

**SEXUAL HEALING**

**(Episode One - All Screwed Up)**

**by  
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INT. HOUSE, NORTH LONDON SUBURBS (1986) (PRE-TITLE)

We are in the kitchen of a comfortable, middle-class North London household. A cheeky-looking kid, SYDNEY (8) is munching on her Cornflakes as her father, ROGER (40's), a Doctor, gets ready for work. SOPHIE (30's), SYDNEY's mother, a frustrated woman, is resentfully clearing the table, banging the plates around. SYDNEY looks at her parents dolefully as she munches. We hear her VOICE-OVER

SYDNEY (V.O.)

When I was a kid, Mum and Dad  
were forever fighting. I would  
make them kiss and make up ...

SOPHIE hisses at ROGER, trying to keep her voice down

SOPHIE

I've had it with you and your  
late nights 'on call'! On 'call'  
to whom? Not to your patients,  
that's for sure!

ROGER

Darling? Not in front of Sydney?!

SYDNEY clearing her throat, pushes back her chair and does a tap dance, desperate. A fixed smile on her face. They suddenly both turn, freeze and look at her smiling sadly.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

I learned from a tender age that  
if you make people laugh, they  
will love you and things might be  
o.k. just for that moment.

ROGER and SOPHIE both gulp hard as SYDNEY looks from one to the other hopeful.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEAFY ROAD. SUBURBIA (1986 - DAY) (PRE-TITLE)

SYDNEY watches sadly as ROGER goes to his car. SOPHIE pulls SYDNEY close - ROGER is leaving. He throws a suitcase into the boot of his car. SYDNEY looks horrified.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

They didn't always laugh -  
sometimes they cried!

SOPHIE, tears of anger pouring down her cheeks, clutches SYDNEY around her shoulders as ROGER bangs shut the boot and walks slowly towards SYDNEY. He crouches down to her.

ROGER (GENTLY)

Sydney, I'll always love you.

ROGER breaks off, rubbing the tears from his eyes.

SYDNEY  
If you walk out now, Daddy, I'll  
never, ever get over it!

ROGER hugs her fiercely and walks backwards towards the car. SYDNEY looks from her mother to her father, eyes ablaze.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
I'm gonna send you both my  
therapy bills!

SYDNEY rushes into the house and slams the Door. TITLE  
fades up: EPISODE ONE - 'ALL SCREWED UP'

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SYDNEY'S FLAT - CAMDEN TOWN. DAY (PRESENT DAY)

We pan across SYD'S massive double bed - four people are munching on bowls of 'Cheerios'. In the middle SYDNEY (30), cropped dark hair, attractive; ANGUS (30), gay, hair bleached blonde, SYDNEY'S Australian flatmate and his boyfriend ROY, also an actor. RICKI (30), Colombian, SYDNEY's lover. SYDNEY smiles at RIKI - he kisses her.

ANGUS  
Don't mind us, people? Shall we  
toddle off, baby boy?

ROY kisses ANGUS and nods, getting out of the bed as SYDNEY laughs and hands ANGUS her empty bowl.

SYDNEY  
Angus, could you get me some more  
'Cheerios'?

ANGUS, grumbling good-naturedly, gets out of bed.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
You know the deal - my flat,  
unemployed actors keeps clean!

ANGUS  
Huh! What would you know about  
keeping things 'clean', Sydney?

ANGUS and ROY leave the room and RICKI grabs SYDNEY and she SHRIEKS and GIGGLES. They kiss passionately. RICKI pulls the duvet over their heads as they start to make love.

CUT TO:

INT. EUGENE'S BEDROOM. STOKE NEWINGTON. DAY.

We're in a semi-decorated bedroom. It's very minimal and we can see from the dust sheets these people have just moved in. We see a huge bed and EUGENE (27), black, intelligent and his girlfriend BECKA (24) are making love. BECKA is under the sheets and we ANGLE ON EUGENE, lying flat on his back - he doesn't look happy.

EUGENE

I ...? I'm sorry, babes?!

BECKA, black, beautiful an aspiring model, emerges from under the duvet. She looks perplexed.

BECKA

What's up, Euge? I can't get no life out of this thing?

BECKA, frowning, leans back exhausted on the pillows

BECKA (CONT'D)

Baby ... we need to get it straight. What's up?

EUGENE

My ... head is overloaded.

BECKA

Maybe you need to see someone?

EUGENE

How can I? I am that 'someone'!

