

# "MOTHERLAND"

PILOT EPISODE

**SHOOTING SCRIPT @ 01/04/16**

by

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1

**EXT. A CAR ON QUIET STREET - DAY 1 MORNING. 08.40**

1

A quiet, suburban street. Birds cheep pleasantly.

Suddenly a car ROARS around the corner, destroying the peace completely. Every time the car gets to a speed bump (there are dozens) she slows down dramatically to gently clear the hump, then slams on the accelerator.

\*  
\*  
\*

INSIDE THE CAR

At the wheel is JULIA, early-40's, stylishly dressed, desperately brushing her morning hair with a tangle teaser. Two kids yelling at each other in the back seat.

She overtakes a car at speed. Car honks at her.

JULIA

Baby! Baby on board, arse hole!

\*  
\*

On a corner up ahead a WOMAN is about to cross the road with her kids. This is LIZ (red lipstick, unbrushed hair, a bit rock and roll by accident) pushing a toddler in a modern but knackered pram and calmly debating a young boy in a Spiderman outfit with his arm in a cast. He's taking a piss behind a spindly council-planted tree in the pavement, looking back at her nervously.

\*  
\*  
\*

LIZ

...Go on, you're supposed to do it there / That's what they're for / That's why they plant them. No one can see you!

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

She grabs the boy just before he steps out into the road.

Julia's car speeds past, just missing them.

BACK INSIDE THE CAR

Julia is frantically trying to unravel her headphones (hands free) to answer her mobile. She sticks the jumbled mess in her ear.

\*  
\*  
\*

JULIA

Sorry. Sorry. My hands-free isn't working.

(into her phone)

Marie! At last. Can you let Andrew know that I'm running late, I have to drop my kids at school and then -

(beat)

My kids... Yes. Thank you... a boy and a girl. Look, Marie, I'll call you back.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

The car speeds by a PARK.

2 **EXT. PARK BENCH. - DAY 1 MORNING. 08.40**

2

Inside the park, a man is sitting on a bench with two young children. This is KEVIN, dressed in a North Face jacket and patiently waiting for them to choose something from a tupperware box. The box is full of carrot sticks, cucumber slices and grapes in different compartments.

KEVIN

(sees car)

Someone's in a hurry, aren't they?  
Leave the grape for desert, Emily.  
Who wants napkins?

He reaches down and we see that he has a pouch for napkins attached to his belt. He yanks one out (another one reappears at the hole) and dabs it to Emily's mouth.

3 **INT. JULIA'S CAR. - MORNING DAY 1. 08.42**

3

Back in the car, Julia swerves around a corner, slams on the brakes.

Nightmare traffic jam. Back to back cars.

She switches into the bus lane. Immediately, sees in the mirror a bus right up her arse. The bus honks at her.

\*

Julia, mortified, tries to ignore it. The honking continues. She opens the door and leans out.

\*

JULIA

I'm sorry! I thought this was a disabled lane. I'm a disabled person!

\*

\*

\*

She slams the door. Immediately realizes she's caught her scarf in it.

\*

JULIA (CONT'D)

Bollocks.

She has to drive off, bent slightly over, awkwardly tethered to the door.

She grimaces horribly, looking highly stressed.

\*

FREEZE ON THIS: The title comes up--

MOTHERLAND.



JULIA  
Who?

\*  
\*

JANET  
The head mistress.

\*  
\*

JULIA  
I certainly am. That's why I'm here  
and that's what I want to do.

\*

Julia follows Janet towards Mrs Lawson's office, desperately  
thinking of an excuse for being there.

\*

CUT TO:

6

**INT. THE HEAD MISTRESS'S OFFICE - DAY 1 09.00**

6

Julia is sitting opposite Mrs. Lawson. Through the door, We  
can see the kids are sitting on the chairs outside, bored.

MRS. LAWSON  
...Ivy didn't mention anything  
about being bullied.

JULIA  
Well, that's... classic victim  
behaviour.

MRS. LAWSON  
Who's doing this?

Julia sees some kid's drawings behind Mrs. Lawson. One is  
signed 'LEO MARTIN'.

JULIA  
Leo... Martin.

MRS. LAWSON  
Leo Martin? That's very surprising.

JULIA  
Well...

MRS. LAWSON  
You know he's five?

JULIA  
Yes, he's a bit of a evil... child-  
prodigy type ... that's my  
understanding.

MRS. LAWSON  
Let me speak to Leo's teacher.

JULIA  
Please do.

MRS. LAWSON  
Janet!

Janet sticks her head around the door.

MRS. LAWSON (CONT'D)  
Listen to this. Leo Martin.

JANET  
Leo? Nothing's happened to him?

MRS. LAWSON  
No, no, he's been bullying Ivy here.

JANET  
No! What kind of bullying?

Julia stares at her. She's in too deep now to back down.

JULIA  
Mind games.  
(beat)  
You know... Overtly condescending.  
Tapping into her insecurities. I  
think he said some things about her  
online.

Mrs.Lawson stabs out some numbers on the desk phone.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
So what's going on now?

