle like rutting deer over the ball.

GAIVN
Oh and England are rattled (etc)

DOUG
I'm not England (etc)

GAIVN
Oh yes, you're a Sassenach now (etc)

Meanwhile, MICKEY is charging towards GORDIE with his sword.

GORDIE
(enjoying himself) Oh no! It's a marauding berserker! Help!

MICKEY runs his Grandad through with his toy sword.

GORDIE goes down, in instalments, quite carefully, with the sword tucked under his arm. Meanwhile, the ball is played towards KENNETH, who lets it run under his foot towards Scotland's goal where a disinterested JESS is collecting shells, with no-one within 20 yards.

DOUG
Jess! Kick it in the goal!

GAIVN
Oh Kenneth, you spazz!

MARGARET looks shocked. A wounded KENNETH suddenly sets off after JESS. JESS toddles towards the ball.

JESS has the ball about six inches from the goal when KENNETH launches into a savage sliding two-footed challenge, that throws JESS up in the air, spraying sand everywhere.

Everyone stares in horror for a split second before they run to her. ABI is first there.
ABI
Darling… are you OK?

Scattered next to JESS are various keys. ABI shoves the keys underneath her as she kneels down.

KENNETH is really upset and shocked at what he’s done.

KENNETH
I'm sorry, I'm really, really sorry, I…

ABI
It's OK, she's alright.

KENNETH
I'm so sorry Jess, sorry everyone.

MARGARET
It's alright, darling. (Glaring at GAVIN) It wasn't your fault.

GAVIN
It was his fault.

ABI
(Hugging JESS) No harm done, you're alright, aren't you darling?

GORDIE has only just made it to the gaggle, he's a bit out of breath.

GAVIN
...And where were you, goalie?

MICKEY
He was dead.

LOTTIE is alarmed that this is inappropriate. But GORDIE is playful.

GORDIE
You can’t keep goal when you’re dead. It’s too difficult to come for corners.

GAVIN shakes his head and walks off.

MARGARET
I think we should maybe stop there.

She puts her arm around the dejected KENNETH and they all start to drift away.

DOUG
I’ll just take the penalty.

The two women look at him.
EXT. THE PATH FROM THE FIELD - DUSK

Everyone starts to walk away into a beautiful dusk.

MICKEY
Did you really play for Scotland?

GORDIE
Aye, just once, against Cyprus.

MICKEY
Did you score?

GORDIE
Oh yes, cracking header into the top corner... of my own net.

MICKEY
That's probably why you only played once.

MICKEY runs off. ABI catches up with GORDIE.

ABI
So, how are you feeling?

GORDIE
Really pissed off about the dying thing... totally, utterly, 100 per cent pissed off... like millions before me.

ABI
Look on the bright side... you've dodged Alzheimer's.

This makes GORDIE laugh for a moment. But he goes serious again. ABI's one of the very few people he can really talk to.

GORDIE
Just rather it didn't drag on.

ABI just gives him a hug as they walk.

GORDIE (CONT'D)
I was thinking this morning how when Doug was around Jess's age and I'd tickle him and he'd shout, 'No, No, No, more' I feel a bit like that about living.

Behind them DOUG stubbornly takes the penalty he's awarded himself into an empty goal.
INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - PIANO ROOM - NIGHT

KENNETH is playing the violin - impressively. Chairs have been set out in rows for everyone to listen. He concentrates as he plays a classical piece. ABI, MARGARET, DOUG, GAVIN, GORDIE, LOTTIE, MICKEY and JESS sit listening. GAVIN is glowing with pride. DOUG is sandwiched between JESS and GAVIN.

But the CHILDREN get more and more restless as they have been forced to sit still.

ABI has to quieten down MICKEY and JESS, e.g. “Why do we have to sit still to listen to Kenneth? I can listen moving around... my ears still work.” “Why can’t we dance?” etc.

GAVIN glances at the board of keys. All the keys are back on it. He's baffled. DOUG sees him look and makes sure he looks away. LOTTIE whispers to DOUG.

LOTTIE
You should have told me about Grandad...

DOUG
I’m sorry... (GAVIN has raised his finger to his lips to shush him.)

MICKEY whispers quietly to his Mum.

MICKEY
After this, Grandad’s going to show me his Viking brooch and I’m going to show him the drunk hippo in the crematorium.

ABI
After this, it’s bed, it’s gone ten.

JESS
But it’s still light.

ABI
Well, things are different up here, the sun stays up longer.

JESS
What else is different?

ABI
Well, the winters are colder in Scotland, and the breakfasts are bigger in Scotland...
...and the houses are tidy in Scotland.

ABI
...what?

JESS
Houses are tidy. There isn’t mess everywhere...

ABI is embarrassed and very conscious that MARGARET can hear all this. They exchange smiles.

JESS (CONT’D)
And the floor isn’t covered in-

ABI
Shush, you’ll distract Kenneth.

Meanwhile, LOTTIE is back on DOUG’s case.

LOTTIE
You and Mum need to stop lying.

KENNETH’s recital stops and the audience claps. DOUG joins in clapping enthusiastically to drown out LOTTIE. The clapping is making one of GAVIN’s sound-triggered lights flicker on and off on a wall behind them.

LOTTIE (CONT’D)
If you didn’t lie so much, maybe you’d still be together.

DOUG claps even louder to drown her out, throwing in the occasional “BRAVO!”

GAVIN
He’s competing for ‘Young Musician of the Year’.

KENNETH
(quietly) If I qualify.

GAVIN
When you qualify.

GORDIE is watching this exchange; as the applause continues.

LOTTIE
And maybe you wouldn’t be living at the YMCA.

DOUG has his fingers in his mouth and is whistling loudly and enthusiastically to drown her out.
...and Mum wouldn’t be on the phone to her solicitor all night (still more whistling from DOUG) ...banging on about ‘breaches’ and ‘rights to remove’.

DOUG is now applauding and whistling on his own, which the others are beginning to feel is odd.

DOUG
(stops) ...wasn’t that great?

MARGARET appears with some bedding.

MARGARET
I've had to put all five of you in the attic room together. I hope that's alright.

DOUG
Absolutely.

ABI
Lovely.

DOUG and ABI smile at MARGARET a little too much.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET'S HOUSE – NIGHT

The house is glowing in the moonlight.

We cut round the bedrooms.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – ATTIC BEDROOM – NIGHT

The 3 children share a mattress. ABI, MICKEY and JESS are asleep, MICKEY is clutching the Viking brooch. LOTTIE is staring at the ceiling, troubled.

And so is DOUG.

[DELETED SCENE]

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – GORDIE’S ROOM – NIGHT

In his bedroom GORDIE is sitting in his pyjamas on the end of his bed, clearly in some pain.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – DOWNSTAIRS/STAIRS/CORRIDOR – NIGHT

Downstairs, KENNETH sits polishing his shoes. He hears a distant noise... an animal maybe. He follows it upstairs.
It's closer... an on/off wailing... not quite human.

He hesitates, and then heads down the corridor, towards it. It's coming from behind a door. He opens it.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET'S HOUSE - BATHROOM/CORRIDOR - NIGHT

It's the bathroom and in it, MARGARET his mother sits on the side of the bath weeping half-stifled heaving sobs. She is shocked to see him.

KENNETH

Sorry...

He hurries away down the corridor. But she comes to the bathroom door.

MARGARET

Kenneth... Darling, it's fine...

She makes an enormous effort to be cheerful.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

This ... it's just something women do when they're a bit older ... it's perfectly normal... just letting off a bit of steam...

KENNETH

Is this about... The incident.

MARGARET tries to hide her alarm.

MARGARET

Incident?.. What incident?

KENNETH

Mum, it’s on Youtube.

He goes. MARGARET is shaken.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAWN

A misty summer dawn.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - CORRIDOR/BATHROOM - DAY

A bleary eyed ABI goes into a corridor. DOUG ambushes her.

DOUG

‘Leave to remove’...

ABI

(She tries to walk off.) I need the toilet.
ABI enters the bathroom, closing the door behind her. DOUG hesitates for a moment then bursts in after her, just as she is about to settle on the toilet.

ABI (CONT’D)
Doug! I’m…

DOUG
‘Leave to remove’… I texted my solicitor…

ABI
(Desperate to pee) Doug! I’m dying for a…

DOUG
You’re… You’re planning to take my children away somewhere… aren’t you?… Somewhere that’s…

ABI
(Can’t wait any longer, sits on toilet) Newcastle! OK? We’re moving to Newcastle. But now’s not a good time to talk about it.

DOUG
Well when is a good time?

ABI
When I’m not on the toilet!

DOUG is stunned for a moment, while she pees.

DOUG
...Newcastle?

ABI
Yes

DOUG’s mind starts to race.

DOUG
...Oh, I get it, ‘Leon from Newcastle’.

ABI
He’s just someone giving me a job offer, OK?

DOUG
You are seriously going to take my children to live in Newcastle!(etc)

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – CORRIDOR – DAY

LOTTIE is hovering outside the bathroom door, listening. Her expression darkens. She turns and bolts back up the corridor.
INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ATTIC BEDROOM – DAY

LOTTIE bursts in and hunts rapidly for something. She finds her little book and starts writing angrily in it.

INT. EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - SHED – DAY

GORDIE picks up some nets and rods. MICKEY holds GORDIE’S brooch.

MICKEY
I think it’s a king’s brooch ‘cos it’s got the Tree of Life on it… Is it true you’re a Viking, cos Dad says you are.

GORDIE
Aye. The University Hospital wanted volunteers for a DNA test, and seeing they were forever taking my blood anyway… seems I’m 84% Viking.

MICKEY’S not sure about percentages.

GORDIE (CONT’D)
That's most of me. Why did you pull the horns off that helmet?

MICKEY
It's not historically correct… Viking helmets didn't have horns.

GORDIE
They didn’t have two holes in them there and there either.

He points to the holes MICKEY has left.

MICKEY
They did if the Viking was hit on the head by a two pronged battle axe… or two Saxons hit him on the head with two swords at the same time, or if he fell off a cliff and landed head first on a gnu. Odin's got a hole in his face. He's only got one eye. He’s my favourite Norse God. I pray to him sometimes.

GORDIE
…You pray to Odin?

MICKEY
Yeh he roams the world testing people's hospitality.
GORDIE

Right... yeh, here in the mortal world we call the scrounging.

MICKEY and GORDIE continue discussing Odin and the other Norse Gods.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET'S HOUSE - TOP BATHROOM - DAY

DOUG and ABI are in mid-row. DOUG is standing with his back against the door.

ABI
Look, come on, I thought we agreed that this weekend was about your Dad, and that we'd put all personal issues on hold. We agreed didn't we?

DOUG
...Yes.

ABI
Well then unlock this bloody door.

DOUG
How would I get to see the kids?

ABI
You'd... come to Newcastle.

DOUG
What?

ABI
It's a few hours on a train.

DOUG
4 hours at least.

ABI
3 hours 12 minutes.

DOUG
That's nearly 7 hours there and back.

ABI
Will you let me out please?

DOUG
Every weekend, 7 hours...

ABI
I'd like to leave please.
DOUG
That's - oh, no, wait, at weekends it'd be much longer, they do engineering work, I'm going to spend my life on a bus replacement service.

ABI
Let me out.

DOUG
You're just doing this out of revenge, aren't you?

She moves calmly to the window and throws it open.

ABI
OK, either you behave in a mature and adult way or I scream 'rape' out of this window.

DOUG
Oh, not that again...

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY
MARGARET is stirring a protein drink. GORDIE and MICKEY come in with the fishing stuff.

MARGARET
...Happy 75th birthday.

She hands him the drink.

From upstairs we hear a lot of arguing, as DOUG and ABI tear into each other. MARGARET smiles awkwardly.

MICKEY
They're fine. And they don't live in different houses by the way.

MARGARET and GORDIE look at each other.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET'S HOUSE - DAY
Various delivery men, including the marquee people, are milling around. Two bakers are carrying a cake with the word 'Gordie' written on it, followed by another two bakers, carrying a cake bearing the word 'McLeod'.

