OVER BLACK: The sound of rain and the roar of a crowd.

FADE IN:

EXT. FARM FIELDS - SLAUGHTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Flickers of light escape through corrugated walling.

INT. SLAUGHTER-HOUSE - NIGHT

A mass of MEN huddle closely at its center. Glimpses of barbarity. Teeth tearing at flesh. A head rammed into the blood soaked ground.

INT. SLAUGHTER-HOUSE - SIDE-ROOM - NIGHT

The crowd’s roar reverberates through. Thirsty for blood.

A MAN kneels beside a wall, steadies his hand and carefully thumbs pressure on to the end of a syringe. The substance takes effect. His body goes limp and he falls back against the wall. His leg starts to thrash.

Two HEAVIES enter and forcefully lift the Man to his feet.

HEAVY #1
Get up ya crackhead!

The second Heavy yanks the syringe from the Man’s arm and casts it aside. Without compassion they drag him from the room.

INT. SLAUGHTER-HOUSE - NIGHT

We follow as the Man struggles to keep up, gets marched through the crowd then launched into an opening.

Opposite the Man stands his OPPONENT; equally intoxicated. Their eyes meet and without hesitation they charge each other.

The violence is savage. A thumb pressing deep into an eye. Hair torn clean from a scalp. The MAN grabs his Opponent’s head and repeatedly head-butts him in the face.
INT. SQUAT - DAY

The room is small, dingy, and other than a mattress and a yellowed sleeping bag, empty.

The Man from the previous night is motionless on the mattress. Congealed blood has glued his face to the mattress.

His eyes blink into life. He peels himself off and struggles to his feet. His body is covered with cuts and bruises.

His name is GAVIN DAVEY, though he’s known locally as MEPH. He’s in his late twenties, but his face has been weathered by a history of abuse: parental abuse, physical abuse, alcohol and drug abuse... all the abuses.

Meph dresses himself in overtly branded but poorly fitted clothes then makes his way to the windowsill, pauses, looks out and taps his head against the pane several times.

He makes his way downstairs and through the living room where another FIGURE lie asleep beside a couch, and then finally to the kitchen. The cabinets are mostly empty. Some stale bread finds use as breakfast and the remains of a can of cider washes it down.

He returns to the living room and softly kicks the Figure on the floor.

MEPH
  What ya on the floor for? I’m gonna get fags. Want some?

The Figure groans and turns in his sleeping bag.

Meph exits through a kitchen window at the rear of the squat.

EXT. CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUND - DAY

A poor excuse for a playground. Beer cans and fag butts litter the ground. Meph sits alone puffing frugally on a cigarette and looks into the distance.

The sound of a mobile phone rings out. He pulls the phone from his pocket, scans the screen and keys answer.

MEPH
  (into phone)
  Yeah?... Alright. Meet ya at the bus stop.
EXT. BLUE BUS-STOP - DAY

The blue bus-stop stands out against the oppressive colors of the council estate.

The Figure that had been laying in the squat earlier is sat waiting. He’s dressed in an oversized jacket and worn out trainers. His name is STEVEN KIRK, early thirties, tall and emaciated.

Meph approaches fag in hand and they greet with a nod. Meph sits down beside Steven and holds out a pack of cigarettes. Steven takes one out and lights it.

STEVEN
Ta.

Whilst the guys puff away and watch the passing traffic, an OLD LADY arrives and sits on Steven’s side of the bench.

OLD LADY
(to Steven)
Do you know if the number five has been by yet?

Steven looks at Meph then back at the Old Lady shrugs his shoulders and gobs on the ground.

STEVEN
Fuck knows.

Disgusted, the Old Lady shuffles further along the bench.

INT. DOUBLE-DECKER BUS - TOP FLOOR - DAY

Meph and Steven are sat at the rear. Meph looks out the window, Steven taps away on his mobile.

EXT. HIGHSTREET - DAY

The bus comes to a halt at a bus stop beside a newsstand and two YOUNG GIRLS board.

INT. DOUBLE-DECKER BUS - TOP FLOOR - DAY

Steven looks up from his mobile as the Young Girls sit, then nudges Meph.

STEVEN
I fuckin’ would, wouldn’t you?

Meph freezes on seeing one of the Young Girls.

Steven notices this and nudges Meph again.
STEVEN
Yeah, I can see you’re up for it!
Ya know what I always say, if
there’s grass on the pitch, play!
(laughs)
Or, or if they’re old enough to
know, they’re old enough to blow-

MEPH
Shut up ya fuckin’ twat!

STEVEN
Huh?

Meph stands.

MEPH
C’mon get up, we’re getting off!

STEVEN
Fuck off, there’s still another
couple of stops yet.

Meph stares at Steven coldly. Steven climbs to his feet and
as they pass the two Young Girl, Meph turns his face away
from them.

INT. SQUAT – NIGHT

A torchlight propped against a brick illuminates the room.
Steven is slumped across the mattress; his body half on and
half off. Meph finishes the last of a can of Special Brew
and turns to face Steven.

MEPH
Steve... Oi, wake up.

Meph skittles the can across the floor, crawls over to
Steven and shakes him gently.

MEPH
I wanna tell you something.

Steven is incapable of reacting.

Meph struggles to his feet, circles the room then crouches
next to Steven, puts his hand in Steven’s pocket and pulls
out a pack of cigarettes.

INT. SQUAT – BATHROOM – DAY

A mobile phone vibrates on a hardwood floor beside a
yellowing bathtub. Meph grabs it, clears his throat and
keys answer.
MEPH
(into phone)
Yeah... Who is he?... Yeah, I’ve
heard of him. I wanna go all in
if he’s up for it?

EXT. CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUND - DAY

Steven makes his way over to a children’s climbing frame
carrying a can of cider and a joint.

Meph (wearing ill-fitted shorts) runs at speed towards
Steven. He arrives labouring for air and they greet with
their customary nods.

Still panting for breath Meph reaches for a swig of Steven’s
cider, downs a mouthful then takes a few more deep breathes.

MEPH
Got a call earlier. I’m fighting
all-in against some big fella
from up-north. Meant to be a
right hard cunt.

STEVEN
How much ya getting?

MEPH
Four-hundred.

STEVEN
That’s shit! You should fight for
my brother. He’d sort you out
better than that.

Meph puts his thumb against his nose and exhaled heavily. A
line of phlegm streams out.

MEPH
Put ya hands up will ya?

STEVEN
I ain’t doing that now, it hurts!

MEPH
Don’t be a poof, c’mon.

Steven puts his can on the floor and flicks the last of his
joint away before reluctantly lifting his hands.

Meph clenches his fists and throws a combination of punches
at Steven’s hands.

STEVEN
Stop it, Meph. It fucking hurts!
Meph sighs as Steven turns and tries to shake the pain away.

**Meph**

C’mom, help us out. I gotta be sharp for this guy. He ain’t coming for a fucking tickling contest!

Steven reluctantly holds up his hands again. Meph throws a lightning-fast combination that force Steven back.

**Steven**

No fucking more, Meph. You’re gonna break fuckin’ hands!

**Meph**

Ponce!

**Steven**

Yeah? Well it’s not you taking the punches is it?

**Meph**

It fuckin’ will be ya twat... and with you as my pad man, it definitely will be!

**Steven**

I didn’t ask to do it, did I?

Steven gobs at the floor then picks up his can and backs away from Meph. Meph drops to the ground and starts repping out press ups.

**Steven**

Up for grabbing radios later?

**Meph**

Dunno. Probably.

(playful)

Girl.

**Steven**

Fuck off.

(beat)

Oh yeah, I nearly forgot to say. You know that mental, Disco Kev? I sold him the broken radio we got the other night. Funny thing is the dickhead rides round on a fucking bike!

**Meph**

How much for?

**Steven**

Forty quid.
MEPH
  (jumps to his feet)
  Bullocks did ya!

STEVEN
  I fucking did.

Meph turns his attention to a MOTHER (35) who’s keeping one
eye on her DAUGHTER (9) playing on the climbing frame, and
another on him and Steven.

Meph watches the Daughter closely.

STEVEN
  What’s with the shorts? Bit gay
  aren’t they?

The Mother takes he Daughter from the climbing frame and
readies her to leave.

STEVEN
  Oi, Meph... Snap out of it.

MEPH
  Wha... Yeah, what?

STEVEN
  Where the fuck did you get those
  shorts, bit tight aren’t they?

MEPH
  Next-door’s washing line.

STEVEN
  But that guys a fat cunt. Wait a
  sec, if they’re tight on you how
  the fuck did he get into ‘em?

The Mother and her Daughter pass Steven as they leave.

MOTHER
  (to Steven)
  Excuse me.
  (as Steven turns to her)
  Do you think it makes you look
  big swearing around kids?

Steven is thrown off for a moment.

STEVEN
  Yeah it does, so fuck off and
  mind your own business!

The Mother scuttles off with her Daughter. The Daughter
looks back and briefly makes eye-contact with Meph.
STEVEN
Fuck’s her problem? She’s lucky I didn’t show her the elephant!

MEPH
What elephant?

STEVEN
The one in front of ya!

Steven reaches into his pockets, pulls them inside out then unzips his fly and flops his cock out.

STEVEN
This one!

MEPH
(laughs)
Filthy bastard!

EXT. RIVER CAM - WAR BUNKER - DAY

The guys are laying on top of an old concrete war bunker. They’re surrounded by empty cans and chip wrappers.

STEVEN
(points at cloud)
Look at that one. It looks like a fat woman’s gash!

MEPH
Does it fuck, how do ya make that out?

Steven rolls onto his side, pushes his hand down the back of his trousers, farts, and puts his hand over Meph’s mouth.

Meph bolts upright.

MEPH
(laughs)
Ah ya dirty bastard!

Steven sits up.

STEVEN
I guess we better go and clock in for work?

Meph shuffles closer to the roof’s edge, then clumsily lowers himself down but stumbles over as he lands.

STEVEN
(laughs at Meph)
Still shaken are ya?
EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

They walk from car to car, pausing beside each one to glance inside.

STEVEN
I’m starving, Meph!

Meph stops beside an aged but expensive looking sports car.

STEVEN
Let’s go get some chips. There’s a Chinky’s round the corner.

MEPH
How can ya be hungry? You had two bags of chips earlier!

STEVEN
Yeah, but that was ages-

MEPH
Oi shut up a moment. Try this one.
  (gestures to car door)
These never have alarms.

Steven scuttles over and with little thought of subtlety forces a table knife down into the doors locking mechanism.

MEPH
Quiet, Steve. Take it easy.
There’s a neighborhood watch sticker on that post over there. We should be careful!

STEVEN
You’re right. Perhaps we should stop and turn ourselves in now?
  (playfully)
Dick head!

The guys stifle their laughter as Steven becomes more forceful with the door by ramming his hip against it.

INT. SQUAT - BEDROOM - DAY

Meph continually strikes his fists into a mattress that’s been propped against a wall. Beads of sweat gather at his jaw line. The strikes are wild but strong. Not the punches of a trained professional, but the punches of a fighter who’s trade has been learnt from direct work experience.
INT. SQUAT - BATHROOM - DAY

Meph washes himself beside a wash basin using a small plastic tub, pouring the same dirty water over his head again and again.

EXT. TRAVELLERS’ FIELD - DAY

Rain falls heavily. Mud and shit everywhere.

At ground level a forest of denim and tracksuit bottoms obscures our view until an opening shows a face amongst the mass. It’s Meph’s. His back is pressed to the ground and his face is being pushed into the mud. He thrashes his arms upwards in a desperate attempt to defend himself but the punches continue to rain down. Several strikes and he’s out cold...

But the beating continues. Meph’s unconscious body shuddering with the impact of each blow.

EXT. SCHOOL GATES - DAY

Meph sits alone watching CHILDREN leave school. His bruised face attracts the attention of several worried PARENTS.

EXT. NEWSAGENTS OPPOSITE SCHOOL - DAY

Meph catches sight of a GIRL, (9), short brown hair, dressed in trousers and a jumper. It’s the same girl he’d earlier seen on the bus. He follows her, being careful not seen.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The Girl glances back and Meph cuts left down a side street... then reemerges moments later and continues to follow her.

EXT. YOUNG GIRL’S HOUSE - DAY

From a distance he watches the Girl enter a house.

