

# THE SHAM

## **LOGLINE:**

An unforeseen accident casts doubt on the beliefs of a family man, making him question whether part of his life has been a lie.

## **SYNOPSIS:**

The show takes place in a fictitious suburban town called Belwick. In the beginning of the series, James is shocked to find out that he didn't father the boy he has believed to be his son for 10 years. He later gathers the courage to confront his wife about the matter and tell her that he plans to file for divorce. Gene is one step ahead though and isn't ready to end the marriage. This causes a turmoil between the two characters eventually affecting the mental state of their children. The whole community is also dragged into the situation with people taking sides on who is right and who is wrong.

James later comes to learn that Gene has a lot of tricks up her sleeve, some even deadly. In the first half of the series, it becomes less about who's Ralf's father and more about who can hurt the other the most. Their children can't cope with the situation forcing Gene's rich parents to intervene. Tough choices have to be made, more secrets are revealed.

## **CHARACTERS:**

In addition to the following main characters, *The Sham* has more or less anonymous supporting cast of workers, families and generic everyday people. These characters can be featured, developed or done away with if necessary.

**JAMES KELKER** is 35 year old architect who's set up his own studio in the town of Belwick after leaving a big company. He becomes disillusioned when he finds out the truth about his son and this forces him out of his comfort zone. He loves his children more than anything and has to find a balance between keeping them happy while sorting out a messy path to a divorce.

**GENE KELKER** is a 34 year old sales supervisor who runs one of her father's clothing stores in the town of Belwick. It's not necessary, but it's something for her to do. She's been brought up believing that she can have whatever she wants and this has been going well until her husband decides to leave her. She's intelligent and cunning. She knows when to play the damsel in distress when it suits her. She has strong family beliefs and is ready to do whatever it takes to keep her family together.

**RALF KELKER (10)** son to James and Gene. He likes video games, school, visiting friends and riding his bike. He doesn't talk much as he keeps most of his thoughts to himself, but when necessary he speaks his mind.

**KENDALL KELKER (8)** sister to Ralf. She's a bubbly character and an aspiring future chef. She has a collection of food magazines and enjoys cooking on most occasions with her father, James. She's always positive even when times get hard and she the voice of reason in the family.

**FABE (35)** a freelance software engineer and long time best friend to James and his confidant. There are almost no secrets between them. He always tries to help where he can. Alcohol is his weakness, computers are his play ground. He loves living cheap.

**DR. SAM (50s)** is a senior doctor at the Belwick General Hospital. He speaks with science like it's his religion. He can do no wrong, everybody loves him. He can't quit smoking even if he knows it's bad for him, claims its an old habit.

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MS. BROOKS (40s) is a school teacher at the school. She's about law and order during school hours but enjoys a drink or two on her free-time. She is befriended by Gene and will do anything for her.

## **PILOT OUTLINE:**

The pilot opens with James Kelker, a family man in his 30's, his loving wife Gene Kelker and two children, going on about their morning. Life has always been normal till this specific day when James has to drop his kids off to school only to find out moments later that his son Ralf has been involved in a school bus accident.

On his arrival to the hospital, he is informed that Ralf needs blood, which he volunteers to give. He is told moments later that the blood type doesn't match. It's at this point he finds out that Ralf might not be his son. He carries out a paternity test without his wife's consent. The tests confirm his suspicion.

Afraid to confront his wife over the matter, for fear of her coming up with an elaborate lie, he instead entrusts his long time friend and freelance software engineer Fabe to go through his wife's laptop, with the hope that something might be in there that he could use to his advantage when he plans to leave her. Gene catches on to the fact that her husband is on to something and in response threatens Fabe to keep whatever information he has found, believing that this is a matter she will handle with her husband James. The pilot concludes with James asking himself why his wife would hide such a thing as he glances at her from a distance during a barbeque.

## **THEMES:**

In a nutshell, *The Sham* is a case study on the structure of family values and how a revelation affects that structure. As such the series focuses on several major themes.

Betrayal, James suffers a personal betrayal in the pilot when he finds out his son isn't really his. And the fact that Gene must have known about this and not told him, leads him to question everything.

The Sham also explores Power and what it means to people who wield it. This is shown when Gene uses her money and influence to create situations that would make it harder for James to divorce her.

The sham also looks into Sanity, as the stakes are raised we see the main characters mental state change drastically affecting those close to them directly or indirectly.

## **OTHER EPISODES:**

### What now?

James confronts Gene about his findings and demands for a divorce. Gene gives him an ultimatum.

### Damsel in Distress

James finds himself behind bars accused of assaulting his wife. Meanwhile Fabe discovers Gene has more secrets.

### War

James makes plans to take his children away. Ms. Brooks advises Gene to listen to reason.

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## The Pact

James and Gene agree to resolve the matter but will they go through with it. A stranger comes to town.

## Whatever It Takes

Gene's parents are in town to intervene. James might know who Ralf's father is.

## We Need To Talk

Close friends plan an intervention for Gene and James to resolve their issues. Gene is having none of it.

## For Better or Worse.

An unforeseen tragedy brings James and Gene close. Will they be able to find middle ground.

"His whole life was a *sham*, a fairy tale. The truth hidden behind a wall of lies, each lie another brick in the wall until he probably couldn't see the truth anymore." — Shaun Jeffrey