"Little Robin: Part 2"

by

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Little Robin
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FADE IN

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND – DAY

The parents point and stare, including Stacey, as Carl turns up. He's neatly turned out in a freshly pressed suit.

He ushers the children into the building as Stacey approaches. Carl pulls a packet of mints from his pocket and pops one into his mouth.

STACEY
Back then.

CARL
Yes.

STACEY
You OK?

CARL
Yes, thank you for asking.

STACEY
Well, you know, I have to make sure the person teaching my son is in full control of his factories.

CARL
Faculties.

STACEY
That's what I said.

CARL
Yes, well, I'm fine as you can see. In full control of my...

Stacey looks over at a couple of the other moms who are looking on.

STACEY
All right then, see ya.

Carl watches as Stacey walks over to the couple and hands one of them something.
INT. STAFF ROOM – DAY

Carl walks in, sucking on a mint, and bumps into Suzanne. There is an awkward silence.

CARL
I'm really sorry, Suzanne.

SUZANNE
It's not me you should be apologising to. Well, not just me.

CARL
I know. Could I call round?

SUZANNE
That's not a good idea. Mike is still fuming.

CARL
Coffee?

SUZANNE
Carl, it's going to take a lot more than a brief sorry and a coffee to heal what you've done. After all I did for you with the wake.

CARL
I'm really sorry, Suzanne.

SUZANNE
Perhaps I could believe you if you stopped drinking.

Carl is shocked.

SUZANNE
You think sucking on those mints covers it up? You need to address your issues while sober. Until that happens you can't heal properly.

Suzanne quietens as another teacher walks in.

SUZANNE
Talk to me when you get sober. We're your friends and we're waiting for you.
Suzanne walks over to the other teacher and engages them in conversation.

INT. STACEY'S FLAT – DAY

Stacey enters with Robin and closes the front door behind her.

    STACEY
    Right, get yourself in your room and do some reading for an hour or so.

    ROBIN
    Have I got any dinner today, mommy?

Stacey looks at him.

    STACEY
    I'll see what I can do. You're not hungry are ya? Don't they feed you at school anymore? Well, you're a growing lad I s'pose. I'll see what I can do. Now, go on.

Robin walks into

ROBIN'S ROOM

and switches on the light, the bulb still flickering, He pulls out Oliver Twist and begins to read.

Stacey smiles at him before walking into the

LIVING ROOM

Billy is on the phone.

    STACEY
    All right, babes.

    BILLY
    (to Stacey)
    All right. Just on the phone to Maliq.

Stacey pulls a face and sits on the sofa.

    STACEY
    Nothing left?
Billy shakes his head and holds up his hand, indicating for her to be quiet.

BILLY
All right, Mal... It's Billy...
Yeah. Have you got anything?
Yeah. Er, can I have it on sub, or?

Billy pulls a face, not happy with something that has just been said.

BILLY (CONT.)
Yeah OK mate. I can sort that for you.

Billy hangs up the phone and looks pale-faced at Stacey. She grins at him.

BILLY
Dunno what you're grinning at.
You're out later. Maliq doesn't pay much.

STACEY
Yeah well, it's got to be different being a bloke.

BILLY
Piss off.

EXT./INT. SUZANNE'S HOUSE – NIGHT
Carl knocks the front door and Mike opens it. Mike is a little shocked to see him.

MIKE
Well, you've got balls.

CARL
Mike, look. I'm sorry. Really sorry. You guys are the only friends I have. I'm struggling to cope, if you want the truth.

Mike sighs.

MIKE
OK mate, you better come in. Er...

Mike peers over Carl's shoulder.
MIKE (CONT.)
Where's your car?

Carl looks bashful.

CARL
I got stopped the other night, after I left here. I might as well get used to not having a car now.

MIKE
Oh my God, really?

Carl steps into the house.

SUZANNE (OS)
Who is it?

Suzanne pops her head around the living room door. Carl smiles, sheepishly.

CARL
Hi.

Suzanne smiles at him warmly.

SUZANNE
Carl.

Mike leads Carl into the

LIVING ROOM

and takes a seat on the sofa, encouraging Carl to join him. Suzanne is on the phone.

SUZANNE
Have you eaten, Carl? We're ordering pizza.

CARL
No, I'm fine thank you.

SUZANNE
Don't be silly. I'll order extra.

Suzanne leaves the room to speak quietly on the phone.

MIKE
So, what happened?
CARL
The police saw me driving strangely, pulled me over, and that was pretty much that.

Suzanne enters the room, phone in hand.

SUZANNE
Right, I ordered Mexican for everyone. What have you two been gassing about?

Carl and Mike exchange a glance.

MIKE
Carl was just saying how sorry he is.

CARL
I also... got arrested for drink driving the other night.

SUZANNE
After you left here?

CARL
Yes.

SUZANNE
Oh my God. Was there an accident? Where's your car?

CARL
It's OK. Fortunately, I didn't cause an accident. It was a routine police stop.

SUZANNE
Have they taken the car off you?

CARL
No. At the moment I'm still legal to drive, I'm just choosing not to. The car's parked at home.

SUZANNE
Oh, I see. Are you going to tell Miriam?
CARL
No. Not yet. I'm going to wait until the case is over. I need the money or I can kiss goodbye to the house.

MIKE
That's terrible.

SUZANNE
Yes, you must keep the house. The memories.

CARL
I'm going to try.

MIKE
Well, we're here if you need us.

CARL
Thanks, Mike. That means a lot.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Billy is on his knees providing oral sex to Maliq who is sitting on the settee, both hands holding onto Billy's head as it bobs up and down.

Stacey is staring at them intently, willing them to hurry, waiting for her hit.

