

# B L O O D   C E L L S

by  
Joseph Bull, Luke Seomore, Ben Young

**FINAL LOCKED DRAFT**

13 March 2014

Biennale College Cinema  
La Biennale di Venezia

Third Films  
Kingsland Church Studios  
Priory Green  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE6 2DW  
UK

OVER BLACK:

Wind. Birds. A man's laboured breathing.

CUT IN:

1 EXT. PASTURE. DAY

Endless green.

CORMAC (56) stands with his back to us as he surveys his farmland. His broad shoulders rise and fall inside a dirty work jacket.

Reverse and CLOSE on Cormac's face. A faint scar on his cheek. He stares forward, eyes glistening, a strong man weak with grief.

Cormac glances down. A BOLT GUN rests on a rock next to him - half pistol, half science fiction ray gun.

His throat catches.

Breathe.

Cormac leans over. Lifts the bolt gun. Walks into the green distance.

2 INT. / EXT. BARN. DAY

Patient pace, real time as machinery hums in the background and hooves clomp and echo. We move alongside a COW as her head sways, guided down a corridor by Cormac. *He mutters inaudible soothing phrases to the animal.*

An open door beckons ahead. As Cormac and his cow step nearer and nearer the rush of the wind outside rises louder and louder and into the

PASTURE

Cow and farmer move across the pasture as grass sways and stretches around them and the wind surges into a GUNSHOT.

The mechanical thunk of the bolt gun.

3 EXT. PASTURE. DAY. LATER

The coarse sound of burning melts into the score as we reveal a BONFIRE.

Red, orange, raging.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

The upturned stomachs and legs of cows are visible through the flames.

We linger as the fire gets a gulp of oxygen and surges.

4 EXT. PASTURE. DUSK

Smoke curls into the air. The fire has burned down to cremated cinders.

Cormac stares out over the circle of black. Pale, broken, denuded.

He struggles to retain his composure as the last of the fire crackles and sparks and we follow his gaze toward the horizon:

The distant silhouette of a YOUNG MAN.

His son.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLES: **BLOOD CELLS**

FADE IN:

5 EXT. FIELD. DAWN. 13 YEARS LATER

Dark blue sky surrounds a blossom of pink.

Deep greens, expansive horizons, unkempt tufts of grass. A raw savage beauty.

A worn young man treks down a field path: ADAM, 33, Cormac's now-grown son. Lean muscle, piercing eyes, pale Irish complexion. His hands firmly in his pocket, his body closed inwards, a compact unit.

6 INT. SHIPPING CONTAINER. DAY

A tight jet of water blasts across corrugated steel. Dirt and grit drop away to reveal the shiny metallic surface underneath.

Reveal Adam in a face mask and protective overalls as he guides a small pressure hose across the container wall.

7 EXT. PORT OF HEYSHAM. DAY

A small group of DOCKWORKERS (30s) in the distance perch on discarded wooden palates, talking and eating lunch.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

Adam walks toward them. *One of the men calls out to him and Adam nods, trades a quick few sarcastic comments as he passes.*

CLOSER as we follow Adam toward the secluded edge of the docks.

He checks over his shoulder as he walks - no one around.

Adam reaches the edge. Slips his hand into his coat. Pulls out a can of cider.

He pops open the can. Drinks. Relief.

Adam stares out over the nuclear power station and crashing waves - North West England crossed with Eastern bloc.

8 EXT. PORT OF HEYSHAM. DAY. LATER

Adam strides between shipping containers, drenched in sweat. His mobile phone rings and rings.

He finds a spot of relative quiet. Answers the mobile.

ADAM  
(Anglicized Irish accent)  
Hello.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
Adam--

The phone goes dead. Adam pops open the battery cover, slides the battery out, blows on the contact point, reinserts the battery...

Nothing.

*Adam curses* and shoves the phone into his pocket. Wipes the sweat from his brow.

Adam goes pale. Unnerved by the call.

9 INT. WORKING MAN'S CLUB. DAY

A faded, half-empty museum of a place. MEN of all ages huddle amid floral carpets and stained net curtains.

Adam holds court at a corner table, pint of cider in hand. The men are immersed in his words as they drink and roll cigarettes.

*Adam finishes a funny story from his family's farm - a tale of the time his younger brother shot him in the arse with a pellet gun thinking Adam was the field monster Adam had invented in bedtime stories.*

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

The men roar with laughter. As the laughter starts to die out Adam moves into a story about an old bull from the farm named Thor. About the time Adam's father was cleaning the barn and Thor pinned him against the wall and gouged Adam's Father's face with his horns.

*The men smile and chuckle in anticipation of a punch line that never comes. A charitable OLDER MAN (60s) asks Adam if he goes back to the farm often. Adam replies that his family lost the farm years ago. The rest of the conversation becomes a distant echo as Adam glances out the window.*

CUT TO BLACK.

The soft ambience of the afternoon lingers for a moment before the thump and screech of TRANCE MUSIC blasts through.

CUT IN:

10 INT. WORKING MAN'S CLUB. NIGHT

A swirl of darkness and primary colours. The club has mutated into a sweaty teenage disco. TEENAGE GIRLS and BOYS cluster and grope and dance - the girls in fake Jimmy Choos covered in plastic jewels, the boys in cheap sportswear. Sparkling blue shots of flavoured vodka travel through the room.

Adam sits in an empty booth with his drink. Catches the gaze of a pair of TEENAGE BOYS (16) - one tall and rangy, one hulking and rotund. They stare back with woozy menace.

Adam returns the favour. Intoxicated, a subtle enjoyment at their anger. He rises and manoeuvres toward the opposite end of the club, away from the boys.

11 INT. WORKING MAN'S CLUB. NIGHT. MOMENTS LATER

Adam lingers on the edge of the dance floor amid the drinking and gurning kids. He turns--

The ROTUND BOY stands in front of him.

Acne scars, pupils like saucers, demanding a reaction.

*Shouting over the music, the boy demands to know where Adam is from. What he is doing in this town, at a teenage disco. Adam says that he has travelled here for the beautiful nightlife.*

The boy steps in for a fight and Adam EMBRACES him. A full on bear hug.

The boy is stunned into homophobic paralysis.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

Adam releases him. Migrates onward through the crowd. Small victory, fleeting serenity.

12 INT. WORKING MAN'S CLUB. NIGHT. LATER

Louder. Lonelier. Trance music pounds across the near-empty dance floor.

Adam sways alone in his own quarantine corner. Drunk.

The red lights pulse over Adam as the beat of the song loops and stacks into chaos. Adam slips into his numb cocoon.

13 INT. BEDSIT. NIGHT

Seclusion. A single red light bulb illuminates a mattress propped up against the wall. Adam rests on a second mattress on the floor, surrounded by crumpled food packets. Old newspapers. A bottle of vitamins, a bottle of vodka.

He watches Live Roulette on the television as sound and image from the TV distorts into a troubling, sexualised collage.

ON TELEVISION: A spinning roulette wheel. A voluptuous BLONDE PRESENTER (20s).

The spinning sound builds and builds until Adam sits up, grabs the remote, mutes the television.

Adam lies back onto the mattress. Studies the ceiling. Lets the house sounds wash over him: rattle of the radiator, flow of the pipes...

Peace.

Broken by a sharp electronic tone.

Mobile phone.

A second ring and a third as Adam digs through his jacket, pulls out the phone, answers.

ADAM  
...hello?

AIDEN (V.O.)  
Adam.