INT. SQUAT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

In near pitch black Steven clambers in through the kitchen window and crashes down heavily onto the sink, then climbs out and clumsily crash to the floor.

Meph enters the kitchen holding a torch and shines it at Steven’s face.
MEPH
Gotcha ya, ya fat bastard!

STEVEN
Fuck off.

MEPH
Oooo moody! Did ya get the booze?

Steven nods and Meph breathes a sigh of relief.

INT. SQUAT - FRONT-ROOM - NIGHT

Meph is sits drinking in the corner of the room. Music can be heard coming from a mobile phone. Steven wobbles around in a feeble attempt at dance.

MEPH
Out of fags?

STEVEN
Yeah.

Meph pulls a pack of cigarettes from his pocket and chucks them to Steven.

STEVEN
You got jam round your mouth.

MEPH
It’s blood ya, nob.

STEVEN
You win?

MEPH
Nah, I was robbed. It was going my way an’ all.

Steven lights up a fag and starts puffing away.

STEVEN
Get your money?

MEPH
He said next week for sure.

Steven inhales deeply then slumps down beside Meph, their shoulders touching.

STEVEN
Fuckin’ hate that cunt. He’s minted but reckons he can’t pay ya. Bullocks. You should smack him one and fight for my brother instead!
MEPH
Shut up about your brother will ya? I ain’t at the standard he’s after. You’d know if you came to my fights!

Meph drops the rest of his fag into an empty beer can.

MEPH
I’ve got something to tell ya.

STEVEN
Not gonna tell me you’re a poof are ya?

Meph leans away causing Steven’s upper-body to sag for a moment.

MEPH
Nah, nothing like that.

STEVEN
I was kidding mate. Go on what is it?

Meph smiles, pauses, becomes serious.

MEPH
I’ve been talking to someone from Outreach. He reckons he’d help me clean up if I want.

STEVEN
You’re wasted mate. What’s in those fags?

Meph climbs to his feet.

MEPH
I’m serious. I wanna go for it, I wanna sort myself-

STEVEN
What ya on about? Why?

Steven staggers to his feet and stands square-on to Meph.

STEVEN
(fans arms out)
What, you’re too good for it now are ya?

MEPH
Huh? Calm down, mate. I didn’t say that did I? Look, I’ve had enough of this shit. I’m fuckin’ sick of it!
STEVEN
What you on about? I mean... What the fuck is there to sort out?

Steven paces the length of the room.

MEPH
I wanna see my kid.

Steven turns and looks Meph in the eye.

STEVEN
Wha? You ain’t seen her in years. Do ya even remember what she fucking looks like? You’re daft if you ask me!

MEPH
I ain’t asking ya-

STEVEN
And that cunt mum of hers would never let you see her anyway.

MEPH
I gotta try.

STEVEN
No point!

MEPH
I gotta try, Steve.

STEVEN
Yeah, whatever. I’m off.

MEPH
Wha’s ya problem with me seeing-

Steven leaves slamming the door behind him. Meph stands alone. Stunned.

INT. SQUAT - BEDROOM - NIGHT
Meph packs his sleeping bag, grabs his jacket and leaves.

EXT. DERELICT BUILDING - NIGHT
A number of boarded up out-houses in a state disrepair.

Meph moves from building to building, yanking at doors that won’t open.
INT. DERELICT BUILDING - GLASS-HOUSE - NIGHT

Exhausted, Meph settles for a battered old glass-house that adjoins the central building.

EXT. YOUNG GIRL’S HOUSE - DOORSTEP - DAY

Meph stands motionless, staring at the GIRL’S door. He takes a deep toke on the remainder of a fag, flicks it away then knocks on the door.

Seconds later a WOMAN (32), with bleached blonde hair, hollow cheeks and loosely fitted bra straps opens the door.

Meph
How long?

Woman
Fuck off!

She sucks deeply on her cigarette, then exhales the remaining smoke and throws the butt into the garden as she moves to shut the door. Meph steps forward to stop her closing the door.

Meph
How long, Tanya?

Tanya
Fuck off, Meph!

Meph
I ain’t here to fight.

Tanya
Yeah, well it don’t look like it. Now fuck off!

Meph
I just wanted to say hello, that’s all.

Tanya
What?... I haven't heard a peep out of you in... I dunno know how long and you suddenly turn up at my door. What the fuck?

Meph
I didn’t even know you were here. How long you been back?

Tanya
(snarling)
I ain’t giving you any money if that’s what you’re after?
MEPH
I’m not here for money! I just wanted to say hello and ask you where you’ve been all this time... That and see how Rosie is.

Tanya steps out from the door and points scornfully at Meph’s face.

TANYA
Don’t you fucking dare mention my daughter’s name you cunt!

MEPH
She’s mine an’ all!

TANYA
She hasn’t been yours since I left!

MEPH
You had no fuckin’ right to-

TANYA
Yeah whatever. You ain’t seeing her... So fuck off or I’ll call the police!

Meph backs off, surveys the street and catches sight of a curtain from an upstairs window twitching. It’s ROSIE peeping though. Their eyes meet for a moment before she whips the curtain shut.

Tanya picks up on what happened and turns back to the hallway.

TANYA
(to Rosie)
Oi... Get out of my room!

The sound of a door slamming shut echoes down.

An uncomfortable silence descends on the front garden as they stare each other in the eye. Meph edges back further to the gate.

MEPH
I’m gonna come back. She’s my daughter as well.

TANYA
You come back here and I’ll have your head kicked in. Think you can just show up on my doorstep after six years and everything would be hunky-dory did ya? You stupid wanker!
They turn on hearing the sound of a NEIGHBOR’S window opening. A Neighbor (40), pokes her head out.

NEIGHBOR
You alright, Tanya?

TANYA
Yeah, Karen. Close the window, I’m alright.

Karen nods, eyes Meph then closes her window.

Meph steps out of the garden then turns to walk away just as Tanya sticks up two fingers at him.

INT. DERELICT BUILDING - GLASS-HOUSE - NIGHT

Meph is crouched in the corner with his body half leant against a wall. He’s shivering violently. His skin is drained of colour and his clothing is soaked through with perspiration.

INT. DERELICT BUILDING - GLASS-HOUSE - DAY

Meph is stood lost in thought, peering out at the forecourt. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his phone, keys in a number and waits for it to connect. After a few seconds it connects..

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
Hello.

MEPH
(into phone)
Kathy... It’s me.

KATHY (V.O.)
You alright, love? You haven’t called in ages. Have you changed your number because I tried-

MEPH
(into phone)
Yeah... I lost my phone. Listen, Kathy. Can I ask you for a favor?

INT. CARAVAN - DAY

The caravan is almost empty other than a few basics and a black and white television in the corner. Meph is sat opposite KATHY (55), pretend posh but kind hearted.
KATHY
The caravan is yours for as long as you need it, but on one condition.

MEPH
Anything.

KATHY
You bloody well take care of it!

MEPH
Of course, yeah.

KATHY
It might look like much now, but after me and Mike tied the knot we lived in this for over a year. Any way, I’ll ask Mike if there might be something you could do at the factory too. They always need people.

MEPH
Yeah that would be great. I’ve not had much luck lately.

KATHY
When have you ever had much luck?

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Meph is tightly clutching the handle of a trolley. His eyes are fixed on an aisle with a vast selection of booze. He lets go of the trolley and walks the other way, leaving the trolley and his things behind.

INT. FACTORY - DAY

Blue overalls, white helmets and noisy machines.

Meph pushes a trolley along.

INT. FACTORY - CANTEEN - DAY

Tables, chairs and lumpy mash potato on plastic blue plates. Meph is sat alone... Until a CLAIR PECK (19), simple looking, with thick lensed glasses and straight hair waddles up to him carrying a pink Care Bear with “I LOVE YOU” printed on its belly.

MEPH
You alright?
(reads her name badge)
Clair.
CLAIR
Yes, thank you. This is for you.

She pushes the Care Bear at Meph, forcing him to take it.

MEPH
Erm, thanks.

CLAIR
I think you’re handsome. Are you married?

Stifled giggles can be heard coming from the kitchen. Clair looks back over to the KITCHEN STAFF who in turn wave her to move closer. Clair blushes, turns and waddles off back to the kitchen.

Embarrassed, Meph stands to leave.

EXT. BINGO HALL - ENTRANCE - DAY

With some flowers in one hand and the pink Care Bear in the other, Meph waits beside steps that lead up to the hall’s entrance.

Tanya spots him and adopts her customary scowl.

TANYA
I told you what would happen if you showed up again!

MEPH
I don’t wanna fight with ya, Tanya.
(shows her the gifts)
These are for you. The bear’s for Rosie.

Tanya’s expression morphs from a scowl to a cautious stare.

MEPH
Anyway I can’t stick about I’ve-

TANYA
Bloody right you can’t. Bastard!

MEPH
I can’t stick around ‘cos I gotta get back to work. Just take them. Please.

Meph holds out the presents for Tanya.

TANYA
Work? Yeah right.
(eyes the gifts)
You nicked them I bet?
Shaking his head...

MEPH

Please.

Tanya reluctantly takes the presents then turns and makes for a bus. Meph watches her as she leaves.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

Meph, face-down in the pillow, sleeping. Until...

A mobile phone spins in circles on the bedside cupboard and wakes him. He sluggishly picks up and keys answer.

MEPH

(into phone)
Yeah?

KATHY (V.O.)
It’s me, Gavin. I’m outside. Can you open the door?

MEPH
Yeah, of course. Gis’ a sec.

Meph staggers out of bed, dresses then opens the door.

KATHY
Hello, love. You alright?

MEPH
Yeah, not bad.

Kathy steps in and gives the caravan the once-over.

KATHY
Sorry to wake you, love. But I’m here because, well I don’t know if you know or not, but your dad’s back. He’s been asking about you. I told him I haven’t seen you but... well, he keeps asking.

Meph sways for a second then props himself beside the sink.

MEPH

(after a short pause)
I couldn't give a shit, Kathy! I’m sorry, I know you’re just looking out for him, but he’s been dead to me for years. I’m not angry with you, and I know you mean well and that. But I can’t see him, not now.
Kathy acknowledges Meph with a nod. A few seconds of silence pass before Meph walks over to a window and opens it.

MEPH
Where’s he been?

KATHY
I don’t know. He wouldn’t say. He doesn’t look good though. He said the doctor’s have given him six months. It’s his liver.

MEPH
No surprises there.

KATHY
Well would you think about it at least, Gavin... For me?

MEPH
I can’t, Kathy. I’m sorry.

Kathy smiles warmly.

KATHY
If do change your mind, call Me OK?

Kathy smiles softly and moves closer to the door. Meph returns the smile as she leaves.

EXT. OUTSIDE OFF-LICENCE - NIGHT

Meph is stood with his hands in his pockets. He’s staring through the shop window and slowly edging closer to the door when he pauses, takes a deep breath, looks down and closes his eyes...

Moments later he opens his eyes, turns to walk away and spots three TEENAGERS approaching.

MEPH
Can one of ya get me some fags if I give ya the money?

TEENAGER #1
I’ll try mate. Depends if he’ll serve us though. We were gonna ask you the same thing.

MEPH
He won’t serve me. The tosser banned me for nicking a Mars bar.
EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE – DOORSTEP – DAY

Meph coughs into his hand then knock the door. Seconds later Tanya opens an upstairs window and pokes her head out.

MEPH
I didn’t nick it!

TANYA
I don’t care how you got it, now piss-

MEPH
I know ya don’t like me coming here-

TANYA
You’re clever!

Tanya grabs the handle to close the window.

MEPH
Just gimme a chance will ya?
Please. Tanya... Please.

Tanya sighs and release her grip on the window handle.

INT. CARAVAN – NIGHT

Meph lie on his bed staring at the ceiling, smoke trailing from the cigarette in his hand.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE – DOORSTEP – DAY

Tanya is leant against the door frame staring at Meph. Her posture less aggressive than on their previous meetings.

TANYA
You’re like a bad rash, keep coming back like this!

Meph looks down to hide a smile.

TANYA
Must be the what, five, six times you’ve been here now? I suppose you’re gonna keep coming until I give in?

MEPH
That’s the plan, yeah!