Robin is sitting on the floor staring intently at the TV.

Maliq suddenly moans and Stacey looks on expectantly.

MALIQ
Ohhhh. Yes. Yes. F-hu-hu-huck yeah!

Billy tries to pull away but Maliq holds his head. Billy gags but Maliq holds him until it is over, finally letting go. Billy pulls away gagging.

BILLY
You bastard, Maliq.

Maliq laughs cruelly. Billy recovers enough to see an opportunity.

BILLY
That's got to be worth an extra hit?
Maliq reaches into his pocket and pulls out the plastic bag full of wraps. He counts some out onto the table.

Maliq
Two white ones and a brown one.

Billy
Come on Maliq.

Maliq
You've got twenty quids worth there and that's all it's worth. I can get boys anywhere for a tenner.

Maliq does up his trousers and stands up.

Maliq
Time to go. have a nice night, people.

Maliq rubs Robin's head.

Maliq
See ya later little man.

Robin smiles, waves.

Robin
Good bye.

Maliq laughs.

Maliq
Later, peeps.

EXT. STREET, OUTSIDE CARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Mike pulls up outside Carl's house and gets out of the car, following Carl to his front door.

Mike wiggles his eyebrows provocatively. Carl laughs.

Mike
So, you going to invite me in for a coffee, or ... ?

Carl
Thanks, Mike.

Mike
What for? I'm being serious.
Mike wiggles his eyebrows again.

    CARL
    Do you want a coffee?
    
    MIKE
    Nah, better get back to Suzanne.
    She gets frisky after pizza.
    
    CARL
    Hey, too much information.
    
    MIKE
    Good to see you getting back to normal.
    
    CARL
    I doubt that will ever happen.
    
    MIKE
    Things do get better with time.
    
    CARL
    Thanks Mike.
    
    MIKE
    Don't forget, if you need me or
    Suzanne, pick up the phone. You're
    welcome any time... aside from
    maybe three in the morning.

Mike and Carl laugh.

    CARL
    I'll keep it to a reasonable time.

Mike heads back to the car while Carl lets himself in
the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM, CARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Carl sits on the sofa and puts his hand into his
jacket pocket, pulling out a bottle of prescription
DIAZEPAM.

He turns the bottle around in his hand, opens it and
empties out two blue tablets -- dry swallows them.
INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Billy finishes the last of the crack. Stacey is sitting on the settee with a huge grin on her face. Robin is watching the TV.

BILLY
I'd love another hit.

STACEY
Better get exercising your jaw then. Phone Maliq.

BILLY
Fuck off Stacey, he's not going to want to do it twice in one day.

STACEY
Phone him, you never know.

BILLY
I do know Stacey. It's your turn.

STACEY
I don't like going out this late.

BILLY
Fuck that. I did my part. It's your fucking turn.

STACEY
Why don't we just come down on the brown now? We don't need any more crack tonight.

BILLY
It's your fucking turn, Stacey.

Billy stands up with his fists clenched.

STACEY
OK, OK.

Stacey stands up and Billy relaxes.

BILLY
Hurry up. You know what I'm like when I need a hit.

STACEY
If I'm gone longer than an hour send the posse.
Billy sits back down.

    BILLY
    Yer a good un.

    STACEY
    No, you're just a bastard.

Billy laughs.

    BILLY
    Don't be like that, Stace'.

Stacey ignores him and heads out of the flat, slamming the door behind her. Billy grins at Robin.

    BILLY
    Looks like something has pissed off your mother, mate.

Robin doesn't respond and watches the TV. Billy looks around on the floor and picks up a piece of crack, laughing to himself.

    BILLY
    She missed this bit.

Billy loads the pipe and lights it.

INT. LIVING ROOM, CARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carl pours himself a glass of whiskey and knocks it back in one while looking at a family picture.

    CARL
    I miss you so bad.

He places the photo down and puts on his coat.

EXT. STREET CORNER, HARLEQUIN ESTATE - NIGHT

Stacey stands, smoking a cigarette. A car pulls up. BRAXTON LEADSTONE (40's), winds down his window, smiles.

    BRAXTON
    Hello love.

Stacey leans in through the window.
STACEY
What you after, lover?

BRAXTON
How much for the works?

STACEY
Oh, you've got some get up and go then.

BRAXTON
You could say that.

STACEY
You can do whatever you like for a hundred.

BRAXTON
OK, get in.

STACEY
Ooh. A big spender too. We're going to get along just fine.

Stacey climbs into the car.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Billy is crawling around the floor looking for any crumbs of crack that may have fallen. He looks over at Robin, who is watching the TV.

BILLY
Have you seen any?

ROBIN
No.

BILLY
You've got eyes, haven't ya?

Robin nods his head.

BILLY
You're sitting right there. Ideal spot to see the bits fall.

Billy finds something that looks white and then discards it.

BILLY
Fucking breadcrumb.
Billy stands up, rubbing his head.

**BILLY**
Where's your fucking mom? I need some crack. You know what crack is, Robin?

Robin gets up.

**BILLY**
Where the fuck are you going?

**ROBIN**
To my room, to read.

**BILLY**
(mimicking)
To my room, to read.

Billy looks at him with disgust.

**BILLY**
Go on then. Do some fucking reading. I'll be all right in here on my own.

Robin leaves the room.

**BILLY**
Yeah, thanks for the fucking support.

Billy rubs at his face, clearly agitated.

**STACEY**
So where are we going?

**BRAXTON**
My place. The wife's away on business.

**STACEY**
Oh, OK.
BRAXTON
You don't think I’m going to pay a hundred quid for a quick shifty in the car do ya?

STACEY
Course not. I was expecting a hotel somewhere.

