

FADE IN:

EXT. CONCORDE THEATRE - NIGHT

A POSTER on the wall advertises Les Misérables - A Concorde Theatre Players production.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Music cue: Dramatic Theatrical Music

SAM, 28, scruffy, neat drink in hand sits on a chair, watching the show with JASMINE, 25 years old in stage dress. She peers around the curtain.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

The audience is full. KATE, 30, well dressed cleans glasses behind the bar, watching the show. On stage, REGGIE, 25, goofy and imposingly tall is wearing a blue police costume several sizes too small with fake facial hair.

He locks eyes with WAIN, 30, handsome, theatrical and rich voiced is in stage dress.

REGGIE
Monsieur La Mayor. I have disgraced
the uniform that I wear.

Music cue end.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Sam whispers to Jasmine, sat next to him.

SAM
You can say that again. I give it 5
minutes until he pops out of it.

Jasmine giggles, pointing into the audience.

JASMINE
Sam, do you know who that is?

Sam peers at DAME HELENA on the front row of the audience. 70's, well dressed, distinguished, scrutinising the show.

SAM
What am I? The... curator of old
ladies?

JASMINE

That's Dame June Helena. You know,
star of screen and stage? She's
been here two nights in a row.

SAM

That is profoundly sad.

A WORK PHONE loudly vibrates by Sam's feet, distracting him.

JASMINE

No, don't you see? She's on the
board of the Royal Shakespeare
Company. She must be headhunting or
something.

Reggie loudly interjects, imposingly behind Sam and Jasmine.

REGGIE

OO did you say headhunting? This is
so exciting! My talents are finally
being recognised!

Wain, on stage gives Reggie side eye at the loud
interruption.

SAM

Not for you, you blockhead! And put
on some trousers that fit you, for
Christ's sake.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

Wain gives a heartfelt monologue, the audience transfixed.

WAIN

Who am I? Can I condemn this man to
slavery? Pretend I do not feel his
agony? This innocent who bears my
face, who goes to judgment in his
place? Who am I...

Dame Helena nods in approval from the audience.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Reggie not so quietly whispers in Sam's ear.

REGGIE

Is Kate still giving you the silent
treatment?

SAM

I don't know what the craic is Reg.
Tell you the truth, I'm a bit
afraid to find out.

REGGIE

Just say hello, that you value her
friendship or something. The worst
that could happen is she gets cross
and you never see her again.

SAM

Comforting, Reggie.

The work phone BUZZES again. Sam picks it up.

JASMINE

Are you going to answer that?

SAM

It's not mine, it's Wain's work
phone. It's been buzzing all night.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

Reggie takes to the stage, duetting with Wain.

WAIN

And this I swear to you tonight.

REGGIE

There is no place for you to hide.

Reggie's TROUSERS disintegrate, revealing BUZZ LIGHTYEAR
underwear and hairy legs. The audience gasp.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BAR - DAY

Reggie, Wain, Mitch and Jasmine are sat around a table,
reading SCRIPTS with cups of tea. Sam ambles in, swiping a
drink from behind the bar, humming a jaunty tune.

WAIN

...And she told me I could expect a
call any day! Quite the fillip I'd
say.

MITCH

Congrats!

SAM

Well done buddy!
(Fist bumps Wain.)
No dress rehearsal today?

WAIN
Surprisingly, no.

REGGIE
Don't. I felt like Jesus at
Cavalry.

SAM
There was nothing holy about last
night. On another note, I didn't
realise you were such a Toy Story
fan.

REGGIE
Oi! I won't be shamed for comfort.
I just wish I could sing as well as
Russel Crowe.

WAIN
Trust me, you do.

JASMINE
Anyway, well done Wain! To you!

All toast Wain.

WAIN
(Sips tea.)
Thank you, but nothing is certain
yet. We need to be on top form
tonight. Top form!

Wain's PHONE rings on the table. Reggie jumps up and down
with excitement.

REGGIE
Oo it could be them!

Wain exhales deeply, answering the phone.

WAIN
Oh, Sandra. Just when I thought
today couldn't get any better...

INT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

SANDRA, 50, snooty, condescending and professional looking.
She walks and talks on her mobile phone, past ADMINs
frantically moving paperwork.

SANDRA
Bruce, it's bad. We lost the
Pontefract branch at appeal.

WAIN (ON PHONE)

What?

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BAR - DAY

Wain paces in front the bar, phone to ear.

WAIN

How does that even happen? The appeals process is specifically engineered for applicants to win every time!

INT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Sandra reaches her desk, sifting through FILES.