MRS. LAWSON  
Calling Leo's mum. Don't worry,  
we'll get to the bottom of this.

JULIA  
Go for it.

They sit there, waiting for Leo's mum to pick up the phone.

Suddenly Julia leans forward and presses the cradle, cutting off the call.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
You know what, let me check the  
facts with Ivy, because now that I  
think about it she can be a little  
untrustworthy and manipulative /  
full of shit herself sometimes.  
(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)  
So glad we were able to have this,  
uhm... I feel much better about the  
whole thing.

She starts to bustle the kids out.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
By the way, are there any half-term  
kids clubs? Chess or Latin or  
something? I don't like them to  
switch off. Anything happening  
today? Like now? Is there anything  
happening right now?

\*

7 **EXT. STREET OUTSIDE MARION'S HOUSE - DAY 1. 09.30**

7

Julia screeches to a stop in front of a small semi-detached house.

JULIA  
(to the kids)  
Two minutes.

She gets out of the car and storms up to the house.

8 **EXT. MARION'S HOUSE - DAY 1. 09.30**

8

Julia bangs on the front door. No response.

She peers through the letter box. Nothing.

Stepping over to a window, she presses her face against the glass.

She sees a slippered foot sticking out from behind a sofa.

JULIA  
Mum? MUM. Oh, my God, M--

\*

The foot pulls up out of sight behind the sofa.

Julia stares for a second, takes a deep breath, and goes back to the front door. She shouts through the letter box.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
I know you're in there. I can see  
you. You're behind the sofa.

MARION  
(from behind door)  
Julia, is that you?

JULIA  
Yes, it's me.

The door opens, revealing MARION. She's in her seventies, but healthy, and with a scarf tied around her head that gives her a little-old-lady air.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Were you *hiding*?

MARION  
No. No. I was having a lie down.

JULIA  
Behind the sofa?

MARION  
I... had a fall.

JULIA  
Why are you acting like you're ninety years old? What's with the scarf?

Marion, reluctantly removes the scarf, revealing CORNROWS.

Julia is shocked, then collects herself.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Nice. They suit you. So when did you get back from your "cruise"?

\*

MARION  
Yesterday.

JULIA  
That's funny because Paul saw you in Waitrose on Saturday.

MARION  
Oh... I suppose I'm still on Caribbean time.

JULIA  
Where were you this morning?

MARION  
Look, Julia, I wanted...

JULIA  
Well, you're here now and that's the important thing. I'll get the kids.

Julia starts walking to the car.

MARION  
Julia....

She keeps walking.

MARION (CONT'D)

Julia!

JULIA

WHAT.

Julia stops, finally.

MARION

We talked about this.

Julia stares at Marion.

JULIA

We talked about what?

MARION

I'm not doing it anymore. I can't.  
I love them but I can't look after  
them anymore.

As if on cue, the kids start honking the horn.

Julia does a little sort of wobble - uses one of the ornate  
cement acorns to steady herself.

JULIA

I thought that was what the holiday  
was for. I thought--

MARION

No, no, in fact, the holiday...  
made me even more certain... After  
my lung collapsed...

JULIA

Oh, it didn't collapse.

MARION

It did collapse!

JULIA

Oh, look, I'm not having this  
argument again. If you're really  
serious, how about, starting from  
say, the new year, we'll look at  
how you can have a bit more free  
time and -

MARION

No, Julia, from now.

The car alarm goes off. Julia absently turns it off with the  
key fob.

JULIA  
Okay, so, starting from say next  
month -

MARION  
No, now, Julia. Starting from now.

Julia stares at her.

JULIA  
Okay. Fine.

MARION  
I'm sorry -

JULIA  
No. I don't have time for sorrys.  
Unless it's sorry I've changed my  
mind.  
(waits)  
Is it sorry I've changed my mind?

\*  
\*  
\*

MARION  
No.

JULIA  
Well, then I don't have time for  
them.

Julia gets in the car, slams the door. Her scarf gets caught  
again. She opens the door and yanks the scarf back in. She  
pulls away from the curb, does a lap of the small roundabout,  
does another lap, winds down the window.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

JULIA (CONT'D)  
YOU KNOW, IT WAS YOUR IDEA TO HAVE  
GRANDCHILDREN! JUST REMEMBER THAT,  
MOTHER!

The car roars away.

9     **INT. JULIA'S CAR. DAY 1. 09.45**

9

Julia, driving, (back on her headphone hands free) shouting  
at her phone in the passenger seat.

\*

INTERCUT WITH:

10     **INT. OFFICE RECEPTION - COSTA COFFEE STAND. DAY 1. 09.45**

10

Cut between the chaos of the car and Julia's husband, Paul,  
who is calmly queuing at the office Coffee Wagon.

\*  
\*

Paul, (good-looking and chilled out) checks out the pastries in the glass display.

PAUL  
How about Helinka?

JULIA  
She's a cleaner -

Julia swerves to avoid a human crossing the road.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
(shouts back)

SORRY.