Braxton pulls the car to a stop and switches off the engine outside a large house.

STACEY
Nice house.

BRAXTON
How do you think I can afford a classy girl like you?

Stacey giggles.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Billy is getting extremely agitated as he searches the floor for stray pieces of crack.

BILLY
Fuck sake, fuck sake.

He stands up and begins searching his pockets, as he does so Pete's business card falls out. Billy looks down at the card and slowly bends, picking it up.

INT. HALLWAY, BRAXTON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Braxton leads Stacey in.

STACEY
Very nice.

Braxton closes the front door, locks it.

STACEY
So where does all the action take place? Upstairs?

BRAXTON
No. Just go through there.

Braxton points at the living room door. Stacey smiles.
STACEY
OK.

Stacey reaches out a hand and pushes open the door, stepping into the

LIVING ROOM

Sheets hanging everywhere and seven naked MEN are waiting for her. Stacey tries to back away but Braxton pushes her into the middle of the men.

STACEY
No, I've changed my mind.

Braxton slaps her, hard across the face.

BRAXTON
Now, now love. You're going to be nice to me and my friends. Do you understand?

Stacey nods her head. Braxton removes his belt.

STACEY
Oh, God.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Billy sits down and looks at the business card. He takes out his phone and dials a number, putting the phone to his ear.

BILLY
Hello... Is that Pete?

INT. BRAXTON'S CAR, TRAVELLING - NIGHT

Stacey is sitting in the passenger seat looking heavily bruised and disheveled. Braxton pulls the car to a stop.

BRAXTON
This looks like your stop, love.

Stacey is scared, but ever desperate.

STACEY
What about the hundred quid?
Braxton laughs.

BRAXTON
You're not that stupid, love.

Stacey nods and gets out of the car.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT
Billy leads Pete into the living room.

BILLY
Have a seat.

PETE
No, thank you. I'm happy standing.

BILLY
Fair enough, fair enough. So, er... you got the money?

PETE
Of course. The boy?

BILLY
Yeah, he's in his room.

Pete nods his head and pulls an envelope out of his pocket.

PETE
Fifteen hundred here.

BILLY
You said three grand.

PETE
You get the rest when I bring him back.

BILLY
Four hours, yeah?

PETE
Approximately, yes, that's as long as we need.

BILLY
We?

PETE
Do you really want to know?
Billy swallows. Pete offers the envelope to Billy. Billy eyes it, licking his lips.

BILLY
No, no I don't

Billy takes the envelope and leads Pete into ROBIN'S BEDROOM

Robin is lying on the mattress, reading Oliver Twist. Billy looks at Robin, trying to find the right words. Pete walks over to Robin's mattress.

PETE
Hello, Robin. I'm Pete. Remember me?

Pete offers his hand to shake, Robin looks at him nervously.

PETE
You know, that's a hard book for a boy of your age to be reading. Reminds me a lot of myself.

Robin edges away nervously.

PETE
It's OK. I'm not going to hurt you. (to Billy)
I thought you said you prepped him?

BILLY
I did. Robin! Go with your uncle Pete. He's taking you to the cinema.

Robin shakes his head and moves away nervously.

PETE
You're going to have to carry him down to the car for me, to avoid suspicion.

Billy stares at Robin, who is now looking petrified on the mattress.

PETE
It's too late to back out now.
Billy steels himself and reaches down, picks up Robin. Robin struggles -- Billy slaps him across the head.

    BILLY
    Stop it, little cunt.

Robin acts more passively as Billy throws him over his shoulder.

    BILLY
    Just need to soften them up a bit sometimes.

Billy throws Pete a wink.

EXT. STREET CORNER, HARLEQUIN ESTATE – NIGHT

Stacey stands on the corner, clothes ripped, face bruised. Cars pull up, see the state of her, and then drive on again.

EXT. CANAL – NIGHT

Carl sits on a bench for a while before getting to his feet and walking away.

INT. PETE'S CAR – NIGHT

Pete puts on Robin's seatbelt, locking the doors. Waves farewell to Billy as he drives away.

TRAVELLING

Pete turns on the radio and the car is filled with gentle, classical music. Robin looks petrified.

    PETE
    Why do you look so worried? Do you think I'm going to hurt you?

Robin nods his head.

    PETE
    I tell you what, let's make a deal. When you say it's hurting, we'll stop. Is that OK?

Robin doesn't reply, Pete laughs.
PETE
You'll be OK little Robin.

EXT. MAIN ROAD, HARLEQUIN ESTATE - NIGHT
Carl walks out onto the estate, near a main road. Not many cars around as he approaches a junction.

INT. PETE'S CAR, TRAVELLING - NIGHT
Pete drives along the main road and sees the traffic lights turn to amber at a junction ahead.

PETE
You're going to go down really well, little Robin. Do you know that? Star of the show.

Pete rests his hand on Robin's leg, then moves it again to control the car as he stops for the red light. Pete looks out of his side window.

Robin sees his chance and presses the button to release the door locks.

Pete turns at the sound of the locks being released and reaches out to grab Robin.

EXT. JUNCTION, HARLEQUIN ESTATE - NIGHT
Carl walks along the street and sees Pete's car sitting at the traffic lights.

Suddenly the car door opens and there appears to be a struggle going on. Robin manages to get out of the car, falling into the road as he does so.

Carl squints through the dark.

CARL
Robin?

Carl walks/jogs over to Pete's car.

CARL
Robin, is that you?

Carl breaks into a run and gets to Robin who is just clambering up off the floor.
Carl and Pete's eyes meet as Pete reaches over to close the door, driving quickly away.