Adam registers his brother's voice. Sits up on the mattress.

AIDEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Mum wanted me to give you a call.

ADAM  
What is it?

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN (V.O.)  
Mum's all right. Remember the baby?

ADAM  
What are you talking about?

AIDEN (V.O.)  
I told you months ago. Me and Abi.  
We're having a baby.

Adam swallows his drunkenness. Rises from the mattress.

ADAM  
(confused)  
I remember.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
Abi's due in two weeks. Mum expects  
you to be here.

Adam winces with headache.

ADAM  
Bit difficult.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
Well - where are you?

ADAM  
Just have to sort some things  
first.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
Don't be a disaster when you get  
here.

ADAM  
Right.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
Did you get Mum's last letter?

ADAM  
Yeah.

AIDEN  
And you read it.

ADAM  
...some.

A silence between them. The phone line crackles.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
If you don't come down, I don't  
want to see you again.

13 CONTINUED:

Aiden hangs up.

Adam lowers the phone. Gazes out over his wreck of a room: mattresses, rubbish, redness. Seeing it for the first time.

14 EXT. BEDSIT. BACK GARDEN. NIGHT.

Adam crouches against the wall. Finishes the last of a cigarette.

He tosses the cigarette into the paved-over garden and rises to his feet.

The spent cigarette glows on the ground. A dot of light in the unknown.

Adam looks up. The stars blaze bright in the dark night sky.

15 INT. BEDSIT. NIGHT

Hurried. Inefficient. The uneven mechanical rhythms of the room build as Adam pulls open a dresser drawer. Clears its contents.

Adam grabs an old rucksack from the floor. Shoves clothes / books / a bundle of documents and envelopes into the rucksack.

Adam slings his rucksack over his shoulder.

He flips the light switch and the red room goes dark.

16 EXT. PORT OF HEYSHAM. DAWN

Blue haze surrounds Adam as he walks through the empty docks, rucksack over his shoulder. Seagulls float through the sky, the only witnesses to his departure.

The blood orange of sunrise warms his path as his pace accelerates.

17 EXT. DUAL CARRIAGEWAY. MORNING

Morning mist. Trees like bony hands. Sparrows flutter past.

Adam hikes down the hard shoulder with his rucksack. Anticipation in his step.

18 EXT. BUS STOP. MORNING

Adam lifts his rucksack from the ground as a coach (bus) in the distance rumbles toward him, closer and closer.



## 19 INT. COACH. TRAVELING. DAY

The countryside of Northern England unfurls in pastoral, Turner-esque glory as the rhythmic and hopeful score mixes with passing sounds from inside and outside the coach.

Moors turn into rolling hills as cows and sheep and lambs and horses stride through the sea of green. Disused factories, abandoned railways, remote housing estates blip across rural expanses before we slip into a dark TUNNEL.

Artificial lights flit past as the sunlight on the far side grows warmer and nearer until it bleaches our view--

Trees and trees. A deep forest marches past and clears to reveal:

Rhyl. North Wales.

## 20 EXT. RHYL HIGH STREET. DAY

The battered gentility of the British seaside. Chip shops, boarded-up facades, scattered crowds.

Adam wanders through as the sounds of the street and the locals give way to the rhythm of the waves.

Adam stops. Catches his first glimpse of the beach.

The Irish Sea, austere but inviting.

## 21 EXT. RHYL PROMENADE. DAY

A torn Welsh flag ripples in the wind above flashing neon signs:

Mega Arcade. Terror Towers. Cash Bingo. Scarface's.

Adam strolls between the arcades and the beach.

He stops at the door to a walk-up flat. Presses the buzzer.

A beat.

A glance up to the first floor window.

No one home.

## 22 EXT. RHYL PROMENADE. DAY. LATER

Adam reclines on a bench. Sips from a can of cider.

Something - someone - catches his eye. He bins the cider and rises as

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOWN THE PROMENADE

LAUREN (31) leans into the wind. Sharp, petite, walking home.  
A nurse with lingering traces of hippiedom.

She stops at the door. Fishes her keys from her bag.

ADAM (O.S.)

Lauren.

Lauren startles. Slowly turns...

Adam.

LAUREN

Oh ... God.

ADAM

I don't look that bad.

A rush of shared emotion as Lauren hugs Adam - and pulls back.

LAUREN

Why are you here?

ADAM

You.

LAUREN

(playful)

Fuck off, Adam.

Adam holds his hands up.

ADAM

Truth.

Adam leans against the doorway.

LAUREN

England finally kicked you out then.

ADAM

I'm on loan.

LAUREN

Lucky us.

Adam grabs Lauren's hand.

ADAM

Let's get a drink.

LAUREN

I just finished work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADAM

Exactly.

Lauren laughs off Adam and pulls her hand away. She unlocks her door, opens it--

ADAM (CONT'D)

Thought I might stay with you.

Lauren turns.

LAUREN

What for?

ADAM

Just a couple of days.

Lauren sighs. Pulls the door shut. Guards it.

LAUREN

Dylan's going to be home soon.

ADAM

How is he?

LAUREN

He's really well. He's at school now.

Adam leans toward her, intimate.

ADAM

...does he remember me?

LAUREN

Course he does.

A silent look between them. Verge of a kiss.

ADAM

I'll wait for him.

LAUREN

He's not even yours.

(beat)

You'd better leave.

Lauren unlocks and opens the door. Adam nudges it further open and Lauren shoves his hand away.

Adam retreats.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

ADAM

South.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

LAUREN

Home.

ADAM

Aiden's having a kid.

The sea wind rushes through.

LAUREN

You must be happy.

ADAM

I am.

Lauren kisses him on the cheek. Gentle, brief.

LAUREN

Let me know what they name the  
baby.

Lauren shuts the door.

Adam focuses on the door. A flicker of uncertain anger - the  
temptation to bash down the door.Adam sighs. Relents. Gazes down the promenade's long arc of  
blinking, glowing arcades.

Adam walks toward the lights.

23 INT. AMUSEMENT ARCADE. NIGHT

A cacophonous labyrinth of sound and light.

Adam pops a twopence piece into a Penny Pusher - a strange  
old contraption with shifting trays full of twopence pieces  
and weird little toy prizes.

Adam leans forward as the lights flash and his jackpot nears--

The lights dim on the Penny Pusher. No luck.

Adam digs a new copper from his cup of coins and pops it into  
the machine.

The lights flash anew.

24 INT. AMUSEMENT ARCADE. NIGHT. MOMENTS LATER

Adam watches from several meters away as a trio of meaty and  
oblivious YOUNG MEN (20s) take turns hitting a machine that  
measures the strength of their punch.

Punch. Laughter.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

PUNCH. Celebration.

Adam enjoys the ridiculous macho spectacle as one of the Young Men finishes his round. Shakes the pain out of his fist.

The Young Man clocks Adam - not even worth a punch.

Adam stares back, invisible.

25 INT. AMUSEMENT ARCADE. NIGHT. MOMENTS LATER

Concentration. Adam guides the claw of a crane machine toward a small stuffed bear.

He presses the button. The claw grips the bear. Adam swerves the joystick, the claw lifts...

The bear falls. Back into the pile with his brethren.

Through the glass of the machine Adam notices two teenage girls - MORGAN (14) and CARI (15) - as they aim plastic guns at a screen. A shooting game.

The girls pull and pull their triggers as the tacky staccato of fake gunshot blares from the game console.

Morgan lowers her gun. Out of the game.