SANDRA

Well, the impossible happened, so we're going to have to pull an all-nighter to fix this.

WAIN (ON PHONE)

Well, I don't work Thursdays...

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BAR - DAY

Wain continues to pace.

WAIN

...And today of all days is important, I'm waiting on a life-changing call!

INT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Sandra loads up a SHREDDER with paperwork, which jams.

SANDRA

Do you think I care about your LARPing as much as you do?

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BAR - DAY

WAIN

Acting. I'm an actor.

SANDRA (ON PHONE)

Whatever, Bruce.

INT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

SANDRA

Unlike some, I don't have the luxury of flexible hours. I'm here every day! So if YOUR application gets refused and we miss the deadline to submit an amended application because you're not here to split the workload, that's on your head, not mine. I'm doing MY part.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE - DAY

Wain looks stressed.

SANDRA (ON PHONE.)

So get yourself in this office and help me part the bloody red sea, or you'll have plenty more time to play Dungeons & Dragons, or whatever it is you do while the rest of us are doing your work!

WAIN

I'm an actor!

Wain angrily hangs up. All eyes are on him.

REGGIE

It's okay, Wain. We can practice without you.

Wain sighs.

WAIN

Sorry fellows, it's my job.

JASMINE

We understand. See you tonight.

WAIN

Yep. If I'm not arrested for choking Sandra to death with her own mouse.

Wain runs to the exit.

SAM

Is it me, or does he look like he actually might?

REGGIE

It's okay. Most mice are wireless these days.

WAIN (O.S.)

(Shouting faintly.)

I'll find a way!

Sam taps Reggie on the shoulder, murmuring to him.

SAM

Reggie, can I have the pleasure of your company in private?

REGGIE

What, like a movie?

SAM

No, you pillock.

Sam drags Reggie out of his chair, speaking to him in hushed tones out of earshot of the others.

SAM (CONT'D)

Is Kate in today?

REGGIE

She's about I think.

SAM

I can't talk to her in case she's still mad with me. I need you to follow her around until you find out what the deal is there.

REGGIE

What, like stalking?

SAM

No! More like... spying. Like Solid Snake. You're a Tactical Espionage Expert.

REGGIE

I thought you were turning a new leaf and not stalking your crushes.

SAM

There's nothing wrong with getting a little background information so I can make an informed decision on how to approach Kate.

REGGIE

I guess...

SAM

But I need you to be discreet so you don't freak her out. Can you do that?

REGGIE

You can rely on me, Sam.

Reggie spots a delectable plate of CHOCOLATE ECLAIRS on the bar.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

(Very loudly.)

OO Chocolate eclairs!

Sam rolls his eyes and goes behind the bar. Reggie SCOOPS UP the whole plate and looks both ways, before tiptoeing towards the theatre office, opening the door...

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE OFFICE - DAY

Reggie stops short of entering, door open ajar, when he sees Kate pacing around the office on the phone, mid-argument. He peers through the gap in the door.

KATE

..And you know what? You called me to give me the n'th degree about Phil and you haven't even had the courtesy to ask me how I am.

JUDITH (ON PHONE.)

(Faintly.)

Well how are you?

KATE

You won't like the answer.

Reggie puts his ear to the door, holding the plate steady. Judith's chatter is inaudible.

KATE (CONT'D)

I'm not okay. I've got no purpose, I'm stuck here when there's loads more I can contribute to the world. I'm depressed, frankly mom.

JUDITH (ON PHONE.)

Rubbish! What do you have to be depressed about?

KATE

Do I need to justify a reason to you?

JUDITH (ON PHONE.)

Well just think of all of the people who have it worse than you! People who don't have a home. Children starving in Africa.

KATE

Why would that make me feel better? That makes me feel worse!

JUDITH (ON PHONE.)

I can't deal with this right now. I'm babysitting...

KATE

That's right, change the subject when your daughter chooses a subject that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Reggie nosily gets closer to listen. He nearly drops his plate, knocking the door for a faint SQUEAK.

KATE (CONT'D)

...I've got to go now. Bye.

Kate hangs up, storming to the door. She opens it, Reggie is standing there, to attention, offering Kate the PLATE.

REGGIE

(Nervously.)

Oh... h...hi Kate. I came to bring you a nice Chocolate Eclair.

Kate goes to take one, Reggie recoils.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

(Panicked.)

Only one!

Kate is confused, taking one, eating it as she talks.

KATE

Fuck it. Today's shit, may as well stock up on chocolate. I guess you heard me in there.