GAVIN (OOV)
So I'll be running, well, all the important stuff.
Everyone is in a bustle, preparations for the party are under way. GAVIN is wielding his tablet, which is sending a colour-coded chart to the many screens in his ‘system’. KENNETH sits behind him, at his own laptop.

GAVIN
...Margaret I've got you on the flowers, the food, the place names and the cloakroom, oh and the taxis... and the photographer. Doug, I need you to supervise the marquee for the band and set up the tables. Kenneth is on parking and...

DOUG
I'm going to the West Beach with Dad and the kids...

GAVIN
I think not... 214 guests we have coming.

MARGARET
215. Patsy Cameron's found a man on the internet.

GAVIN
Too late...

MARGARET
Although Jimmy Cazerotto's stuck in New Zealand on account of the ash...

DOUG
Dad can't manage the kids on his own.

MICKEY walks in.

GORDIE
I'm not senile...

DOUG
No, but what if... Mickey put the puppy back... what if...

MICKEY walks out with the puppy.

GAVIN
(taking over) Dad, it is your birthday, and there'll be...

LOTTIE comes in.

GORDIE
And this is how I'd like to spend my birthday.
LOTTIE
(Pointedly, to her Dad) And we don’t want to upset him, do we?

DOUG
Well... no... but I’m just a bit...

GORDIE
We’ll be back by seven.

GAVIN
Well no, you need to be back bef–

GORDIE
(As he leaves) So that’s agreed then. I’ll take my mobile. Come on kids.

Excited, the kids dash outside.

ABI stops him in the door.

ABI
(Concerned) Right... are you sure you’re up for this?... Only Margaret said your medicine makes you feel a bit...

GORDIE
I'm giving the medicine a miss today.

DOUG joins them.

DOUG
Well is that... (i.e. is that a good idea?)

GORDIE
No need to worry... I’ve carried out a risk assessment. (He exits - then sticks his head back round the door) I haven’t really, that was a joke.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHLAND LANDSCAPE

The CHILDREN scream joyfully as they bump and bounce around in the back of the old pick-up truck that GORDIE is driving along a rutted old track.

As they pass a traditional stone farmhouse, DOREEN, an eccentric looking woman calls out to them.
DOREEN
Hey! Are you not stopping to say 'hello' you miserable old bastard?

GORDIE
(Stopping the pick-up) Je-sus, Doreen, can you just mind your language, they're only-

JESS
(Leaping out of the pick-up) She's got ostriches!!

EXT. OSTRICH ENCLOSURES - DAY

W/S as the five of them admire the ostriches.

LOTTIE
(chasing after JESS) Don't get too close, Jess!

GORDIE
I'm just saying go easy on the-

DOREEN
Ach, they're from London, everybody swears in London.

MICKEY
Mum and Dad swear all the time.

GORDIE
Well, maybe so, but-

MICKEY
Mum used the C-word. And the other ones.

GORDIE
OK, but-

MICKEY
(Quoting his MUM) 'Tell that to your poxy-f-ing c-word of a solicitor you f-ing b-word.'

GORDIE and DOREEN look at him in disbelief

MICKEY (CONT'D)
...she thought I was in the garden but I was in the toilet... peeing very quietly... by aiming at the side of the toilet and not the water, though I did miss a bit.

GORDIE
Right...
MICKEY charges over towards the ostrich pens.

GORDIE (CONT’D)
You’ve got another escapee charging around like a loonie down by the burn.

DOREEN
Oh that’ll be Wiggins, he’s a bit A.D.D. How are you feeling today?

GORDIE
Oh, fine, today’s one of the good days.

DOREEN
...You are such a crap actor.

GORDIE sees LOTTIE standing on her own.

LOTTIE
Are they OK up here? Do they have any predators?

DOREEN
Only drunks, driving pick-up trucks...

GORDIE
Oh for - I’d had one glass of -

DOREEN
...backwards.

GORDIE
The thing just ran out behind me! How many more times!

LOTTIE
(Watching a sprinting ostrich) How fast can they go?

DOREEN
Not fast enough to outrun your Grandad.

GORDIE glares at her.

Down by the ostriches MICKEY shouts..

MICKEY
I'm gonna race one!

He starts to sprint, running parallel to an ostrich, and providing his own commentary.
We open on a C/U of a very large egg in a makeshift incubator, with JESS's forefinger prodding it gently.

JESS
So... this came out of an ostrich's bottom?

DOREEN
Aye, that's why they're so bad tempered.

MICKEY
How do they know if they're about to lay an egg... or if they just need the toilet?

DOREEN
(Amused) I think they just know.

MICKEY and JESS ask DOREEN more questions, e.g. Could you get an ostrich egg back inside an ostrich's bottom if you pushed it?

GORDIE and LOTTIE are talking down by the fence.

GORDIE
Look... I know your Mum and Dad are going through a difficult time...

LOTTIE
So... so you know what's happening to them?

GORDIE
I... put two and two together...

LOTTIE
So you know they're getting divorced?

Now GORDIE is a little thrown.

GORDIE
...Well, em... no, I didn't know that right. (He takes a deep breath) ...divorced. (He notices LOTTIE look very anxious again) ...Well, um, ...ooh, er... y'know Lottie... sometimes people change and, um... but they both still love you. (LOTTIE groans) ...and... you'll see, they'll muddle through eventually.

He puts his arm around her shoulder and gives her a hug.

LOTTIE
...Daddy had an affair.
GORDIE
(Again, very thrown)…Right… well, um, that's -

LOTTIE
With a paralympic athlete lady, with one foot, who…

GORDIE
(Cutting her off) I probably don't need to know all the details.

MICKEY, JESS and DOREEN come walking back.

MICKEY
Do you look after all these ostriches on your own?

DOREEN
No, Morag helps me.

JESS
Who's Morag?

DOREEN
She's my girlfriend.

GORDIE hurries over.

GORDIE
(Mutters in dismay) Oh for -

DOREEN
(Irritated) What?

GORDIE
You could have just said 'friend'. They're bairns, for god's -

JESS
Your girlfriend? Boys have girlfriends.

GORDIE
See? Now we have to explain the whole -

DOREEN
Fine, then I'll explain. (To JESS & MICKEY) Do you know what a lesbian is?

MICKEY
Is it someone from Lesbia?

DOREEN
(laughs, very tickled by this) That's right Mickey… I'm from the magical kingdom of Lesbia…
CONTINUED:

Cut to W/S of house, we hear their voices OOV.

GORDIE (OOV)
Oh for God’s sake, woman, now
you’re confusing them even more!

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE

The marquee is starting to go up, food is being laid out,
trestle tables being assembled etc. GAVIN is giving out
orders. MARGARET is scuttling around doing just about
everything. ABI is arranging some flowers. DOUG appears at
her shoulder, very conscious of lots of people being around.

DOUG
Why the hell... I mean, Newcastle,
that’s -

ABI
(Quietly as she arranges the
flowers) It’s a vibrant, growing
city with a great public transport
hub and-

DOUG
Yes but it’s hundreds of miles from-

ABI
The Tyne is the best salmon river
in Britain and otters have been
seen in Gateshead.

DOUG
Abi, please listen...

ABI
(More brittle now, like she senses
she might be in the wrong) There
are lots of castles.

DOUG
Eh?

ABI
Around Newcastle. Lots of castles,
and the kids love castles.

DOUG
Yes, but -

ABI
There’s Bamburgh Castle,
Dunstanburgh, Alnwick, Holy Island...

DOUG
Is this job with the Newcastle
Tourist Board?
ABI
I'm just saying, it's-

DOUG
(Exposed, vulnerable) Abi, please...
please don't take them away.

ABI reaches for an answer, but can’t find one. She suddenly moves off, leaving DOUG frozen, contemplating the horrific prospect.

EXT. TRACK WITH A SPECTACULAR VIEW OF THE COAST

The pick-up is bumping along with GORDIE driving and JESS, in the back seat of the cab making banshee noises on every bounce. MICKEY has his head out of the window like a dog. They are townie kids who have got the wind in their hair and are off the leash.

However LOTTIE - who is sitting next to GORDIE - is looking a little constrained - like she dare not quite cut loose. She picks up GORDIE’S mobile.

LOTTIE
Grandad, your mobile’s turned off.

GORDIE
Aye, that’s the way I like it.

GORDIE stops the pick-up and takes in the view.

GORDIE (CONT’D)
And the battery’s dead just to make sure.

GORDIE farts.

JESS
Bless you.

GORDIE is amused.

GORDIE
Lovely manners.

MICKEY
Can we drive for a bit?

LOTTIE
Don’t be stupid, Mickey, kids can’t-

GORDIE
Yeh, you can drive, you toot the horn for me (MICKEY leans forward and keeps his hand on the horn) Jess, you be look-out, if you see another car shout, 'Look out!' and Lottie, you steer.
LOTTIE
What? No, I... it's not... I...

GORDIE
So when I press my foot on that pedal which makes it go, it's all down to you...

GORDIE takes his hands off the wheel so LOTTIE has to grab it like GORDIE intended.

LOTTIE
...but... it's not allowed... I'm ten...
I'm not insured...

The pick-up moves forward slowly with LOTTIE driving, and MICKEY reaching across to hoot the horn.

GORDIE
(To LOTTIE) That's good...

LOTTIE
But I think that...

GORDIE
You need to live a little more and think a little less... left a bit... yes.

LOTTIE relaxes, as the enjoyment beats the worry.

GORDIE (CONT'D)
Now we'll speed up...

LOTTIE
I'm not sure that's... (But she's having fun.)

GORDIE
Good. And a bit more left...

They take the corner a bit wide and knock over an old wooden sign.

LOTTIE
Oh no...!

GORDIE
Well done, Lottie... Been trying to get that for years.

JESS
What did it say?

GORDIE
'Don't let children drive'... No, it said, 'No fires on the beach'.
Right a bit (etc).
The pick-up jerks the last bit down to the beach. Cut wide to see the huge empty beach. The pick-up stops and the doors open. The children run yelling out onto the wide expanse of sand. Even LOTTIE has lost all her worries.

GORDIE gets out gingerly, short of strength and short of breath. But he smiles at the excited kids, doing what children should be doing.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

MICKEY carries armfuls of firewood down the beach from the heaps of flotsam and jetsam at the tide line. The pick-up is visible up at the edge of the dunes. GORDIE sits in an old deck chair.

MICKEY
And is it nice being a lesbian?

GORDIE
What the hell are you asking me for?

MICKEY
I suppose it must be... otherwise they wouldn't do it.

GORDIE chuckles and shakes his head. This kid tickles him.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
How do people know what they are?

GORDIE (Struggling a little)
Well... they... they just find out. Eventually, we all find out what we are...

By now, they've arrived at the beginnings of a fire they're making on the beach. LOTTIE is lobbing on some sticks. In the middle of it is the broken 'No Fires On The Beach' sign.

GORDIE (CONT'D)
...and then everyone has to lump it.

JESS is adding a single twig to the woodpile.

GORDIE (CONT'D)
...don't overtax yourself now.

JESS
Eh?

MICKEY
Can lesbians make babies?
GORDIE
Well... (GORDIE decides this is a bridge too far) Why don’t you get us some more wood from over there by the old Viking burial mound?

He points at a tummock just beyond the dunes.

MICKEY
That’s an old Viking burial mound!

He runs off towards it.

GORDIE
(Calling after him) That’s what they reckon... That’s where I found the brooch.

GORDIE winces in pain. LOTTIE sees.

LOTTIE
Are you OK?

GORDIE
Indigestion, Princess. Had it all my life. Don’t chew enough.

JESS calls across.

JESS
Grandad... I’ve lost my pebble.

GORDIE looks up. JESS stands in the middle of a stony bit of beach surrounded by at least 5,000 pebbles.

GORDIE
Right...

(Possible improvisation)

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - LATER

GORDIE, MICKEY and JESS are gathered around a reasonably impressive pile of firewood.

LOTTIE stands next to a big boulder above the tide line, which has something carved in it.

LOTTIE
Is this official?

GORDIE
Is what official?