CARL
Oh my God, Robin! It is you. What the hell have I just seen?

ROBIN
Uncle Pete wanted to take me to his house.

CARL
Your uncle?

ROBIN
Not my real uncle.

CARL
Oh my God. We better telephone the police. What happened? Did he just snatch you off the street?

ROBIN
Billy put me in his car.

CARL
What?

ROBIN
I didn't want to go.

CARL
And he made you do it?

Robin nods his head.

CARL
Right, I'm going to have to call the police.

ROBIN
No. I don't want my mom to get into trouble.

CARL
Where is your mom?

ROBIN
I don't know.

CARL
Was she there when you got put in the car?
ROBIN
No, she was out. She doesn't know where I am.

CARL
Come back to my house, it's just around the corner from here.

INT. LIVING ROOM, CARL'S HOUSE – NIGHT
Carl walks in and removes his coat, points at the settee.

CARL
Take a seat.

Robin sits down. Carl looks at him and sighs.

CARL
Hungry? Thirsty? Both?

Robin nods his head.

CARL
All of them?

Robin nods his head again. Carl chuckles.

CARL
I know I'm your teacher, Robin, but you can relax. I'll get you something.

Carl walks into the KITCHEN and opens the fridge, it is almost bare. A carton of milk, past its sell by date, and a small block of cheese. Carl takes the cheese and shuts the fridge.

He looks through a few bare cupboards and finds a pack of Jacobs crackers. Takes everything into the LIVING ROOM.

Carl prepares the cheese and crackers, places them onto a plate.
CARL
Sorry. It's been a while since
I've been shopping. Hope it's OK.

Carl hands Robin the plate who takes it gratefully.

ROBIN
Thank you.

Robin immediately tucks into the cheese crackers. Carl chuckles.

CARL
You really are hungry. Don't they feed you at home?

ROBIN
Mom says, that's what schools are for.

Carl looks at him, grinning at the joke, then realises he's not joking.

CARL
You're serious?

Robin nods his head, mouthful of cheese and crackers.

CARL
What about weekends? Saturday and Sundays?

ROBIN
I get food then.

CARL
I should bloody think so. You get a cooked meal?

Robin nods his head.

CARL
Like what?

ROBIN
Noodles.

CARL
Noodles?

ROBIN
We haven't got an oven, so Mom has to make noodles out of the kettle.
CARL
Jesus Christ. I'm going to have to call your social worker on this. I just can't listen to any more. You really need to get out of there, Robin.

ROBIN
I love my mom.

Carl sighs and reaches for the phone.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Stacey staggers into the living room and takes a seat on the settee.

Billy is sitting down smoking crack, clearly extremely high. There is a large pile of crack on the table.

STACEY
Where did you get all this from?

Billy looks at her with a spaced-out grin.

STACEY
I couldn't make us anything and all the while you've been here with this.

Billy offers her the crack pipe.

STACEY
Well thanks for giving a shit.

Stacey takes the pipe.

STACEY
Is Robin OK?

Billy swallows at the mention of Robin's name and glances at the clock.

BILLY
He's OK. Just get some of that down ya.

Stacey puts the pipe to her lips.

STACEY
I need it after the night I've had.
She lights the pipe.

INT. LIVING ROOM, CARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Robin is sitting reading a copy of Oliver Twist. Carl looks on, smiling.

   CARL
   You can keep that copy, if you like.

   ROBIN
   It's OK. I have a copy at home.

   CARL
   Robin, I don't think they're going to let you go home this time.
   What's happened is pretty serious.

The front door bell rings.

   CARL
   I'll just get that.

Carl leaves Robin in the room for a few moments, returning with Vicky. Robin looks up from his book.

   VICKY
   Hello, Robin.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Billy loads up the pipe and lights it, drawing on it deeply. Stacey gets up, very unsteady on her feet, and heads into the HALLWAY

where she pauses for a second before entering

ROBIN'S BEDROOM

The room is dark, she finds it hard to see.

   STACEY
   Robin? Are you asleep baby?

Stacey walks over to the mattress and finds it empty.
STACEY
Robin?
Stacey checks the
BATHROOM

STACEY
Robin?
Starting to panic, she looks in the
KITCHEN

STACEY
Robin? Where are you baby?
She rubs her head, breathing fast. She walks into the
LIVING ROOM
Billy looks up from the crack pipe, relaxed.

STACEY
He's gone Billy. I can't find him anywhere. I'm going to call the police.

Billy's eyes open wide in shock.

BILLY
Not the police.

STACEY
He's not here. I'm going. We've got no fucking choice.

Stacey makes to head out. Billy stands up quickly, grabs her arm.

BILLY
Wait, Stacey, wait.

STACEY
What? He's gone. He's not here.

BILLY
It's all right Stace. I know where he is.
STACEY
What? Where is he?

BILLY
He went out with a friend of mine.

Stacey frowns.

STACEY
A friend of yours? You haven't got any friends.

BILLY
Yes, I have. He's a good bloke.

STACEY
What do you mean he's a good bloke? Where is he? Where is my son?

BILLY
He is a good bloke, Stacey, he paid for all this.

Billy indicates the drugs on the table. Stacey looks at the drugs, taking a moment for things to sink in.

STACEY
Why would he do that?
(long pause)
Oh my God. You've sold my son.

BILLY
No Stacey, no.

Stacey screams and lashes out, punching Billy in the face. His nose splits, bleeds.

STACEY
Now, you're going to get my son back or I swear I will fucking kill you!

Billy checks the blood from his nose and his face darkens.

INT. LIVING ROOM, CARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vicky is sitting on the settee. Carl is standing and Robin is reading his book.
CARL
It appears to me that they actually sold him to some sort of paedophile.