REGGIE

No. No, no, no... why, were you on the phone or something?

KATE

My mom. Always calls when she wants something off me.

REGGIE

Really?

KATE

Get this. She even forgot my birthday last year! Because when it's gin o clock, nothing else matters!

REGGIE

That's a bummer.

KATE

Anyway, I'd better get home. Phil says he has some kind of surprise for me.

REGGIE

See ya buddy.

Kate leaves the office, shaking her head. Reggie takes a sigh of relief, looks around. Confident nobody can see him, he quickly SCOFFS the Chocolate Eclairs.

EXT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

A rustic old office block, grey skies.

INT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Wain is behind a desk, shoving aside a PHANTOM OF THE OPERA FIGURINE by his keyboard to make room for a HEFTY STACK OF FILES. He sifts through carefully. TIM, 30's, white collar worker peeks his head over the office partition.

TIM

Bruce! I didn't know you were in today.

WAIN

Not by design, my boy.

TIM

Whatever. Hey, could you do me a favour?

WAIN

Only a rhetorical one.

TIM

I've got to knock off early, would you mind taking care of these...

Tim chucks more PAPERWORK onto Wain's file. Wain goes to discard it, but is interrupted.

TIM (CONT'D)

It's just I've got a date with this piece from the mail room, got to get home to... refresh if you know what I mean.

WAIN

I exist to ensure you get laid, Tim.

Tim runs off.

TIM

Thanks man!

Wain groans. He starts writing a report, FOLDERS land next to his outstretched hands, narrowly missing. Gareth, a mid 30's worker is standing above Wain.

WAIN

You're blocking my light.

GARETH

Bruce, can you put these away for me? It's my lunchbreak.

WAIN

(Sighing.)

Sure, why not? Where do they go?

Gareth has already run off. Martha, 50's, cleaner approaches, wearing yellow gloves, cloth in hand.

WAIN (CONT'D)

Hello Martha, how do you intend to torture me today?

MARTHA

(Groaning.)

The toilet's blocked again.

Wain rushes to his feet, pulling a PLUNGER from underneath his desk.

WAIN

Okay, I'll sort it.

Wain runs off. Martha quietly tries to grab his attention, but it's too late.

MARTHA

I was asking if you wanted a cup of tea, but okay.

EXT. J.K. BOWLING - DAY

Reggie runs into the entrance, nearly KNOCKING over CHILDREN as he goes.

INT. J.K. BOWLING BAR - DAY

Reggie finds Sam at the bar, out of breath sitting before him. Sam has a drink, sunglasses and a hat.

SAM

Were you followed?

REGGIE

(Suddenly worried.)

I hope not!

SAM

Kidding! I just won these!

Sam tosses aside the glasses and hat.

SAM (CONT'D)

So, do my little birds have intel for me?

REGGIE

Kate's sad because her mom couldn't remember her birthday. They had an argument on the phone. I don't think they're close.

SAM

Hmmm...

Sam checks FACEBOOK on his PHONE.

SAM (CONT'D)

It's her birthday tomorrow. I know! Let's throw her a birthday party, invite her mom and tell Kate it was her mom's idea!

REGGIE

Brilliant!

SAM

Then after, I can say it was actually my idea. Then she'll like me again!

REGGIE

Um... And another thing, and I'm not sure I should tell you this.

SAM

That just means it's extra juicy! Tell me.

REGGIE

I think Kate's having relationship problems with Phil. I don't think Mama Kate approves.

SAM

Right, why'd I want to know that?

REGGIE

Hypothetically, if you could break them up and ask Kate out, would you?

SAM

(Sarcastically.)
Obviously.

REGGIE

That's low, Sam.

Sam goes to retort, but checks his WATCH.

SAM

Don't we have a show in half an hour?

REGGIE

Oh fuck!

Sam and Reggie get up and run, Reggie TOSSES ASIDE a WAITRESS.

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

Can I borrow your trousers Sam?

EXT. CONCORDE THEATRE - NIGHT

Music cue: Musical singing.

POSTER on the wall advertises Les Misérables - A Concorde Theatre Players production.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

The faint sounds of Wain singing off screen are heard. Sam sits alone, in very short GOLD SHORTS, legs spread. In the corner, an open cardboard box entitled 'Rocky Horror Costumes'. He shuts his eyes, reclining. They open. He is in a DREAM SEQUENCE.

LUCY (O.S.)

Well if it isn't my favourite
nearly - ex husband?

Sam turns to his left. Lucy, 30, moody rock chick sits beside him.

SAM

Well if it isn't the ghost of
Christmas past!