She eyes him up and down.
TANYA
So what you doing for work?

MEPH
Just factory stuff. Mike got me it.

TANYA
Your auntie’s Mike?

Meph nods.

TANYA
I heard got killed or something.

MEPH
You can’t always listen to what people say can ya? He hurt his back that’s all.

TANYA
Anyway, think you’ll stick it? Bet you don’t.

Meph pauses before replying and looks away for a moment.

MEPH
Can I see her then?

TANYA
No... Not yet. Maybe. If you keep it up. The work I mean.

MEPH
I will.

TANYA
Still see that idiot Steven?

MEPH
No. Not for a while now.

She studies him closely.

TANYA
Still drinking and stuff?

MEPH
No.

TANYA
Bloody liar!

Meph steps closer to the door, Tanya moves partly behind it. Meph eases the tension with a smile.
MEPH
I’m not lying. I’ve had enough of it... I’m not happy.

TANYA
Like I should give a shit!

MEPH
Just let me see her will ya?

Tanya rests her head against the door for a moment as she thinks.

TANYA
Call Wednesday, but hang up if Rosie answers. I don’t want you speaking to her until I say so.
(beat)
And I’d want maintenance money!

MEPH
How much?

TANYA
I don’t know, tell you Wednesday.
Now piss off. She’ll be up soon.
She hates getting up early. Like you. Lazy bastard.

A smile stretches across Meph’s face as Tanya closes the door. At the gate Meph looks back and catches Rosie peeping out. Meph waves to her but she whips the curtains shut.

INT. CARAVAN – NIGHT

The room is quiet and lit only by the light off a small bedside lamp. Meph is perched on the end of his bed, his phone in hand. He keys in a number and waits for it to connect...

KATHY (V.O.)

Hello-

MEPH
(into phone)
I’ll see him.

KATHY (V.O.)
Ah that’s great... When are you free?

Meph catches his reflection in a mirror and stares at himself for a moment.
MEPH
(into phone)
Tomorrow.

KATHY (V.O.)
Where?

MEPH
(into phone)
Tell him I’ll meet him at that
cafe on Mill Road. Terry’s
something or other. He’ll know
the one. I’ll be there at eight.

KATHY (V.O.)
Alright, I’ll call him now. And,
Gavin... Thanks.

Meph hangs up and drops the phone on the bed, walks over to
the sink, fills the kettle, looks down and notices his hand
is shaking.

INT. TREVOR’S TEA AND BUNS COFFEE SHOP – NIGHT

Typical working mens’ greasy spoon that plays host to a
mixture of the local community. But not that mixed, mostly
white, fat and balding. A thick ambiance of chat and the
clanging of cutlery on plates fills the air. Meph is sat
beside a window watching the main door closely as faces
come and go.

A SCRUFFY MAN enters and approaches the til to order from
the WAITER. He then turns and surveys the room, spots Meph
and walks over to him with his right hand out-stretched.

SCRUFFY MAN
Hello, son. You alright?

Meph stands and acknowledges him with a nod, then sits
without shaking his hand.

MEPH
Alright, Phil?

PHIL
You’re looking good. Been keeping
well then?

MEPH
I’m doing alright. You look like
shit.

Only the ambience of the room between them as car lights
zip past outside.

MEPH
Been back long?
PHIL
(clears throat)
A week or so.
(after a pause, nervous)
Kathy’s doing OK ain’t she? Her
Mike got nearly eight grand comp’
pay out for falling off a fucking
ladder at work. The twat! He
still works there too. And now
she’s acting all posh. Even gets
her milk delivered to the door
instead of going to Tesco like
every cunt does. She hasn’t
offered me a penny though.

Phil nervously rubs his brow line.

PHIL
She says you ain’t been going to
visit her.

MEPH
Not for a while. Had a lot on.

PHIL
That’s good. Good to keep busy,
that’s what I always say.

MEPH
Do ya?

Meph, looking bored, watches the passersby outside the
window.

PHIL
Well anyway, I... I suppose she
told you the bad news?

MEPH
The bad news?

The Waiter places Phil’s coffee on the table.

PHIL
You thirsty? I'll get you a
coffee.

MEPH
No.

PHIL
You hungry?

MEPH
No.

PHIL
Sure?
MEPH
Yeah.

PHIL
Right, cheers. Sure you don’t want-

MEPH
I’m alright...thanks.

Meph climbs to his feet.

MEPH
I’m going for a piss.

PHIL
You coming back?

INT. TREVOR’S TEA AND BUNS COFFEE SHOP – TOILET – NIGHT

Meph washes his hands then splashes his face with water.

INT. TREVOR’S TEA AND BUNS COFFEE SHOP – NIGHT

Meph slumps down back into his seat.

PHIL
Kathy said you’re working now?

MEPH
Yeah. Nothing fancy. Just packing at Mike’s factory.

PHIL
You’re not with Tanya anymore then. What about the kid, still see her?

Meph turns his attention to a couple of blokes playing cards near by.

PHIL
Anyway, at least you got a job. Most people round here just sit and wait for hand outs.

MEPH
Look, I better shoot off. I got a few things to do.

PHIL
Yeah? I guess I’ll be off as well then. Let me go pay first.
Meph stands and heads for the door. Phil climbs to his feet and approaches the counter but accidentally nudges a FAT BLOKE (40’s) who’s wider than he is tall. The Fat Bloke turns to Phil looking angry, but on seeing Phil his expression softens.

**FAT BLOKE**

Phil? Where ya been fucking been so long?

Meph turns and leaves.

**EXT. OUTSIDE TREVOR’S TEA AND BUNS COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT**

Meph steps out into the street then looks back in at Phil who joins him seconds later.

**MEPH**

Like being back then?

Phil nods then turns back and playfully sticks his fingers up at the Fat Bloke. Meph starts to walk away and Phil hurries to catch him.

**PHIL**

He used to play for Cambridge United. Wouldn’t think it to look at him would ya?

Meph looks away, bored, tired.

**PHIL**

You free tomorrow night, wanna go for a pint?

**MEPH**

Nah.

**PHIL**

What you up to?

**MEPH**

Got a few things to sort out.

**PHIL**

Day after that then?

**MEPH**

Erm, busy again.

**PHIL**

You’re busy nowadays... Day after that-

**MEPH**

Ah fuck it. Tomorrow then. Where?
PHIL
The Crab and Eel... Same time?

MEPH
Alright.

A moment’s hesitance before they shake hands and part their separate ways.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

Meph closes the door behind him and heads straight to the sink, fills a glass and downs it. Seconds later there’s a heavy knock on the door.

MEPH
Who the fuck’s that?

STEVEN (O.S.)
It’s me. C’mon mate open up!

Meph opens the door.

MEPH
How’d you know I was here?

STEVEN
Word gets around. Can I come in?

Meph nods reluctantly. Steven steps in and accidentally clatters a bag full of booze on the door frame. Meph glances down at the bag then looks Steven in the eye.

STEVEN
Want one?

MEPH
I’m trying to lay off it.

STEVEN
Good luck with it! Mind if I sit down?

MEPH
There’s only the bed to sit on.

Steven shrugs his shoulders and plonks himself down on the bed. Meph struggles to hide his annoyance.

STEVEN
Don’t mind me coming here do ya?
Been weird not having ya round, mate.

Meph props himself against the sink and glances over at the clock.
STEVEN (CONT)
I’ve been knocking about with Mickey instead. Don’t think you know him that well do ya? He’s a fuckin’ laugh though. You’d like him.

MEPH
(irritated)
Not with him tonight then?

STEVEN
Gonna be. Meeting him soon. Sure you don’t want a drink? I’ve got plenty.

MEPH
No, ta.

Steven raises to his feet.

STEVEN
Mate. I know we haven’t being seeing eye to eye recently... But you couldn’t you lend me a few quid could ya?

MEPH
I can’t, Steve. I’m low myself. What about asking your brother?

STEVEN
Andrew? He won’t give me anything ‘cos he’s a tight cunt. Just forty quid, Meph?

Meph looks away as he considers it.

MEPH
I can’t, I’ve gotta give Tanya money if I wanna see my girl.

STEVEN
Yeah? That’s good innit? But c’mon, Meph. Just for a day or two.

MEPH
Alright. But You gotta do me a favor then.

Steven nods.

MEPH
Don’t come here unless it’s to pay me back.
STEVEN
You serious?

MEPH
If Tanya knows I’ve seen ya she
won’t let me see me see Rosie.

STEVEN
If that’s what ya want... Not
forever though is it?

Meph pulls out forty quid from a kitchen draw and hands it
to Steven.

MEPH
I better get it back?

STEVEN
Next week. I promise.

MEPH
You just said two days!

STEVEN
Yeah I know, I’m jus’ pulling yer
leg. Well I better shoot off.
Take it easy won’t ya mate?

Steven grabs his bag and makes his way to the door.

STEVEN
Good luck with Tanya. Still a
fuckin’ bitch I bet?

Steven opens the door, smirks, nods and leaves.

INT. FACTORY - CORRIDOR - CLOCKING-IN MACHINE - DAY

Meph clocks in for his shift. From along the corridor Clair
waves over to him then approaches.

MEPH
You alright?

CLAIR
Yes. You look sad, are you OK?

MEPH
Yeah, I’m fine. Just a bit
knackered. Your friends put you
up to this?

CLAIR
No. I just thought you looked
sad.

Meph smiles softly.
EXT. FACTORY - FORECOURT - DAY

Clair is sat on the front of a metal trolley, giggling like a kid as Meph pushes her along narrowly avoiding various shelves and heavy machinery. THREE CO-WORKERS look on with contempt.

INT./EXT. NEWSAGENTS - DAY

Rosie thumbs through a kids science magazine, unaware that outside Meph is watching her through the store window. She puts the science magazine down then picks up a magazine with the image of a man hugging a young girl on the cover.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CRAB AND EEL PUB - NIGHT

Drizzle and street light reflects off the pavement. Meph is wearing a brand new pair of (Reebok Classic) trainers and appears irritable as he stands staring at the entrance to the pub. A YOUNG COUPLE with touchy hands walk towards the pub’s entrance.

MEPH
(to Couple)
Excuse me, mate.

The couple stop walking and slide their hands into their pockets.

MEPH (CONT)
Do me a favour and tell the bloke by the fag machine that Gavin’s outside will ya?

YOUNG MAN
Yeah alright. Garry was it? I’ll let him know.

MEPH
Cheers... And it’s Gavin.

Moments later Phil staggers out red faced and drunk.

PHIL
Alright, Garry? Didn’t think you were gonna turn up! Not coming in for a pint?

Meph shakes his head.

PHIL
Come on let me get ya one!

MEPH
I’m alright, thanks. Mind if we just walk instead?
Phil nods then longingly looks back at the pub.

**EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT**

They walk slowly. Phil’s eyes scan shop displays whilst Meph looks mostly at the ground.

**EXT. RIVER SIDE PATHWAY - NIGHT**

The guys are sat on a bench. Phil looks more relaxed than on their first meeting whilst Meph, feeling the cold, pulls his jacket tight against his body.

Meph

If your liver’s fucked why ya still drinking?

Phil’s tightens up as he considers his reply.

Phil

It’s not the booze that’s doing the harm... Ain’t you gonna ask why I’m back?.

Meph looks away.

Phil

I came back ‘cos I wanted to see you and Kathy. I’ve got things I wanna clear up.

Meph turns to face Phil, shakes his head then turns away again.

Phil

When you’re in my situation it makes you think differently. You realize you gotta sort things out while you still can... I know I’ve done wrong, Meph.

From out of the darkness a cyclist hurtles past and the bike’s light illuminates their faces for a moment.

Meph

Spoke to Kathy about it?

Phil

Yeah.

Meph

It’s gotta be from the booze.

Phil

Nah. It’s just one of those things I reckon.

(MORE)
PHIL (cont'd)
(beat)
I like your trainers. They new?

Meph sighs, looks into the distance.

INT. CARAVAN - DAY

Meph presses his phone to his ear and waits anxiously for an answer...

TANYA (V.O.)
Hello.

MEPH
(into phone)
It’s me.

A moment of silence.

TANYA (V.O.)
You can see her.

MEPH
(into phone)
Yeah?