(to Paul)  
- not a baby sitter. Anyway I don't really trust her. I'm almost certain she ate my Easter egg that time / since she's got her eyebrows tattooed she really scares the children.

\*

\*

\*

\*

PAUL  
What? The line is really bad.

JULIA  
I can't get the hands free to work.

\*

PAUL  
Why can't we get a nanny again?

JULIA  
I've told you a million times. I want my children brought up like I was. By my mother.

\*

PAUL  
Look, I've got to go. Let's talk more later, ok?

JULIA  
But what am I going to do the rest of the week? I've got work too - it's the Peter Mandelson thing on Thursday.

\*

\*

PAUL  
I know - and listen. Whatever you decide, I'm right behind you.

JULIA  
Yeah, but... Paul!  
(beat)  
Paul? Paul!

Paul has hung up and now stares up at the coffee menu above the counter. He turns to the office worker behind him.

PAUL  
You go ahead, I haven't decided yet.

11 **INT. LOCAL CAFE. DAY 1. 10.25**

11

A cafe, bustling with mothers and children. There are a few groups in the cafe, including...

-JULIA sitting with her kids at a table.

-A TEAM OF ALPHA MUMS, commanding a huge table. AMANDA, their leader, who we will meet presently, is calling for her kids.

AMANDA  
Georgie! Manus! Stop that!

-LIZ AND KEVIN, seated at a small corner table. Kevin stares longingly at the table of alpha mums. Liz deals with her kids.

LIZ  
I just *know*, all right? Santa doesn't do iPads. The elves don't have the technology.

\*  
\*  
\*

KEVIN  
(distantly)  
I wonder if Amanda knows about the situation up at (xxx cafe name tbc).

\*

LIZ  
What situation?

KEVIN  
There was another breast-feeding incident. They asked Deirdre to cover up. I tell you, Liz, if it was men doing the feeding, there'd be men all over this cafe with their tits out / bobs out.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

LIZ  
You should put that on Facebook, Kevin. That would be a brilliant Facebook post / Be prepared to give a quote to Mumsnet.

\*  
\*  
\*

KEVIN  
I'll just see if Amanda heard about it.

LIZ  
Don't.

KEVIN  
What?

LIZ  
It's not going to happen, Kevin.

KEVIN  
What's not?

LIZ  
We're not getting on the big table.  
They don't want us there. You're  
going to have to accept it.

KEVIN  
I'm just going to have a word.

Kevin crosses over and starts to speak to Amanda. We see this from LIZ'S POV, as she starts to provide her own soundtrack to the conversation.

LIZ  
(as Kev)  
Oh, hi, Amanda. Just wondering if  
you heard about the war on tits at  
(xxx cafe name's)?

\*

(as Amanda)  
Oh, eh, sorry, Kevin, my friends  
and I were hoping to ignore you  
today?

(as Kevin)  
OK, great. I'll send an email  
around to discuss an appropriate  
response?

\*

(as Amanda)  
Do whatever you like. My computer  
shits all your emails to a spam  
folder.

(as Kevin and Amanda)  
Ok, then, bye! Bye! Go away  
forever.

\*

Kevin returns to the table.

Long pause.

KEVIN  
I'm going to send round an email.

Over in another corner, a young mum starts to breast feed.

She looks up and sees Kevin staring at her from across the room. He gives her a reassuring wink - like Anne Robinson at the end of Watchdog.

JULIA'S TABLE

Julia is on the phone.

JULIA

...today is out, Duncan, forget today. I'm minding my kids.

(beat)

My kids? Yeah, one's five and the other's nine. Well... she can still do that, can't she? Duncan. Duncan! I don't need to be there to watch Elaine print out a press release. Yes, Thursday will be fine. I'm sorting it out right now.

\*

She hangs up, puts her mobile away and looks around.

She sees Kevin and Liz. Liz gives her a nod and a smile.

Julia politely does a half-smile, but then tunes into the conversation of the Alpha Mums.

Certain tantalising lines jump out of the rumble of the Mums conversation:

*...you take Jenny on Tuesday...*

*...I'll pick up Charlie and Sam on Wednesday after football...*

Julia turns to her children.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Hey. Play with those kids, will you?

The kids obediently walk away towards some children.

JULIA (CONT'D)

No the other ones, the other ones.

\*

They move over to the kids nearer the Alpha mums. Julia goes up to the counter and pours some water from a jug. She turns around with her drink, all faux casual, like Margot from the Good Life with a cocktail, and nods at the kids.

JULIA (CONT'D)

They're getting on, aren't they?

AMANDA, Queen of the Alpha Mums, looks up. She is the polar opposite to Liz--carefully made-up and stylishly dressed, her kids and her friends under tight control.

AMANDA  
Julia, isn't it?

JULIA  
It is. And you're...

\*

Pause.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Could you say your name?

AMANDA  
Amanda.

JULIA  
That's right. How do we know each other?

\*

AMANDA  
Our kids are in the same class.

JULIA  
Yes. Yes. Of course, Ivy is always talking about, erm, er...

\*

AMANDA  
Manus.

JULIA  
Manus.