LUCY

...Do you think that's from Les
Mis?

(Looks at Sam's shorts.)

Nice shorts.

SAM

They're really not. Tell me what
you have to say then leave me
alone.

LUCY

Why do you always think you can lie
your way into people's hearts?

SAM

Well who's ever made a successful
life out of always being honest?

LUCY

(Shrugs.)

Abraham Lincoln?

SAM

I work in a theatre. Emulating
Abraham Lincoln isn't in my best
interests.

LUCY

Usually, you always think you're
going to screw everything up. And
now, you think you can fix all of
Kate's problems by playing Jerry
Springer with her mom!

SAM

She'll thank me for it, realise I'm not so bad after all. Maybe I still have a shot.

LUCY

You put in all the effort in the world with me. And look how that ended up.

Lucy slowly begins to fade into non-existence.

LUCY (CONT'D)

See you later, masturbator.

Lucy is gone. A HAND grabs Sam's shoulder. DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS. He looks up, it's REGGIE, in his blue Javert costume, but wearing jeans.

SAM

Oh, Reggie. I was taking a power nap. I dreamt Lucy disappeared.

REGGIE

But... Lucy did disappear.

SAM

Hardy har har. What's up?

(Music cue ends)

Reggie's eyes dart to the stage. Wain exits, APPLAUSE audible. Sam sees Wain.

SAM (CONT'D)

Jeesus! You look awful!

Wain has bags under his eyes, swaying, tired.

WAIN

I'm supposed to look awful! I'm Jean Valjean, the downtrodden...
(Sleepily.)
...the proletariat.

Wain FAINTS. Sam helps him into the chair.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE OFFICE - NIGHT

Wain comes back into consciousness. Sam, Reggie, Kate, Jasmine and Mitch surround him, in assorted emergency chairs.

WAIN

How long was I out?

KATE

Stay down. You've been out for a while.

WAIN

(Tearful.)

I don't know where Gareth's files go.

Sam gives Reggie and Kate a knowing look before kneeling down to Wain.

SAM

Oh, I see what's going on. You're being overworked, Wain.

WAIN

I am!

SAM

You need some sugar or something to eat.

MITCH

I brought some Chocolate Eclairs in for everyone to celebrate, but I can't find them anywhere.

Reggie looks nervous, turning his face away from Mitch. Wain sits up, Kate passes him a warm FLASK which he sips from.

WAIN

They keep giving me pointless task after pointless task. I can't do it! Every time I make any kind of stride at work, it comes at the expense of here. And now I have this impossible deadline tomorrow. Something's got to give.

SAM

No it doesn't. Tonight was the last night of Les Mis. You can focus on your job all day tomorrow. Obviously get some rest tonight, but if we can help, we will.

KATE

If you're being given all these extra tasks to do, then just don't accept any more. Just focus on the one big important thing and say no to everyone else.

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

That's your problem, you can't say no to anyone.

WAIN

You're right.

(Wain sits up.)

Fellows, can I have a word with Sam in private?

Kate, Reggie, Mitch and Jasmine leave the office, shutting the door behind them.

SAM

Wain, now I have you alone, we're organising a surprise birthday party for Kate tomorrow at 12, here in the Concorde. I can understand if you can't be there...

WAIN

No, I can spare an hour for a friend. I've got to say, I'm liking the new Sam.

SAM

I didn't realise there was a new me.

WAIN

Sam, I've got an important job for you.

Wain gives Sam his WORK PHONE.

WAIN (CONT'D)

People keep bothering me on this thing, and like you say I can't seem to say no to them. So if anybody calls me up trying to get me to do anything, can you just make sure nobody gives me anything else to do? I mean, I hit my limit 5 tasks ago.

SAM

You can count on me.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE BAR - DAY

Sam enters from the office. Reggie, Mitch and Jasmine are chatting by the bar when they see him.

SAM

Hey, where's Kate gone?

REGGIE

She just went off, something about packing...

SAM

Perfect! Let's spring into action.

Music cue: Montage music.

Sam, Reggie, Mitch and Jasmine huddle behind the bar.

SAM (CONT'D)

Mitch, Jasmine. There's a party supply place on High Cross Street. Get party poppers, balloons, refreshments, the works.

REGGIE

And party rings!

SAM

You heard the man.

Mitch and Jasmine nod in agreement.

SAM (CONT'D)

And what is a birthday without a birthday cake? Reg. Up for some baking?

REGGIE

Yes, but I'm going to need some assistance.