TANYA (V.O.)
I want forty quid a week.

MEPH
(into phone)
Forty quid? But I’m nearly skint.

TANYA (V.O.)
Forty pound, Meph! I don’t give a shit if your skint. If you want to see her you gotta bloody well pay for it! Otherwise you can fu-

MEPH
(into phone)
OK, OK... I’ll get it.
(pause)
When can I see her?

Silence and crackle.

TANYA (V.O.)
Saturday.

MEPH
(into phone)
Have you told her about me?

TANYA (V.O.)
She ain’t stupid, she know’s who you are!...
(MORE)
And I still want my money even if she doesn’t wanna speak to ya.

MEPH  (into phone)
OK.

TANYA (V.O.)
You can come at lunch time.

MEPH  (into phone)
Can I get her something?

TANYA (V.O.)
If you want.

MEPH  (into phone)
What’s she in to?

TANYA (V.O.)
She likes stars.

MEPH  (into phone)
Stars? Alright then. Cheers, Tanya.

TANYA (V.O.)
Wait, Meph... You know what this means don’t ya? You can’t just walk in and out of her life when it suits ya.

MEPH  (into phone)
Yeah... I know.

Meph hangs up, chucks the phone on the bed and thrashes his arms in the air with excitement then goes to the sink, crouches down and pulls out a small wad of notes, counts it.

INT. CARAVAN - DAY

Meph washes his face, brushes his teeth, check himself in the mirror.

INT. BOOKSHOP - DAY

Meph glances over several multi-colored books on astrology and picks up the brightest one.
EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - DOORSTEP - DAY

Meph checks his reflection in the window then knocks the door. The sound of a lock clanging, the door opens to show Tanya wearing her usual scowl.

Meph
You alright?

She looks down at his shoes, smirks.

Tanya
Nice trainers. Got my money then?

Meph reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small wad of notes.

Tanya’s eyes light up as Meph plops the money into her hand.

Meph
Is she here?

Tanya
Of course she is. She’s in the garden... Good luck.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

Meph is stood at the kitchen door looking out at Rosie in the garden. She is sat on a small plastic chair facing away. He studies her petite frame trying to read the situation but she gives nothing away.

Meph takes the book out from under his jacket, clutches it tightly, opens the door, steps out and slowly walks towards her.

Meph
Hello, Rosie.

Her shoulders droop slightly.

Meph
You alright?

He circles around to her right, she turns to her left. He steps closer but she raises to her feet and shoots off to the back gate, opens it and runs over to a small park out back.

Meph
Rosie!

Behind him he can hear laughter. He turns to see Tanya delighting at the unfolding drama.
TANYA

Not easy is it?

Meph shakes his head.

TANYA

Didn’t think she’d be happy to see you did ya?

Meph looks over to see Rosie perched on a wall with her back to the house.

TANYA

You better go.

MEPH

Can I see her again?

Meph places the book on Rosie’s plastic chair and turns to leave.

TANYA

Don’t give up so quick next time.

(beat)

And don’t forget my money!

Meph pauses, nods and leaves.

INT. GREASY-SPOON RESTURANT - NIGHT

Phil scoffs down a bacon-butty covering his chin with grease and ketchup. Meph is sat opposite.

PHIL

How’d it go earlier?

MEPH

Not great.

PHIL

Gotta expect that I suppose.

Phil slurps down the last of his drink.

PHIL

She looking alright?

MEPH

Beautiful. Dunno where she gets her looks. Definitely not Tanya!

(beat)

I’m seeing her again soon.

PHIL

Yeah? Tha’s good.
Meph sits back on the chair legs, looks down and notices Phil’s wearing a new pair of (Reebok Classic) trainers.

MEPH
New trainers?

PHIL
Yeah. Nice ain’t they!

A WAITRESS approaches holding a damp cloth.

WAITRESS
Mind if I give your table a wipe boys?

Phil smiles, gives her a nod and leans back.

WAITRESS
How’s the food?

PHIL
Lovely!

The Waitress smiles at Phil and moves on to the next table.

MEPH
Think she liked you!

PHIL
I wish. See the tits on it? Lovely.

Meph smiles and turns his attention to the passing traffic outside. Drizzle starts to pepper the window.

PHIL
Son... I know it’s a lot to ask, but could I stay at yours? (off Meph’s look) Jus’ for a bit!

MEPH
I dunno about that. There ain’t much room there as it is, and I got a lot of work on.

PHIL
It wouldn’t be for long. I feel like I’m getting in the way at Kathy’s. I could kip on the floor if you’re short of space?

Outside the drizzle becomes rain.

MEPH
Fuckin’ hell... You put me in it ain’t ya?
PHIL
Sorry, mate. But I’m a bit desperate.

MEPH
Fuck it, OK. But no boozing there. Not in front of me.

Phil nods submissively.

INT. CARAVAN - DAY

Phil dumps his bag on the floor then looks up to meet Meph’s eye line.

PHIL
Only if you’re sure?

MEPH
It’s just for a bit right?

PHIL
Bloody hope not!

They share a chuckle.

MEPH
Well at least you ain’t got much. Another pair of socks in here and the place might look cramped!

PHIL
I do need a new jacket now you mention it. This one’s fucked, look. Fraying all round the sleeve.

MEPH
Maybe tonight I’ll show you where you could get a newer one. Can’t guarantee it though. Luck of the draw what’s there.

PHIL
Beggars can’t be choosers huh?

Meph throws a glance down at Phil’s new trainers.

MEPH
How are ya for money?

Phil shakes his head and looks away.
EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE – BACK-GARDEN – DAY

Rosie is sat on a patch of grass with an assortment of small rocks laid out in front of her. Meph is crouching with his back against the wall.

Meph
Like rocks do ya?

He coughs nervously.

Meph
What about stones... and trees and stuff? I liked fishing when I was a kid. Weren't any good at it but still.

No response.

Meph
Did you like that book I left for ya? Your mum said you like stars!

He kicks his legs out and sits.

Meph
Have you liked stars long?

She turns slightly, almost facing him.

Rosie
Not those kind of stars.

Meph
Eh? What was that?

He stands and moves closer.

Meph
Go on, say that again.

Meph glances back towards the house then edges closer to Rosie and crouches down.

Meph
What sign are you then?

Rosie
I don’t like it! I don’t like the book!

She stands up and quickly walks into the kitchen SLAMMING the door behind her. Meph stands looking deflated.
Meph and Phil share the same cigarette as Phil occasionally reaches into the clothing bank, pulls out various items of clothing, and dumps the clothing on the ground.

Meph
She spoke today. Good to hear her speak.

Phil
Well that’s good!

Phil pulls out what looks like a jacket and starts to examine it.

Phil
What she say?

Meph
Not sure. She only said one thing. Sounded nice though.

Phil nods along as he tries on the jacket.

Phil
Progress though ain’t it? You were never a talker either!

Meph
Like you’d know!

Phil
We ain’t so different.

Meph sucks hard on the remainder of the fag then flicks it away.

Meph
I ain’t nothing like you.
(beat)
I’m off. I’ve gotta collect some money. I’ll see you back at the van.

Phil
Wait... (holds up a jacket)
What do you think of this? It’s Addidas!

Meph nods approval and leaves.

EXT. HIGH STREET - NIGHT

Passing by an off-licence Meph turns his head to face the passing traffic and quickens his pace to a jog.
EXT. SQUAT - NIGHT

Meph taps loudly on the door and peeps through the letter-box.

Moments pass and he moves around to the kitchen window at the rear of the house.

The squat appears devoid of life.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

Meph and Phil lie cramped up and head to toe in bed.

Phil’s snoring keeps Meph awake. Meph pulls hard on the duvet but it holds fast, jammed under Phil’s belly.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Meph scans a selection of music CDs and picks up a Spice Girls album.

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - FRONT-ROOM - DAY

Meph watches Rosie asleep on a couch. Tanya creeps up from behind.

TANYA
I’m surprised with ya.

MEPH
What about?

TANYA
Didn’t think you’d keep coming.

Meph passes her a small wad of notes.

MEPH
There’s an extra twenty in there. Buy her something pretty.

TANYA
What, Rosie? Look at her. She’s a bloody tom-boy.

A smile flickers across his face.

MEPH
Still, get her something nice.

Tanya feigns a nod.

TANYA
Want me to wake her?
MEPH
Nah, let her sleep. Can I stay for a bit?

TANYA
If you make yourself useful. The back gate’s bugged. You could fix it.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - BACK-GARDEN - DAY

Meph bangs away at the gate with a hammer. He pauses to look behind and sees Rosie watching him from the kitchen window. She cups her hands against the window and blows causing it to fog up...

Then using her finger she writes Aries into the fog patch and runs off.

Meph smiles, stands, and makes for the door but just as he reaches for the handle Tanya opens the door and steps out.

TANYA
These fuckin’ heels are killing me!
(looking past him)
That gate done then? Doesn’t look it.

Meph turns back to face the gate.

MEPH
Nah, not yet.

TANYA
The council were meant to fix it but they never came. Useless they are.

Meph walks back to the gate and Tanya follows.

MEPH
Where did ya go?

TANYA
What, today?

MEPH
No, no I mean... the last four years. This wasn’t the first time I tried to find Rosie you know?

TANYA
I know. My mum said you went to hers asking for us. She said you were pissed up though.
TANYA
So how come you don’t see that Steven anymore then?

MEPH
Haven’t seen him for a while now. I told him I wanted to see Rosie again but he didn’t wanna hear it. Dunno why it bothered him so much.

TANYA
You were always different around him. I never liked him, he’s a wanker. My mum always used to say he was dodgy even when we were kids.

Tanya pulls out a packet of fags and offers Meph one. He accepts and they light up sharing the same match.

MEPH
So come then, where were ya all that time?

TANYA
I went to stay with my dad for a bit. Living in a village did my head in though so I got a job in Bedford doing reception work. It was nice, I liked it. But had to leave when I got pregnant.

MEPH
Pregnant?

TANYA
Yeah, I lost it though.

MEPH
Fuckin’ hell, I’m sorry... How?

TANYA
Dunno, we never knew why. Jus’ wasn’t meant to be I suppose. (beat) You can keep coming here. But if you bring trouble, or if you see that wanker, Steven, then that’s it. I’m ending it. You got it?

Meph bows his head submissively.

TANYA
Good. You better. Anyway, keep trying. She’ll warm to ya. She did with my ex until he hit her. (MORE)
Fucking cunt. Kicking my daughter.

Who was he?

Calm down, Meph! He’s gone now. He was in the army. Bastard.

Meph turns away and stares into the distance, visibly angry.

I’ll rip his fucking head off!

Oh, that’s sweet... But it’s too late now innit? He’s been gone three years. You should have been there when it mattered!

Was that how you lost the baby?

No, Meph. It wasn’t his. Besides, he couldn’t even get it up when it mattered ‘cos he was always pissed!

Silence broken by the occasional expulsion of smoke.

Want something to eat?

Really?

It’s only gonna be fish fingers and oven chips so don’t get too excited.

I love that stuff. Mind if I pop to the bog first though?

Tanya nods and Meph marches over to the kitchen door, pauses, and reads what Rosie had wrote on the window.

What’s Aries mean?

It’s a star sign? Why?
Meph
Nothing, it doesn’t matter.

Meph suppresses a smile and enters the house.

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - LANDING - DAY

Meph pauses on coming out of the toilet and looks towards Rosie’s bedroom door.

He creeps over and presses his ear to it.

Meph
(to Rosie)
All the best people are Aries.
It’s in the Guinness Book of Records so it must be true.

He knocks the door lightly.

Meph
Do you like the Spice girls? I bet you do.

Meph takes the CD from his jacket pocket and places it on the floor beside the door.

Meph
There’s something out here for ya. Wanna come and get it?

Silence.

Meph sighs then trots down the stairs.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - BACK-GARDEN - MOMENTS LATER

Meph gets back to working on the gate. Seconds later the sound of pop music can be heard blasting from Rosie’s window. Only it isn’t the Spice Girls.

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Soiled pots and pans in the sink, on the kitchen work-top a TV is on with the sound muted. The clanging of cutlery and glass. Tanya is sitting at the head of the table. Meph and Rosie are sat facing each other. Rosie is playing with her food.

Tanya
How you finding the job then?