She glances over her shoulder. Playfully points the gun at Adam.

Adam rises from his perch and strolls away from the girls - toward the door, toward the sea.

26 EXT. AMUSEMENT ARCADE. NIGHT

The bright lights of the promenade recede toward the darkness of the sea as Adam finishes rolling a cigarette, takes out his lighter...

Nope. The sea wind won't allow it.

Adam cups his hand around the lighter. Strikes and strikes and strikes the spark...

Finally. Adam inhales and exhales smoke as Morgan and Cari saunter out of the arcade.

*The girls ask Adam where he is from. How old he is. What he is doing in Rhyl. Why he was playing for stuffed animals. They tease Adam about his accent; he reveals that he grew up in England but had an Irish father and a Romany mother. The girls get around to the question they really wanted to ask: whether Adam will buy them alcohol.*

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

*Adam agrees on the condition they share it together.*

27 EXT. RHYL PROMENADE. NIGHT

Arcades bleep and flash. Adam hustles against traffic to keep up with a drunken Cari as she piggybacks on an even drunker Morgan.

Adam laughs as Cari leaps off Morgan's back and stumbles to the ground. Morgan cannot contain her laughter and sits down on the pavement, exhausted from schlepping her friend.

Adam lifts the girls to their feet like a patient Dad.

28 EXT. RHYL PROMENADE EDGE. NIGHT

The arcades are silent. The crowds are gone.

Adam sits alone on the bench, *enjoying the banter with Morgan and Cari* as they turn the railing into a drunken jungle gym. From moment to moment the girls' gestures and stances switch between the confidence and complexity of womanhood and the playful innocence of childhood.

*Morgan and Cari talk about how much they dislike Rhyl. Morgan is from Cardiff and here on holiday with her mother; Cari lives here and met Morgan via mutual friends. The girls joke about the local boys: their immaturity, their bullshit machismo.*

*Adam playfully prods them along. The girls ask if Adam has a girlfriend in Rhyl – he must, surely – and Adam admits that he once had a girlfriend here named Lauren. When the girls ask where she is now, Adam lies and says that Lauren moved to Scotland. All the way up to Inverness.*

*The girls ask Adam straight out: what is he doing spending his time drinking with teenagers? Doesn't he have a job? Adam deflects their questions with humour – not growing up has its perks.*

29 EXT. RHYL PROMENADE EDGE. NIGHT. LATER

Adam wakes with a start. The waves crash in the distance.

He is alone a bench alongside Morgan.

Cari is gone. Adam scans the empty horizon. Panics. Shakes Morgan awake.

*Adam asks Morgan what happened to Cari. Morgan tells him that she does not know. Adam presses her and she insists that Cari probably walked home – she knows the way.*

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

Fuck it. Adam stares up at the cloudy sky.

*Adam asks where Morgan is staying with her mother. A caravan park across the bridge, she tells him. Adam asks if Morgan's mother will be angry, which leads to Morgan complaining about going on holiday with her mother - complaints that then shade into a more pointed analysis of her mother's flaws.*

*Adam's advice to Morgan becomes his own furtive confession to a stranger: about how he dwelled on his father's flaws, dwelled on his own resentment, wasted the past ten years of his life.*

30 EXT. RHYL PROMENADE EDGE. NIGHT. LATER

Morgan is unconscious on the bench, her skirt hitched up, her hair swept across her face.

Adam pushes her hair free. Morgan breathes heavily. Adam moves his hand along her arm, onto her leg...

Adam pauses. Shuts his eyes.

He adjusts Morgan's skirt.

Adam staggers to his feet. Slips one arm under Morgan's knees, the other under her shoulders. Cradling her.

*Morgan rests her head on Adam's chest. She mutters about needing to get back to her mother. Adam says not to worry - he'll take her home.*

Adam walks down the beach with Morgan in his arms.

31 EXT. BRIDGE. NIGHT

Sea mist sweeps through a web of old steel beams.

Adam holds Morgan upright, walking her like an oversize rag doll toward the far side of the bridge.

MOMENTS LATER

Adam walks back toward us, into town.

Morgan recedes into the distance as she continues home in the opposite direction.

32 EXT. DUAL CARRIAGEWAY. DAWN

Traffic streaks past as pastures and wetlands unwind into the sea. Adam marches along the edge of the hard shoulder with the flow of traffic.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

He stops.

Flickering lights across the road. A small huddle of buildings in the distance.

Traffic dissipates. Adam crosses toward the light.

33 INT. MOTEL CORRIDOR. DAY

Exhausted, Adam shoulders his rucksack and a plastic carrier bag down the long tunnel of magnolia walls and strip lighting.

34 INT. MOTEL ROOM. DAY. MOMENTS LATER

Sunlight edges through the curtains.

The door opens. Adam steps inside, shuts it.

He tosses his rucksack and carrier bag onto the bed. In front of him an old 4:3 television, behind him on the wall a shrunken reproduction of a Joseph Wright landscape painting: *A Cottage On Fire*.

CLOSE on the painting. Flames surge out of the cottage and illuminate the forest canopy.

Adam can barely take it. He grabs a can of cider from the carrier bag, cracks it open, drinks.

He sits on the bed. Shuts his eyes.

35 INT. MOTEL ROOM. DAY. LATER

Footsteps and murmuring from the corridor. Adam wakes on the bed.

Pain. Headache. Still drunk. He focuses on the cottage painting.

Adam grabs his rucksack. Pulls out a bundle of folded documents, atop which are envelopes with graceful cursive script.

Letters. From his mother.

Adam snaps the rubber band off the bundle.

36 INT. MOTEL ROOM / CORRIDOR. DAY. MOMENTS LATER

Envelopes and papers clog the sink as Adam strikes his lighter. Lights corners and edges.

(CONTINUED)



36 CONTINUED:

He watches in drunken fascination as the flames rise in a steady surge.

Adam looks up to his reflection in the mirror the sound of burning rises out of all proportion to the fire in the sink and he turns on the tap.

Water. Damp smoke. The flames in the sink are gone - but not the sound of burning. Adam steps out of the bathroom and into the main

MOTEL ROOM

No fire.

Adam follows the burning sound to the front door. Listens to the other side.

He opens the door as the roar and crackle of the fire surges and he steps into the

MOTEL CORRIDOR. INTEGRATED FLASHBACK

No fire to be seen - but the roar of one rises and deepens.

Adam walks on and we follow him. He turns the corner and we follow him...

37 EXT. FIELD. DAY. FLASHBACK

WIDE as we travel toward small woodland in the distance as Adam's father Cormac (56) slips into the trees. He carries a rifle.

Adam (20) steps into the foreground and follows his father into the woods.

38 EXT. WOODLAND. DAY. FLASHBACK.

We follow Cormac as he steps over the roots and branches. His hand whitens with a tight grip on the barrel of the rifle.

BEHIND

Adam hastens down the trail.

AHEAD

Cormac sits down against a tree.

BEHIND

Adam accelerates.

A GUNSHOT. Birds flutter and Adam halts.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

Adam halts.

Silence.

Adam runs down the trail. Faster.

He stumbles to a stop as we reveal Cormac slumped against the tree, covered in blood, rifle on the ground next to him.

Adam's face fills with horror.

39 INT. MOTEL CORRIDOR. DAY

The buzz of fluorescent lights.

Adam (33) steps back around the corner. Pale, sick with trauma. He accelerates toward his room and opens and enters and slams the door.

An empty corridor remains.