INT. REGGIE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Sam looks stressed, STIRRING a bowl, out of breath while Reggie weighs ingredients on the counter, wearing a CHEF'S HAT.

SAM

Oh my god, why do people enjoy baking? Why don't they just... buy cakes instead?

REGGIE

Cooking is a science, it requires patience.

SAM

Can I at least have some cooking wine?

REGGIE

Why? We're making a cake!

SAM

Not for the cake, for me!

Time has passed. Sam SLAMS the oven shut, him and Reggie exhausted. WAIN'S PHONE rings, Sam answers.

SAM (CONT'D)

Wain's phone. Yes, I mean Bruce.

(Pause.)

You know what? Wain's a little busy right now, Gareth. So you know where you can shove your sales records!

Phone hangs up.

INT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Wain is at his desk, well rested, filing a neat pile of paperwork away. Sandra invites herself into Wain's cubicle.

SANDRA

Bruce, how are you?

WAIN

I've been better, truth be told.

SANDRA

Well at least you haven't been dealing with cramps the last three days.

WAIN

It's not the ailment Olympics, Sandra.

SANDRA

How close are we?

WAIN

If we purchase a storage container from the nearby lot, we have no need for an extension, therefore the Wakefield pedants have nothing to whinge about this time.

SANDRA

I hope we're ready for the 12 meeting tomorrow.

WAIN

Of course. See you then.

Sandra turns to leave. Martha collects an empty cup near Wain's desk.

WAIN (CONT'D)

(Under breath.)

You daft old bint.

Martha hears this, looks dejected.

INT. REGGIE'S KITCHEN - DUSK

Reggie looks through a PHONEBOOK, calling a number on a NOVELTY PHONE. Sam is opening the oven in the background.

REGGIE

(Putting on deep voice.)

Hello, is this Kate's mom. Hi,
I'm... Phil, Kate's boyfriend.

Inaudible dialogue from the phone.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

(Deep voice.)

I have a cold. You're invited to
the party, at the Concorde. That's
right, where Kate works. Tomorrow
at 12.

More inaudible chatter.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

(Voice slips.)

Thank you babes! Love ya!

Sam cringes. He opens the oven. A PLUME OF SMOKE ESCAPES. Reggie and Sam look down at the sorry excuse of a BURNT CAKE.

SAM

Fuck.

REGGIE

Never fret. There isn't a problem
that icing can't cover up.

Time has passed. Reggie sits on his STOOL, eating a tube of icing. Sam stops him.

SAM

Reggie! What about the cake?

REGGIE
Oh, um. Of course.

More time passed. Sam and Reggie admire an IMMACULATE CAKE.
Sam swigs from a bottle of COOKING WINE.

EXT. CONCORDE THEATRE - MORNING

Wheels SQUEAL as Reggie parks up, Sam and Reggie emerge from the car, Reggie carrying the cake. Sam looks up. Balloons are tethered to the theatre walls. Sam and Reggie give each other the nod.

MUSIC CUE ENDS.

PHONE BUZZING. Sam pulls out WAIN'S WORK PHONE, answering.

SAM
You're through to the office of
Bruce Wain, how may I direct your
call?

(Pause.)

I'm sorry, but Wain can't take on
any more tasks. He's busy enough
with the Pontefract case as he is.
So I'm afraid you're going to have
to take your 'generous offer', and
shove it up your jacksy!

Sam hangs up.

INT. POSH LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dame Helena is sat by her phone, glass of red wine in one
hand, phone in the other. DIAL TONE is heard.

DAME HELENA
Such a pity.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE - DAY

Faint party music from a CD player comes on through the
SPEAKER SYSTEM. Wain (Dressed in a suit for work), Mitch and
Jasmine are on stage, with a table full of snacks and drinks,
party balloons and a BANNER across the backdrop: HAPPY
BIRTHDAY.

Sam excitedly clambers onto the stage, helping Reggie with
the cake.

SAM
Ceeelebrate good times, come on!

REGGIE

You look much better, Wain.

Wain puts a BRIEFCASE down on the table, opening it, revealing REPORTS.

WAIN

Behold! The best days work I ever got done! Mr Philis says if this goes through, I could be in his seat in three years time.

SAM

Glad to have helped keep the vultures off your back.

REGGIE

Where is the birthday girl?

A loud CREAK. The distant entrance opens, a shadow of a figure.

SAM

Quick, it's Kate!

Mitch pulls the CURTAINS closed. Jasmine turns off the music.

SAM (CONT'D)

Reg, the cake! Hide the cake!

Reggie puts the CAKE in the SUITCASE, closing it. FOOTSTEPS approach.