Meph
Good.
TANYA
Who’d have thought?

Meph laughs nervously then coughs to clear his throat.

MEPH
How’s school, Rosie?

Rosie continues to play with her food and refuses to look up.

TANYA
She said anything to you yet?

Meph shakes his head.

TANYA
Her teacher reckons she’s one of the smartest in her class.
    (to Rosie)
Ain’t ya?

Rosie looks down to her lap.

TANYA (CONT)
Ain’t ya, Rosie? Smartest in the class?

Rosie nods lamely.

MEPH
So you didn’t like the book?

Rosie rubs her hands nervously under the table.

TANYA
    (to Rosie)
C’mon, answer him.

    ROSIE
No.

TANYA
What?

    ROSIE
No. I didn’t like it.

A smile flashes across Meph’s face.

MEPH
How come?

    ROSIE
I don’t like Astrology. I like Astronomy.
MEPH
What’s the difference?

Rosie glances up for a split second.

ROSIE
One is real and the other is made up.

MEPH
I thought they were the same thing.

ROSIE
You can’t see the future through a telescope. Only the past.

TANYA
(to Meph)
Don’t start her on that stuff or she’ll never shut up! She should be like the other girls and get a bloody boyfriend!

Meph shoots a disapproving look at Tanya.

MEPH
I wanna know what she means.
(to Rosie)
Go on, tell us about it. We wanna learn don’t we, tanya?

Tanya sighs, raises to her feet and goes over to the sink to fill a glass. Rosie’s gaze raises slightly as she peels her chin from her chest. She fixes her eyes on Meph’s plate.

ROSIE
When you look at the stars you see the past. It took the light years and years to get here. Even the light from the Sun took time to reach us.

MEPH
 Fucking hell, I never-

TANYA
Oi!... We don’t swear in this house!
(to Rosie)
Do we?

ROSIE
I don’t... Not sure about you.

TANYA
You little Cow!
As Tanya sits the three share a chuckle... The chuckle quietens to a silence.

Meph
Your cooking’s improved.

Tanya
That’s what happens when you’re alone with a kid and no money.

Meph glances over at the muted TV then back at Tanya.

Meph
I can help wash up if you want?

Tanya
Too bloody right. I expected you too!

Rosie throws a disapproving look at Tanya.

Tanya
Bloody isn’t a swear word! Is it?

Meph and Rosie’s eyes meet and they giggle shyly.

Tanya
Look what I’ve done. I’ve gone and made you two friends.

Rosie’s giggle ends abruptly and her gaze drops downward once more.

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Meph scrubs away at the dishes as Tanya finishes the last of her drink.

Tanya
She’s warming to ya. Bloody sod. You always get what you want with girls.

Meph’s smile fades.

Meph
My dad’s back.

Tanya turns to face Meph.

Meph
Reckons he’s ill.

Tanya
Do you believe him?
MEPH
Nah. He still drinks all the time.

Meph places a clean dish in the rack.

MEPH
He’s staying at mine now. Farts all night long. He Puked in the sink too. Dirty bastard.

TANYA
Dirty bastard.

MEPH
I suppose everyone deserves another chance though innit?

Tanya looks at her watch.

TANYA
It’s late... You can kip on the couch if you want? Last bus has probably gone already.

Meph pauses and looks at his bare wrist as if expecting a watch to appear.

MEPH
If you’re sure?

TANYA
I’ll go and grab the sleeping bag.

MEPH
Alright, cheers.

TANYA
Probably stinks of shit though.

MEPH
How come?

TANYA
Because it used to be yours!

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - FRONT-ROOM - NIGHT

The room is lit by the green light from the fish tank. Meph lie awake, staring at a framed picture of Rosie.

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Meph groggily staggers in as Tanya clears away the last of the breakfast bowls.
TANYA
Sleep alright?

TANYA
(off Meph’s yawn)
Got cornflakes or coco pops if you’re hungry. You’ll have to help yourself though. I’ve gotta go to work.

MEPH
Didn’t know you were working.

TANYA
Just some cash in hand stuff. You alright to let yourself out?

Meph nods and Tanya grabs her purse then chucks it in her handbag.

TANYA
I’m getting my hair done later.
(beat)
You can pick Rosie up from school if you like?

MEPH
Really?... Yeah, I’d love to!

TANYA
Alright. She doesn’t know your gonna be there but I’m sure you’ll ease her nerves.

Tanya opens the door.

TANYA
Oh and, Meph.

MEPH
Yeah?

TANYA
(playful)
Twat!

Tanya leaves closing the door behind her.

EXT. SCHOOL GATES – DAY

A LOLLYPOP LADY surrounded by GIGGLY KIDS steps out onto the road and stops traffic. Meph is leant against a metal railing holding a plastic bag containing a football.

Rosie and a young INDIAN GIRL approach the gate. Rosie notices Meph, pauses and clutches her friend’s arm.
MEPH
Hello, little lady. You alright?

INDIAN GIRL
(to Rosie)
Do you know him?

ROSIE
He’s my mum’s friend.

MEPH
(miffed)
Rosie.

ROSIE
Does mum know you’re here?

MEPH
It was her idea. I thought you might wanna go for a kick about in the park.

ROSIE
(to friend)
It’s OK, I’ll walk with you tomorrow.

The girls part with a smile. Meph and Rosie start walking side by side...

MEPH
How was school?

ROSIE
What time’s my mum gonna be home?

MEPH
She didn’t say. Not too long I guess.
(beat)
I had fun last night. Maybe I could eat at yours more often?

Cars pass-by packed full of KIDS with their faces pressed to windows.

MEPH
I bet your friend likes the Spice Girls?

ROSIE
Why?

MEPH
Because she’s Indian.

ROSIE
I don’t understand.
MEPH
Spice Girls—Spicy—Curry. Pakis
love curry don’t they?

Rosie pauses mid step and looks Meph straight in the eye.

ROSIE
Your a dickhead!

Meph stops, stunned.

MEPH
What do you call me that for?

Rosie turns on her heels and walks away at speed.

MEPH
Wait, wait... I didn’t mean it, I
was just kidding!

Meph jogs a step ahead of Rosie.

MEPH
Sorry, Rosie. C’mon please. Just
wait... Please.

Rosie’s pace slows then comes to a halt as a tear trickles
down her cheek. They stand facing each other.

MEPH
I’m sorry, Rosie. Honestly I
didn’t mean it, I was just
messing about.

Meph bends down bringing his face closer to hers.

MEPH
Let me make it up to ya. Come on,
I’ll take you to the park and
we’ll have a kick-about... What
do ya reckon?

Rosie pulls a tissue from her sleeve and rubs her eyes.

ROSIE
Don’t tell mum I swore.

Meph smiles and they begin to walk side by side...only this
time nearer to each other.

EXT. PATHWAY TO PARK – DAY

Huge oak trees arch over a long path dotted with benches
and bins. The distance between Meph and Rosie remains
constant as they walk looking up only to glance at passing
cyclists.
EXT. PARK - DAY
A couple of dozen KIDS loiter around crooked goal posts.
Meph and Rosie walk by them...and keep walking till there’s only greenery ahead.

EXT. MOTORWAY - OVERHEAD PASS - DAY
A narrow bridge stretches over a dual carriageway. Cars whiz by underneath before disappearing in the distance. Meph and Rosie are sat side by side with their legs dangling over the edge.

    MEPH
    I came here years ago with your mum.

A passing lorry honking its horn. Neither react. Meph leans back onto his elbows, then lays...

Rosie stars into the distance for several seconds then lays back and lets her arms fall by her sides where her hands almost touch Meph’s.

They lay close enough to be aware enough of each others distance...and neither of them notice as the ball escapes from the plastic bag and rolls away.

EXT. MOTORWAY - OVERHEAD PASS - DAY
From above the they look like amputees, legless below the knees. With their backs to the ground they gaze up at the sky. Rosie lifts her arm and points toward the sky.

    ROSIE
    The one near the horizon. I think that’s Mars.

    MEPH
    I’m sorry I wasn’t there.

Rosie lowers her arm and rests it on her stomach.

    ROSIE
    An astronaut wants to go there in twenty-twenty.

    MEPH
    I always thought of you.

Meph turns his head to Rosie but she looks away.
EXT. MOTORWAY - OVERHEAD PASS - DAY

They stand, brush them selves off and walk towards the bottom of the bridge where Meph spots the football amongst the grass.

MEPH
I forgot about that ball... Wait, how the fuck did it get here?

Rosie throws him a disapproving look, then smiles.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - DOORSTEP - NIGHT

Tanya is leant against the door frame with a fag in her hand, eyeing them as they approach.

TANYA
Sure you’re late enough?

Rosie slips past Tanya and into the house.

MEPH
See ya, Rosie.

TANYA
I didn’t mean you could have her all fuckin’ day.
(to Rosie)
Go on...upstairs!

Rosie throws Meph a quick wave before dashing off.

MEPH
Sorry, Tanya. Didn’t mean to be so long.

Tanya puffs away, studying him closely.

TANYA
Yeah, OK.
(shakes her head)
You can come Sunday if you want?

MEPH
Yeah, definitely. See you then, then.

Meph tries to hide his relief as they part with a smile.

EXT. RAILWAY TRACKS - NIGHT

The railway track and its support beams are lit only by the cast off light of nearby houses and the occasional passing train.
Meph and Phil are sat on the track, dragging on the same cigarette and picking stones from the treads of their identical trainers.

MEPH
Where were ya all those years?

PHIL
All around. Leeds. Coventry. Before here Norwich. I had a labouring job there.

Phil pulls a flask from his jacket pocket, takes a swig and pushes the flask at Meph.

MEPH
Nah, thanks.

Phil buries the flask back in his jacket and throws the remainder of the fag away.

PHIL
Work going alright?

Meph nods and lights up another fag.

MEPH
Gonna stick around then?

PHIL
Haven’t got much choice. I’m pretty much broke. I’ll pop along to the job-center tomorrow and see what they have.

Meph passes the fag to Phil.

PHIL
I ain’t got anywhere else to go anyway.

INT. FACTORY - CANTEEN - DAY

Meph is using his trolley to help Clair move a vending machine.

CLAIR
Let’s just leave it here. My arms are hurting.

MEPH
You’re the boss.

CLAIR
Do you help your wife with things like you help me with?
Meph laughs.

**MEPH**

I ain’t married. I don’t think there’s a woman alive who’d marry me.

**CLAIR**

I would.

**MEPH**

(blushing)

You’re a sweet little thing.

(playfully)

If only I was ten years younger huh?

**INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT**

Meph is alone, fag in hand. Curtains drawn. A commercial radio station fills the air with crackle and commercials. A bang at the door startles Meph from his near slumber.

**MEPH**

Who the fuck’s that?

**STEVEN**

It’s me mate. Let me in will ya?

Meph throws on a T-shirt, switches off the radio and opens the door. Steven is stood beside MICKY (22).

**MEPH**

(to Steven but looking at Micky)

Who’s he?

**STEVEN**

Him? Micky. Thought you knew him!

Micky leans forward with his right arm outstretched.

**MICKY**

Watcha, Meph. Steve’s told me all about ya. Says you’re a fuckin’ mental!

Meph gives a firm handshake as Steven squeezes himself past Meph. Seconds later Micky follows.

**MEPH**

(sarcastic)

Come in won’t ya?

(to Steven)

Got my money then?
STEVEN
That’s what I wanted to talk to ya about. Wanna fag? Have a pack.

Steven chucks a pack onto Meph’s bed.

STEVEN (CONT)
Micky knows someone who works in co-op. Sorted us out as cheaply as free.

MEPH
So why you here then?

STEVEN
(looks around the room)
Fucking hell this place is a dump. What happened to the cleaner?

MEPH
My old man’s moved in.

STEVEN
Didn’t expect that. Been a while innit. Work going alright?

MEPH
Yeah.

STEVEN
How long you got this place for th-

MEPH
Less of the bullocks, Steven. Have you got my money or what?

STEVEN
I did have but my fucking brother took it off me.
(looks at Micky)
Didn’t he?

Micky nods sheepishly.

STEVEN
The cunt reckons I owed him it.

Micky plops himself down on the end of Meph’s bed.