VICKY
We're better off not making assumptions. As far as you know, Robin was in a car, being driven by somebody you don't recognise.

CARL
Escaped. Robin escaped from a car. It's not like he was sitting in the car and I've taken it upon myself to drag him out.

VICKY
Have you been drinking tonight?

CARL
So what if I have, what does that have to do with anything?

VICKY
Alcohol can cloud our judgement.

CARL
Well, I've only had a couple, and I know what I saw. Tell her, Robin.

Robin looks up from his book.

ROBIN
I love my mommy. I don't want to leave her.

CARL
If you take Robin back there there is a very real danger he will be hurt in the future.

Carl turns to Robin, bending down to his level.

CARL
Do you hear that Robin? You have to tell them the truth.

Vicky stands up and grabs Robin by the arm.

VICKY
That's quite enough of that. Come on, Robin.
Carl grabs Vicky by the arm.

    CARL
    You can't take him home.

    VICKY
    We will do whatever we feel is the best thing to do for Robin, Mr Webster. Now, let go of my arm.

Carl lets go of her and she heads out of the house with Robin in tow.

Carl watches her leave through the living room window. Robin looks back at him and waves. Carl raises his hand.

    CARL
    Good luck, little Robin.

INT. HEAD OFFICES, SOCIAL SERVICES – NIGHT

Vicky walks in holding Robin's hand. She turns to a COLLEAGUE.

    VICKY
    Did you call it through?

    COLLEAGUE
    Yes we did. He should be here in a minute.

Colleague looks down at Robin.

    COLLEAGUE
    Hello little man. What's your name then?

    ROBIN
    Robin.

    COLLEAGUE
    You're a cutie. Don't worry we'll have you sorted out in a minute.

    ROBIN
    I want to see my mom.

    VICKY
    You missing your mommy, Robin?
Robin nods his head. A BUZZER sounds and the Colleague picks up the phone.

COLLEAGUE
OK, thank you.

Colleague puts down the phone.

COLLEAGUE
He's in his office now.

VICKY
Wait here Robin.

COLLEAGUE
Yeah stay with me, I'll look after you. Do you like chocolate?

Vicky smiles and heads down a corridor to a door with the name DAVID JENKINS stenciled into it. Vicky knocks and walks into

PETE'S OFFICE

shuts the door behind her. [Pete is obviously a fake name]

PETE
Take a seat.

VICKY
Thank you, sir.

Vicky sits.

PETE
Please, call me David.

She smiles sheepishly.

VICKY
It's the Pearce case we were discussing a couple of weeks ago.

Pete pretends to think for a few moments.

PETE
Ah, yes little Robbie wasn't it?

VICKY
Robin.
PETE
That's it.

VICKY
He was found by a teacher from his school, apparently getting, or escaping, out of a strange man's car.

PETE
Did he give a description of the car?

VICKY
No, just a dark, expensive-looking car. Aside from that, nothing.

Pete relaxes.

PETE
What about the person driving? Maybe it was an uncle or something?

VICKY
We're not sure who was driving.

PETE
But the teacher gave a description?

VICKY
A very vague one.

PETE
Did he go to the police?

VICKY
No, he telephoned us. Didn't want to call the police in case it was for nothing.

PETE
Good, good.

Pete realises he sounds just a bit too relieved and changes his tone.

PETE
The last thing we want to do is needlessly bother the police.

Vicky smiles in agreement.
PETE
The best thing to do here is take him back to his parents. The likely scenario is he ran away from home and some kindly person was trying to get him to a police station. The world isn't full of animals, like they would have us believe.

VICKY
I agree, David. So, I'll get him home to mommy then. He'll be pleased.

PETE
Bring all relevant paperwork to me. I'd like to follow this case closely. I'm looking for a new area manager and, so far, you're ticking all the right boxes.

Vicky is flattered and smiles coyly.

VICKY
I'll certainly try my best to do a good job, David.

Pete winks.

INT. LIVING ROOM, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT
Stacey is on the floor, crying. Billy is sitting on the settee smoking crack.

BILLY
Fucking bitch. Punch my fucking nose.

Stacey struggles to her knees.

STACEY
I want my son.

BILLY
I told you, they will bring him back soon.

STACEY
What are they going to do to him?
Billy swallows and looks away from her, unable to meet her eye.

**BILLY**
He'll be fine. All I know is, three grand. Three fucking grand, Stacey.

**STACEY**
He's seven years old. Just a little boy.

Stacey tries to get to her feet, Billy stands aggressively, pushes her back to the floor.

**BILLY**
Did I say you could get up?

A look of disgust crosses Billy's face as he stands over her.

**BILLY**
I don't even really need you any more. Look at you. Look at the state of you!

**STACEY**
No Billy.

Billy grabs Stacey by her hair and drags her out of the living room.

**INT. VICKY'S CAR, TRAVELING - NIGHT**

Robin sits in the passenger seat, closes his eyes. Vicky glances at him and smiles.

**VICKY**
We'll have you home to mom in a bit.

Robin opens his eyes and smiles.

**INT. LIVING ROOM, CARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Carl is on the phone.
CARL
Well is there somebody I can speak to? A manager or something?
(pause)
OK, I'll hold.

Carl takes a sip of whiskey.

CARL
Hello? Yes. Hi, David this is Carl Webster, I'm calling about Robin Pearce.

Carl takes another sip of whiskey while he waits for Pete to finish speaking.

CARL
You're kidding me? Why would you take him home?

Carl stands, agitated at what he's hearing.

CARL
I know what I saw. It looked like a kidnapping to me.

Carl calms down a little, sits down, as he listens some more.