JASMINE

Now!

The curtains open. Everyone jumps out. Shouting 'Happy Birthday!'. It's JUDITH. 50, sour faced, unhappy to be there.

JUDITH

It's not my birthday.

Sam clambers off the stage to greet her.

SAM

Hey, you must be Kate's mom. Thanks for coming.

JUDITH

I'm here to see my daughter, who are all you people?

The loud sound of WAIN'S PHONE ringing interrupts the conversation. Sam offers it to Wain, who answers.

WAIN

Hello?

INT. PHONEHOUSE OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The entire office is sat around a TABLE. Sandra is on the phone, speaking loudly, feigning discreetness.

SANDRA

Bruce, where the hell are you? We started 5 minutes ago. I told you repeatedly, 12.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE - DAY

Wain clenches his fist, frustrated.

WAIN

Shit. Stall them, I'll be right there.

SANDRA (ON PHONE.)

Okay. But I'm fed up of doing your work for...

Wain hangs up, hopping onto the stage, taking his SUITCASE.

WAIN

I'm so sorry. I have to go.

Reggie chases after.

REGGIE

Aw no!

WAIN

I'll try to catch the tail end. I just have to deal with this.

Wain exits through the backstage. Kate enters through the front, eyeing the stage, confused.

KATE

What's going on here?

Kate spots Judith, looking disgusted.

KATE (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

JUDITH

That's a fine way to greet your mother.

SAM

Kate! Look what we did...

KATE

I'm in a rush, Sam. I only came here because of your text, which I quote, said 'Get here at 12, or your ass is fired.'

REGGIE

Sam! Why would you say something like that?

SAM

It's a surprise party! You try thinking of an excuse!

(Turns to Kate.)

You're not fired. Obviously.

KATE

And what, you invited my Mom here? Without asking me first? What made you think I'd want any of this?

REGGIE

But Kate! Can't we just have a fun party? Everyone's here. Well, except for...

INT. CARHOUSE OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Tim is finishing a presentation on a projector entitled 'THE CROISSANT OF EFFICENCY'. Sandra looks irritated.

TIM

And that, my colleagues, is how we can improve our 'croissant of efficiency.'

The room claps. Tim sits down, Sandra stands up. Room goes quiet.

SANDRA

I'm sorry to say that it would seem our man has let me down, so unfortunately...

The conference room door opens with a SLAM. Wain enters, dishevelled, having run, placing the SUITCASE on the table.

WAIN

Apologies, everyone. I am pleased to report that I worked day and night for two days, but an alternative proposal for the Pontefract branch will be submitted by close of business... today!

The room claps, even Sandra, grudgingly.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE - DAY

The confrontation between Sam, Kate and Judith continues, Reggie, Mitch and Jasmine to the side-lines.

SAM

You have to admit, we pulled out all the stops.

KATE

Sam. You should have asked! I already have plans! I'm supposed to be on the way to the airport with Phil.

JUDITH

Phil?

KATE

He's waiting for me, I'd really better...

JUDITH

Why don't I get a say on this. You're supposed to be saving for a house, Kate. You can't go off wasting money on that... waste of time.

KATE

At least he cares about me. He wants me around all the time, not just when he needs favours. You didn't even say happy birthday!

JUDITH

That was today?

Sam groans with frustration, grabbing Kate and Judith's attention.

SAM

I don't mean to involve myself, but what did you think was going on here with the party hats and banner?

JUDITH

Nobody mentioned anything about a birthday, just a party.

Sam gives Reggie side eye.

KATE

Hold on, you don't mean to involve yourself? All you do is involve yourself! Why did you even do this without asking me first?

SAM

Well that defeats the purpose of a SURPRISE, doesn't it Kate?

KATE

Well yes, but...

SAM

I knew you were having family issues, so I invited your mom so you could fix things up.

KATE

Hold on, I didn't tell you anything, how did you...

Reggie steps forward, ashamed.

REGGIE

I'm sorry, I can't live with the shame any longer.

(Louder.)

He made me spy on you!

Reggie points at Sam. All gasp.

SAM

Judas!

Sam throws his PARTY HAT at Reggie.

REGGIE

The guilt was eating me up inside!

SAM

What guilt? We organised a party.

REGGIE

And he said he'd break you and Phil
up if he could!

SAM

Reggie, I was joking.

JUDITH

You should be ashamed of yourself.

SAM

You have to believe me, Kate. You
know I wouldn't.

KATE

I don't know what you're capable
of, Sam.