MEPH
(to Micky, sarcastic)
Sit down won’t ya? Make yourself comfortable.

MICKY
Cheers, Meph.
STEVEN
(to Meph)
Mate, I know it looks like I’m taking the piss but I need to ask for a favor.

Meph’s brows furrow. Micky quickly climbs to his feet.

MICKY
Got an ash tray, Meph?

Meph points to the window then gestures for a fag from Micky. Mickey quickly hands him one.

STEVEN
It’s my brother... He told me I need to get ya to fight at his next show or he’ll kick my head in!

MEPH
Wha’s that gotta do with me? Not my problem is it?

STEVEN
Yeah I know. But my back is to the wall, mate. I’ve got no one else to turn to-

MEPH
(nods at Micky)
You’ve got him!

STEVEN
He’s useless! My brother’s dead fuckin’ serious this time.
(beat)
We’ve always looked out for each other before ain’t we?

Meph takes a moment to collect his thoughts.

MEPH
I can’t get in trouble. Not now. I’m done with the fighting.

STEVEN
But I’ve already spoke to him. He said he’ll pay ya a grand for it!

Meph lights up and paces the room. Silence and shifty eyes.

STEVEN
Can we go outside for a sec? Just you and me, Gav. It’s too stuffy in here!

Meph nods and they make their way to the door.
EXT. FIELD - CARAVAN - NIGHT

They stand looking out at the surrounding fields. City lights flicker in the distance.

MEPH
Can I trust him in there?

Meph peeps through a window into the caravan.

STEVEN
Yeah, Mickey’s alright.

Meph takes one last toke on his fag and flicks it away.

STEVEN
Sorry to come round and ask ya like this. I didn’t have any other option though. I really need your help, Meph.

MEPH
I dunno. I wanna help ya but I’ve got too much to lose. If Tanya finds out I’m fucked!

STEVEN
How’s she gonna know? I ain’t gonna tell anyone.

MEPH
Word gets around... or if I get hurt, she’ll know then.

STEVEN
You won’t get hurt. Just train hard for it.

MEPH
When is it?

STEVEN
Day after next.

MEPH
You’re fucking joking!... How can I get ready before that?

STEVEN
Gav, you’re like a horse. You’ll be fine.

MEPH
Bullocks! I ain’t trained in ages. I wouldn’t last thirty seconds.

Meph looks out at the city in the distance, Steven copies.
Meph
Give us a fag?

Steven rummages through his pockets nervously.

Steven
They’re inside.

Meph sighs and turns away.

Meph
Alright, fuck it, I’ll do it!

Steven
Ah cheers, Meph!

Meph
But I’m only doing it for the money... And, Steve-

Steven
Yeah?

Meph
I swear if you ask me to do anything like this again, I’ll fuckin’ end ya!

Steven nods submissively. The sound of a draw shutting emanates from the van. Meph rushes over to the caravan door, opens it and sees Micky looking through a draw. Meph rushes in, grabs Micky by the hair and drags him out.

Meph
What the fuck you doing ya cunt?

Meph throws Micky to the ground and puts the boot in. Micky curls up, covering his head with his arms.

Micky
I weren’t doing anything!

Meph puts another kick in. Steven grabs Meph and pulls him off but Meph shakes himself loose. Steven jumps between them.

Meph
Get the fuck out of my way!

Steven raises his palms to Meph.

Steven
(calming tone)
OK, Meph, It’s alright... Just chill out, yeah! C’mon mate it’s me... We got a history remember? Just relax... C’mon relax.
Meph goes to side-step Steven but Steven continues to shield Micky.

STEVEN
Relax, mate. Just chill yeah?.

Meph breathes in deeply. Spits in Micky’s direction.

MEPH
(to Steven)
Go on, fuck off!... And don’t bring that cunt here again.

STEVEN
OK, Gav... I’m sorry, mate. I wont bring him again.

Meph walks back to the caravan.

STEVEN
You still gonna do the fight though yeah?

Meph enters the caravan and SLAMS the DOOR behind him.

INT. CARAVAN - DAY

Meph’s wedges his feet under the base of his bed and performs sit-ups.

EXT. FIELD - CARAVAN - DAY

Meph shadow boxes and uses the reflection from one of the caravan’s windows to monitor his form.

EXT. FIELD - CARAVAN - DOORSTEP - DAY

Meph is sat staring into the middle distance, his T-shirt soaked through with sweat.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

Meph and Steven wait beside a phone box. Speakers on wheels hurtle by, drum and base blurring out. A bashed up Ford Transit pulls up to the curb. The guys climb in the back and the van disappears off into the night.

INT. BACK OF VAN - NIGHT

Other than a small light that flickers on and off the back the van is almost pitch black.
STEVEN
This usually how it goes?

MEPH
Sometimes. Not the first time
I’ve known fuck all about who I’m
fighting or-

DRIVER (O.S.)
That light working in there?

STEVEN
Nah, mate. Sort it will ya?

A loud BANG and the light stays off.

INT. WAREHOUSE - BACK OF VAN - NIGHT

Meph and Steven wait anxiously. Muffled shouting and the
sound of the British anthem. The van’s doors swing wide
open, blinding white light rushes in and they cover their
eyes with their hands.

INT. INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Meph and Steven climb out and are immediately surrounded by
a mass of white face and bomber jackets. The warehouse is
draped with Union Jacks and posters that read: ‘BRITON
NEEDS YOU!’.

A MAN (33) in a leather jacket swaggers over to them.

STEVEN
(to MAN)
Alright, Andrew?

Andrew ignores Steven and looks Meph up and down.

ANDREW
(to Meph)
Heard you’re a bit handy. Don’t
look much to me. Still though,
easy one for you tonight.

MEPH
When am I on?

ANDREW
When are ya ready?

Meph takes his jacket off.

MEPH
When ever he is!

Andrew looks Meph straight in the eye.
ANDREW
Don’t hang about do ya? I like that... He’s warmed up already.
C’mon and follow me then, Rocky.

MEPH
Just hands or all in?

Andrew shrugs his shoulders then walks Meph through the CROWD and to the door of a large metal container. Meph stands looking into its blackened hull. In its furthest corner a young INDIAN MAN with a bloodied face cowers with his back to the wall. Meph turns to face Andrew and looks him in the eye.

MEPH
I’m not having anything to do with this shit!

ANDREW
C’mon, Meph. Smash the fucking Paki and give ’em what they come for!

MEPH
Fuck off. I’m not doing this. It ain’t right.

Andrew steps forward and leans closer to Meph.

ANDREW
Look you fucking cunt, if you don’t smash that fucking Punjab in, this lot will smash you in!

Meph looks over to Steven but Steven melts back into the crowd.

Meph turns to face the container and his expression morphs from fear to anger. He charges forward.

A fist repeatedly slams into a face. Knuckles tearing deeper with each strike.

INT. INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - WAREHOUSE - TOILET - NIGHT

Meph stands alone with blood streaming from his hand.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

Meph props himself against the sink and washes his hand with tap water.
EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE – BACK-GARDEN – DAY

Meph (wearing goalie gloves) is sat on a small plastic chair. Rosie is sat on the ground opposite with her rock collection laid out between them.

ROSIE
(picks up a rock)
This is Amethyst, it’s my favorite.
(points to another rock)
And that one is Quarts.

MEPH
The same as what’s in a watch?

ROSIE
I don’t know. Maybe.

Meph points to an aqua coloured rock.

MEPH
What’s that one called?

ROSIE
Aqua Marine.

MEPH
Like water?

ROSIE
I’m surprised you know what aqua is!

MEPH
I can read you cheeky lump! And when I’m on the bog I always read what ingredients are in shampoo. And that’s what it has in it!

They share a giggle as Tanya approaches from the kitchen.

TANYA
Hello lovers.
(looks at Meph’s gloves)
What you got them on for?

Meph freezes.

ROSIE
Were gonna play football out the back. Aren’t we, Meph?

MEPH
Yeah... Yeah, c’mon then.

Tanya watches them as they trot away.
EXT. SMALL PARK AT BACK OF HOUSE - DAY

ROSIE
Why are you them?

MEPH
I cut my hand. Thought these might stop the bleeding.

ROSIE
Mum says you used to fight for money.

MEPH
(nods sheepishly)
You don’t have to call me Meph you know? You can call me-

ROSIE
I forgot the ball. Wait here.

Rosie turns back to the house and dashes off. Meph releases the glove’s velcro strap, takes it off and looks down at his hand. Rosie springs up from behind but freezes at the sight of his hand.

ROSIE
That’s not from a cut!

MEPH
I wanted to get a bit more money than what I’m getting at the factory so I could buy you something nice.

She smiles to herself.

ROSIE
No football then?

MEPH
Next time.

She looks down, disappointed.

MEPH
Anyway I better get going. I’ve gotta meet my dad.

(beat)
Maybe you could meet him soon. Or maybe not. Your mum’s not keen on him. Neither was I, but he looks like he’s trying to sort himself out... And I reckon everyone deserves another chance.

ROSIE
I guess.
MEPH
Your mum gave me a chance. Only seemed right to give him one.

Rosie smiles and looks at his hand.

ROSIE
If the gloves hurt too much you don’t have to wear them again. Just don’t go back inside. I’ll tell mum you had to go.
(points to a pathway)
You can go that way instead. It takes you back to the main road.

MEPH
Look at you, my little partner in crime!

Meph starts off down the pathway, pauses and flashes a smile back at Rosie. She smiles then darts off.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

Meph is sat on his bed with his phone pressed to his ear.

MEPH
(into phone)
...Tanya. The reason I called was ‘cos I wanted to ask for a favor.

TANYA (V.O.)
What?

MEPH
(into phone)
Can I take Rosie to Yarmouth. Just for a couple of days?

TANYA (V.O.)
Fuck off I wouldn’t let you have her that long!
(after a pause)
You can have her for a day.

MEPH
(into phone)
A day is good.

TANYA (V.O.)
And not so far away either.

MEPH
(into phone)
Alright.
TANYA (V.O.)
Anyway that ain’t even a favor is it?

MEPH
(into phone)
I guess not, no. How about I take her to Norfolk?

TANYA (V.O.)
Yeah, alright. You gotta be back by nine though!

INT. MOTORWAY - CAR - DAY
Meph is at the wheel, Rosie peers out at the passing landscape of fields and hills

ROSIE
It stinks in here!
She pinches her nose and makes a wafting motion.

MEPH
Nah it don’t, that’s just the smell of nature.

Rosie playfully furrows her brows and crosses her arms as if angry.

ROSIE
Smells like pooh.

MEPH
It is. Well, in a way. It’s manure innit?

ROSIE
It’s your feet!

MEPH
Oi! Haven’t you got some homework to do? Your mum said you had.

ROSIE
I’ve done it already.

MEPH
Yeah?

ROSIE
Yeah!

MEPH
When?... No actually, what was it then?
ROSIE
I had to revise the alphabet.

MEPH
Easy!

ROSIE
In French.

MEPH
Still easy.

ROSIE
Do you even know it in English?

MEPH
Yeah.

ROSIE
Go on then!

MEPH
I will then.

ROSIE
Go on then!

MEPH
I know the letters of the alphabet, just not so sure about the order.

Rosie bursts into a drum role of giggles.

MEPH
Wanna stick your head of the window?

She nods enthusiastically.

MEPH
Wind your window down then, but Tell me if there’s something coming. Your mum would kill me if we lost your head!

Her laughter is almost drown out by the rushing wind.

**EXT. HOLKHAM BEACH – DAY**

Miles of sand and sporadic patches of grass.

They amble along slowly, Meph kicking up sand and Rosie looking over the occasional pebble.
EXT. OUTSIDE FISH AND CHIP SHOP - BENCH - DAY

They sit beside each other eating chips. Both use one hand to eat with and the other to keep the paper from blowing away.

EXT. PIER - DUSK

They hug their jackets as they look out at the ocean.

    ROSIE
    Mum said she left you.

Meph nods.

    ROSIE
    Why?

    MEPH
    Because I was never around much. I’d disappear for days. After a while she’d had enough and booted me out. When I went back, you were both gone. I tried to find you but no one knew where she’d taken you.

Rosie looks down at the braking waves.

    MEPH
    You didn’t see me on the bus that time then?

    ROSIE
    What bus?