40 INT. COACH. TRAVELING. DAY

Adam's reflection stares out the window. Alternates between sleep and wakefulness as the serene countryside unfurls.

41 EXT. SERVICE STATION. DAY

A retail and petrol camelot among the fields.

42 INT. COVERED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE. DAY

Traffic whooshes beneath us. The warmth and noise of the service station beckons.

43 INT. DINER. DAY

Meat sizzles in the background as an ornate framed photo of the Queen of England stares out over a formica wonderland. An American diner grafted onto Britain.

Adam sits alone in a booth. Downs the last of a cup of tea.

Adam peers into a box of wax crayons and small toys next to the condiments. Digs into the box and pulls out a barnyard figurine: a cow.

He places the cow on an empty, dirty plate.

Grabs the salt shaker.

Pours salt over the cow. A miniature snowfall.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

Salt piles up around the cow as the staccato sizzle of flipping burgers punctuates its immersion.

44 EXT. TRACTOR PATH. DAY

Birdsong. Comfort. Trees flank a dirt track through the fields.

Adam walks away from us toward a 1970s Mercedes parked in the distance. TARIQ (38) rests atop the car's bonnet, talking on a mobile phone.

As Adam approaches Tariq begs off the phone and steps to meet him. Handshake, shoulder pat, camaraderie. A conversation we cannot hear.

Adam and Tariq perch on the bonnet of the Mercedes. Adam pulls something from his pocket.

CLOSER on the two men as Adam rolls a cigarette.

ADAM

Are you still on picking?

TARIQ

(Afghan accent)

I'm in charge now.

ADAM

Well done. Is George still here?

TARIQ

Afraid so.

Adam laughs.

TARIQ (CONT'D)

What have you been doing?

Adam shrugs. Glances across the fields.

TARIQ (CONT'D)

Nothing then.

Adam forces a grin through the sting.

ADAM

I was hoping you might have something. Few days work.

TARIQ

(disbelief)

Days.

ADAM

Just need to get my head together--

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

TARIQ  
It's springtime. Adam.

ADAM  
I know--

TARIQ  
Do you see a harvest?

Adam puts his rolled cigarette in his mouth. Lights it. Shakes his head.

Tariq sighs in disgust. Disappointment.

Tariq pulls out his wallet. Takes out a pair of bank notes. Adam accepts them and slips them into his pocket as if nothing happened.

ADAM  
...thanks.

TARIQ  
See you next season.

Tariq rises from the boot as Adam steps away from the car.

Tariq ducks into the driver's seat, shuts the door, glances toward Adam.

Contempt. Pity.

Content with his quick cash, Adam waves Tariq off as the engine coughs and starts.

Tariq drives away.

Adam stands alone on the path.

45 EXT. TRACTOR PATH. DAY. MOMENTS LATER

Birdsong clashes with an ominous eruption in the score as:

- Ants crawl across wet, decomposing leaves.
- A black, viscous substance bubbles up through the ground.
- Maggots squirm across the rotten flesh of an apple.

Adam treks down the path. Sees something and stops.

We follow Adam's gaze into the fields. Dip below the vegetation. Leaves and stalks bend past us and it gets darker and darker and near black until we ascend into an

46 EXT. FIELD OF GRASS. DAY. FLASHBACK

YOUNG ADAM (11) and YOUNG AIDEN (7) sprint through the grass. Swat plants with sticks.

Thwack. Thwack. Aiden mimics his elder brother's technique.

Adam stops. So does Aiden...

Adam WHIPS the grass close to Aiden's legs and Aiden *shouts at Adam to stop.*

Adam relents before one last SWAT at Aiden's legs and *Aiden curses him.*

Adam lowers his stick.

Finally. Aiden relaxes.

Adam STRIKES his brother on the leg with his stick and Aiden *wails as he runs off.* Away from Adam.

47 EXT. FIELD OF GRASS. DAY. FLASHBACK. MOMENTS LATER

Young Adam marches through the grass, stick in hand.

Adam's father CORMAC (47) *scolds someone for being soft. Weak.* Reveal that it is Young Aiden getting the angry lecture from their father.

Aiden glances toward Adam.

Help.

Adam *shouts to his father to leave Aiden alone* and hurls his stick toward him--

48 EXT. TRACTOR PATH. DAY

The buzz of an engine and present reality as Tariq's Mercedes pulls up.

Adult Adam turns away from the field. Toward the car.

Tariq rolls down the driver's side window.

ADAM

I thought you were leaving.

TARIQ

Where are you going?

ADAM

Sheffield.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

TARIQ  
Not many farms there.

ADAM  
My cousin lives there.

Tariq motions for Adam to get in.

WIDE on the path and fields as Adam opens the passenger door to the car, steps in, shuts the door.

49 INT. CAR. TRAVELING. DUSK

Adam sits in the passenger seat as Tariq drives, silent and content in the rhythm of the journey as we intercut glimpses of passing landscapes.

Farms turn into satellite villages. TEENAGERS shuffle across traffic bridges. Self-storage buildings loom like space stations.

We glimpse the city of SHEFFIELD as the sun dips below the horizon. The red brick and smokestacks of the city's nineteenth century heyday loom in the distance.

50 EXT. SUBURBAN ESTATE. NIGHT

Adam strolls past tidy street lamps and manicured lawns. A gently winding road of modest new build houses. Too peaceful to be real.

He stops outside a house. A flicker of anxiety. A warm glow from the windows streams across the grass. He studies the house and its clean lines, unsure of what to do.

Adam stands motionless before the house, a stranger in suburbia.

The front door opens. KEITH (33) spots Adam - an intruder.

Keith barrels out of the door ready to confront the invader and--

Keith stops in his tracks. A smile of recognition, tinged with sadness.

The two men hasten toward each other and embrace.

Keith releases Adam.

They walk towards the front door together.

Keith opens the door. Ushers Adam inside. Shuts it behind him.

51 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. FRONT ROOM. NIGHT. MOMENTS LATER

Adam lowers his rucksack onto a carpet clogged with children's toys as the footsteps and faucets of the kids' bedtime carry on upstairs.

For a moment Keith stands and looks at Adam in disbelief; his cousin is actually here.

Keith settles into his armchair and gestures for Adam to sit.

Adam clears a stuffed animal from the sofa and sinks into the cushions.

KEITH  
Coleen's on the night shift.

ADAM  
Where?

KEITH  
That restaurant in the new casino -  
have you been there?

ADAM  
I was working on the docks in  
Lancashire. But it was time to go.

KEITH  
I hear you're going to be an uncle.

Adam nods shyly.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
Congratulations.

Adam picks up an action figure. Stays silent as he fiddles with its joints.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
Are you...

Adam glances to the plasma screen TV on the wall. A blue default screen.

Keith rises from his chair, turns off the TV, sits back down.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
If you need to crash for a couple  
of nights, you can stay here.

ADAM  
Thanks Keith.

KEITH  
Do you want anything to eat?

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

Adam sits the action figure on the coffee table, its arm bent to its neck.

52 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. KITCHEN / FRONT ROOM. NIGHT.

Keith grabs two glasses from an empty sink. Places them on a tray with too many lager cans.

He walks through the hall into the

FRONT ROOM

and sets down the tray, sits down. Offers a can to Adam as Adam paces the room.

ADAM

Cheers.

KEITH

The other night I was telling Colleen about those summers on the farm. When I was over from Ireland.

ADAM

You and me on patrol.

Keith laughs.