CARL
Yes, looked. It was dark, I couldn't see properly. I know one thing though, I will recognise that guy if I see him again.

Carl opens his bottle of Diazepam and swallows one, chasing it with a dram of whiskey.

INT. HALLWAY, STACEY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Billy drags Stacey by her hair into the MAIN BEDROOM

throwing her onto the bed.

BILLY
That's where you stay from now on.
Billy raises his hand to slap her but stops when he hears the front door knock. Stacey tries to climb off the bed.

STACEY
Robin!

Billy drags her back, pushing her back onto the bed.

BILLY
Stay there and don't fucking move.

Billy heads into the

HALLWAY

and straightens himself out before opening the front door. He is shocked to see Vicky and Robin standing there.

VICKY
Don't worry, there is an explanation. I tried phoning but couldn't get through.

BILLY
Come in. Go through.

Vicky and Robin walk in. Billy closes the door and follows them into the

LIVING ROOM

Vicky looks around, her eyes falling on the drugs on the table. Billy hurry in and makes an attempt at hiding the drug paraphernalia.

VICKY
So where is Stacey? Little Robin here has been missing her, haven't you.

Vicky bends and grins at Robin who nods his head.

BILLY
She's sleeping. Very tired. So, what's going on here?
VICKY
I'm sorry about this, I'm sure there is an explanation but Robin's teacher, Mr Webster?

Billy nods his head.

VICKY
He found Robin out on his own on the Harlequin.

Billy frowns, and makes the connections.

BILLY
I don't understand. Earlier, he was in his room and now you're knocking the door with him.

Billy takes a seat.

BILLY
This is all a bit of a shock.

VICKY
There was some mention that perhaps he was with an uncle? An Uncle Pete?

Billy shakes his head.

BILLY
Nope. Like I said, he was in his room and now he's at the door with you. He must have got out on his own.

VICKY
Well it's lucky he was found.

BILLY
Thank you. We'll have to remember to keep the door locked.

VICKY
Yes... OK. Have you got any further with decorating his room?

BILLY
We start tomorrow.

Vicky smiles.
VICKY
Of course. Right then. I'll not keep you any longer, er...

BILLY
Billy.

VICKY
Yes. I'll be in touch to see how Robin is doing in the next couple of days.

Vicky heads into the HALLWAY
with Billy following her.

VICKY
Obviously with recent events we'll have to check in a little more frequently for a while.

Billy leans past Vicky to open the front door.

BILLY
Bye.

Billy slams the front door before she has time to speak.

Billy runs into the LIVING ROOM
and bends down to Robin's level.

BILLY
What the fuck is going on? Where's uncle Pete?

ROBIN
I escaped.

BILLY
Escaped? Escaped from what?

ROBIN
I got out of the car and Mr Webster helped me.
Billy rubs his head. Billy's phone rings, he answers.

    BILLY
    Hello? Yeah, he's here. What happened?

Billy uncovers his drug paraphernalia and loads up the crack pipe.

    BILLY
    Yes, I know. I tried to play my part.

Stacey walks in.

    ROBIN
    Mommy!

Robin runs to her and Stacey, painfully, embraces him. Billy turns away so as to hide his conversation.

    BILLY
    Yeah, OK. Just let me know.

Billy hangs up the phone.

    STACEY
    I want you out, Billy. Get out of my flat.

Billy grins.

    BILLY
    You don't mean that, Stacey.

    STACEY
    Yes I do. I want you out. I can't take this any more.

Billy picks up a large ball of crack and walks towards her with it.

    BILLY
    You don't want any?

Stacey looks hungrily at the crack.

    STACEY
    No, it's not worth my son. Never.

    BILLY
    Nothing happened to him. He got away. Ask him.
Stacey's eyes are full of tears as she bends down to speak to Robin.

STACEY
Do you trust mommy?

Robin nods his head.

STACEY
You'll tell me the truth, no matter what?

Robin nods his head.

STACEY
Tell me what happened.

BILLY
He...

STACEY
Shut up, Billy.
(to Robin)
Tell mommy what happened.

ROBIN
Billy told me to go with uncle Pete.

Stacey looks hatefully at Billy. Billy grins, puts the pipe in his mouth and lights it, taking a seat on the settee.

STACEY
And then what happened?

ROBIN
Uncle Pete put me in his car.

STACEY
He's not your uncle, baby.

ROBIN
I know, mommy.

STACEY
Where did he take you?

ROBIN
He locked the doors but I saw how he did it. I waited until he had to stop at a red light. I pushed the button and opened the door.
Stacey gasps.

    STACEY
    Did he try to stop you?

    ROBIN
    He tried... but I kicked him in the face... and I fell out.

Stacey clutches Robin, hugging him.

    STACEY
    Oh my God. You clever boy. Clever, clever boy.

    ROBIN
    Then I saw Mr Webster.

    STACEY
    Mr Webster?

    ROBIN
    Yes, he helped me.

    STACEY
    OK, Robin. Go to your room. Things are going to be better from now on. I promise.

Billy grins, lighting the crack pipe, as Robin goes to his room.

    STACEY
    Right, Billy, I want you out.

Billy laughs.

    BILLY
    What the fuck you talking about Stacey? I'm not going anywhere.

    STACEY
    Yes you will. I swear, I'll get the police.

Billy's eyes grow wide.

    BILLY
    You know how I feel about the filth, Stacey. Don't push it.
STACEY
I mean it, Bill. Leave or I will call the police.

Billy stands up.

STACEY
Don't think hitting me will work either. I won't allow you to do that to my son.

BILLY
He can make more in one night than you make in two months.

STACEY
So is that all I am to you, Bill?
A cash cow?