LOTTIE can just read it.
LOTTIE
‘Keep off. Frazer and Gordie’s beach.’

This throws GORDIE for a moment.

GORDIE
Oh God… I carved that… well I helped… well I was too young to do much… Frazer did most of it.

LOTTIE
Who’s Frazer?

GORDIE takes a breath… he’s got to explain this now.

GORDIE
Frazer was my big brother… died in the war.

MICKEY
In Afghanistan?

GORDIE
No, he was fighting a very stupid man called Hitler, who wanted to take everyone else’s land.

MICKEY
Like in Monopoly?

GORDIE
…Yes, just like Monopoly. Only with more screaming. Anyway, before the war, when I was your age, Mickey, Frazer would bring me here and show me how to catch crabs… and he taught me how to swim.

LOTTIE
How did he die?

GORDIE hesitates for a moment.

GORDIE
…Someone made a mistake. A pilot thought Fraser’s platoon were Germans.

MICKEY
…Where’s he buried?

GORDIE
… He isn’t buried anywhere…

JESS
I know about dying.
GORDIE
Right.

JESS
Cos of Bambi’s Mum, and Babar’s Dad, and Simba’s Dad, and Nigel.

GORDIE looks a bit confused. LOTTIE explains.

LOTTIE
Our next door neighbour.

JESS
(Examining a pebble) I don’t think this is my pebble.

GORDIE
No, it definitely is. I recognise it. Come on, more driftwood, my little beavers!

He claps his hands in encouragement and the kids charge off to look for wood.

EXT. BEACH - LATER

GORDIE and the CHILDREN are gathered around a good blazing fire. MICKEY is running around whooping like a small deranged arsonist.

MICKEY
(Picking up the spade) Can we bury you, Grandad?

GORDIE
Oh no, that sand gets everywhere. I definitely don't want to be buried, thank you.

JESS
What, not even when you die?

LOTTIE
Je-ss!

JESS
(To LOTTIE) Well that’s what happens when someone dies… you bury them and then everyone goes and eats cakes. That’s right, isn’t it Grandad?

GORDIE
(Amused) Aye, that’s right sweetheart. And then all the arguing starts. I’ve never seen the point of funerals.

(MORE)
GORDIE (CONT'D)
Lots of people standing in the kirk while some priest tells some pack of lies about what a great man you were, I tell you, just put me out with the recycling... the purple bin, isn't it, for plastics and Dead Grandads. (LOTTIE looks shocked)
Oh, for God's sake it's a joke. (He puts his arm around her.)

JESS has wandered off during this speech.

MICKEY
On telly they had this rocky country where they leave bodies out to be eaten by vultures.

GORDIE
That'd be perfect... or if I have to have a funeral, just give me a good old Viking funeral, like my ancestors, eh, just stick me on a burning raft and float me out to sea, that's what I'd like, no stupid family fights, no stupid rows about who does what. Just a warrior's farewell.

MICKEY
Do you want me to catch some fish for us to cook?

GORDIE
That's right... and get a few crabs while you're about it...

MICKEY grabs a bucket and he and JESS sprint towards the water.

LOTTIE
There are sandwiches in the pick-up, aren't there?

GORDIE winks at her.

GORDIE
Yes, but you can't hunt sandwiches, can you?

JESS and MICKEY are now nearly at the water's edge.

LOTTIE
Stay where we can see you!

JESS
(Calling back) The water won't be cold, will it Grandad?
GORDIE
(Calling back) Course not, darling, it's the North Atlantic, why would it be cold?

The two kids dash into the waves and then dash out, screaming blue murder. GORDIE kills himself laughing, LOTTIE laughs as well, as the little ones scream.

EXT. BEACH - LATER

JESS and MICKEY are doing some sand-sculpting.

MICKEY
No, you've got to pat it down nice and hard like this.

JESS
I'm decorating it.

MICKEY
You do that later... are you OK back there?

We cut to see that they have, indeed, buried GORDIE, only his head is visible.

GORDIE
Aye, I'm grand, apart from the sand up my arse.

JESS and MICKEY find the notion of sand in Grandad's pants very funny.

GORDIE (CONT'D)
Oh look... look up there... it's the osprey.

We cut to the osprey, circling.

GORDIE(CONT'D)
Look at that...

JESS
(Quietly to MICKEY) It's just a bird.

GORDIE
17 years she's been coming back. She's flown all the way from Africa... back to where she was born... see, they breed us tough up here... eh, Lottie?

JESS
How far is Africa? Is it further than Yarmouth?
MICKEY
Africa's eight million miles away.

JE-S-S, M-I-C-K-E-Y and L-O-T-T-I-E start an improv about the point of migration. Why don't animals just stay put? It's about parents helping their children to survive. If you laid an egg in Africa it would fry. Is that why Dad went down to London to have us? During all this, G-O-R-D-I-E is watching the osprey, in semi-rapture, but then his eyes start to hood. Finally they close. J-E-S-S, L-O-T-T-I-E and M-I-C-K-E-Y continue their discussion, until L-O-T-T-I-E says...

L-O-T-T-I-E
That's rubbish, isn't it, Grandad?

He does not reply. He is completely still.

L-O-T-T-I-E (CONT'D)
...Grandad?... Grandad?

The kids look at each other. They're a little thrown.

M-I-C-K-E-Y
(Louder)...Hey, Grandad.

Now the kids are troubled.

J-E-S-S
...Perhaps he's asleep.

Nervously, L-O-T-T-I-E moves forward, closer to G-O-R-D-I-E's face, she reaches out to touch him, tentatively, on the shoulder.

L-O-T-T-I-E
...Grandad?

Suddenly G-O-R-D-I-E erupts out of the sand and shouts, 'Boo!'. The kids dissolve into screams and laughter. He's really startled them, especially L-O-T-T-I-E.

L-O-T-T-I-E (CONT'D)
Gran-dad! That wasn't funny!

M-I-C-K-E-Y
Well, it was quite funny-

L-O-T-T-I-E
No, it-

J-E-S-S
It was funnier than monkeys. (etc.)
The tasks are colour-coded red, amber and green. ABI is aware of DOUG watching her, as she puts a pot of flowers on a shelf with a printed notice that says ‘flowers here’.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The little ones are playing in the rock pools on the south side of the beach. LOTTIE is still with her Grandad. She is drawing in the sand with a stick, as GORDIE tries to reassure her.

LOTTIE
Mum and Dad lie so much I just don’t trust them. I feel so angry with them all the time...

GORDIE
I used to feel like that about my lot. But then I realised there's no point being angry with people you love for being what they are. So what if your Dad is a complete and utter bloody shambles... and what if your Uncle Gavin is a bit of a tight-ass... all that social climbing... he can't help himself... just as his wife can't help being frightened of her own shadow... and your Mum can't help being a bit mouthy... the truth is... every human being on this planet is ridiculous in their own way, so we shouldn’t judge and we shouldn't fight because in the end... (He shakes his head and chuckles to himself) In the end, none of it matters... none of that stuff...

LOTTIE smiles at him, she's understood (sort of). They hear JESS shouting from the waterline.

JESS
Lottie, this shell's got legs. What do I do?

LOTTIE
It's OK... it'll be a hermit crab.

GORDIE watches as LOTTIE runs off to help JESS, explaining about hermit crabs as she goes. MICKEY is now kicking a ball around by the waterline. Because GORDIE is looking into the sun the children are now just silhouettes, outlined against a shimmering sea, like the perfect tableau of carefree childhood. The silhouette of MICKEY turns and starts to run towards GORDIE. GORDIE shields his eyes against the sun and, as MICKEY's silhouette walks towards him it resolves into a 15-year-old boy dressed in 1940s clothes carrying an old-fashioned leather-and-lace football.
GORDIE is delighted, if a bit puzzled to see him.

GORDIE
Frazer!... What are you doing here?

The image of his brother smiles.

GORDIE (CONT'D)
...Oh ...I get it.

FRAZER
Are you coming in for a swim, you big Mary?

FRAZER turns and runs back towards the sea.

He slowly disappears as he walks into the huge sun of GORDIE's imagination.

Down by the waterline, LOTTIE and JESS are wildly splashing each other. MICKEY comes running along the beach, triumphantly holding a wriggling crab in the air.

MICKEY
(Shouting) Hey, Grandad, can we cook this? Or would that be unfair on the beach? I don't mind putting it back if...

MICKEY dribbles to a halt. His Grandad is lying still

MICKEY (CONT'D)
...Hey I'm not falling for that again, Grandad... stop mucking about.

MICKEY has a bright idea. He creeps forward and craftily puts his live crab on GORDIE's chest. Then he steps back, waiting for GORDIE to react. But nothing happens. The crab tumbles off GORDIE's chest on to the sand. Now MICKEY starts to worry.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(Calls) Lottie! ...Lottie! (Shouts)... I think something's happened to Grandad.

LOTTIE gets up and approaches, followed by JESS.

LOTTIE
Oh, he's just doing his joke again... Come on Grandad, we're not stupid.

GORDIE remains horribly still.

JESS
(To the others) Sssh ...

She creeps up on her GRANDAD and tickles him. Nothing. LOTTIE leans forward and shakes him by the shoulder.
LOTTIE
Grandad!... I think he might be dead.

LOTTIE listens to his chest. MICKEY and JESS stand by, staring, now very worried.

LOTTIE (CONT'D)
He’s not breathing.

LOTTIE carries out the reflex test on his foot - running a biro from toe to heel.

MICKEY
(Very serious) This is such bad luck... dying just before your birthday party.

JESS
We’d better get him back alive again.

LOTTIE
That’s the brain function test. I’ll check his pulse. They showed us last week at Brownies.

The two younger ones discuss how they’re going to bring him back to life. Only LOTTIE is taking in the full gravity of what’s happened.

JESS
On Casualty they put things on their chests and shout, 'Clear!'

MICKEY
In Lord of the Rings lots of people come back from being dead, but I’m not sure how... it’s something to do with believing.

JESS
... What if we put a lobster on his chest?

Suddenly LOTTIE shouts at them, angrily.

LOTTIE
Stop being stupid and going on about stupid lobsters !!! (JESS looks really upset.) Sorry... sorry Jess, I didn't meant to shout.

She gives JESS a hug.

LOTTIE (CONT’D)
But Grandad’s got no pulse so we'd better go back and tell everyone that he’s died. Come on, the grown-ups will know what to do.
She starts to move.

MICKEY
Well, they'll just argue and fight. (This stops LOTTIE in her tracks.) Grandad said... And he said he didn't want that.

LOTTIE turns very pensive, she starts to worry.

JESS
But if we leave him then crows and seals and puffins and badgers and things might eat him... and it'd be a bit horrible.

MICKEY
You go back, Lottie. We'll stay and guard Grandad.

LOTTIE
...Are you sure you'll be OK with that? (They nod) Well that's very brave and grown-up of you.

MICKEY
I'll get a stick in case we have to fight a sea eagle.

JESS
Lottie?

LOTTIE
Yes.

JESS
...Do you think it'd be alright to have the swiss rolls?

She points to a plastic bag containing swiss rolls.

LOTTIE
(Distracted) I think it'd be alright.

MICKEY
We won't eat Grandad's... just in case.

LOTTIE sets off running towards the dunes.

LOTTIE
(Calling back over her shoulder) I won't be long! ... Be sensible!

MICKEY and JESS watch LOTTIE as she runs off past the pick-up through the dunes.
89 EXT. TRACK JUNCTION - DAY

LOTTIE is torn. The track forks. She is not sure which way to go. Then she sees a footpath sign that reads ‘Westbrae. 30 minutes’. She hesitates, but decides to take the footpath and runs off along it.

90 EXT. BEACH - DAY

A big wide of the beach. MICKEY and JESS are still guarding their Grandad’s body.

91 EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

LOTTIE is running, alongside a stream tumbling down the hill. Suddenly she trips and falls over, as she gathers herself she sees a mouse’s nest tucked away in the heather full of very small baby mice.

She picks herself up, a bit battered, and sets off again.

92 EXT. BEACH - DAY

MICKEY and JESS are still on guard.

JESS

In that film about the man who fought the other man, when the other man died they covered his face.