KEITH

Aiden used to follow us everywhere. Holding that rifle like a little soldier.

ADAM

He mimicked everything you did.

Adam sits as Keith swigs from his can.

KEITH

Aiden idolized you.

ADAM

All little brothers do that.

KEITH

I was jealous of you two.

ADAM

(sarcastic)  
What? Waking up in the middle of the night to start work?

KEITH

No. You and your family on the farm. Had your own world, didn't need anyone else.

(CONTINUED)



52 CONTINUED:

Adam finishes his can. Sets it on the table. Keith realises he has struck a nerve.

53 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. TOILET. NIGHT.

Adam urinates into the toilet.

Finishes.

He leans into his reflection in the mirror. Turns on the hot tap. Closes his eyes as the warm water runs through his hands.

A small moment of comfort.

54 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. FRONT ROOM. NIGHT.

Drunk laughter. Loose. Adam and Keith struggle to keep it down in the otherwise quiet house.

KEITH  
Jimmy's hen houses.

ADAM  
What?

KEITH  
Aiden used to loved it down there.  
They had these little one day old  
chicks.

ADAM  
(whispers)  
Fuuck...

KEITH  
They used to put them onto the  
table and let them walk, one by  
one. If they walked okay they put  
them into this box, but if they had  
a limp...

Keith slams his hand down on the wooden table. Adam flinches, shaken by the gesture.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
...just bang their head on the  
table and throw them in the bin.

ADAM  
The good box and the bad box.

KEITH  
Aiden used to get so upset.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

Adam drains his can.

ADAM  
Death to all runts.

A brief pause between them before Keith hops to his feet.

KEITH  
I've got to show you this.

Keith opens a cupboard in the corner of the room. Retrieves a shoebox, sits down next to Adam, sets the box on the coffee table.

Adam spies a row of cassette tapes in the box. Fishes one out, studies the spine.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
We found them when we were helping your Mum move.

ADAM  
I can't believe she saved these.

KEITH  
You were obsessed. Every animal, every sound.

ADAM  
(reading tape)  
'Mum Singing again.'

Adam returns the tape to the box. Pulls out a faded 1980s photograph of his family's cows in the pasture and shoves it back into place.

KEITH  
What did you ever get for the land?

ADAM  
Fuck all. The government took it for nothing and sold it on to the giants.

KEITH  
Your Dad would have hated that.

ADAM  
He was too proud.

KEITH  
He was from a different place. Different time.

ADAM  
He should have adapted.

(CONTINUED)

54

CONTINUED:

KEITH

He use to put your drawings on the mantle.

ADAM

He'd rip them up if I got too big for my boots.

KEITH

Do you miss him?

Children's footsteps trundle down the stairs.

KEITH (CONT'D)

I'd better put the boys back to bed.

Adam rises to help - but Keith darts out of the room ahead of him.

Adam sits alone in the empty room, intoxicated. The family's uneven footsteps ascend the stairs as Adam shuts his eyes.

55

INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. FRONT ROOM. NIGHT. LATER

The night is turning.

Adam and Keith sprawl on opposite sides of the sofa, drinking the last of the cans. Drunker.

KEITH

Aiden got in touch with me. Asked if I had seen you. Said he hadn't heard from you for ages.

Adam looks away, ashamed.

KEITH (CONT'D)

It was like you disappeared.  
(beat)  
You've got to go and see them.

ADAM

It'd be worse if I went there--

KEITH

It was a disease. No one saw it coming.

(beat)

They're not thinking of the past, it's irrelevant.

ADAM

I can't go down there alone.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

KEITH  
We'll go together.

Adam shifts in his seat.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
Tomorrow.

ADAM  
Maybe.

KEITH  
What?

ADAM  
I'm not--

KEITH  
We've got to go tomorrow.

ADAM  
Let's have another drink--

KEITH  
That's enough--

ADAM  
I want another drink--

KEITH  
You're a fucking coward.  
(beat)  
Let's talk in the morning.

Keith rises. Stares Adam down. Leaves the room.

Adam listens to his cousin's heavy footsteps up the stairs, into his bedroom.

56 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. DOWNSTAIRS CORRIDOR. NIGHT

We move down the corridor as Adam drifts into and out of rooms in a trance.

An old analogue recording plays in a disintegrating loop: Adam's then-young mother singing a lullaby.

57 EXT. KEITH'S HOUSE. NIGHT

The disintegrating sound loop continues as Adam inhales the fresh air.

The neighbourhood sleeps.

Adam relishes the wind across his numbed face.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

A siren whines in the distance.

58 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. DOWNSTAIRS CORRIDOR. NIGHT

We move toward the open kitchen door. We cannot see inside but we can hear water running from the tap. The clatter of washing up amid Adam's low staccato laughter.

A CRASH.

SHATTER.

59 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS

Adam stands with his back to us. We move steadily toward him as he plunges, lifts, plunges his hands into the kitchen sink. The scattered rhythm of drunken dish washing gathers pace and the sound of the running water rises louder and louder as we move closer and closer...

CLOSE on Adam's hands and forearms in crimson water.

Blood.

Adam lifts and shoves his bloody hands back into the red water as smashed porcelain bobs and swirls inside. He wipes and wipes the broken plates but just smears more blood across their smooth surfaces.

Adam laughs softly. Oblivious. It's happening to someone else.

In the window reflection Adam spots Keith standing in the doorway. Guarded and bleary-eyed in tracksuit bottoms. Adam turns to face Keith as Keith spots the crimson stain on Adam's forearms.

Keith barges toward Adam.

KEITH

STOP IT.

Adam's laughter starts to turn to tears as Keith shoves Adam aside and shuts off the tap-

60 INT. KEITH'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT. MOMENTS LATER

Adam sits at the kitchen table. Keith winds a bandage around Adam's hand.

Keith is methodical. Parental.

Adam swells with shame. Avoids eye contact with Keith.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

ADAM  
(voice cracking)  
I think I should go.

KEITH  
I know a guy in Birmingham. You can  
stay there.

Keith tightens, seals the bandage.

KEITH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)  
I'll get you a cab.

CLOSE on Adam's hand as blood seeps through the white  
bandage.

61 INT. TAXI. NIGHT

Back seat. We idle in the front drive of Keith's house as  
Adam looks out the window to Keith.

ADAM  
(to driver)  
You can go.

Adam lowers his head. Leaves Keith marooned on the front step  
as the taxi pulls out of the drive.

62 INT. TAXI. TRAVELING. NIGHT

Lights flow across Adam's face as he tightens the bandage on  
his hand and the rising sound of burning melds with the  
rhythm of the traffic.

Adam starts to weep.

Painful, reluctant, ashamed.

63 EXT. BIRMINGHAM. NIGHT

Weedy lots. Ragged side streets. Early commuter traffic.

Britain's Second City, a warren of half-built spaces, awakes.

64 INT. TAXI. TRAVELING. NIGHT

The taxi slows and pulls to the kerb. Adam wipes condensation  
from the window.

ADAM  
(to unseen Driver)  
Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

No response. The engine hums.

Adam grabs his rucksack, steps out the door, shuts it.

65 EXT. TERRACED ROAD. NIGHT

Adam approaches a plaque mounted on a coarse brick building:

**New Life Drop-In Centre**

Adam laughs softly. Keith must be joking.

Adam presses the intercom.

DEBO (V.O.)  
(over intercom, West  
African accent)

Yes.

ADAM  
Is that Debo?

DEBO (V.O.)  
Yes.