\*

AMANDA  
Here, sit down. Budge up, Anne.

Anne does as she's told.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
So where's your mum today? Still on her holiday?

JULIA  
(bitterly)  
Nope, she's back alright. With cornrows and Saga herpes, probably.  
(catches herself)  
Ha, I just thought I'd give her a bit of a break. I took the day off.

AMANDA

You work so hard. I really admire the way you can just slip your family in a drawer and slam it shut for the day.

JULIA

Oh -

AMANDA

Because, and I know I'm being pathetic...

(hand on heart)

I would just hate myself too much.

\*  
\*

JULIA

(hand on heart)

Oh, no, I hate myself but -

AMANDA

No, but I think I'd *really* hate myself.

(hand on heart again)

I just love my kids too much.

JULIA

(hand on heart again too)

Oh, no, I love my kids too much too-

ANNE

I'd die for my kids.

Amanda looks at Julia.

JULIA

I'd die for *my* kids. If I really had to. If I had no choice.

They all look up to see Kevin and Liz walking to their table. Liz holds a push chair with a toddler slumped all the way to the bottom. Her mental-looking son Charlie is in full Spiderman outfit with his arm in a cast. Anne immediately throws a coat on the only spare chair.

ANNE

Melissa's sitting there. Sorry.

KEVIN

Oh, absolutely. So Amanda, I'll pop a few ideas in an email. What to do about the (xxx cafe name) situation.

\*

AMANDA

Sure. Okay, Kevin.

KEVIN

Great. Let me know your thoughts.  
You all have my phone number, don't  
you? I did put that on my last  
email so everyone should have it.  
Did everyone get my last email? It  
had the subject line 'URGENT'?  
Maybe--

\*  
\*  
\*

Liz saves him, pulling him towards the door.

LIZ

Tell Melissa we said hi.

As Kevin and Liz go out the door, SUNITA, another of the  
mums, leans in to Julie.

SUNITA

(under her breath)  
Slut.

\*

JULIA

Kevin?

SUNITA

No, Liz.

JULIA

Really?

SUNITA nods, gravely.

AMANDA

Oh. I don't believe it.

\*

She's looking at her phone.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Sorry, everyone. I have a flat on  
air b&b and the French twats have  
locked themselves out. Kids, come  
on. Anne - is there any chance you  
could take Manus and Georgie back  
to yours while I sort it out?

\*  
\*

ANNE

I can't, I'm sorry. Chris is home  
from work and he's playing a  
computer game with swearing in it,  
so we're staying out of the house.

\*

Julia's eyes widen. This is her chance.

\*

JULIA  
(blurts)  
If it helps - I can take them  
today.

Amanda looks at her, weighing her up.

AMANDA  
What? Oh... if you're sure?

JULIA  
Go! Do your thing. I'll take them.  
I don't mind. That's what we do,  
isn't it? Us mums. We scratch each  
other's backs. I'll take them  
today, you take them... Thursday,  
for example.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

AMANDA  
Here's my address. I'm having some  
kids and mums around for some spag  
bol. Maybe bring them back in time  
for that? Say, six?

Julia looks at a clock on the wall. It's 10.30am.

JULIA  
Six. Ok. Ok. Or four?

\*

AMANDA  
No, six.

JULIA  
Six it is.

\*

AMANDA  
Well, that's very kind of you  
Julia. I'll get you back another  
time...

JULIA  
Yes, Thursday. Thursday?

But Amanda's out the door.

12 **EXT. A ROW OF SHOPS - DAY 1. 11.15**

12

Julia, on the phone by a crappy horse coin-operated ride  
outside a laundrette, now has 4 kids--her own and AMANDA'S.

\*  
\*

JULIA  
(to the yelling kids)  
I don't have any money.  
(into the phone)  
I will be there Andrew. I will.  
(MORE)

\*

JULIA (CONT'D)

I had some childcare issues today...yes...yes, a boy and a girl... god, James and Ivy -who cares?

(to Manus)

Manus, can I have a crisp? Please. I haven't had breakfast yet. One crisp.

\*  
\*

One of the other kids starts screaming when the ride stops.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Just sit on it, just sit on it and rock it.

\*

Liz is walking along the pavement. She sees Julia having trouble and goes up to her.

\*

LIZ

Stick two pennies together.

JULIA

Sorry?

LIZ

If you stick two one pees together, it thinks it's a pound.

\*

Liz takes two pennies out of her pocket and puts it in the slot. The machine starts. Julia can't believe it.

JULIA

Thank you.

\*

Julia tries to keep it together but she wells up little.

LIZ

You alright?

JULIA

Sorry, I...I just....

Liz looks a bit embarrassed, is this woman crying?

JULIA (CONT'D)

(wobbly voice)

I'm just, not used to being with my kids like this. And now there's all these other ones as well. That one with the plait has been really horrible to me.

Julia's face is red and her mascara has run.

LIZ  
Look, I live just there. Want to  
come over and have a cup of tea?

JULIA  
Thank you, that'd be great. I'll  
just, wait for the horse to finish.  
Get our money's worth. \*

LIZ  
Sure.