MICKEY gently covers his Grandad’s face with a jumper.

MICKEY

There was a thing in a newspaper that said when people had stopped breathing, cos they’d just died, they felt themselves leave their bodies... and then they found they were sort of hovering above their bodies, looking down at themselves and watching everything that everyone was doing.

They think about this for a moment. Then, slowly, apprehensively... they both look upwards.

93 EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY

LOTTIE runs towards the back of the house. She slows when she hears familiar raised voices. She peers around a corner. DOUG and GAVIN are carrying either end of a table, but arguing vociferously.
DOUG
You told me this’d be a small
family gathering, this is more like
bloody Glastonbury.

GAVIN
Oh don’t exagger-

DOUG
You are just parading Dad in front
of Sir Donald and all that lot,
‘Meet my Dad, he played football
for Scotland,’ oh, by the way, can
I be Captain of the Golf Club...

GAVIN
Dad knows these people, he's-

LOTTIE is still watching, unseen. For a moment she shapes to
say something, but the speed of their argument prevents her.

DOUG
You should just give him what he
wants.

GAVIN
(V. loud now) He's very ill, he
doesn't know what he wants, we have
to make decisions for him, but you
wouldn't know about that, because
you're never here!

They have reached the spot for the table. And GAVIN walks
away to fetch some chairs.

DOUG
Oh f-

GAVIN
This is going to be a reasonable-
sized gathering to celebrate Dad's
life.

DOUG shouts after him.

DOUG
Oh right, and where have you booked
for the funeral... Westminster
Abbey?... The O2 Arena?

ABI comes by, on the phone. LOTTIE goes to speak - this is
her chance - but DOUG gets there first.

DOUG (CONT’D)
Who’s that? (He puts on an absurd
Geordie accent) Leon? Geordie Leon?
My kids’ new Dad?
(To phone) I’ll call you back.

Bye bye Leon.

You pathetic child, and for your information Leon is just my boss. The man I’m screwing is called Ken.

DOUG is shocked but tries to cover it up.

Oh right... Do the kids know?

I’ll tell them when it’s time.

LOTTIE frowns at another secret.

That you’re dating a plastic man with no genitalia.

Oh don’t be so...

They start shouting over each other.

LOTTIE has been watching all this. Her mind is made up. She runs off, as their argument intensifies. She dashes round the back of the house to GORDIE’s room, and climbs in the window.

LOTTIE runs in and picks up a plastic bag. She’s about to start collecting up some belongings when she hears feet coming down the stairs. She has to hide somewhere fast.

MARGARET bustles in. It doesn't look as if there's anyone in the room. She heads across the room, looking for something.

The camera stays on the empty room just long enough to register that there is a small pair of legs standing in the grate in the fireplace. LOTTIE is standing with her body and head up the chimney.

MARGARET crosses back, carrying a couple of photo albums and then goes out of the door. LOTTIE steps out of the chimney, a couple of small smuts on her cheek, looking fierce and determined.
The fire has gone down. MICKEY and JESS seem a little bewildered as they stand guard over GORDIE’S body. JESS is repeating an idea that MICKEY has told her.

JESS
So it’s not really Grandad any more... he’s left... and that’s just the outside of him.

The thought is interrupted by LOTTIE running across the dunes, past the pick-up. She’s carrying a plastic bag.

MICKEY
She ate Grandad’s swiss roll.

JESS
I didn’t mean to. It was an accident.

MICKEY
It wasn’t an accident.

LOTTIE
It doesn’t matter.

JESS
...Where are the grown-ups?

LOTTIE
Fighting. Mickey was right. They can’t be trusted to do what Grandad wants... so we’ll do it. We’ll give him the funeral he asked for.

MICKEY
...A Viking one?

Yes.

LOTTIE

MICKEY
Cool.

JESS
(Checking) So... we’re going to put him on a Viking boat... and then send him out into the sea.

LOTTIE
... Yes.

JESS
...and then set fire to him.

LOTTIE
...Yes... it’s what he said he wanted.
JESS
Where will we find a Viking boat?

MICKEY
They've got one in York! Though I'm not sure the Museum will lend it to us if we tell them we're going to burn it.

LOTTIE
Right now listen, we all have to work together... this is our present to Grandad... saying goodbye... his way.

They all turn very serious for a few moments.

MICKEY
(Picking up the box) Shotgun the matches!

EXT. BEACH - DAY

We look at a massive wide shot. The children are up in the sand-dunes, tugging at a big wooden pallet which is half-buried in some sand. They heave it out. Cut to them joining two pallets together by pushing fence posts through the hollow space in the middle. They stuff empty plastic water bottles in the gaps between the posts.

MICKEY
So it won't be a proper Viking longboat?

LOTTIE
No it'll be a raft, but I expect the Vikings had rafts, didn't they?

MICKEY the Viking expert considers, then agrees. The only problem is that now, when they try, they can't shift the pallets.

They discuss ways they could move it.

JESS suggests they could use their brain waves like the man on TV.

MICKEY says if they had helium filled balloons that would make it lighter.

LOTTIE wonders if they could take the wheels off Grandad's pick up and put them on the pallet.

Finally JESS says:

JESS
Why don't we put it in Grandad's car?
LOTTIE
We can't drive.

JESS
Yes we can...

A beat. Then hard CUT TO:

INT/EXT. PICK-UP/BEACH - DAY

The children are in the front seats. The engine is running. The car is an automatic.

LOTTIE grabs hold of the wheel, but her feet won't touch the ground.

LOTTIE
Mickey you push the pedal and I'll do the wheel.

MICKEY is stretched head-first under the dashboard. He pushes down on the accelerator. The engine roars but doesn't go anywhere as it is not in gear. MICKEY points at the gear lever and hand brake.

MICKEY
You have to do something with those.

MICKEY and LOTTIE push and pull at the handbrake until it is released. The pick-up rolls forward a yard, and they think they are driving, but then it stops.

MICKEY (CONT’D)
I'll do this (the gear stick). Which one should I do? One, two, three, four or R?

LOTTIE
‘One’ cos that's first.

JESS
I think you should do R cos we want the car to go rrrrrr!

MICKEY considers.

MICKEY
I'm going to do ‘One’. (He hesitates.) Are we going to get in trouble for all this? Like when I started the lawnmower indoors?

LOTTIE
... I think the grown-ups might be annoyed at first, but once we explain it’s what Grandad wanted, they'll be fine with it.
The pick-up is making some horrible noises, but MICKEY gets it into gear one.

JESS
The car sounds a bit annoyed.

LOTTIE
Do the pedal again!

MICKEY pushes the accelerator and the pick-up lurches forward. They all cheer as it bounces along the beach. JESS reaches for what she thinks is the indicator.

JESS
Do I do left or right?

LOTTIE
Er... right...

She turns right toward the pallets. JESS pulls and pushes at the levers. The windscreen is squirted with soap and the wipers come on at their fastest speed.

LOTTIE (CONT’D)
No...

LOTTIE shouts at MICKEY for more or less power, until they triumphantly pull up in front of the pallet. They are all very pleased with themselves, until a thought occurs to MICKEY.

MICKEY
How we going to get that on to the back?

LOTTIE's face tells us that she hadn't thought of this.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

We start on a big C/U of a tangled forest of knots, that suddenly tightens. The CHILDREN have used some brightly coloured blue, green, and red nautical nylon cord washed up on the beach to tie the big pallet to the back of the pick-up and are driving to the sea, dragging the pallet behind them.

MICKEY
(Looking backwards out of the window) That’s every knot I know

LOTTIE
Grandad said the tide is coming in, so if we leave it at the edge of the sea...

LOTTIE drives the pick-up right down to the sea, turning so the truck is parallel to the waterline.
LOTTIE (CONT’D)
Jess... say when it’s at the edge...

To get the pallet near to the sea LOTTIE has to drive the pick-up nearly into the water.

JESS
Edge!

They start to get out.

MICKEY
Do you think we need to lock it?

LOTTIE
Yes... we don't want it getting stolen.

But as MICKEY jumps down the matches in his pocket fall into a puddle of water.

LOTTIE (CONT’D)
Mickey... you idiot!

MICKEY
(Fishing out the soggy match box)
That was an accident.

LOTTIE
Yes, but-

MICKEY
A real accident, not like her swiss roll-eating accident.

LOTTIE
Alright, alright, but how are we going to light the-

Suddenly, JESS yells.

JESS
Look!

A couple of crows and/or seagulls are hopping ominously towards GORDIE’s body. All three of them run at the birds, shouting, to drive them off.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The tide has come in and the pick-up is now closer to the water.

MICKEY is concentrating hard, twisting a small bit of wood into a big bit of wood in an attempt to make fire.
MICKEY
'Course for it to be a proper Viking funeral, it's crucial that he gets to take his favourite things to Heaven.

LOTTIE looks pleased with herself and empties out the plastic bag she brought back from the house. The contents include GORDIE's Viking brooch and his Scotland jersey.

Suddenly, GORDIE's corpse lets rip with a very loud fart.

LOTTIE
Grandad!

MICKEY
He's alive!

They leap across to the corpse, shouting excitedly, trying to revive him. They take the jumper off his face. LOTTIE gently slaps his cheeks.

LOTTIE/MICKEY/JESS
Grandad, come on/wake up/can you hear us? (etc)

LOTTIE
(Realizing) ... He's cold...

The other two understand that he's definitely dead. JESS wanders disconsolately off, and starts playing with some stones.

MICKEY
...I think you can do farts after you're dead. I saw it on (Remembers) 'The Real Silent Witness'... This woman said so.

LOTTIE
...are you sure?

MICKEY
She was wearing a white coat... she said dead people are full of gas so they make noises, they can fart and burp and whistle (thinks)... actually I'm not sure about whistle.

The disappointment seems to have knocked all the air out of MICKEY. He sits on the sand, staring at the corpse.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
I'm a bit scared.

LOTTIE
(Putting her arm around him) It's OK, Mickey... it's just Grandad.
LOTTIE places the jumper back over GORDIE’s face, then puts her arm around MICKEY’s shoulders.

LOTTIE (CONT’D)
He sort of died in battle... cos he was fighting cancer... so we’ll give him a warrior’s funeral.

She is interrupted by the barking of a dog. The children look up. A WOMAN is walking an unruly black Labrador, along the beach.

MICKEY
What are we going to tell her?

JESS (EMPHATIC)
The truth...

LOTTIE
No, Jess, then all the adults will get involved. (Remembering her Grandad’s words) ...Sometimes it’s OK to lie.

The WOMAN has been preoccupied with managing her dog, but now she has spotted the rather peculiar scene on the beach. She’s about thirty five yards away.

WOMAN
(Calls) Are you alright down there?

LOTTIE
(Calls) Yes... we’re fine... thank you.

The dog starts bounding towards them.

WOMAN
Hero! Hero! Come back!...

She points at the pick-up, which is up to its hubcaps in the water.

WOMAN (CONT’D)
How did that get there?

JESS
It drove there.

LOTTIE shoots JESS a look that says 'be quiet'.

LOTTIE
We’re just waiting for some grown-ups to come back.

The dog is now approaching Grandad. MICKEY tries to quietly shoo it away, but it’s sniffing around him. The WOMAN is now more perplexed. She starts to approach.
WOMAN
Is… is he alright? Hero, heel!

She approaches some more, so LOTTIE approaches her, to try and keep her away from the body.

LOTTIE
Oh yes, that's Grandad... he's... just having a nap.

The WOMAN moves forward again, but is stopped dead in her tracks when Grandad lets rip with an even more enormous fart. Even the dog recoils.

WOMAN
(To herself)... Well... really.

MICKEY and JESS start to get the giggles. LOTTIE shoots them a look.

LOTTIE
(To the WOMAN)... Sorry about that... he does that sometimes.

The little ones start giggling even more and for a moment LOTTIE thinks they’re about to be rumbled, when suddenly the dog chases off after some gulls, barking like crazy.

WOMAN
He-ro! No! ... (To LOTTIE) So ... you say some grown-ups are coming? - oh no, he's got one, He-ro!! No!! Drop!!