ADAM  
It's Adam. Keith's cousin.

Adam scans the empty street, his breath heavy in the air.

The door buzzes. Adam pushes it--

Stuck.

Adam presses the buzzer again. The door buzzes and he pushes through--

66 INT. DROP IN CENTRE. NIGHT. CONTINUOUS.

The door shuts behind Adam. DEBO (45) stands at the top of the stairs, waiting. Sympathy, tenacity, and a rumpled white collared shirt.

Adam ascends toward Debo as the original floorboards creak beneath laminate and dust curls in the artificial light.

Adam reaches the landing. Debo EMBRACES him.

DEBO  
Keith explained.

Debo releases Adam.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
I'm pleased I can help.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

Debo motions for Adam to head down the corridor. Adam walks on.

67 INT. DROP IN CENTRE. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Tidy but meagre. Baby blue walls and two single beds with a table between.

The door opens and Adam follows Debo inside.

DEBO  
Not quite a hotel.

ADAM  
(grateful)  
It's perfect.

Debo smiles as Adam sets down his rucksack and stretches.

DEBO  
(authoritarian)  
No alcohol, drugs, caffeine, or  
sweets in the building. I find any  
on your person I will remove you.  
Understood?

Adam straightens. Absorbs the change in tone.

ADAM  
...yes.

DEBO  
Good. Rest well.

Debo steps out and shuts the door.

Adam drops his rucksack next to the door. Pulls the curtains. Removes one shoe, then the other with near-sexual relief.

He sloughs off his coat.

Shirt.

Trousers.

Standing in his underwear, Adam checks out the two beds: one has a red leather bound Bible on the pillow, one does not.

Adam pulls back the covers of the unholy bed and collapses into it.

68 INT. DROP IN CENTRE. BEDROOM. DAY

Adam sleeps as shards of ethereal late morning light blaze through the curtains.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Debo enters quietly in a crisp dress shirt and chinos. Sits on the bed opposite Adam. Sets a glass of water on the table alongside a small plate with a banana and freshly cut bread.

Adam looks peaceful. Childlike.

DEBO  
You need water.

Adam opens his eyes. Sees Debo, sees the small breakfast. Adam gulps the water as Debo grabs the Bible from the bed.

Adam peels the banana. Starts to eat it, a slow struggle as Debo flips through the Bible.

Adam eats.

Debo reads. Watches. Closes the Bible.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
How are you feeling?

ADAM  
Better. Thanks.

DEBO  
Why do you think you are in this house?

ADAM  
Maybe Keith did some cheap brickwork for you.

DEBO  
Keith is a fine man. He told me about your plight.

Adam finishes the banana. Rises out of bed in his underwear. Debo looks away obligingly.

Adam staggers through the room, dresses piece by piece.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
But I can see joy ahead. You must witness the birth of this new child.

ADAM  
I've got plenty of time--

DEBO  
You have mere days my friend. You must lift yourself up and sacrifice. Free yourself from the prison of this temptation.

Adam laughs as he pulls on his shirt.

(CONTINUED)

DEBO (CONT'D)  
You can't see the future.

ADAM  
I'm not a psychic.

DEBO  
You must embrace your family. Go back to the farm.

ADAM  
There isn't one.

DEBO  
Create one.

Adam sits down the bed, fully dressed. He puts on his shoes.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
You must have strong memories of it.

Adam locks eyes with Debo.

ADAM  
I do.

DEBO  
Tell me.

ADAM  
Fields. The family. Feeding the animals--

Debo grabs Adam's shoulder and startles Adam.

DEBO  
God's creatures. You must reconnect with them.

ADAM  
They're all gone.

Debo's face changes. Intense. As if a switch has been flipped.

DEBO  
So now is the time to repent. To rebuild. To be reborn.

Debo smacks the Bible to punctuate his words. Adam recoils.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
The Bible is a precious gift from God. People worship many things but there is only one God.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DEBO (CONT'D)  
 You mock Him, you mock  
 Resurrection, you are done.

Adam stands over Debo.

ADAM  
 You're full of shit--

DEBO  
 You are a liar.

Adam lifts his rucksack, slings it over his shoulder.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
 Satan is a liar. You accept his  
 lies. About your family. About  
 yourself. Which makes you a liar.

Adam stays silent. Debo rises to meet him.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
 The demon is silent.

ADAM  
 The demon--

Debo SEIZES Adam's shoulders. Rocks them back and forth in waves as Adam's uncomfortable laughter devolves into anger.

DEBO  
 You must cast him out.

ADAM  
 Fuck off.

DEBO  
 Cast him out!

Debo SHOVES Adam backward and presses Adam's forehead with his palm and Adam SHOVES Debo back against the wall with barroom violence.

Adam steps back. Debo leans in with the Bible.

DEBO (CONT'D)  
 The answers are in the book.

Debo lingers between Adam and the doorway.

Adam seizes the Bible from Debo.

ADAM  
 I'll just take the guidebook then.

Adam lifts his rucksack with his free hand and pushes past Debo - out the door.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

DEBO  
God will abandon you.

69 EXT. HOUSING ESTATE. DAY

Adam strides through a warren of brutalist walkways and staircases.

70 EXT. BACK ALLEY. DAY

Along rows and rows of garages, each door a different colour, each coated in graffiti.

71 EXT. ROUNDABOUT. DAY

Adam halts. Catches his breath.

A solitary young elm tree sprouts from the middle of the roundabout.

Adam takes out his phone. Presses the call button.

ADAM  
Hayley. Hello? Call me back.

The sound of whipping wind and traffic rises in a Wagnerian build...

72 INT. / EXT. PEDESTRIAN SUBWAY. DAY

Adam's footsteps echo as he accelerates down the tunnel.

He emerges onto a pavement as his mobile RINGS and he stops and answers.

HAYLEY (V.O.)  
I need to see you.

ADAM  
Now?

HAYLEY (V.O.)  
I've lost the job.

ADAM  
What job?

HAYLEY (V.O.)  
Are you bothered what job?

ADAM  
...no.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

HAYLEY (V.O.)  
Come back to London.

Adam exhales. Hesitates. Unsure what to do.

HAYLEY (V.O.)  
Adam?

ADAM  
I'll meet you in Golders Green.  
About six.

HAYLEY (V.O.)  
Brilliant. I'll see you there.

ADAM  
See you tomorrow--

HAYLEY (V.O.)  
Love you.

ADAM  
...me too.

Adam hangs up and pockets his mobile. Gauges his surroundings.

Edgeland. Wasteland. Nowhere.

73 INT. COACH. TRAVELING. NIGHT

A vast motorway spreads out before us. A tunnel approaches. We enter the DARKNESS.

The countryside merges into a post industrial landscape: storage facilities, mothballed towers, abandoned factories. Rows and rows of container units piled up like giant Lego.

74 INT. COACH. TRAVELING. NIGHT. LATER

London.

It blinks and glows in the distance, mournful yet tempting as light trails of late night traffic streak past. Endless rows of 1930s bungalows roll by like manifestations from a parallel, gentler dimension.

Up a ramp. Adam watches as we rise and rise onto THE WESTWAY, a broad elevated motorway that slices through West London.

Buildings and windows flit past in the foreground with uncomfortable intimacy. An invasion of private space.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

1960s COUNCIL FLAT TOWERS grow taller and taller in the background until we reach the king of them all: the TRELICK TOWER, a 31-story concrete silo of flats.