BILLY
You're not even that, any more.

Billy raises his hands to hit her, she cowers away.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND – DAY

Carl waits as the children line up for his class but there is no sign of Robin. Carl glances at his watch.

CARL
OK then kids, inside please.

Suzanne leads her class in and waves at Carl, he waves back.

INT. ROBIN'S BEDROOM, STACEY'S FLAT – DAY

Billy walks in. Robin is already dressed in his school uniform.

ROBIN
Where's mommy?

BILLY
I'm taking you to school this morning.

ROBIN
Where's mommy?
BILLY
She's sleeping. You know what the lazy bitch is like.

ROBIN
I want to see her.

Billy slaps him around the head.

BILLY
I'm your dad now. Do you understand?

Robin rubs his head.

BILLY
Do you understand?

ROBIN
Yes.

BILLY
So, you do as I say. You can see your mom later, if she sticks around. Now come on, we're late.

INT. CLASSROOM – DAY
Carl stands in the classroom, reading to his class, and happens to glance out of the 

WINDOW
Billy is walking into the school with Robin.

CLASSROOM
Carl spots them and places the book down.

CARL
OK class, continue reading from your own books. I'll just be five minutes.

Carl heads into the 

EXT. PLAYGROUND
and hurries over to Billy.
CARL
Hi, could I just have a word with you please.

Billy stops.

BILLY
Make it quick. He's late.

CARL
Yes I know. Robin, carry on to class, I just want to have a word with your...

BILLY
Dad, I'm his Dad. Isn't that right, Robin?

Robin nods his head and then hurries off into the school building.

CARL
What the hell was going on last night?

BILLY
That's none of your business.

CARL
I'll make it my business when a child from my class is escaping out of a stranger's car during the middle of the night.

BILLY
Oh you will, will you.

Billy leans in close to Carl and sniffs.

BILLY
Like a drink do ya?

Carl looks shocked.

BILLY
My old man was just like you. All respectable on the outside, but inside...

Billy laughs and taps his temple with a forefinger.
Billy walks away. Carl chases after him.

**CARL**
I'm warning you. If anything happens to that child...

Billy turns on him.

**BILLY**
You'll what? What will you do? You know how far this goes?

**CARL**
How far what goes?

Billy stops, realising he's said too much.

**BILLY**
Let's just say you don't want to get yourself involved in my business. I have friends in high places.

Billy leans in to whisper, Carl moves his head back slightly as though offended by Billy's smell.

**BILLY**
Why do you think they brought him back to me?

Billy winks and walks away. Carl grabs his shoulder again, Billy turns and punches Carl in the face. Carl staggers backwards, clutching his nose.

**BILLY**
If you want some more of that, touch me again. I was just defending myself.

Billy waits for a while, but Carl is only concerned about the blood pouring from his nose, and walks away. Carl heads back into the school but is stopped by Miriam on the way in.
MIRIAM
Carl, I need to speak with you, in my office.

CARL
But my class.

MIRIAM
My office, now, Carl.

Carl sighs and follows Miriam to her OFFICE.

Carl stands by the desk. Miriam takes her seat.

MIRIAM
Right, now we're a little more private.

Miriam takes a tissue from a box on her desk and hands it to him -- he places it against his nose.

CARL
Thank you.

MIRIAM
I'd like for you to take some time off.

CARL
With all due respect, Miriam, I can't afford it. I've got a mortgage to pay.

MIRIAM
I have no choice Carl, this is not my decision.

CARL
Well who's decision is it then?

INT. CONSERVATORY, MONROE’S HOUSE – DAY

COUNCILLOR MONROE sips from a glass of bourbon, while sitting opposite Pete who has just finished his own glass and stands up.

PETE
Got to go. Thanks.
MONROE
The guy is off the rails. A little break won't hurt him.

EXT. CAR PARK, OUTSIDE MONROE'S HOUSE - DAY
Carl heads up the drive, towards the front door.

INT. HALLWAY, MONROE'S HOUSE - DAY
Pete puts on his jacket and heads toward the front door. Monroe follows him.

MONROE
So, you up for golf Sunday?

PETE
Yes, why not.

Pete reaches out his hand, opens the front door just as

EXT. FRONT DOOR, OUTSIDE MONROE'S HOUSE - DAY
Carl reaches out a hand to knock it.

INT. HALLWAY, MONROE'S HOUSE - DAY
Pete and Carl stare at each other.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. JUNCTION - NIGHT
Robin falls out of Pete's car into the road. Carl runs over to help him. Carl's eyes lock with Pete's as Pete hurries to close the car door.

END FLASHBACK.

Pete barges past Carl out onto the

EXT. CAR PARK, OUTSIDE MONROE'S HOUSE - DAY
Carl follows him with his eyes as Pete gets into his car. Realisation dawning.

CARL
It was him. That was the guy!
Monroe arrives.

MONROE
Who are you?

Pete drives away and Carl turns to face Monroe.

CARL
Carl Webster. Are you Councilor Monroe?

MONROE
Yes I am. I suppose you're here to talk about your suspension.

CARL
I was until I saw that guy leaving your house.

MONROE
Dave?

Carl frowns.

CARL
His name isn't, Pete?

Monroe laughs.

MONROE
No. Whatever gave you that idea? That was David Jenkins, Senior Head at Harlequin Social Services.

CARL
That was the guy I saw a pupil escaping from the other night.

Monroe laughs.

MONROE
Yes, I was told about this. I believe you've been drinking. You're also on anti-depressants? I understand you lost your wife and son recently.

CARL
That doesn't change what I saw.
MONROE
Look. You've been through a tragic time. I understand what you're going through.