She scuttles off to control the dog. LOTTIE watches her go for a moment, thinking.

LOTTIE
Mickey? Is it important that we set fire to Grandad's boat?

MICKEY
Yes, otherwise his soul’s not... let free.

LOTTIE has spotted the WOMAN lighting a cigarette. She runs after her.

LOTTIE
Excuse me!... Excuse me, could I borrow your matches?

WOMAN
...My matches?
LOTTIE
Yes, um... Grandad's addicted to cigarettes but he dropped his matches in the sea, (The WOMAN seems undecided)... and cigarettes are his only pleasure in life.

The WOMAN is amused by this. She hands LOTTIE the box.

WOMAN
Alright, sweetie, just one left, I'm afraid. Don't you start smoking now.

LOTTIE
I won't. (Turns and runs off)... Thank you!

The WOMAN carries on up the beach, shouting after her uncontrollable dog.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The pick-up is a bit deeper in the water. The raft is finished, complete with GORDIE's brooch and jersey laid on top of a pile of kindling. MICKEY starts pouring petrol from a can all over the raft, till LOTTIE takes it off him. A deer skull, plus antlers has been tied to the front. There is even a sail made from GORDIE's old deck chair, flapping in the wind.

The children have placed a row of round fence posts on the ground and LOTTIE and MICKEY are rolling GORDIE's body over them. (body double) JESS is hanging back a little nervously.

LOTTIE
I didn't think this would work.

MICKEY
Well, it worked at Stonehenge. And those Druids were moving huge rocks... not Grandads... so well done, my brain... Whoa!

They stop as Mickey takes a fence post from behind and places it in front. They roll him some more.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
I am so looking forward to when we go back to school and we have to write 'What I did at Half Term'. (They keep rolling.) Though I bet Shania has done something more interesting, cos she always has.
The pick-up is now much deeper in the water and the raft is nearly afloat. The CHILDREN stand in the shallows with an air of solemnity. They have taken the jumper off their Grandad’s face. MICKEY puts his toy sword in GORDIE’s hand.

JESS gets her favourite pebble out of her pocket and places it on the raft beside him.

LOTTIE
(Clears her throat, bows her head)
We are gathered here... this...
Saturday to... remember GORDIE MCLEOD... I’m sorry you died Grandad...
I liked having someone to talk to...
Amen.

MICKEY mutters ‘Amen’ and JESS copies.

JESS
... Goodbye (stumped) you were nice.

MICKEY
Have a good Valhalla.

LOTTIE hands MICKEY the box of matches. MICKEY opens the box. Suddenly the enormity of it hits him.

MICKEY (CONT’D)
What if I mess it up?

LOTTIE steps up to the plate. Nervously, she takes the match. She takes a deep breath, steps forward towards the raft. Suddenly the wind picks up and the deck-chair billows. The raft starts to drift out. After a couple of attempts, LOTTIE manages to strike the match, and then lobs it onto the kindling around the edge of the raft. The raft goes up with a big whoof! The kids have to back away, and walk back up the beach a bit.

LOTTIE puts her arm round JESS, who turns her back to the sea. The kindling on the raft is burning well now, but the flames have not reached the body. The wind is blowing the raft away from the beach.

MICKEY (CONT’D)
... I wish he could see this.

LOTTIE
Yeh... he’d be really proud of us.

JESS glances back over her shoulder to look.

JESS
Is it too late to get my pebble back?
102  EXT. BEACH - EARLY DUSK

The raft is now a couple of hundred yards from shore, still burning steadily. The three children stand on the beach, holding hands. The sky is red and orange and gold.

103  EXT. BEACH - EARLY DUSK

The sun is lower now, and spectacular. The children are still watching the raft, now well out to sea.

104  EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DUSK

The marquee is up. There’s an atmosphere of chaos. The band are arriving, carrying their kit. They range from the old and craggy to a 15-year-old girl. SMOKEY (the band leader) is bending GAVIN's ear.

SMOKEY
We can do folk/rock, country, country/folk/rock, indie/folk/rock, disco (etc)

GAVIN
(Distracted) OK, Smokey well that's-
(Calls) Margaret, there’s a wrong apostrophe on the toilet signage!

ABI, notices the children walking towards the house holding hands.

ABI
Where have you been? We told Grandad seven o’clock. (She calls) Doug-ie! It's OK, they're back!

She shoos them inside.

104A  INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE. ENTRANCE HALL - DUSK

ABI
Come on, come on (etc)

LOTTIE
...We need to...(tell you something)

ABI
You're all sandy, OK, run up and have a quick bath, Lottie, you help Jess.

104B  EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - FRONT STEPS

SMOKEY is still bending GAVIN's ear.
SMOKEY
I don’t think I mentioned
bluegrass... we can do that, but not
quite so fast since Billy’s stroke.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - FRONT HALL

ABI notices the children are still just standing there.

ABI
Come on you lot, shift, the party's
starting soon, I've laid out your
party clothes, they're on the-

LOTTIE
(Interrupts) Grandad died.

ABI
...What?

Instinctively, the children huddle closer together.

LOTTIE
Grandad died... on the beach.

ABI is shocked, trying to take it in as DOUG fetches up.

DOUG
Crikey, guys, what time do you call
this? We were-

ABI
Doug...

Her expression and tone stop DOUG in his tracks.

ABI (CONT'D)
They're saying Gordie's died.

GAVIN bustles through, oblivious to the atmosphere.

GAVIN
Hallelujah, at last, what have you
done with your Grandad, eh?

JESS goes to answer, but LOTTIE intercepts.

LOTTIE
He died... on the beach.

GAVIN is dumbstruck for a moment, then takes control.

GAVIN
(Getting his mobile out) OK, I'm on
to it.

DOUG
Oh God... I knew I shouldn't have let-
ABI
(Trying to reassure him) It's alright, love, let's just find out exactly what's-

Suddenly GAVIN is barking down his phone.

GAVIN
Ah yes... Ambulance quickly please to... Lottie, where exactly is Grandad now?

LOTTIE
Out at sea.

GAVIN
...Out at sea?

MICKEY
And on fire.

The adults are totally bewildered, GAVIN's jaw hangs.

LOTTIE
He wanted a Viking funeral, so we made a raft, put his body on it, set it all on fire and then floated it out to sea.

GAVIN
(To phone)...Can you hold on a sec?

DOUG
Stop being silly, Lottie, just tell us, where is Grandad?

GAVIN
Oh yeh this is a wind-up. (He spots KENNETH walking past) Kenneth! Kenneth! Go see if Grandad's in his room. (To the children) He's put you up to this, hasn't he, this is one of Grandad's stupid jokes isn't it?

MICKEY
(V. matter of fact) Well he did do it as a joke where he pretended to die, but this time it isn't a joke.

GAVIN becomes aware of a voice saying, 'Hello? ... Hello?' in his phone.

GAVIN
(To phone) Yes, yes, alright... we're just getting the details... if you could just show a bit of patience.
ABI isolates JESS and tries to get the truth out of her, but JESS slowly starts to give her chapter and verse on every tiny thing that happened leading up to the death, much to ABI's frustration.

This all happens in the background of the following scene.

Meanwhile DOUG has homed in on LOTTIE and MICKEY.

DOUG
(Trying to stay calm) Listen, kids, it's vital you tell the truth.

LOTTIE
(Tears of anger forming) We do tell the truth.

KENNETH comes in through the front door, unaware of the atmosphere.

KENNETH
Grandad’s not in his room, and the pick-up’s not there.

He picks up some parking signs and exits.

GAVIN
(A voice is talking at the other end of the phone) Yes, yes, we do still need an ambulance, and the police, and possibly the coastguard and... no we don’t need the fire brigade, and I don’t appreciate your tone.

MICKEY
(Quietly) Well he is on fire.

GAVIN
(Still to phone) Yes I know that it is a criminal offence to 'make prank calls‘ but- She's hung up! 999 has hung up! Can you- (He looks at the three KIDS) Aah, they're making it up (A BEAT) I’m going to the point. (He dashes out of frame)

For a moment, DOUG and ABI, still stunned, are left facing the children.

MICKEY
...Do you still want us to have a bath?

ABI
(Distracted) Um... no.

JESS
Yaay!
We hear music starting up from the marquee. The band haven't plugged in, but there's the thump of a drum kit and a jig on a couple of violins. GAVIN dashes back in.

GAVIN
The car keys! Where the bloody hell are the car keys?

A flicker of a look between DOUG and ABI.

DOUG
We'll take ours.

They speed off towards the car. We hear MARGARET coming.

MARGARET (OOV)
Okey dokey.

She emerges in her apron carrying a tray full of homemade cakes and heads for the children.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Now then, I need some very important cake-tasting done, do I have any volunteers to ...

She realises something's amiss. She clocks ABI'S face.

ABI
Gordie died.

MARGARET
... Oh no...

MICKEY
So we gave him a Viking funeral on a burning raft.

MARGARET
... ... I'm sorry, what?

EXT. LARGE DUNES - LATE DUSK

A car pulls up sharply and GAVIN and DOUG leap out. They start frantically running, clambering, up a very steep dune.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - LATE DUSK

One end of the tent behind the stage is open, looking out onto the hills and the sunset. The band start playing, joining in one after the other. They're very good musicians. KENNETH’s head appears round the tent flap. He is instantly transfixed by one of the fiddlers. She’s 15, pretty, and her fingers move in a blur.
DOUG and GAVIN, out of breath, clamber, with some difficulty, up the last few feet of the hill. They look out over a magnificent panorama of the ocean. They scan it anxiously, until DOUG spots a small red speck, glowing like an ember out at sea. Then GAVIN spots something else. He sets off at speed.

C/U of the girl fiddler’s fingers magically whizzing up and down the neck of the violin. KENNETH watches totally entranced, still wearing his tabard with ‘PARKING’ written on it.

The pick-up is nearly submerged. GAVIN has waded out to it, and is checking inside. DOUG is inspecting the beach, some fence posts are lying on the sand. A few are bobbing in the shallows. GAVIN starts pulling, angrily, pointlessly, at the door. He is beating it with his fists and shouting. DOUG starts to wade out to get him.

The GUESTS are starting to arrive in numbers. As no one is organising the parking, a traffic jam is building up. Some horns are being tooted and there is a police siren in the distance.

The children are gathered, nervous, in the kitchen with DOUG, ABI, MARGARET, while GAVIN - with wet trousers - stands in the doorway, splitting his attention between the arriving guests and the family.

GAVIN  
(Manic) I don’t believe this, it’s a bloody nightmare, it’s- (Calls down the hall) Sir Donald, glad you could make it – a total bloody nightm- (calls again) Hughie, good to see you – a bloo-dy total –

MARGARET  
(interrupts) Gavin, please, language... the children.

GAVIN  
Oh, so they can’t hear the word ‘bloody’ but they can set fire to my father?
MICKEY
(Sticking up for himself) We didn't hurt him, he was dead.

GAVIN
Well let's hope so.

DOUG
(Snaps) Oh for Christ's-

ABI
Doug!

As the adults argue, MICKEY peers out the window. An OLD MAN wearing a big hat and a dark blue overcoat limps towards the house. For a moment MICKEY experiences a flashback to the poster on his bedroom wall at home. He sees a striking resemblance.

MICKEY
(mutters quietly to himself) Odin.

No one sees MICKEY as he heads excitedly towards the door.

GAVIN
... This could still be one of Dad's wind-ups. I tell you, I wouldn't put it past him.

DOUG and ABI watch GAVIN sympathetically. They can see he's in denial.

DOUG
Gav, listen... I think we have to accept the kids are telling the truth.

LOTTIE
We just did what Grandad wanted.

GAVIN
He didn’t want... this! He wanted to be cremated (DOUG goes to speak)
And don’t bloody say it, ‘cos I’m looking for someone to punch and your children are too small!

GAVIN and DOUG start arguing over each other. LOTTIE and JESS watch them, bewildered.

JESS
(Quietly to LOTTIE) You said they'd be annoyed at first and then they'd be fine with it... well they’re not fine with it yet.
There's a cheery hubbub from many guests until MARGARET stands on a chair to make an announcement. ABI is with her, not sure how to help.