Reggie steps forward, pulling Kate and Judith into a huddle.

REGGIE

Guys, I have just the thing that'll
make everything all right.

Reggie leads them both onto the stage to the table.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Feast your eyes on the best ever...

Reggie looks at the table. It's empty.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Where's the birthday cake?

INT. CARHOUSE OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Wain has the floor, addressing the sat conference.

WAIN

The application is ready with
dimensions, schematics and all
relevant paperwork. I'm afraid to
tell you that I had no time to
create a flashy power point, or an
accompanying document, but I firmly
believe in substance over style.
Having said that, feast your eyes
on this.

Wain opens the BRIEFCASE on the table. Murmuring ensues. A
ruined BIRTHDAY CAKE has wrecked the paper work beyond
recognition. Mr Philis, 60, is chairing the meeting.

MR PHILIS

Bruce, what is the meaning of this?

GARETH

What's that? A cake?

Wain inspects the suitcase, before brushing it aside.

WAIN

Yes, Gareth. Indeed. That is in fact a birthday cake. A big, juicy, succulent birthday cake which has disintegrated, staining and ruining my planning application which I spent 2 SOLID NIGHTS WORKING ON.

Wain pulls out the ICING IMBUED APPLICATION, tossing it in front of Mr Philis.

WAIN (CONT'D)

Mr Philis. If you were the council, would you accept this monstrosity as a valid planning document?

Mr Philis nervously shakes his head.

WAIN (CONT'D)

No? Indeed. What we have here is an example of the absurd, unwieldy CLUSTERFUCK THE BEST YEARS OF MY LIFE HAVE BECOME!

The room is silent.

SANDRA

Wain. I think you need to calm down, go outside, take a deep breath then come back in when you've calmed down.

Wain nods, exhaling. Pauses.

WAIN

Sandra.

(Pause.)

Have some cake.

Wain grabs a FISTFUL OF CAKE, throwing it in Sandra's face. The room is silent. Then a LONE ADMIN begins clapping. Everyone else looks at him before he stops in shame.

WAIN (CONT'D)

I bid you all good day! Tata, and farewell.

Wain exits the office.

INT. WAIN'S CAR - DAY

Wain gets in his car, screaming silently. He calms down, taking a deep breath.

WAIN

It's okay, calm down, calm down...
You have your friends, your health,
your acting career... yes. I know.

Wain takes a CARD out of his pocket with a number on. He dials the number. The call is answered.

WAIN (CONT'D)

Hello. Am I speaking to Dame June
Helena.

(Pause.)

Oh wonderful! It's a pleasure to
speak to you, an honour in fact...

(Pause.)

My name is Wain, from the Concorde.
I know that you were supposed to
call me...

(Pause.)

Pardon?

INT. POSH LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dame Helena is angry, speaking into the phone.

DAME HELENA

Never in my many years has one been
so unwarrantedly rude to me as your
secretary, so I am afraid that the
original offer is off of the table.
You should be ashamed of yourself.

INT. WAIN'S CAR

Wain puts down the phone, DIAL TONE ringing. Wain's anger grows.

WAIN

Sam.

INT. CONCORDE THEATRE STAGE - DAY

Kate, Sam and Judith are midway through argument, only Reggie remains on the sidelines.

KATE

Why do both of you feel the need to plan my life out for me? Can't you trust me to live my life the way I want to?

JUDITH

Well perhaps if you had a proper job then...

SAM

She's happy here, Judith!

KATE

I'm not happy here!

SAM

She's not happy here!
(Pause.)

What?

KATE

It shouldn't be news to you after the shit you subject me to!

SAM

I'd have listened.

KATE

Why bother? Every time I trust you, open up to you I regret it. Both of you!

JUDITH

And why is this rummy so involved all of a sudden?

SAM

Rummy?

JUDITH

Alcoholic.

Footsteps are heard.

SAM

I know what it means...

Wain appears, irate, PROP SWORD drawn on Sam, raising hands in surrender.

WAIN

SAM!

SAM

Oh, Wain... how did your...

WAIN

Silence! Not another word from you.

Wain edges closer, threatening demeanour.

WAIN (CONT'D)

You... ruined... my one shot at success. My one shot! Years of learning, practice, back-breaking effort! All tossed aside because of a stupid, selfish drunkard who owns a theatre, but knows nothing about the performing arts.

SAM

That's unfair. I know plenty.

WAIN

Oh yeah? Then who created the hit stage play Hamilton?

SAM

Er... Lewis... Hamilton?