75 EXT. BUS STATION. NIGHT

A tsunami of noise and traffic. Adam shelters next to an old steel pillar as crowds surge past.

Adam scans the crowds. Looks for Hayley. He spots a BRUNETTE (20s) waiting at the kerb, facing away from him.

Adam smiles and picks up his rucksack as the Brunette turns into profile--

Not Hayley. Adam resumes his post as a taxi honks.

Adam staggers away from the station. Into the bowels of the city.

76 EXT. PARK. MORNING

Adam wakes on a park bench, spooning his rucksack.

Adam sits up. Shudders in the damp morning chill.

He takes out his phone. Presses call.

77 EXT. PUB. DAY

HAYLEY (24) embraces Adam, her hair tied back in a ponytail to reveal a cherubic and streetwise face.

ADAM

We were supposed to meet yesterday.

HAYLEY

It was today.

ADAM

It wasn't.

Hayley releases Adam and playfully shushes him. She wraps her around Adam's waist and walks him over to THOM (28) and his girlfriend DJANGO (23). They look like they have been up for days. Django holds a beautiful German Shepherd - ELI - on a leash.

Eli immediately catches Adam's attention.

HAYLEY

(proudly, to Thom and  
Django)

This is Adam.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

Thom and Django nod weakly. Not bothered. Adam holds out his hand as Eli nuzzles into it.

DJANGO  
(to Hayley)  
So you're cool to look after Eli  
for a couple of days.

HAYLEY  
Yeah. Call me later.

Hayley kisses Django and Thom goodbye as Adam smiles toward the dog and nods to the couple.

Hayley wraps her arms around Adam and pulls him down the pavement.

78 INT. HAYLEY'S BEDSIT. DAY.

Hayley shuts the door as Adam takes in her cramped studio flat, a modern-day Nan Goldin photograph: ripped pages from strange magazines on the wall, a small stack of homemade CDs on the floor next her mattress, a small pile of clothes.

HAYLEY  
Welcome to paradise.

Adam looks around, puts down his bag. Glances out the window across the city, back into the sparse room.

ADAM  
Where did all your stuff go?

HAYLEY  
I got claustrophobic.  
(beat)  
I sold some. Want a drink?

Adam nods. Hayley grabs a bottle of vodka from the shelf next to the sink. Adds store brand lemonade to both glasses. Stirs Adam's glass with her fingertips as she hands it to him.

Adam takes the drink. Sits on the bed.

ADAM  
Thanks.

Adam lies down, feet on the floor. He takes off his shoes, lifts his legs onto the bed, leans against the wall. Hayley lies beside him and idly sips from her drink.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
I'm glad I'm here.

HAYLEY  
Who have you been living with?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADAM

No one.

HAYLEY

Are you sure?

Adam nods.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)

It's been boring without you.  
Seeing the same people. My friend  
got me a job in a print shop last  
month. But the guy there was a real  
fuck, so I left.

(beat)

Can you stay this week?

Hayley holds onto Adam's arm. Strokes it with her fingertips.

ADAM

I can't stay long.

HAYLEY

Don't be hateful to me. I don't  
care.

ADAM

I need to go back.

HAYLEY

Up North?

ADAM

No. Home.

HAYLEY

Somewhere in the middle of nowhere.  
Where nothing ever happens. A place  
you hate.

Hayley sits up. Meets Adam's gaze.

ADAM

I'm going back for Aiden.

Hayley kisses Adam. The draw together as Hayley breaks from  
the kiss, slides her arms around Adam, reaches for her drink,  
and finishes it - an impressive gulp.

Hayley stares at the ceiling, serene as Adam leans his head  
on her shoulder.

We linger on Adam and Hayley as they intertwine in a sphere.

HAYLEY

I used to have tiny stars on my  
ceiling when I was a kid.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



78 CONTINUED:

HAYLEY (CONT'D)  
Millions of little worlds. I  
imagined I could visit every single  
one.

ADAM  
They were always too far away.

Adam kisses Hayley's forehead.

79 INT. HAYLEY'S BEDSIT. DAY

Adam wakes and sits up as Hayley zips around the room getting ready: dries her hair. Pulls on a skirt. Eyeliner, mascara, lipstick.

ADAM  
Can I help?

Hayley ignores him as she opens a pink jewelry box. A plastic ballerina spins and music twinkles as she fishes out a bag of MDMA.

HAYLEY  
Let's go.

ADAM  
Where are we going?

HAYLEY  
To make some money. Together.

Adam sits up, weary. Tightens his hand bandage, dirty and flecked with dried blood.

He rises as Hayley opens the door. Waits for him.

Adam steps toward the light in the corridor.

80 EXT. EAST LONDON. DAY

We follow Adam and Hayley as they walk with arms around each other. Empty and semi-derelect residential roads morph into busier and busier streets as Adam pulls Hayley close and shop signs and passing headlights blur into abstract shapes until--

Street noise. A blast of dialects. Adam and Hayley step through the front door of a public bath house.

81 INT. PUBLIC BATHS. DUSK

A weathered and spent Victorian lobby.

Against the far wall is a glassed-in SECURITY BOOTH. Adam hovers just outside of it, uncertain and pensive.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

Inside the glass booth, Hayley is in the midst of a negotiation with the squat MANAGER (43).

The Manager nods to Hayley. She leaves the booth and returns to Adam.

HAYLEY  
He said we're on for thirty percent.

Adam bristles with anger.

ADAM  
He won't go for more?

HAYLEY  
No. I've tried. Come on.

ADAM  
Why? Because you come here all the time? I'm fucking going.

She grabs Adam's arm and he pulls it away.

HAYLEY  
You can't just leave me on my own.

ADAM  
I am.

HAYLEY  
That's what you do.

ADAM  
(exasperated)  
That was more than a year ago. You didn't care. You weren't alone.

HAYLEY  
You're right. I wasn't. Had to go to the clinic for that. Get rid of your baby.

Guilt surges through Adam as he absorbs what Hayley has just said.

Adam grabs Hayley. Consoles her. She returns the embrace, at once drawn to and repelled by him.

HAYLEY (CONT'D)  
Come on.

Hayley marches down a corridor. Deeper into the building.

Adam hesitates - and follows her.

82 INT. PUBLIC BATHS. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

The Manager waits on a stool in the open doorway to a steam room.

The back of a BALD MAN (50s) approaches. Hands the Manager a twenty pound note. The Manager adds it to a healthy stack.

MANAGER

Don't touch the talent.

83 INT. PUBLIC BATHS. STEAM ROOM. NIGHT

The flow of steam against white tile. MEN in white towels - some white, some Arab - move in and out of the clouds as they take their seats.

We turn to see Hayley as she leads Adam into the centre of the room. Both of them are in their underwear. Vulnerable.

Adam and Hayley stop. Centre stage.

Hayley passionately kisses Adam. Their bodies intertwine as we bend away from them toward the transfixed faces of the male audience contorting in furtive masturbation and rising carnality as we float into the empty corridor outside...

84 INT. CLUB. NIGHT

Minimal, industrial, infernal. A low bass throbs as Adam moves along a dark corridor.

Adam emerges into a young crowd of fellow REVELLERS dressed in oversized sportswear and trainers. Smoke drifts through amid the escalating flash of reds, yellows, blues.

85 INT. CLUB. NIGHT. MOMENTS LATER

Adam retrieves a drink from the bar and turns to Hayley as she pockets her bottle of water and pulls out a plastic bag of MDMA.