MARGARET
Erm... excuse me...

There's a ripple of shushing around the room. The OLD MAN in the blue coat comes in at the back, struggling with the feedback from his hearing aid. A PHOTOGRAPHER starts taking photographs, but ABI politely gestures for him to stop.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Thank you all so much for coming... Gordie would be pleased to see so many of his friends gathered together... except... sadly... he can't be pleased... because he passed away... today. (There are groans and sounds of dismay from the guests)...
... We think... well, we're fairly certain that... (The GUESTS are starting to look a little puzzled)
... he has... The details aren't important... Anyway, um... (Her voice breaks a little... she doesn't know how to finish) I know the competition for local babysitters has been intense, so do stay and have a-

MARGARET suddenly sees the OLD MAN in the blue coat.

MARGARET (CONT’D)
Jimmy Cazzarotto...

JIMMY
(Loudly) Margaret.

MARGARET
We thought you were stuck in New Zealand... with the ash.

We cut to JIMMY’s POV and hear what he hears... which is just a mush of sound.

JIMMY
Four days it’s taken me... So where is the old bastard?

He clearly has no idea what MARGARET's said. MARGARET and ABI look at each other. ABI gestures to MARGARET. She’s going to try and deal with this.
INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - LATE DUSK

There’s the sound of hooting outside. GAVIN looks out the window.

GAVIN
Where’s Kenneth? He’s supposed to be...

Two POLICE, SGT MURDOCH, P.C. MCLUHAN and a STERN-LOOKING WOMAN enter the hall, where they are met by GAVIN and DOUG. MICKEY drifts in behind the Police.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
You took your time, Murdo.

SGT MURDOCH
Ally Mackay’s stag night. A dwarf got thrown through a window. (Introducing the WOMAN) This is Agnes Brody.

AGNES
(Intimidatingly to the point) From the Child Welfare Unit. I’ll require a room for interviews.

DOUG
...Right.

AGNES
(Indicating MICKEY) I found this child outside… unaccompanied.

DOUG
Yes… that’s my son… (Limply, as he takes MICKEY by the hand)... Thank you.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - LATE DUSK

We can hear the band playing jigs, as some guests head for their cars.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - LATE DUSK

The band are up on the stage and playing vigorous jigs with electric backing.

KENNETH stands, watching, and now he is holding his violin. He finds himself staring at the girl VIOLINIST with the flying fingers and the tossing hair.

KENNETH realises that SMOKEY is beckoning him up on to the stage.
AGNES
Please do exactly as I ask. There is a procedure for this kind of situation.

DOUG
(Amazed) ...There is?

AGNES
(Producing a folder) Oh yes.

LOTTIE, MICKEY and JESS are watching all this from the far end of the room.

LOTTIE
Why have they called the police? We’ve done nothing wrong.

JIMMY
(Very loud) Can I... Can I see him one last time?

ABI
(Loud) I’m afraid that’s not possible, Jimmy.

JIMMY
Why’s that? I’ve come from New Zealand, you know.

ABI puts her mouth close to his ear. GAVIN comes in and starts dealing with other guests.

At the other end of the room, MARGARET finds herself with MALCOLM, a soberly-dressed man in his 50s.

MALCOLM
I’m very sorry for your loss, Margaret, if there’s anything I can do, I mean... will you be wanting us to come by and pick up the deceased?

MARGARET
Thank you Malcolm, but there isn’t... there isn’t any... any necessity for that.

MALCOLM
(Suspicious) I see... no necessity for undertakers?
MARGARET
No.(MALCOLM is fixing her)... Now, if you’ll excuse me. (She shapes to move on)

MALCOLM
Is it Fosters of Inverness you’re using?

MARGARET
No, no, it’s not. I need to... um... (she exits)

MALCOLM follows her.

We cut to GAVIN, who is with SIR DONALD.

GAVIN
I’m really sorry about this, Sir Donald (etc).

Meanwhile, nearby, ABI is explaining to JIMMY. MICKEY is watching JIMMY, who is standing in front of a painting that depicts a crow, and from MICKEY’s perspective, the crow seems to perch on JIMMY’s shoulder (like Odin).

ABI
So, we think that’s what’s happened, but obviously, y’know... that’s...

She pulls a conspiratorial face and puts her finger to her lips to clearly indicate that JIMMY mustn’t tell anyone.

JIMMY
(Puzzled) ...That’s what?

ABI
Con-fi-dent-ial.

JIMMY
(V.loud, Can’t help himself) What, that the kids set fire to his body and floated him out to sea?

The guests in that half of the room all stop talking and look. GAVIN, still standing next to Sir Donald, is appalled.

GAVIN
(addressing the gawping room, not knowing what to say) Well... y’see... the kids... it’s... they’re from London.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - NIGHT

Some guests are leaving. Wild music comes from the marquee.
INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - NIGHT

The band are playing for themselves, but now KENNETH has joined them, and it’s clear just how good he is at playing the Scottish folk music that he loves. His face is illuminated.

The GIRL VIOLINIST with the flying fingers steps across the makeshift stage so they can play together. They grin at each other as they step up the tempo.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

DOUG is hovering by a door, trying to hear what’s going on inside. He turns and does his best reassuring smile to LOTTIE and JESS, who sit on two chairs outside the dining room. JESS opens KENNETH’s laptop that is sitting there.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DUSK

AGNES sits across a big table, facing MICKEY, who looks very small perched on his chair. ABI sits off to the side watching anxiously. AGNES speaks to MICKEY in that oversimple way that suggests she’s been on a course.

AGNES
So, the idea... of the... special funeral... Who did that come from?

MICKEY
Odin.

AGNES
(Writing) Odin?

MICKEY
He commanded Vikings to do that...

He goes to the window.

ABI
Mickey, sit down, love.

MICKEY
He walks the earth with one eye and a big hat and a blue cloak, on his eight-legged horse, disguised as a traveller, to see if people are nice to him... and he’s here now.

AGNES
... With an eight-legged horse?
MICKEY
Yeah well he’s probably left it somewhere so people don’t stare, because if your horse had eight legs they would stare.

AGNES writes something down. ABI starts to get anxious. ABI discreetly cranes her neck to try and see what she’s writing.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – ENTRANCE HALL – DUSK

MARGARET is saying goodbye to some guests. She finds herself face to face with MALCOLM again.

MALCOLM
Y’see, the thing about Fosters of Inverness…

MARGARET
No, we’re not using Fos–

MALCOLM
...is that they may have gone all hoity-toity with the website…

MARGARET
...Malcolm…

MALCOLM
...but all those 5-star reviews of their impeccable service…

MARGARET
...Malcolm…

MALCOLM
I’ve heard Hettie Foster writes those in herself.

MARGARET
Malcolm, with the greatest respect… fuck off.

The room falls quiet.

MALCOLM is stunned. So are GAVIN, the POLICE and the last of the departing guests.

MARGARET (CONT’D)
Just… fuck right off.
GAVIN
(to MALCOLM) ...That’s the grief
talking... it affects everyone in
different ways, doesn’t it, it’s -
well why I am telling you this -
anyway, we’ll be in touch, as soon
as we have a... (stops himself) have
a... moment.

A taxi is pulling up outside the house.

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jimmy hobbles out towards his taxi. He’s started to see
MICKEY staring at him from a doorway.

MICKEY
You are Odin... aren’t you? You’ve
come to protect us, haven’t you?

JIMMY
(Clearly hasn’t heard a word) Aye,
wee fella, yes indeed, too right.

MICKEY looks reassured.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - NIGHT

The band plays, even faster. But now, KENNETH and THE GIRL
VIOLINIST play answering phrases, the jig climaxing at
exhilarating speed, their eyes ablaze with excitement.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - THE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

AGNES is rising from her chair, the interview’s coming to an
end.

AGNES
So, thank you, for that, Jess, and,
if its OK, I’ll just hang onto this
lovely drawing I asked you to do
for me... of the three of you... (She
looks, pensively, at the picture)...
Setting fire to your Grandpa...

JESS
Do you want to put it on your
fridge?

AGNES
No, not exact-

JESS
There wasn’t actually a unicorn on
the beach, I just got bored.
ABI
(Feels threatened) Perhaps we could hang on to the picture.

AGNES
I’ll give you a receipt and it will be returned to you when the investigation’s been completed.

AGNES writes some more notes, as ABI’s anxiety increases.

JESS
Can I go now? Because I was half way through a cheese string.

AGNES
OK... (JESS is already virtually out of the room, taking one of her stones with her as she goes) (To ABI) ... so... does she hold her breath a lot?

126 EXT. THE BEACH - NIGHT
A powerful light is switched on and illuminates the beach. Shadowy figures in fluorescent jackets move towards the semi-submerged pick-up.

126A INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - NIGHT
The band are still playing, watched by two guests. But KENNETH and the girl violinist are missing.

127 EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MARQUEE - NIGHT
KENNETH and the GIRL VIOLINIST are snogging with wild abandon round the back of the marquee.

KENNETH has finally cut loose (as his GRANDAD advised him).

128 INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - THE STUDY - NIGHT
AGNES is now interviewing LOTTIE.

AGNES
So, Lottie, um... why didn’t you come back when your Grandad died and fetch an adult?

LOTTIE
I did. I was going to tell my Dad... but he was having a big slanging match with my Uncle. And then my Mum.
AGNES
He was... in conflict with your Mum?

ABI goes to say something, but AGNES just writes something ominous in her notes.

ABI
(Weakly) But... mostly... with... her Uncle.

AGNES ignores her and keeps writing.

[SCENE DELETED]

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT

MICKEY and JESS are bored and tired, looking at clips on KENNETH’s laptop. (We don’t need to see any clips.)

JESS
Make it bigger.

MICKEY hits a key that doesn’t seem to do anything.

JESS (CONT’D)
Bigger.

JESS tries to help him, hitting some keys.

MICKEY
Don’t stress... I’m trying.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

GAVIN bustles in to find the two policemen, slumped, watching TV. He stiffens.

GAVIN
...Is this an effective use of police resources?

P.C. MCLUHAN
We’ve been told to await operational instructions, Mr. McLeod.

GAVIN
It looks very like sitting on your arse, watching my TV... shouldn’t you be out... looking for evidence of my father?

SGT MURDOCH
(V. laconic) We haven’t got a submarine.
INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – MAIN LOUNGE – NIGHT

A handful of GUESTS still sit or stand around talking. Behind them, the TV screen flickers into life. DOUG, standing in a doorway, turns to look.

Cut around the house as the TV in the kitchen and another computer come to life.

It is CCTV images of a shopper in a supermarket who is losing her temper, flailing her arms and berating another shopper.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – ENTRANCE HALL – NIGHT

The same footage has come up on the laptop that MICKEY and JESS are watching.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE – KITCHEN – NIGHT

GAVIN
Well I’ve thought of a joke, a very funny joke. Do you want to hear it?

Behind the Policemen, for the first time we register that the WOMAN losing her rag is MARGARET. The row reaches a peak. Then stops for a moment, as if it is over, before MARGARET suddenly starts grabbing tins, bags of flour, boxes of eggs etc hurling them at the shopper, who covers beneath the bombardment. But GAVIN notices none of this, he continues to upbraid the Policemen.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
Here it is. How about I make a formal complaint to your Chief Superintendent… who happens to be a friend of mine.

Behind P.C. MCLUHAN’s shoulder we can see MARGARET’s rage is escalating still further.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
...who happens to be in my house now... as a guest, so...

He stops in his tracks. His eye-line drifts to the left. Then he shifts his head to the side. His eyes widen as we see what he is seeing behind the POLICEMAN on the TV screen, where MARGARET, is still pelting the shopper with a barrage of missiles. Suddenly she stops and runs out of frame. She returns a moment later carrying a huge pumpkin which she hurls at the shopper, knocking her over. Supermarket staff run in attempting to restrain her, but she won’t be restrained.
GAVIN (CONT’D)
(Stunned and bewildered) ...Margaret?