They stand there, waiting for the ride to finish.

Julia sniffs, trying to pull herself together. Liz pats her  
back in support.

Eventually the ride clunks to a halt.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Come on, let's go.

CUT TO:

13

**INT. LIZ'S KITCHEN - LATER DAY 1. 11.25**

13

They walk into the kitchen. It seriously looks like the store  
room of a charity shop. There is not one clear surface.

LIZ  
Here we are. Downton Abbey.

Liz steps over a house made of cardboard and switches the  
kettle on. The house is a mess, but it's a friendly mess, one  
which Liz navigates with ease.

When Liz opens the overstuffed cupboard, a cup falls out of  
it into her hand.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Tea?

JULIA  
Do you have any herbal tea?

LIZ  
Fennel, Ginger, Jasmine or mint?

JULIA  
Ooh, mint, please.

LIZ  
I'm joking I don't have any herbal  
tea. Yorkshire. I have tea from  
Yorkshire. How's that?

JULIA  
That's... Thanks.

Liz reaches up for a couple of dusty cups.

LIZ  
(offscreen)  
Give these a wash. Sorry, Mister  
Spider.

\*

She opens the fridge.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Oh. No milk.

14

**INT. LIZ'S SITTING ROOM - LATER, 12.10**

14

They sit in Liz's equally disastrous sitting room while the kids are going WILD in the background.

Julia and Liz are drinking wine.

LIZ  
So what about you? Do you work?

JULIA  
Yeah. I organise corporate events.

LIZ  
Wow.

JULIA  
Thursday I've got Peter Mandelson  
hosting the Women in Construction  
awards.

LIZ  
Double wow. Did he win I'm A  
Celebrity?

JULIA  
No, I don't know who you're  
thinking of there.

LIZ  
I wish I could restart my career by  
eating worms. Paul Burrell. That's  
who it was.

\*

Suddenly, Charlie launches himself off a windowsill, followed by the toddler onto a large mattress.

JULIA  
Isn't that...? Should they be..?

LIZ

Oh, they're fine, it's why I put the mattress there.

JULIA

So do you work?

LIZ

I was at Citizens Advice but one of my calls got recorded for training purposes. So... that was that.

Pause.

JULIA

What's the time now?

LIZ

Just past midday.

JULIA

Fuck-ing hell. Are you going to this spag bol thing?

LIZ

Nah, that lot don't like me. I'm single so they're afraid I'll steal one of their fat husbands away. Amanda had to tolerate me for a while when Charlie was friends with Manus, but then they started showing each other their dicks. So, The End.

A sudden cry from one of the kids offscreen.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I'm going to make a pizza for the kids, Charlie gets a bit punchy if he hasn't eaten. Can I get yours something?

JULIA

Oh, ehm, yes, that'd be great.

LIZ

Grab your drink.

Liz stands up. As she leaves, one of the kids launches themselves off a chair, missing her by merest of seconds.

Liz has 'made' mini pizzas for all the kids, Charlie carries his away.

LIZ

Er, excuse me, we are not animals.  
Use a magazine, please!

Charlie puts his pizza on a Closer magazine and moves away.

JULIA

Actually, Liz, I will have  
something. I missed breakfast and I  
forgot to eat at the cafe.

\*  
\*

LIZ

Oh, shit, sorry, there's no more  
pizza. Cheese sandwich?

JULIA

If it's not a hassle. I'm starving.

Liz pulls out some frozen stuff from the small freezer that  
is badly ice-monstered. She hacks the ice away.

JULIA (CONT'D)

You can freeze cheese?

LIZ

You can freeze anything.

Julia looks at the freezer and sees there's **everything** in  
there teabags, ham, rice crispy buns, hummus, eggs.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Aha!

Liz pulls out some bread, it's got weird black marks on it.

LIZ (CONT'D)

That's just surface, I can cut that  
off -

She pulls an enormous knife out of the knife stand. Julia  
looks at the filthy chopping board.

\*  
\*

JULIA

Do you need a hand? Do you want me  
to wipe any of that stuff off the  
bread board?

\*

LIZ

No it's fine. I just need to  
separate the slices, it's frozen  
together so it's -

The knife jolts as it hits the frozen bread. Liz looks round  
at Julia.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
This knife is amazing, it came with  
the flat / I managed to keep it in  
the divorce... oh *shit* -

\*  
\*  
\*

Pause.

JULIA  
What?

Pause.

LIZ  
Can you call a cab, I think I need  
to go to A & E.

JULIA  
What? Why?

LIZ  
I've cut my finger off.

Julia goes to Liz.

JULIA  
You didn't cut your finger off...

We see Julia glance down and nearly faints.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Ohhh... ohhh....

LIZ  
Don't. Don't. Keep it together.

JULIA  
Your finger... your finger is...

She stumbles slightly and has to hold on to the counter.

LIZ  
Julia! I need you!

She tries to click her finger, holds up the wrong hand and we  
get a quick horrible flash of her finger hanging off.

She holds up the other hand, starts snapping her fingers.