Hayley opens the bag. Adam dips his fingers inside. Dabs the crystal onto Hayley's tongue, then his own.

Hayley grips Adam's hand. Intimate.

86 INT. CLUB. NIGHT. MOMENTS LATER

Adam dances in the middle of Hayley and a group of her younger FRIENDS (20s).

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

Adam is the leader, a satyr in his element. Safe in the womb of the club as lights flicker and pulse into oblivion.

87 EXT. LONDON. DAWN

Lights sparkle under a dark blue and amber sky.

The city wakes.

88 INT. HAYLEY'S BEDSIT / CORRIDOR. DAY

Hayley sleeps. Adam cannot.

Adam strokes the German Shepherd as he looks out the window at the vast urban horizon before him. Over to an old framed painting from tenants long gone: Joseph Wright's *Bedgellert Landscape*. A stone bridge, a towering hill, hypnotically peaceful.

A BANG - gunshot - resonates through the flat.

The dog does not stir. Neither does Hayley.

*Adam murmurs for the dog to stay* as he steps toward the bedroom door and opens it into the

BEDSIT CORRIDOR. INTEGRATED FLASHBACK.

Breathing and suction and fluid sounds pulse through the corridor as Adam steps around the corner--

89 EXT. WOODLAND. DAY. FLASHBACK

Adam (20) races down the path. Faster and faster. Panic spreading across his face.

90 EXT. WOODLAND. DAY. FLASHBACK. MOMENTS LATER

Adam's face fills with horror as we reveal:

Adam's father, Cormac. Blood across his face. His left jaw blasted. The rifle in his lap.

Cormac has failed to commit suicide.

Adam is transfixed. Haunted as he approaches his father, whose chest shudders in the struggle for breath.

Adam kneels in front of his father. Blood spills around Cormac's collar and soaks his shirt as he slowly opens and closes his eyes, struggling to focus on his son.

Adam lifts the rifle from Cormac's lap. Sets it aside.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

Adam leans in to his father. Listens to his faint breathing as Cormac musters a shred of strength...

Cormac reaches. Gently grips his son's hand.

Do it.

Cormac's breaths become fewer and shallower as he stares into Adam urging him on and Adam embraces his father and PULLS Cormac's face to his chest. HOLDS it there.

A moment of surreal calm as Adam holds his father close.

Cormac's body shudders. Spasms. Against his son, against suffocation.

Stillness.

Adam's father has stopped breathing.

Tears well in Adam as he rises amid a crescendo of insect noise.

Fresh blood soaks the front of his shirt.

91 INT. HAYLEY'S BEDSIT. DAY

Adam (33) closes the door and wipes the tears from his eyes.

Eli the German Shepherd sits at attention. Ready.

Adam looks over to Hayley. A faint trace of a smile in her sleep.

Adam sits on the bed next to Hayley. Watches her at peace.

Adam pulls on his shoes - left, and right.

He rises from the bed and leaves his rucksack on the floor as he grabs Eli's leash. Attaches it to the dog.

Eli bristles with excitement as Adam leads the dog out of the room and closes the door.

The morning sun warms Hayley. She stirs in her sleep.

92 EXT. SIDE STREET. DAY

Adam and Eli strike out across the sun-streaked fringes of Southeast London. The lead is loose, the dog is happy.

93 EXT. DERELICT SKI SLOPE. DAY

A narrow oasis wedged between a dual carriage way and an industrial estate. Adam and Eli rest atop it, enjoying a 360-degree view of London.

Adam takes a bite from a half-finished hamburger. Eating is strange for him.

Adam holds the burger out for Eli. The dog wolfs it down.

Eli gets up. Circles Adam.

As Eli passes, Adam embraces him. Runs his fingertips through the dog's fur.

Adam watches the skyline. Tips his head back, closes his eyes.

94 EXT. DERELICT SKI SLOPE. NIGHT

Adam wakes. A dark city beneath him. Ghost trails of passing headlights.

Eli is gone.

Adam scrapes to his feet.

A growing sense of betrayal as Adam stalks the edges of the property. Desperate, panicked.

The front gate is locked.

Adam struggles up the fence. Reaches the top. He hops down the other side as his injured hand CATCHES a wrought iron spike.

Adam grimaces in pain. Holds his hand as fresh blood soaks through the dirty white bandage.

He struggles on, into the distance.

Toward a motorway flyover.

95 EXT. DUAL CARRIAGEWAY. NIGHT

Adam staggers along the hard shoulder as traffic roars past him.

96 EXT. INDUSTRIAL EDGELAND. NIGHT

Adam moves down the lonely pavement. Face drained of colour as he drinks from a bottle of cider.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Adam stops. Finishes the bottle. He SPINS and SPINS with his arms outstretched, chaos and despair incarnate as the score descends into mayhem...

Adam stops spinning. A rush of blood to the head.

Focus.

Ten meters in front of Adam stands a muscular BULL.

Adam freezes. Fear and awe as the street lamp illuminates contours of the beast's hulking body, blocking Adam's path toward lights in the distance.

Adam approaches. Tentative as steam rises from the bull's hide.

The bull shakes its head.

Adam pauses in his advance.

The menacing bass score melts into Adam's and the bull's breathing and Adam SCREAMS--

But we cannot hear him. Neither can the poker-faced bull.

Adam exhausts his vocal chords. He cannot intimidate the beast.

Adam moves forward.

He stops a metre from the bull, eye to eye.

Adam shifts his gaze to the horizon. The lights. Slow and careful he sidesteps and the bull turns its head but Adam accelerates and strides past the animal. Toward us. Faster and closer as his determination grows...

CUT TO BLACK.

Quiet.

CUT IN:

INT. MATERNITY WARD. DAY

A NEWBORN BABY quivers in the arms of its father: AIDEN, 29.

Aiden sits in a chair as he whispers to his baby. Gentle and paternal and awed as the score builds into an even, harmonious crescendo.

98 INT. MATERNITY WARD. CORRIDOR. DAY

Clean. Warm. The hum of hospital machines and STAFF amid the cries of NEWBORNS form a low, comforting texture.

We follow Adam as he takes tentative steps down the corridor. His footsteps echo as he enters the

99 MATERNITY WARD

Aiden looks up from his baby as Adam stops in the doorway.

Joy, fear, paralysis between brothers. It has been a long time.

Adam sits in a chair next to Aiden. Studies the baby. As beautiful as it is alien.

Adam and Aiden's halting, inaudible words meld into the score as Aiden watches Adam watching the baby...

Aiden offers the baby to Adam to hold.

He trusts his brother.

Adam takes the baby in his arms.

100 EXT. HOSPITAL. DAY

A lift rises through a glass column.

Adam ascends inside.

101 EXT. FIELD. MORNING. FLASHBACK

YOUNG ADAM (11) and YOUNG AIDEN (7) run through the long grass cradling air rifles far too big for their bodies.

They halt. Adam motions to move on. The boys advance like soldiers - Adam with confidence, Aiden unsure.

The boys step forward and stop.

WIDE on the sky as two birds soar upwards.

Adam *commands Aiden to take aim.*

Aiden holds his rifle close to his chest, refusing to shoot. Shuts his eyes as Adam raises his own rifle.

Adam aims and tracks the birds with a shaky grip on his rifle.

WIDE on the sky as the birds glide toward us, unafraid.

(CONTINUED)



101 CONTINUED:

Adam lowers his rifle. A sense of relief.

Adam and Aiden watch the birds soar past together.

CUT TO BLACK.