The two POLICEMEN watch the shaken GAVIN, while his wife continues to run amok on the TV.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT
DOUG and the other GUESTS stare at the screen, hypnotised by what they see.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT
MICKEY has got the clip so it fills the screen. They are both laughing.

JESS
Hurray! Go Auntie Margaret!

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT
AGNES
So Lottie? ...when your Grandad passed away...

LOTTIE
(glancing at her notebook) At ten to four... approximately

AGNES
(On the scent) ... That’s a pretty wee notebook... what sort of things do you put in that?

LOTTIE
Thoughts, facts, information... (A glance at her mum) Lies that I get told.

AGNES
...Could I possibly have a look at that?

LOTTIE warily hands it over. AGNES starts to thumb through the book. ABI looks very apprehensive and LOTTIE too begins to look worried.

AGNES (CONT’D)
... Do you think I could hang on to this for a bit?

ABI
(Alarmed) Um... Is that necessary? Why do you need to hang onto it?
LOTTIE
... You’re not thinking of... removing us anywhere, are you?

ABI
(Trying to reassure her) Don’t be silly, darling, this lady isn’t here to do that, are you.

AGNES
At this stage I’m just making an assessment.

ABI does not like the sound of this.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

On all the screens, MARGARET is now decking a supermarket attendant with a big fish.

We cut to GAVIN, who is watching, still in shock. He looks through the hatch into the living room, where he can see lots of people, including DOUG watching MARGARET’s meltdown.

P.C. MCLUHAN
(concerned) I... um... I take it that you hadn’t seen this, Mr. McLeod.

GAVIN does not respond, he just stares at the TV as if it was an abyss.

SGT MURDOCH
... No charges were brought.

P.C. MCLUHAN
(trying to make GAVIN feel better)... No... the staff at Morrisons were very good about it... y’know, everyone... understood that your wife was, y’know, adversely affected by her medication.

GAVIN (QUIETLY)
... Medication?

P.C. MCLUHAN
Yeh, y’know, the anti-depressants. (GAVIN looks at him blankly)... for the depression.

GAVIN’S face tells us that he knew nothing about any of this.

SGT MURDOCH
... Not your night, is it?

GAVIN’S trance is broken by the familiar voice of MARGARET as she crosses the hall, busily calling out.
MARGARET
Who fancies a dram? I’m taking orders. We’ve got McAllans or Glenmorangie.

GAVIN watches her go, astonished and ashamed that he had never realized that his own wife was being treated for depression.

We hear JESS shouting, ‘Play it Again!’

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT

DOUG rushes in and switches off the laptop before JESS and MICKEY can play it again. He looks up to find GAVIN staring at them, as AGNES, ABI and LOTTIE emerge from the dining room.

GAVIN
(quietly to DOUG) ...Anything else your children can do to destroy my life?

DOUG
(Looking at ABI) ... Everything alright?

There is no response. Just worried looks from ABI and LOTTIE.

AGNES
(Leaving) Please don’t go anywhere without notifying me, will you?

As she exits, she passes a very happy KENNETH bounding in. He stops and takes in the weird atmosphere.

KENNETH
Has something happened?

EXT. SEA – DAWN

Out to sea a helicopter sweeps the ocean.

EXT. BEACH - MORNING

The pick-up is still in the sea. The beach is taped off and lit by an emergency floodlight. POLICEMEN in fluorescent tabards are launching an inflatable.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

It’s a late breakfast. The roller blinds are down. The atmosphere is terrible. GAVIN is unkempt and hasn’t shaved and no one is talking.
JESS
Why are the knives and forks so loud?

ABI joins DOUG to get coffee in the corner of the room.

ABI
(Lowers voice) Have you ever read Lottie’s notebook?

DOUG
No. Have you?

ABI
No... not much... very rarely... but she does write down everything.

DOUG
What? Like everything we said to each other? Everything we’ve... (DOUG sees LOTTIE coming) Sleep OK sweetheart?

LOTTIE blanks them and walks to the toaster.

ABI
And now ‘intervention woman’‘s got it.

DOUG
‘Intervention woman’?

They’re aware of LOTTIE watching and lower their voices more.

ABI
Yeh. ‘Intervention’... She kept saying it. Maybe we should get a lawyer.

DOUG
A lawyer, yeh. They’ve been great at calming things down. ...The important thing is not to antagonise her. We need to...

He is interrupted by KENNETH walking sleepily into the kitchen in his pyjamas. He doesn’t pick up on the atmosphere.

KENNETH
Morning all...

He heads straight for the blind and releases it.

GAVIN
Jesus... no!

But it’s too late. As KENNETH lifts the blind. He is confronted by a paparazzi rushing forward and flashings their cameras, all about ten yards away beyond a lower wall.
There is a media circus of reporters and satellite trucks camped a little way off. KENNETH stares amazed.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
How did they find us so fast? That’ll be that bloody Donny Mackay, he’ll do anything to fill his bloody guest house.

He shapes to close the blind.

MARGARET
Oh, leave it.

GAVIN closes it anyway.

MARGARET (CONT’D)
What’s the point? No-one gets to keep any secrets anymore.

GAVIN
(Bitterly) Well you can say that again.

JESS
No-one gets to keep any secrets anymore.

GAVIN mutters under his breath. A bell rings.

GAVIN
Those bloody vultures! Why can’t Scotland have a law of trespass like a real country?

ABI is peering out of the back kitchen window.

ABI
It’s her… Little Miss Sunshine…

ABI sets off for the back stairs.

DOUG
Oh Christ… Just be…(He hunts for a diplomatic word)

ABI
(As she’s going down the stairs) Be what…?

DOUG
Be… you know…

LOTTIE looks worried.
ABI opens the door, DOUG puts his arm around her in an excessively affectionate way.

AGNES
I came through the back lane to evade all the media.

DOUG
Well, thank you.

There’s an awkward moment.

AGNES
May I come in?

DOUG
Of course...

ABI
Why?

AGNES
I’m sorry?

ABI
Why do you want to come in?

DOUG tries to smooth things over

DOUG
Abi, she’s just...

AGNES
Well I need more information...

ABI
What sort of information?

AGNES
Information to help assess which of the range of outcomes...

ABI
‘Outcomes’. What outcomes...

DOUG
Outcomes, Abi...

AGNES
A range of outcomes from intervention to...

ABI
There! She said it.
INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

JESS and MICKEY are peeping around the curtain at the vast media village outside the front of the house.

MICKEY
Ooh, look, that’s two helicopters. Are we famous?

GAVIN
No, we’re infamous.

MICKEY
Is that better than famous?

Behind them a wasp settles on the table. MARGARET instantly annihilates it with a massive cook book... Thu-ump!!! Everyone’s startled.

JESS and MICKEY peer at the squished wasp.

MARGARET
Famous isn’t very good to start with. (Tentatively to GAVIN) Look... Gavin... about the supermarket... episode...

GAVIN
(Moving away) There’s nothing helpful to be said about that.

INT/EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - BACK DOOR - DAY

AGNES
I can involve the Police in this conversation if you like, so it would be better...

ABI
(Raising voice) You can come in when I get an assurance that there is no possibility of you taking away my kids!

DOUG
Abi...

AGNES
As I was in the process of saying...

ABI
That’s a ‘no’ then.

She slams the door.

DOUG
Ab-i!... Bloody Hell.
There’s the sound of the helicopter returning. GAVIN flourishes a newspaper.

GAVIN
Oh Jesus… Look at this!

He holds up a copy of a tabloidy local paper. It reads: ‘LONDON KIDS BURN SCOTS SOCCER STAR’

KENNETH
(On his laptop) We’re front page of the Daily Mail as well.

GAVIN
Yes.

KENNETH
‘War Hero Burnt By – ’

GAVIN
– Yes, thank you Kenneth.

KENNETH
And the Express.

GAVIN
Yes, Kenneth, that’s –

KENNETH
‘Feral Children Sacrifi –

GAVIN
(Interrupts) Kenn-eth! We can do without the bloody rolling bulletin!

GAVIN continues to argue with KENNETH.

JESS claps her hands to turn the light on and off.

DOUG
Jess… no…

AGNES is trying to phone someone, but is frustrated that she can’t get a signal. LOTTIE opens the door.

LOTTIE
…I’d like my notebook back please.

AGNES
I’m sorry, Lottie, but I’m only permitted to talk to you in an interview situation… Actually, could I just nip in and use your phone for a moment?
INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - MAIN LOUNGE - DAY

DOUG
(Calling after ABI) All I said was ‘Let’s not be provocative.’

MICKEY
(Trying to be helpful) Don’t worry, Dad, I told you, Odin will sort all this out.

DOUG
(Weary) Mickey, you didn’t see Odin.

MICKEY
(Bristles) Well, Miss Pringle says she saw Jesus once and if she can see Jesus then I can see Odin.

DOUG
(Snaps) For Christ’s sake!... You didn’t see Odin. There is no Odin. This is the real world!

MICKEY looks deeply shocked.

There is a shout from JESS who has sneaked off and turned on the TV.

JESS
(Delighted) We’re on telly!

A reporter is talking to camera, standing in front of the house.

Alarming bullet points are scrawling across the foot of the screen, including “Prime Minister says grandad burning is symptom of broken society”.

FIRST REPORTER
... and the three children, from this family... who cannot be named for legal reasons.

MICKEY / JESS
(Disappointed) Oh...

FIRST REPORTER
... are, currently, still with their parents in -

KENNETH blips across to the next news channel, which is showing a police news conference. A POLICE SPOKESMAN is delivering a rather stilted statement.
POLICE SPOKESMAN
- we can only confirm that the body
of a man in his mid-70s was...
destroyed, and floated out to sea,
possibly with some valuables. We
are continuing to...

GAVIN blips off the TV. KENNETH’S phone rings and he leaves
the room to talk, he passes LOTTIE who’s coming back in.

JESS
(To herself) I forgot to put the
brooch in my drawing.

GAVIN
... Brooch?

MICKEY
(proudly) Grandad’s Viking brooch.
We put it on the raft. (GAVIN’S
mouth is hanging open)... Vikings
always went to Valhalla with their
treasure.

For a moment, GAVIN goldfishes, unable to find the words.

GAVIN
You... you... morons!

The children look a bit shocked.

JESS
... Well that’s just rude.

GAVIN
You, stupid, stupid little...

DOUG
Whoa, that’s enough!

GAVIN
They’ve destroyed a family
heirloom!

DOUG
Dad found it, so it’s hardly a–

GAVIN
It’s worth 15,000 pounds!

DOUG
... 15,000?

GAVIN
... I had it valued.

DOUG
Oh... I get it.
GAVIN
... what’s that supposed to mean?

DOUG
(His tone turns darker) Thinking ahead, were we?

ABI
(Quietly) Doug...

DOUG
Thought we’d keep the valuation secret did we?

ABI
(Quiet) Let’s all stay nice and -

DOUG
Till after we divided up Dad’s things maybe?

The two men are squaring up to each other now. There’s a feeling it could quickly turn physical. AGNES is now in the living room, by the phone, watching this confrontation through the kitchen hatch.

GAVIN
I was going to announce it as a surprise for his birthday.

DOUG
(Scornful) Oh p-lease, I’m glad he’s not here to listen to this!

GAVIN
Yeh, well he probably would be here if it wasn’t for your mental kids!!

ABI
It’s not the kids’ fault!

DOUG
That’s right!

ABI
(Pointing at DOUG) It’s his!

DOUG
(Shocked) ... What?

ABI
Lottie came back to try to tell us what had happened.

DOUG
Eh?
ABI
... but you were too busy having another stupid argument with your stupid brother!

MARGARET
(Trying to be a peacemaker) This really isn’t getting us anywhere.

ABI
Oh… go chuck a pumpkin!

GAVIN
Hey!

All four adults are now shouting over each other, it’s very ugly. Suddenly, they are drowned out, by LOTTIE banging two saucepans together.

LOTTIE
Stop it!! Now!! Stop it all of you!

Her vehemence stops them in their tracks.

LOTTIE (CONT’D)
This is exactly what Grandad said would happen.

The ADULTS all stare. She’s got their attention.