Julia eyelids are fluttering, showing the whites of her eyes,  
but somehow she manages to resurface.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Focus! Focus, Julia!

JULIA  
Yes, yes. Ambulance. You need an ambulance.

LIZ  
Just call a cab.

JULIA  
Oh God... really? Okay.

She immediately dials a number.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Taxi please....  
(Then to Liz)  
What's your address?

LIZ  
29 Mernell St.

Liz takes out a dishtowel, wraps it around her hand, takes some sticky tape, winds it around the towel. It's all done expertly, calmly, like she's a medic in a war zone.

Julia crosses over, still on the phone.

JULIA  
It's £50 if you bleed on their seat?

LIZ  
That's fine.

16 **EXT. LIZ'S FLAT, CAB IN STREET - DAY 1. 13.15**

16

Liz is in the back of the cab.

The blood has really spread through the dish cloth/field dressing but Liz is still completely calm.

LIZ  
Will you be okay?

JULIA  
I think so.

It's like Julia is the one with the severed finger.

LIZ  
I'll try to get back as quick as I can.

JULIA  
Great. What time is it now? Any idea how long these things take?

The cab starts to drive off.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
LIZ, ANY IDEA HOW LONG THESE THINGS  
TAKE?

Julia looks around at the group standing behind her.

She is now taking care of six kids.

Charlie hits Manus and a fight breaks out.

CUT TO:

17 **INT. LIZ'S KITCHEN DAY 1 17.30**

17

While the kids run riot in the background, Julia talks into her phone.

JULIA  
(on the phone)  
Hey, Liz, erm... just checking  
you're okay and you know, wondering  
what I should do with your kids...  
I have to go to the spag bol thing.  
I'm so hungry and all your food is  
frozen so... anyway no pressure but  
it's 5.30 now so... just gimme a  
call...

She walks over to the sitting room window, presses her forehead against it and stares out. The breath from her exasperated sigh starts to steam up the window...

Suddenly, she leans back and wipes the window clean. On the street, Kevin is walking by with his kids!

She starts banging on the window.

18 **EXT. LIZ'S FLAT ON THE STREET. DAY 1. 17.30**

18

From the street below we see Julia banging on the window. Kevin looks around him and finally looks up. He sees Julia banging on the glass, looking manic and waving.

JULIA  
Keith!

He waves back.

KEVIN  
It's Kevin!

JULIA  
KEITH!

KEVIN  
IT'S KEVIN!

She mouths 'wait there'. Leaves the window.

CUT TO:

19

**INT. LIZ'S FLAT - STAIRCASE. DAY 1. 17.35**

19

Kevin is walking upstairs with Julia.

KEVIN  
...My God, is she all right?

JULIA  
It's fine, she just cut a bit of  
her finger off. But listen, I've  
now got...just a massive amount of  
children. You couldn't help me with  
all these children?

\*  
\*

KEVIN  
Yes, yes, of course.

JULIA  
I'm so hungry, Kevin.

KEVIN  
Amanda's having a dinner? Are you  
sure? I haven't heard anything  
about it.

JULIA  
It's not a formal dinner. It's more  
of an open house. A drop in, spag  
bol thing.

\*

KEVIN  
Well, what are we waiting for?  
(to kids)  
Hey, everyone, we're all going to  
an informal dinner!

\*

The kids stare at him.

\*

KEVIN (CONT'D)  
A drop in spag bol thing!

\*

\*



They all head down the basement stairs.

CUT TO:

22

INT. AMANDA'S KITCHEN. DAY 1. 18.01

22

Julia and company walk into the huge, open-plan kitchen.

It looks like something out of 'Living Etc' with a big central island, massive fridge covered in kid's pictures.

Some the mums from the cafe are already there - sipping white wine and chatting.

On the hob in the centre of the island is a massive metal pan of Bolognese and a stack of bowls.

Amanda turns and sees Julia. She greets her with a double kiss.

JULIA  
(same crazed delivery)  
Something smells good!

AMANDA  
Oh hey! Thank you so much!

JULIA  
They were good as gold.

Julia hugs her. She peers into the pot as she does. She's so happy.

KEVIN  
Hello!

JULIA  
Kevin's also here!

AMANDA  
(hiding her annoyance)  
Oh! Yes!

Kevin is looking around like he's made it behind a VIP rope.

KEVIN  
A blackboard wall! I've always wanted a blackboard wall. What do you write on it?

AMANDA  
Well, what's written on it... just shopping lists, things like that.

KEVIN  
Walnuts! What are you doing with  
walnuts?

JULIA  
I'd love to eat a walnut.

There's a scream and a cry from offscreen. Charlie at it  
again.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Liz cut her finger off so Kevin's  
helping me with the kids.

AMANDA  
Liz cut her finger off?

JULIA  
Yeah. Just the top half.

AMANDA  
(massive fixed smile)  
OK. Well, grab a glass of wine.  
We'll probably serve up in a bit.

KEVIN  
I've always wanted a look around  
your house, Amanda. There's nothing  
I like better than going into  
people's houses and having a good  
old poke around.