WAIN

What's your angle, Sam? Afraid to lose your star player to a real theatre company? Afraid that this poxy little theatre will fall apart without me? I know it was you who told the Dame to bugger off.

SAM

That was the Dame? I forgot all about that.

WAIN

Of course it's not enough for you to be miserable, you have to ruin everyone else's lives to drag them down to your level. No wonder Lucy left you.

Reggie stands in front of Sam, who hangs his head.

REGGIE

Leave him alone, he tried his hardest.

WAIN

Ohhh yes. Well done with the cake there!

(Claps hands.)

What a hat trick! Getting me fired with your little switcheroo. Well maybe if you put in some thought to your actions you'd be a half decent actor!

Wain points at Sam.

WAIN (CONT'D)

You let this moron tell you what to do. All he does is use you for his seedy plans. Read a book! Take a class! Expand your horizons! Be your own man, Reggie. You make me sick.

Wain squares up to Kate.

WAIN (CONT'D)

And Kate. You...

Wain points at Kate, but can't think of anything to say. Wain opens the exit.

WAIN (CONT'D)

Fuck. Each. And. Every. One of you.

The loud door CREAKS, blown by wind. FOOTSTEPS tell us Wain is gone. The silence is incredible. Judith breaks the tension, beginning to sob.

JUDITH

I'm so sorry, Katie. The truth is I don't understand why you're so sad and it scares me that there's nothing I can do to help. All I did was make things worse. If you want me to leave you alone...

Kate hugs Judith, herself now in tears.

KATE

Please... just... try. Try to understand. If you can't, just listen.

The hug ends. Sam and Reggie look satisfied.

JUDITH

Okay. I will.

SAM
 (To Reggie)
 Mission accomplished.

Kate looks Sam in the eye.

KATE
 Sam. I can't believe you'd try to
 break me and Phil up.

SAM
 Trust me, I wouldn't.

KATE
 I've got to go. My plane leaves
 in...

Kate checks her watch, breaking into a RUN.

KATE (CONT'D)
 Oh shit!

EXT. AIRLINER IN FLIGHT - DAY

An airliner soars high above.

EXT. CONCORDE THEATRE - DAY

Revealed to be from the point of view of Sam, stood alone at the theatre entrance. Reflective and regretful. Sam sees Lucy sat on the bannister of the steps.

LUCY
 Plane watching, are we?

SAM
 You rarely see an A300 these days.

LUCY
 She's gone, Sam. But that's good,
 one less person to hurt you one
 day.

Reggie enters the theatre.

SAM
 Oh... Hey, Reggie.

REGGIE
 Leave me alone, Sam.

Reggie goes in. Lucy leans on Sam's shoulder.

LUCY

That's two.

Wain walks up the steps, no tie, jacket tied around his waist.

SAM

Wain, I...

WAIN

Go fuck yourself Sam.

Wain goes in.

LUCY

That's three.

Sam sits at the steps.

LUCY (CONT'D)

It's not your fault. This was inevitable.

The sound of a CAR PARKING UP. Kate steps out of a taxi, standing in front of Sam.

KATE

Mind if I join you?

Sam gestures it's okay. Kate joins Sam. Lucy now gone.

SAM

I'm sorry you missed your fight.

KATE

It's okay. Amsterdam can wait, I guess.

SAM

Sucks for Phil too, obviously.

KATE

He told me something interesting at the airport. Said on your last poker night, you were out of your mind, had one too many refreshments and threw up in the pond.

SAM

That sounds about right.

KATE

Then you turned to Phil and told him that you're happy for me. That we were lucky to have each other.

SAM

I still think that. I just wanted you to have a nice birthday.

KATE

I know. Just... let Phil plan the surprises next time.

SAM

It's good that you think we'll still be friends this time next year.

Pause.

KATE

I don't think I've spoken to my mom so much in the last few hours than I have since I left home. I have you to thank for that.

SAM

You're welcome. That's good, right.

KATE

So-so. She's even chattier than you when she gets going. I couldn't get her off the phone.

SAM

So... we're good.

KATE

Yeah.

Pause.

SAM

...But?

KATE

I think you need to think of your friends more. I understand you have a lot going on...

(Points at head.)

In here. But there's a lot going on in there as well.

Kate gestures at the Concorde Theatre.

KATE (CONT'D)

You thought you could fix everything with Wain, with me. But it's not all about you. And the sooner you start listening to us, the sooner they'll start listening to you. And the sooner you can let go of whatever it is that distances you from everyone else.

Kate stands up to go in the theatre.

KATE (CONT'D)

You might feel like you are, but you're never alone.

THE END.