    MEPH
    Don’t worry about it, I’m just making things up.

    (off Rosie’s confused expression)
    We all used to hang about in the same group. There was a load of us. Did she tell you that?

Rosie shakes her head.

    MEPH
    She did well to sort herself out. I think getting pregnant helped. She did try to help me too but I just threw it back in her face.

    ROSIE
    Didn’t you love us?
Meph reaches over to pinch Rosie’s cheek but she leans back and pushes his hand away. Meph looks away, rubs his nose, tries again. Again she pushes his hand away, but this time more aggressively.

    ROSIE
    Fuck off!

Rosie turns and quickly walks back along the pier towards the beach. Meph follows.

**INT. CAR - NIGHT**

Meph at the wheel, and beside him, Rosie curled up on the seat, asleep.

**EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - DOORSTEP - NIGHT**

Meph carries Rosie with her head resting on his shoulder.

    TANYA
    Sleeps heavy don’t she? Come in and lay her down on the couch. I’ll get her blanket.

Meph enters the house.

**INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - FRONT-ROOM - NIGHT**

Meph watches Tanya tuck Rosie in from the door way.

    TANYA
    Have fun then?

    MEPH
    Yeah. Listen, Tanya. I just wanna say-

    TANYA
    It’s alright, Meph. Don’t worry about it. Wanna fag?

    MEPH
    Nah. I better get going.

**EXT. FIELD - CARAVAN - NIGHT**

Meph climbs over the low wire-mesh fencing and sees that the caravan door has been smashed. He legs it over and surveys the damage.

The sound of a cupboard door closing comes from inside the caravan. Meph charges in with his fists clenched.
INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

Phil is sitting on the bed, eyeing over their possessions that have been strewn across the floor. What little had occupied the room has been over turned.

MEPH
When the fuck did this happen?

PHIL
I dunno! I only got here five minutes ago.

MEPH
Fuck! Fuck!
   (scans the room)
What’s gone?

PHIL

MEPH
Go to the far side of the field and see if any cunt is hanging around there! If ya see anyone, shout and I’ll come.

Phil leaves. Meph opens the cupboard under the sink, reaches in, feels around.

MEPH
The fucking cunts!

Phil runs back in.

PHIL
What is it, Gav? You alright?

MEPH
No I’m not fucking alright! I had ninety quid in here and now those fucker’s have got it.

Meph walks back to the main door and Phil Follows closely behind.

MEPH
It was Steven and Mickey. I’m gonna tear their fucking heads off!

PHIL
I’ll help ya, son.

Meph acknowledges Phil with a nod then looks at the damage. Meph notices that the door had been kicked out from the inside.
MEPH
Wait a sec. If they got in through the door, why’s the damage on the inside?

PHIL
What do ya mean?

Meph points to the dent in the door.

PHIL
Maybe they came in through the window.

Meph goes over to the window. It’s still closed, and even after he opens it, the gap would be too small for a person to fit through.

MEPH
Steven’s skinny, but he ain’t that fuckin’ skinny. And why would he close it after he got in.

PHIL
So no one could hear him?

MEPH
We’re in a field, Phil. Who the fuck is gonna hear him out here?

PHIL
I see your point.

MEPH
Where were ya before I came back?

PHIL
Wha... Pub. I was at the pub.

MEPH
You alright for money now then? I Thought you said you were broke.

PHIL
It was just for a treat.

MEPH
Yeah, treat for what?

PHIL
Nothing. Just a treat.

Meph expression hardens, he takes a step closer to Phil.

MEPH
What’s in your pockets?
PHIL
Nothing... Fags.

MEPH
What else?

PHIL
Nothing else.

Phil’s face goes white.

MEPH
Let me see.

PHIL
C’mon, Gav. What you trying to say?

MEPH
I think its fucking obvious what I’m saying! Show me what’s in your fucking pockets... Now!

Phil turns his pockets out; nothing but fags and a few coins that drop to the floor. Meph pauses for a moment then passes Phil and sits on the bed.

MEPH
Sorry, Phil... I didn’t mean it but I needed the money for Rosie.

Phil nods, crouches to pick up his coins. Meph scans the room and spots Phil’s bag beside the door. Meph grabs the bag and empties it’s contents on to the bed...

Nothing in it but an empty bottle, an empty wallet, and a square looking sock containing the ninety pound.

Meph pulls out the money from the sock then sits on the bed, stunned. Phil anxiously paws at his shirt collar.

PHIL
I’m sorry, Gav. I needed it to for your auntie. I owe her hundreds.

MEPH
Go.

PHIL
Gav, C’mon mate. There it is, no harm done, yeah?

MEPH
Go... Now... Before I can’t stop myself.
PHIL
Gav, please. I’m sorry, son.
Please.

MEPH
Never come near me again or I’ll fuckin’ end ya.

Phil looks down, turns and leaves the caravan.
Meph sits alone staring at the wall. Then stands and charges out...

EXT. FIELD - CARAVAN - NIGHT
Tackles Phil to the ground and starts laying into him. Phil tries to cover his face but gets knocked out after a flurry of punches get through.
Meph stands, looks down at Phil, spits on him, drags him across the field and leaves him nearer the road.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT
Meph is sat on the end his bed, his head buried in his hands.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - BACK-GARDEN - DAY
Meph leans a girls bike (with a sticker the reads: ‘STAR-CRUZER’ on the frame) against the plastic chair in the center of the garden, puts his gloves back on, knocks on the kitchen door, turns and runs to hide behind the fence.
Rosie opens the door and her eyes immediately fix on the bike. She runs over to it barefooted and climbs on.

MEPH
(jumps out)
Boo!

She doesn’t even notice him as she starts pulling on the brakes.

MEPH
Do ya like it?

ROSIE
Huh?

MEPH
Like it?

ROSIE
Yeah it’s cool. Is it for me?
MEPH
Who else is it gonna be for?

Rosie turns the handle bars and to and fro.

ROSIE
Thanks, Meph.

MEPH
It’s not the one I wanted to get ya. Couldn’t afford that one yet. I’ll get you it soon though.

ROSIE
No don’t. This one is awesome! I like the sticker. Thanks, Meph. Mega thanks!

Meph opens the gate and Rosie speeds past. Tanya looks on from the kitchen door.

MEPH
(to Rosie)
You forgot your shoes!

TANYA
Meph.

MEPH
Tanya. Didn’t see you there.

TANYA
Come inside. I want to ask you something.

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

MEPH
Everything OK?

TANYA
I bumped into Steven the other day.

MEPH
Yeah. Didn’t think you’d wanna speak with him.

TANYA
Take your gloves off.

MEPH
Why?

TANYA
Take them off. Let me see your hands.
Meph pulls the left glove off.

TANYA
And the other one.

He reluctantly pulls off the right glove. She coldly stares at his hand.

TANYA
I told you didn’t I? I fucking told you what would happen if you started fighting again!

MEPH
Hang on a--

TANYA
No, Meph. You fucking hang on!

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE – BACK GARDEN – DAY

Rosie watches Meph and Tanya arguing. Their voices muffled by the window.

Seconds later Meph bursts through the back door and walks straight past Rosie. Tanya follows.

TANYA
Don’t you fucking dare come back, you cunt!

MEPH
Fuck off, Tanya!

TANYA
I’ll have you done in you fucking wanker! Cunt!

Meph slams the gate behind him and walks off.

INT. CARAVAN – NIGHT

Meph rummages through a draw and pulls out a vegetable knife.

EXT. CITY STREET – NIGHT

Meph running, his face contorting with a mixture of fatigue and anger...

EXT. HOUSING ESTATE – OUTSIDE SQUAT – NIGHT

Meph slows to a halt. Gasps for breath.
INT. SQUAT - NIGHT

Meph waits hidden behind the living room door. His forehead glistening with sweat in what little light there is in the room.

The sound of a window being opened followed by a single muffled voice. The voice becomes clearer...

STEVEN
(into phone)
...Fella, yeah if you’re nearby come over... Alright. In a bit.

The silence is punctuated by the occasional bump and clang. In the dark Steven resembles a shadow, featureless and black. He enters the living room and lights a cigarette. The lighter briefly illuminates the room...

And from the black Meph charges at Steven, grabs him by the throat and rams his head against the wall. Steven releases a pathetic squeal as Meph pushes his thumb deep into Steven’s eye.

MEPH
You Fuck... I’m gonna fuckin’ kill ya!

Steven retaliates by pushing at Meph’s face and forcing him back a step into the darkness of the room.

In the black; the sound of shuffling feet, furniture breaking and the guttural sound of violence.

Meph forces Steven back into the light of the doorway and tightens his grip on Steven’s throat, then reaches into his pocket and pulls out the knife. The blade reflects what little light there is in the room.

Steven squirms and gasps for air as Meph’s presses the knife against Steven’s throat. Steven freezes, his eyes fix on Meph’s face. Meph pushes his face into Steven’s and Steven starts hyperventilating.

MEPH
Gimme a reason not to end ya!

Meph eases his grip on Steven’s neck just enough to allow him to speak.

STEVEN
I dunno what... What you’re on about, mate. What have I done?

Meph presses the knife deeper, draws blood.
MEPH
You know what did you fuck...
Telling Tanya about the fight!

STEVEN
Meph. Meph, Mate, I never meant to... Ya gotta believe me, it just sort of slipped out ya know? She didn't even look bothered... Honestly, Meph. I never meant to cause-

Meph screams out and head-butts into Steven in the face. Steven’s unconscious body slumps to the ground. Blood gushing from his nose, mouth and neck.

Meph looks down at the misshapen wreck, spits on it and disappears into the darkness.

EXT. SQUAT - GARDEN - NIGHT

Meph pauses on hearing a CAR and crouches behind a bush. Seconds later Andrew and Mickey pass by as they walk to the rear of the squat.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Light from a zebra crossing flickers on and off and drizzle falls lightly on the ground. Other than Meph, the streets are devoid of life.

Meph walks with his hands buried deep in his pockets.

EXT. PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Meph slumps against a large metal bin and drops a bottle of whisky to the ground.

EXT. TOY-STORE WINDOW - NIGHT

Meph stands with his head pressing against the window of a toy-store.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAWN

Meph is sat alone, staring into the distance, lost in thought.

INT. CARAVAN - DAY

Meph leans over the sink, empties his guts.
INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

A muted TV flickers away showing two fat people arguing in front of a live audience. Meph is unshaven, he’s watching the TV but he’s looking through it. He’s holding a can of cider and beside his feet are several more cans; all empty.

INT. FACTORY - FORECOURT - DAY

From a distance Meph is being spoken to by an irate looking SUPERIOR. Their words drowned out by the machines. The Superior walks off leaving Meph alone by a trolley. Meph drops his helmet in the trolley and leaves.

EXT. MOTORWAY - OVERHEAD PASS - DAY

Meph sits with his legs hanging over the edge and a half-full bottle of whisky clasped tightly in his hand.

INT. CARAVAN - DAY

Meph hands his TV to a shell-suit wearing FAT MAN (40).

FAT MAN
Has it got a remote?

Meph shakes his head.

FAT MAN
How about fifteen then?

Meph stares at the FAT MAN coldly and the FAT MAN hands Meph twenty pounds.

INT. CARAVAN - TOILET - NIGHT

Meph is slumped over the toilet retching up sick. He then collapses beside it.

EXT. NEWS AGENTS - DAY

Meph crouches behind a wall. He watches Rosie as she walk past then follows her from a distance.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - DOORSTEP - DAY

Rosie opens the door, steps half-way in, pauses, looks back and sees Meph nearby. Their eyes meet.

TANYA
C’mon Rosie, You’re letting the cold air in!
Rosie closes the door.

**INT. CARAVAN – NIGHT**

Other than a sleeping bag in the corner the caravan is almost empty. Meph, now bearded, is asleep. A knock at the door wakes him. Meph gets out of bed and staggers over to the window and looks out.

Meph
Who’s that?

Silence.

Meph
Who the fuck’s out that?

Tanya
It’s me, calm down.

Meph goes to the door and opens it. Tanya invites herself in.

Tanya
Stinks in here. Where’s your telly?

Meph
Sold it.

Tanya
Yeah, your job not paying you enough?

Meph
They had to let me go.