Amanda gives him a sickly smile.

Julia pours herself a glass of white wine. One eye on the  
Bolognese pot, cooking away.

23

**INT. AMANDA'S KITCHEN. DAY 1. 18.10**

23

Julia is talking with some of the mums & Kevin. They are all  
drinking wine. One of them tops up Julia's glass. She looks  
distinctly uncomfortable.

Johnny, Amanda's husband, walks to the fridge, grabs a beer  
and slaps Amanda's arse as he passes.

ANNE  
Those two seem to have gotten over  
it.

\*

JULIA  
Gotten over what?

SUNITA  
(confidentially)  
Johnny gave Liz a lift home a few  
nights ago.

\*

JULIA  
I don't understand, what? He gave  
her a lift.. And what..?

ANNE  
You don't know? Liz slept with  
Melissa's husband.

\*

Julia looks over at Melissa, who lowers her eyes like Lady  
Di.

JULIA  
Fu-huck? Really?

KEVIN  
I did not know that.

JULIA  
Are you sure? She doesn't seem the  
type who'd be arsed.

No one agrees with this.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Where are the kids? They've gone  
very quiet.

She sees them nearby all gathered in eerie silence around  
Manus, who is playing with an iPad.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Oh.

CUT TO:

24 **INT. AMANDA'S KITCHEN. DAY 1. 18.30**

24

On the other side of the room, Kevin is boring a group of  
women about 'The xxx (was Pistachio) Incident'.

\*

\*

KEVIN  
... I tell you, if it was men doing  
the feeding, they'd be men all over  
this cafe with their tits out /  
bobs out.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

They stare at him with kind but blank smiles.

\*

Julia is hovering by the cooker, beside Amanda, looking over  
her shoulder

JULIA  
Is there anything I can do to help?

AMANDA  
No, all under control.

JULIA  
Ok cool.  
(beat - more to herself  
than anyone else)  
That's gotta be ready soon, hasn't  
it?

Just then a dishevelled looking, slightly drugged Liz walks in. She has her hand wrapped in a huge bandage and sling.

LIZ  
Hello. I'm just here to pick up my  
kids. Hello, hello.

AMANDA  
(forced politeness)  
No, stay, it's turned into a bit of  
a free for all. Julia told us about  
your finger. How is it?

Liz matter-of-factly holds it up. It's the middle finger so it looks very like she's flipping Amanda off.

LIZ  
Still works though.

AMANDA  
Help yourself to one drink.

Amanda walks off, she rolls her eyes to a few of the other mums. Liz walks over to Julia and holds up her finger, proudly.

LIZ  
They put it back on! Thanks for  
looking after the kids.

JULIA  
No problem.

Kevin comes over with a glass of wine for her.

KEVIN  
One for the patient?

LIZ  
I'm on painkillers, so I'd better  
not.

She notices some hostile glances from some of the Alphas. She shrugs.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Oh fuck it.

Liz takes the glass. She knocks it back then grabs a bottle and fills the glass.

25 **INT. AMANDA'S KITCHEN. DAY 1. 18.45**

25

Amanda places a huge steaming pot of spag bol on the counter. The kids and Julia run up for a bowl.

AMANDA  
No, at the table please!

Amanda starts ladling out the food. Julia watching her like a hawk. All the kids have now got a bowl. Julia waits - will Amanda dole out the adult's servings? Or do we help ourselves? She wanders over to sniff around the pot. But it's EMPTY! Julia realises for the first time that the adults are NOT getting fed. WTF? She turns to Kevin and Liz.

JULIA  
Are we not, I mean, what's going on with the food? Is she not feeding us?

Julia looks at the table of twelve or so kids scoffing their dinner. She staggers slightly, a bit faint.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
The children are eating. The children are eating but not the adults. They're not going to feed the adults. They're not going to feed the adults, Liz!

26 **INT AMANDA'S KITCHEN - SOFA AREA. DAY 1 18.50**

26

On the sofa Julia sits with a slightly drugged Liz and Kevin.

LIZ  
(slightly too loud)  
None of these bitches like me.  
(slightly too loud)  
Bitches.

KEVIN  
Oooh, I'm sure that's not true.

LIZ  
They hate me!

KEVIN  
Yeah, but... you know why that  
is...

LIZ  
What?

KEVIN  
You know.

LIZ  
I don't know, Kevin. What?

KEVIN  
Well, you, you slept with Melissa's  
husband.

LIZ  
Is that what they're saying?

JULIA  
Yeah.

LIZ  
That's interesting.

Liz knocks back the last of the wine in her glass then sits  
there, fuming. Something's about to pop.

27

**INT. AMANDA'S KITCHEN - COUNTER AREA. DAY 1. 19.00**

27

(\*Shot of Kevin dozing on the sofa\*)

\*

Julia looks over at the table. She sees the kids have  
finished eating and that one of them has left some food on  
their plate. She stares at the plate longingly. Julia knows  
this is her only chance. A small group of mothers are sitting  
at the table chatting. Julia sidles up as though she's there  
to join the conversation. She slides the plate towards her.