LOTTIE (CONT’D)
He said he wanted a Viking funeral because that would give you all less to fight about. He said no-one should fight, because in the end it doesn’t matter if uncle Gavin’s a tight-arse and Dad’s a shambles and Mum’s a bit mouthy and Auntie Margaret’s… (She tries to remember) …something… he said you mustn’t mind about that in the people you love because… (Tries to recall) Because we’re all ridiculous… and… none of this matters.

There is a silence. The ADULTS stand there, shamed by the message from the grave.

DOUG
(Contrite) I, um... I’m sorry, Gavin... I shouldn’t have said all that stuff about –

GAVIN
(Also feeling guilty) No, no, it was me, I... I didn’t... I was being a...
ABI
Sorry, kids. Sometimes, when grown-ups are upset, they get a bit...
where’s Mickey?

JESS
... On there.

JESS points at the TV. Sure enough, MICKEY is on camera, facing a barrage of questions from reporters. The adults watch, frozen in horror.

MICKEY (ON TV)
I’m fed up with being inside, so
I’ve come out to explain, ‘cos this
is the real world.

DOUG
(sprinting for the door) Je-sus!

MICKEY (ON TV)
See... Grandad stopped breathing...
and...

GAVIN
(Calling after DOUG) ‘No comment’!
Just tell them ‘no comment’!

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY
MICKEY is still addressing the world’s press, as DOUG arrives at high speed.

DOUG
Yes, OK, that’s enough, thank you.

DOUG’S arrival triggers a tsunami of shouted questions and flash bulbs. “Are the police pressing charges?” / “Are the children being put into care?” / “Were drugs involved?” (etc)

DOUG tries to talk to MICKEY over the cacophony.

DOUG (CONT’D)
(Smiles) Best go back inside, mate, OK?

MICKEY
I was just explaining everything.

DOUG
Yeah, I know but -

MICKEY
As it’s all our fault, I thought that might stop all the shouting.
DOUG  
(Smiles) It’s not all your fault.  
Nothing’s your fault, you head  
inside, go on.

MICKEY heads back towards the house. The pandemonium of  
questions grow even louder. DOUG tries to take control.

DOUG (CONT’D)  
(Above the din) We have no comment  
to make at this stage...

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

MICKEY re-enters, ABI gives him a protective hug.

JESS  
(Wide-eyed and impressed) You were  
on TV!

On the TV they can see DOUG attempting to escape from the  
pack of hacks.

DOUG (ON TV)  
No... I... we... I'm sorry, we have no  
comment at this juncture (Turns to  
leave)

GAVIN  
Good, good, straight bat.

DOUG stops. He can’t help himself. He turns back to face the  
mob.

DOUG (ON TV)  
... except to say... that you should  
all be ashamed of yourselves...

GAVIN  
(Appalled) ... what’s he doing?!

DOUG (ON TV)  
You’re a disgrace to your  
profession.

GAVIN  
No! Don’t provoke them!

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY

DOUG is growing in defiance.

DOUG  
You people have guidelines don’t  
you? My son... is six years old.
SECOND REPORTER
(Instantly) Then why’s he wandering about on his own?

DOUG
(v. thrown) He was ... well...

FIRST REPORTER
Do you let your children just run wild, Mr. McLeod? Is that why they set fire to their Grandad?

The questions get faster and louder.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

Everyone’s watching the TV with growing dismay.

DOUG (ON TV)
We have, um, no further comm-

THIRD REPORTER
Why were small children in the care of an elderly, sick man?

DOUG (ON TV)
Well, um, we, um, we did deliberate about that, but... erm... we, well I...

GAVIN
Walk away, man...

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY

The bombardment of questions is accelerating

FIRST REPORTER
Is your divorce affecting your children?

DOUG
Well... erm...

FIRST REPORTER
The divorce... caused by your affair.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

The family are watching DOUG crash and burn on TV. They’re horrified.

DOUG (ON TV)
(His confidence fading fast) Well no, I mean - it’s - they...
FIRST REPORTER (OOV)
Do you take responsibility for the actions of the children. Have you failed as a father, Mr McLeod?

DOUG (ON TV)
... Sorry? What? I... Um...

FIRST REPORTER (OOV)
Have you failed as a father?

EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY
This question hits him hard. He starts to disintegrate.

DOUG
... Um... I... I... I’m not sure, I... (His mouth turns dry) I... I’ve... It’s true, um... that I’ve made a lot of...

Suddenly he feels someone’s hand slip into his, It’s ABI, come to his rescue. Her other hand is affectionately holding him by the arm.

ABI
My husband is a good and loving father.

Her intervention triggers a new barrage of questions.

ABI (CONT’D)
(Above the din) ... and we have no further comm-

FIRST REPORTER
Would you describe your marriage as dysfunctional?

ABI
(Snaps) Oh yes the magic word, alright, yes! Yes , we are dysfunctional!

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

GAVIN
Oh god, she’s doing it now!
EXT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - DAY

ABI
If by ‘dysfunctional’, you mean that we are two people who have made many mistakes, and who are trying to muddle through while attempting, very hard, to protect and nurture our three… (She hunts for an adjective) fantastic children… Jess, Mickey and Lottie.

INT. GAVIN AND MARGARET’S HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL -DAY

The children are pleased with their credit. LOTTIE is delighted by her parents show of unity. She puts her arms around the shoulders of her little brother and sister. They hear ABI talking.

AGNES is watching all this through the kitchen hatch. DOUG and ABI walk back in and MICKEY and JESS and LOTTIE run to hug them. AGNES quietly places LOTTIE’s notebook on the sill of the kitchen hatch and shapes to leave. LOTTIE sees her and AGNES smiles for the first time, then leaves.

LOTTIE
Are you permitted to tell me… will everything turn out fine?

KENNETH breezes into this tableau of togetherness, in a happy mood after his phone call. Again, he is confronted by a very odd-looking scene.

KENNETH
Oh… Has something else happened?

EXT. BEACH - DUSK - A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER

A party is in progress. There is lots of drink, a bonfire, music and a relaxed festive atmosphere. A group of family and friends, including DOREEN and JIMMY are having a wake on the beach where GORDIE died. The abandoned pick-up truck is there.

ABI has her arms around MICKEY and is showing some concern about him. We see all this from MICKEY’s POV, slightly blurred, as if through a fever.

ABI
He’s really burning up. And I calpoled him half an hour ago.

MARGARET
Perhaps we’d best run him back up to the house.
MICKEY
(Adamant) No, I’m fine, I want to stay.

ABI and MARGARET press him, but MICKEY won’t give ground. Nearby JESS is talking to DOREEN.

JESS
I’ve learnt my lesson… next time I’m with someone who dies on a beach… I’m going to tell a grown-up and not set fire to them.

DOREEN
Very sensible.

MICKEY drifts over to LOTTIE who’s staring at the sunset.

DOUG and ABI watch MICKEY and LOTTIE through the flames of the fire.

DOUG
It’s nice Mickey wants to be-

ABI
(Interrupts) I said ‘no’ to the Newcastle job.

This stops DOUG in his tracks.

DOUG
Did you… Thanks. I’ve decided I don’t need a solicitor.

ABI
I know… my solicitor told me.

DOUG
Already?

ABI
She said it gave me a huge advantage… She used the phrase ‘easy meat’.

There’s a long beat.

ABI (CONT’D)
... I’ll get rid of her. We’ll do this… humanely.

GAVIN is organizing everyone.

GAVIN
OK, everybody… if you could all gather round for a moment.

MICKEY is holding hands with LOTTIE.
MICKEY
(a bit dreamy) Lottie?... You know...
I’m not sure there is any actual,
real evidence that the Vikings
actually buried their dead by
burning them and floating them out
to sea.

LOTTIE turns slowly to look at him.

LOTTIE
... Mickey... never, ever... say that out
loud again.

GAVIN
(addressing everyone) My brother
Doug is going to say a few words.

DOUG starts reaching into his pockets looking for his notes.
ABI pulls the notes out of DOUG’S back pocket and hands them
to him.

DOUG
(A little stiff and awkward) Thank
you all for coming - and well done
on shaking off the reporters by the
way... the press have portrayed my
father’s death as a disgrace. But
what better way to die could he
have had... on his favourite beach...
watching the grandchildren he
loved... playing... (His voice starts
to crack) ...in the... (His voice
cracks still more)...

GAVIN puts his arm around his brother and takes over.

GAVIN
... I don’t know what Dad would have
made of all of this... actually I do,
he’d have laughed himself stupid...
(Some murmurs of recognition) ...he’d
have laughed at everyone turning up
for his party except for him... and
he’d have laughed at the
authorities... trying to find the
relevant form to fill in... and he’d
certainly have laughed at
Margaret’s starring role on Youtube
(MARGARET laughs) ... 4 million 458
thousand 207 hits at last count... 3
of them mine.

GAVIN and MARGARET smile at each other and she takes his
hand. They have clearly started to rebuild their
relationship.
Everyone’s listening intently, apart from MICKEY, who is staring at JIMMY / ODIN. We see MICKEY’S P.O.V. of JIMMY, which is momentarily blurred because of his fever.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
...now I’m sure many of you believe he can see us... but for my part, I think death is it. I think life... this life is all you get, and Gordie McLeod had a hell of a life, and so should we... because that’s all death is good for... to give us a kick up the arse and say get on with it, and love those around you.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
And now my wonderful son, Kenneth, will play something.

KENNETH gets out his violin and starts to play a classical requiem.

GAVIN (CONT’D)
No... something he’d like... go mental.

KENNETH stops and launches into a wild piece of Scottish folk music. In amongst the mourners is the GIRL VIOLINIST. She takes out her fiddle and joins with KENNETH. The band are also there. They produce their fiddles and join as well to produce a big blazing chorus that rises above the wind and sea.

But meanwhile... MICKEY is looking towards the burial mound. He watches as a ghostly VIKING emerges from the mound - a big bearded, hairy man carrying a flaming torch. OTHER VIKINGS start to appear.

MICKEY smiles. For a moment, DOUG follows the direction of his son’s gaze. But sees nothing.

GAVIN grabs MARGARET and they start to dance... a dance as wild as the music. MARGARET beams as he whirls her.

KENNETH saws at his violin. The sea is lapping around his feet but he doesn’t notice. The primal music mixes with the wind and the sea.

DOREEN leads JIMMY into the dance and others follow.

The sunset is now darkening into red and purple, and now MICKEY sees a ring of NORSE WARRIORS on the dunes holding high their flaming torches.
The fires flicker, the sea glows red, the dancers whirl and stomp, and the music howls.

EXT. BEACH – DUSK.

Some of the band are now on the back of the pick-up truck. We cut to the family, in silhouette, as they run, shouting, towards the water. Behind them we can hear and see the party still in full flow.

They all run into the waves and then turn around and sprint back towards the beach, screaming and laughing, because the North Atlantic is too cold.

For a few moments, ABI watches the kids mucking about in the shallows with their Dad, looking relaxed and happy. She raises her voice above the din to make announcement.

ABI
Listen, kids... um... me and Dad would just like to say something... (The KIDS stop playing, she’s got their attention) ... We, um... we know that we've not behaved very well recently and, well,... we’d just like to say sorry.

DOUG
(Moving closer to ABI)... That’s right

ABI
And while we will be living in different houses... from now on, we’re going to behave like grown-ups.

The KIDS look pleased with this. ABI smiles at DOUG... and then kicks water at him.

DOUG
Whoa! (He retaliates)

Suddenly, a huge water-fight kicks off, with the entire family gleefully trying to soak each other. Above the whoops of delight, DOUG calls to LOTTIE, pointing at her Mum.

DOUG (CONT’D)
Did you see that, Lottie? Inappropriate behaviour. You need to write that down in your book.

LOTTIE
I’ve chucked the book away.

ABI
Really?
LOTTIE
Yeh, I don’t think I need it anymore.

DOUG and ABI share a happy look before they are both mightily splashed by MICKEY and JESS. The water-fight intensifies, amid much joyful laughter and screaming.

Something runs through shot. Was that an ostrich?

THE END