Carl looks at him suspiciously.

CARL
Don't patronise me. I want to find out if David Jenkins had any legitimate reason for having Robin in his car that night.

MONROE
He doesn't need a reason because it didn't happen. Now look, Mr Webster, you don't want me to patronise you, if you carry on with this delusion, it won't go well for you.

CARL
What's going on here?

MONROE
The question is, what is going on in your mind? There's certainly nothing going on here outside of your imagination.

CARL
There's something not right here.

MONROE
Now look. If you want to lose your job permanently, you're going the right way about it.

CARL
Is that a threat?

MONROE
I don't make threats.

CARL
If that man was a pervert, abusing children would you do anything about it?

MONROE
I've been extremely patient with you, now I'm going to have to ask you to leave.
CARL
Why are you evading the question?

MONROE
You're not thinking clearly, now please leave. Take a four week suspension. Just keep going if you want to add more.

Carl looks at him, hatefully.

CARL
This isn't the last you're going to hear about this.

Carl walks away.

MONROE
Oh, I think it is, Mr Webster. If you turn up at my property again, I'll call the police.

INT. PETE'S CAR – DAY
Pete is on the phone.

PETE
You owe me some money... Calm down. We can still do the deal... The teacher has been taken care of. I really don't see an issue... OK Billy. Make sure you prepare him properly this time.

Pete hangs up.

INT. THE KNIGHT'S ARMS – DAY
Carl props up the bar knocking back shots of whiskey. An old Irish MAN takes a seat next to him and smiles at the BARMAID.

MAN
(to Barmaid)
Double whiskey.

The Man pays for his drink and eyes Carl, inquisitively.
MAN
Now, you look like a man with the world on his shoulders. Drowning your sorrows, eh?

Carl looks at him, head spinning.

CARL
I lost my job.

MAN
Well that can certainly turn a man to drink, alright. Still, there'll be others. Man like you should be able to walk into a job.

CARL
Not when there's a conspiracy against me.

MAN
Well you must be a very important man, eh.

The Man winks at the barmaid.

CARL
I just get the feeling that they will still try to get him, you know?

The Man looks at him, nonplussed.

CARL
I don't care about losing my job. Or my house, not any more. My priority is the safety of that child.

MAN
Of course it is. Whenever children are involved we should always consider them first. You shouldn't need to watch Jeremy Kyle to know that.

Carl looks at him for a few moments.

CARL
You're absolutely right.

Carl leaves the pub. The Man smiles bemusedly and turns to chat to the barmaid.
INT. HALLWAY, STACEY'S FLAT - DAY

Billy opens the front door and three middle aged MEN walk in.

BILLY
All right lads, come in, come in. Heard about the half price special eh? You going in all at once?

The men nod.

BILLY
OK lads, pay me first.

The men reach into their pockets and pull out their money, giving it to Billy.

INT. BEDROOM, CARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Carl finishes off packing a suitcase and searches through his bedroom drawers, finding three passports. He opens them. One of them has Edward's photo in it, another has his own.

He throws them both into the suitcase and holds the third in his hand, opens it and sees the picture of Anita. Kisses it.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

Miriam leads Carl's class outside, ready for collection by their PARENTS.

Carl appears and approaches Robin. Miriam is distracted by a child with a query.

CARL
Robin.

Robin looks at him innocently.

CARL
Remember the bad man?

Robin nods and looks concerned.

CARL
He's going to come back again. Billy will sell you to him. We have to leave.
Carl reaches out a hand.

**CARL**
You can trust me, Robin.

Robin slowly reaches out his hand and takes Carl's. Carl nods and breathes a sigh of relief.

Miriam **POV** -

She looks up to see Carl and Robin leaving the playground together.

**MIRIAM (OS)**
Carl? Mr Webster!

**BACK TO SCENE**

Carl walks on without looking back.

**MIRIAM**
Oh my God.

Miriam wavers between hurrying into the building and staying to watch the children.

Suzanne walks out onto the playground and notices Miriam looking flustered.

**SUZANNE**
What's wrong?

**MIRIAM**
Carl Webster has just taken a child from the class.

Suzanne frowns.

**SUZANNE**
Really? There must be a reason. Maybe the parents asked him to collect them. Which child is it?

**MIRIAM**
Robin Pearce.

**SUZANNE**
He is involved with the family.

**MIRIAM**
Yes, perhaps. Something about this just doesn't feel right.
SUZANNE
Well, it seems that all will become clear in a moment. The main bulk of parents are arriving.

INT. HALLWAY, STACEY'S FLAT - DAY
Billy lets out the three middle aged men that called earlier.

BILLY
Call back any time lads.

Billy shuts the front door and walks into the

MAIN BEDROOM
Stacey is lying on the bed, dressed in provocative underwear. Her face and body are full of bruises.

STACEY
How come you aint up the school?

BILLY
Why, what time is it?

STACEY
You're late.

Billy glances at the clock next to Stacey's bed.

BILLY
Bloody hell, why didn't you remind me?

Stacey looks at him, hatefully.

STACEY
I was getting fucked by three blokes, remember.

BILLY
I'll get down there, it's a school, they've got to look after him.

EXT. CARL'S CAR, TRAVELLING - DAY
Robin sits in the passenger seat, looking out of the window as they pass signs for the airport.
ROBIN
Where are we going Mr Webster?

CARL
Far away from here.

ROBIN
Will I see my mom again?

CARL
Do you want to?

Robin concentrates on the passing scenery.

CARL
They're trying to sell you so they can get money for drugs.

ROBIN
My mom isn't. It was Billy. He's really bad. He hits her.

CARL
I have to make sure you're safe.

FADE OUT