ANNE  
-They think it was a small stroke.

SUNITA  
Oh, no!

JULIA  
Oh, no!

They glance at her.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Sorry, I heard 'small stroke'. I  
don't know who had one but that's  
terrible, whoever it was.

ANNE

My husband.

JULIA

Oh, that's... God. Yes. That must have been just a terrible... How did it happen?

ANNE

He was watching television and I noticed his arm had just dropped down the side of the sofa...

During this, Julia keeps stealing looks down at the LEFTOVER SPAGHETTI. God, it looks so good.

ANNE (CONT'D)

...and then when I tried to take his hand... it just... it was like...a little dead bird...

Anne can't go on. The women quickly comfort her.

While they're occupied, Julia seizes her chance and stuffs three forkfuls of food into her mouth.

They turn back to Julia, and appear to be waiting for her to express the necessary sympathy.

JULIA

If juft awful.  
(she puts her hands over her mouth)  
What you muft have gone fru.

\*

She squeezes her eyes shut while her jaw works furiously.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Oh, look! There's some more there.  
I'll just put it in the bin.

She walks over to the bin and pretends to scrape away the left overs. She's obviously eating more of it. Suddenly Amanda appears next to her.

AMANDA

Julia, what are you doing?

JULIA

Hmm? Oh! I didn't realise I was still eating it. I was just picking at leftovers.

\*

AMANDA

If you were hungry you could have just asked. You're making me feel like a bad hostess.

JULIA

Oh, sorry I -

AMANDA

Do you want me to cook you something? I can't bear to see you eat from my bin like a homeless person.

JULIA

I wasn't eating from the bin. I just thought there would be food, for you know, for the adults.

One of the mums does a quick intake of breath.

AMANDA

Well Julia, I've been dealing with something. I'm sorry I didn't have time to lay on a banquet.

JULIA

I didn't mean it like that -

AMANDA

Do you want me to cook you an omelette?

Liz comes in and sees what's happening.

JULIA

(mortified)

No, no - I'm fine, honestly--

AMANDA

No, I insist. I can't have my guests eating out of the rubbish. I'm making you an omelette.

(Looks around at everyone)

Does anyone else want some food? I'm going to make Julia an omelette.

No one else takes Amanda up on her offer.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Just for Julia then.

JULIA

Honestly, I'm okay -

AMANDA

No, it's fine.

Liz looks at Julia, who stands waiting for her omelette like a naughty school girl.

Liz steps forward.

LIZ

I'll have an omelette actually  
Amanda.

Amanda stares at her. Liz stands beside Julia.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Saves me defrosting some eggs when  
I get home. And while I have the  
chance, I should say... Melissa. I  
feel bad.

Melissa looks up, startled.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I feel bad, I should have cleared  
the air and apologised for taking  
your fat husband's virginity twenty  
years before you met him. That was  
wrong.

Melissa looks embarrassed.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Maybe I should find all the other  
men I slept with before they got  
married and apologise to THEIR  
wives. One of them was a waiter in  
Egypt but I could track him and his  
wife down on Facebook. Won't be  
easy, but might be worth doing so I  
can avoid having to deal with all  
this bullshit! And while I'm at it,  
Anne can you RSVP to Charlie's  
birthday party because he really  
wants Darius there and it'll break  
his fucking heart if his best  
friend doesn't make it. THANK YOU.

\*

Kevin comes in.

KEVIN

What's going on?

LIZ

Amanda's making us an omelette.

KEVIN  
Oooh! Yes, please.

\*

He sits down, oblivious.

28

**EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - DAY 1. 19.30**

28

Amanda is showing Liz, Kevin and Julia and their kids to the door.

Julia is the last to leave. She turns to a grim faced Amanda

JULIA  
You'll have to give me the recipe  
for that omelette.

AMANDA  
(death stare)  
Eggs.

JULIA  
Yes. Keep it simple. So, er, ...  
shall we firm up Thursday *now* or -

\*

AMANDA  
Thursday's not going to work for  
me.

JULIA  
Oh, I thought--

AMANDA  
Lovely to see you all.

She slams the door pretty much in Julia's face.

JULIA  
Did she just shut the door in my  
face?

Julia walks down the steps to Liz and Kevin..

JULIA (CONT'D)  
That's a whole network of helpful  
mums I have no access to anymore.

LIZ  
Oh, well. You can't make an  
omelette without telling a few  
skinny bitches to go fuck  
themselves.

KEVIN  
I can have a word with them if you  
like? That might help?

They walk off down the street.

JULIA  
Screw that lot. Right? We don't  
need them. We have our own gang  
right here. What's everyone doing  
on Thursday?

\*  
\*

LIZ  
I'll take them on Thursday. You  
can get me back another day, like  
Friday.

JULIE  
Definitely. I'll get you back  
another day, some Friday.

LIZ  
Friday.

JULIA  
Yeah Friday or a day like that.

They walk into the distance, surrounded by the kids.

After a moment, the final kid, Charlie, walks into shot,  
still looking at the iPad he's just boosted from Amanda's  
house.

THE END