Tanya
Oh, right. Been keeping alright otherwise?

Meph
Wha’s it look like?

Tanya
She got in trouble at school the other day for fighting. Sticking up for you her teacher said.

Meph
She OK?

Tanya nods...
TANYA
This fucking area. Nothing stays secret.

(beat)
Anyway I’m having a BBQ this weekend. For Rosie’s tenth. You can come if you want.

Meph lifts his head.

MEPH
Yeah, of course.

Tanya sees the cans on the floor.

TANYA
See you’re drinking again then?

Meph nods. Tanya SIGHS, leans against the sink.

TANYA
You can’t keep going back to that shit, Meph!

MEPH
I’ll sort it... What time does it start?

TANYA
Ten. But I don’t won’t you coming until after eleven. I don’t want the other parents seeing you.

They stand staring at each other for a moment before Tanya makes her way for the door.

TANYA
She’s missed you.

INT. CARAVAN – DAY

Meph tidies the caravan, filling a bin-liner with empty bottles and cans. One of the cans hasn’t been finished. He stares at it for a few seconds then goes to the sink and pours it away.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE – BACK-GARDEN – DAY

Rosie’s party is in full swing; music, a small bouncy castle, BOYS fighting BOYS and a FAT BOY poking fun at GIRLS. Meph stands alone in the corner of the garden watching Rosie with her friends. Rosie continually throws him glances, clearly happy to have him there.
The KIDS form a semi-orderly queue to collect a piece of the birthday cake. Rosie sneaks away from the group and approaches Meph.

Meph

Having fun?

Rosie

Yeah... I’m glad you came.

Meph

Thanks. Your mum says you’ve been a bit sad recently. Not because of anyone I know is it?

Rosie

(smiles shyly)

Probably not anyone you know.

Meph smiles.

Meph

Got any good prezzies?

Rosie glances back at the group, then smiles as she shakes her head.

Rosie

Mum got me a necklace.

Meph

Necklace? Ah she’s beat me to it!

He pulls out a small box-shaped present from his pocket and hands it to her.

She immediately tears off the wrapping-paper revealing a small blue box, opens it and pulls out a silver necklace, then pretends she likes it by pressing it against her chest.

Rosie

Thanks, Meph. It’s really nice.

Meph

Bloody liar! Look back in the box, underneath the padding.

Rosie pulls out the padding and finds two tickets to the science museum. She struggles to contain her excitement.

Rosie

Ah cool, thanks. It’s wicked! When can we go?

Meph

Whenever you want.
ROSIE
Tomorrow!

MEPH
We’d have to clear it with your mum first, but that might be a bit too soon for her I think.

She smiles warmly.

MEPH
You can chuck the necklace away if you like? Or give it to Tanya, she likes that kind of tat.

Rosie glances back to the KIDS then gives Meph’s arm a squeeze.

EXT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - BACK-GARDEN - DAY

Other than a few stragglers the party has all but died down. Meph and Rosie are sat beside a table covered in empty plastic cups and mushed up cake.

MEPH
Your mum did a good job today didn’t she?

ROSIE
I suppose. These kids aren’t nice to me at school though. They only came because of her. They’re her friend’s kids.

MEPH
Well at least it wasn’t just me here.

ROSIE
I wouldn’t have minded.

Meph looks away, smiling. Rosie blushes.

ROSIE
Wanna dance?

MEPH
Nah, I’m no good at it. You go ahead though, I’ll watch ya!

ROSIE
Please, that would be the best present!

It’s Meph’s turn to blush.
ROSIE

Please?

MEPH

Ah bugger it... A quick one then.

Rosie grabs Meph by the hand and leads him to a grassy patch where she starts to twists and bounce. Meph wobbles from side to side.

INT. TANYA AND ROSIE’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Meph helps Tanya put away the last of the clean dishes.

MEPH

You did good today. I think she enjoyed herself.

TANYA

You looked like you enjoyed yourself more than she did!

Meph washes his hands and Tanya lights a cigarette.

TANYA

You stopped drinking yet?

MEPH

Yeah.

TANYA

Really?

She studies him closely.

TANYA

How is it you can just stop now when you never could before?

MEPH

Never had a proper reason to before did I? But I do have now. (beat) For Rosie.

Tanya looks away, sighs.

TANYA

She’s been here ten years!

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY

Meph and Rosie walk side by side just inches from each other. The hustle and bustle of suits and shopping bags keep them from talking.
Rosie pulls down on Meph's arm and gestures to a girls' fashion store with an assortment of revealing clothes on display.

    ROSIE
    Do you think they looks nice?

    MEPH
    Couldn’t see you in that. More your mum’s style.

    ROSIE
    All the girls dress like that at school.

    MEPH
    Fu... Don’t worry about them. You’re better than they are.

Meph walks Rosie nearer the shop window and out of the way of the passing shoppers.

    MEPH
    Just do what makes you happy yeah? Don’t Worry about what others think.

Meph bends at the knees so that he’s face to face with Rosie. Rosie tries to turn away but Meph gently pulls her back to him.

    MEPH
    You’re nothing like the other kids round here. You’re better then they are. I dunno why but you just are!

    ROSIE
    Mum never says anything like that.

INT. LARGE SUPERMARKET - DAY

Rows and rows of various bright colors and plastic wrapped things. Rosie leads Meph by the arm to a section containing stationery goods.

    ROSIE
    This is where I got them last time.

She eagerly fingers through a selection of felt-tipped pens and picks up a pack.

    ROSIE
    See!
MEPH
Well have those then if that’s what you’re after?

ROSIE
Thanks, Meph.

MEPH
You don’t have to keep calling me that you know?

She smiles.

ROSIE
I’ll draw you a picture of the solar system if you like? Did you know that people used to think we were in the center of it?

Meph smiles and shrugs his shoulders.

MEPH
Draw a picture for your mum as well then. She’d like that I bet.

ROSIE
She says I’m good at drawing but never puts them up.

MEPH
Really? That’s a bit crap.

ROSIE
She says I’m too old. But she never put them up when I was younger.

Meph shakes his head disapprovingly.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

Meph is standing beside a small camping heater warming beans in a saucepan. Rosie is drawing.

MEPH
Let me have that one when you’ve finished won’t ya?. I’ll stick it on the wall somewhere.

Rosie smiles, nods.

MEPH
And don’t forget to put your signature on it so then I could sell it when you’re famous!

Rosie giggles.
Meph starts stirring the beans again then pauses on hearing a car outside. Its headlights stream through into the dimly lit caravan. Meph drops the spoon, looks at Rosie then goes to the window.

Meph’s POV: A fogged up window, and outside two lights against the black.

The sound of car doors slamming shut. Rosie looks at Meph with fear in her eyes.

MEPH
Stay there!

Her hands clench up, scrunching up her drawing.

A loud bang on the door. Meph grabs a knife from the draw and edges closer to the door.

Smash... the door is almost torn from its hinges knocking Meph back to the sink and causing him to drop the knife. Andrew, Steven and Micky charge in and start laying into him.

Meph covers up, climbs to his feet and starts swinging punches. He catches Micky clean on the jaw and drops him. Andrew pulls half a pool cue from his jacket a cracks it across Meph’s back. Meph falls to his knees and Steven kicks him in the face, grabs his head and rams his head against a cupboard.

ANDREW
Not so fuckin’ hard now, are ya?!

Meph grabs Steven’s leg and bites hard. Steven CRIES out in pain, grabs the knife from the floor and digs it into Meph’s back. Meph lets out a cry then pushes Steven back to the bed and he crashes down beside Rosie. Rosie screams out in fear.

Meph climbs to his feet and reaches around for the knife in his back. Andrew sneaks up from behind and smashes the pool cue over Meph’s head. Meph drops. Unconscious.

Rosie curls up in the corner, screaming. Steven climbs to his feet and limps over to Andrew.

STEVEN
What the fuck do we do now?

ANDREW
Take her outside!

Mickey rises to his feet, rubbing his jaw.

MICKY
What’s going on?
ANDREW
Get out!

Micky staggers out as Andrew crouches beside Meph.

ANDREW
You messed with the wrong fuckin’ family, Rocky.
(looks over his shoulder)
I ain’t keen on Steven but no cunt’s gonna make a fool of me.
If you fuck with my family and I don’t do anything what are people gonna think of me, eh?

Andrew stands, kicks Meph in the face, leaves.

EXT. FIELD – CARAVAN – NIGHT

Andrew forces the door shut, turns to Steven.

ANDREW
Burn the fucker to the ground!

STEVEN
Wha?

ANDREW
Set the fuckin’ thing on fire.

MICKY
You can’t do that.

ANDREW
Do it!

STEVEN
He’s right, you can’t set it on fire... Meph’s still in there.

Rosie screams out and bites Steven’s hand.

STEVEN
Arrrrgh!... Ya fuckin’ bitch.

He lets go and she runs back to the caravan then bangs on the door.

ROSIE
Meph!... Meph!

ANDREW
Grab her you fuckin’ idiot.

Andrew pulls a lighter from his pocket and walks back to the caravan.
Steven grabs Rosie and pulls her back from the caravan, she starts kicking and screaming. Andrew reaches his arm through an open window and sets fire to the netting then steps back and watches as the fire builds.

Mickey wipes his brow, looks at Andrew and Steven.

MICKY
I don’t want anything to do with this... I ain’t going down for murder!

Mickey looks Steven in the eye. Steven looks away. Mickey shakes his head, turns and legs it into the dark. Rosie tries to struggle free but Steven tightens his grip.

STEVEN
We better get going... The rozzers are gonna be here soon!

Andrew nods and turns towards the car.

STEVEN
What shall I do with her?

Andrew shrugs his shoulders then looks back at Rosie as she fights to get loose.

ANDREW
Leave her.

Steven throws her to the ground then jogs to over to the car.

Andrew and Steven pause before getting into the car and look back at the fire which is now almost engulfing the entire roof of the caravan. Rosie climbs to her feet and runs to the caravan then starts banging on its side.

ROSIE
Meph!... Wake up!... Wake up!

In the b.g. Andrew and Steven leaving in the car.

Rosie tries to pull open the door. She grabs the handle with both hands and wedges her foot against the paneling, pulls hard... the door tears open sending her crashing back to the ground. She gets up, runs to the doorway and crawls in.

INT. CARAVAN - NIGHT

She covers her mouth and crawls over to Meph, shakes him.

ROSIE
Wake up!... Wake up, Dad!
Meph’s hand twitches.

ROSIE
C’mon, Dad... C’mon wake up!

She grabs his arm and pulls it. His eyes open and he looks at her. Rosie crawls towards the door with Meph following just behind. They reach the door gasping for air and crawl out.

EXT. FIELD - CARAVAN - NIGHT

Rosie climbs to her feet then helps Meph up. They stagger a half dozen feet further from the caravan before Meph slows and collapses.

Meph motionless; blood pours from his head but his eyes never close; they remain fixed on Rosie as she screams out.

She ceases shouting and crouches beside him, sobs quietly.

The sound of a distant siren and then silence until...

OVER BLACK:

P.A. SYSTEM
Could DR. Jeffries report to the front desk please. Dr. Jeffries to the front desk.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY (ONE MONTH LATER)

Meph is sat up in bed, he has large scar on the side of his head though he’s clean shaven and looks healthier. Softer. Rosie is beside him, brushing his hair and being careful not to go near the scar. Tanya is looking on from the doorway.

TANYA
You ready, sweetheart?

ROSIE
Yeah.
(to Meph)
See you Tomorrow?

He nods.

ROSIE
Our museum tickets are gonna expire soon.

MEPH
How about we go when they let me out?
Rosie smiles and stands.

**MEPH**
Got another drawing for me then?

Rosie reaches into her bag and pulls out a picture.

**EXT. BLUE BUS-STOP - DAY**

Meph and Rosie are sat beside each other with their shoulders touching. A set of crutches have been propped against the seat beside Meph. An OLD LADY arrives, scans the time table, turns to them...

**OLD LADY**
Has the number five been yet?

Rosie hops off the bench then goes over and stands beside the Old Lady.

**ROSIE**
(looks at timetable)
It should be here soon... Maybe five minutes.

The Old Lady looks at Rosie and smiles to her. Meph watches, smiles proudly.

**FADE OUT.**