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT' - SEX THERAPY/RELATIONSHIP CENTRE. NORTH LONDON - DAY

MAEVE (42), 'Connect's' most Senior Sex Therapist, Irish, groomed, sophisticated, curly red hair, walks through the open plan area, her 'designer' glasses perched on her nose. She is followed by ANDY (35) scruffy leather jacket, hair tousled, warm, a roll-up cigarette hanging from his lips. They approach MICKI (26) 'CONNECT'S' young manager - she's black, beautiful, and has a troubled history with men. MICKI's gold-rimmed glasses and scraped back hair, disguise her good looks. Behind her on the long reception desk, VERA (45), the Receptionist answers the phones.

MAEVE

Jesus, I'm hung over! Wine tasting at my flat - woke up in a cold sweat. Could it be ...?

ANDY grins broadly and leans in to MAEVE

ANDY

'Big M' - gotta be!

MICKI whisks the roll-up cigarette from his lips and points to the 'NO SMOKING' sign.

MICKI

Men get the menopause too, Andy!

MAEVE suddenly notices a COUPLE OF CLIENTS sitting over the other side of reception. She quickly lowers her voice.

MAEVE

Those your clients, Andy? Aren't you co-counselling with Sydney?

ANDY

They're early ...?

MAEVE

Where is Sydney?

MICKI GROANS reading a text on her mobile.

MICKI

In the middle of one of her mindless archetypal great fucks!

ANDY

Archetypal 'great fuck'? Thought we were all searching for meaningful relationships in this New Age, Micki?

MICKI

We are - but with a great fuck thrown in!

MICKI hands MAEVE a card, whispering.

MICKI (CONT'D)

Might fancy this, Maeve? That posh dating agency my aunt tried - met all these 'captains of industry' types?

MAEVE

Thank you, Micki - not quite my thing. Dating.

ANDY grins wickedly at MAEVE

ANDY

My cousin had the menopause at thirty six. All her 'parts shut down and withered - tragic!

MAEVE and MICKI stare in horror. ANDY grins broadly.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
 Jeez, life is so tough for you  
 women these days?!

MICKI pins the 'Dating Agency' card on the board behind her  
 as MAEVE walks off, suppressing a giggle.

CUT TO:

INT. SYD'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME - DAY

SYDNEY and RICKI are making love under the duvet. ANGLE ON  
 SYD'S MOBILE BY HER BED - it rings. SYDNEY collapses back  
 on the pillows. RICKI collapses onto of her. SYDNEY leans  
 over to read her text from MICKI

SYDNEY  
 (reading)  
 Where the are you? Clients  
 waiting Maeve on the loose!

SYDNEY jumps out of bed, struggling with her clothes.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (breathles)  
 Fuck, fuck, fuck! I'm coming,  
 Micki. I'm ... Coming! I ...  
 came! But now I've gone!

SYDNEY lurches out of the room as RICKI looks confused

MUSIC & CUT

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. DAY

EUGENE, dressed in his business suit now, is counselling  
 DOUG (30's) and SALLY (30's). EUGENE listens hard, very  
 smart and handsome, he has his own Website business as  
 'CONNECT' is a charity. DOUG is a Fireman, SALLY his wife.

EUGENE  
 (very gently)  
 This must be very scary for you  
 both. This is a huge change.

SALLY, tears in her eyes, shakes her head silently as DOUG,  
 ashamed, blinks back the tears.

EUGENE (CONT'D)  
 Sally? How did you feel when you  
 first found Dougie in your  
 underwear?

SALLY  
 Angry ... disappointed. I felt  
 terrified, Eugene. He ruined me  
 best M & S stuff!

SALLY blinks back tears of frustration and anger

EUGENE

Dougie? Could you try and explain how you feel ... right now at this very moment?

DOUG

My whole world is about to fall apart, Eugene!

EUGENE, beads of sweat appearing on his forehead, loosens his tie. He keeps focusing hard.

EUGENE

Why 'fall apart', Doug?

DOUG

Well, I've turned into an 'effing drag queen, en' I?!

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. NORTH LONDON. DAY

SYDNEY rides her motor-bike very fast, weaving around the traffic. A TAXI DRIVE 'HOOTS' her as she rides.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION. 'CONNECT' - DAY

VERA answers one of the phones, MICKI on her computer behind her.

VERA (ON PHONE)

'Connect' Marriage Guidance and Sexual therapy Centre? No, you don't need to be married ... Thursday at five? Ok, thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. SAME TIME.

EUGENE, wipes the sweat from his brow and loosens his collar - we can see he's getting distracted by something.

EUGENE

What's the reaction been from your mates in the fire service?

DOUG

Haven't told 'em, Euge!  
Firefighter like me, six foot four, built like a brick shit-house and turns out to be a ... Transvestite!

DOUG suddenly breaks off and drops his head into his hands. SALLY, blinking back the tears looks at DOUG helplessly.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
I mean, who'd ring up a 'Tranny'  
to put out a fire?!

EUGENE is lost for words. Suddenly his 'PAGER' goes off in his pocket - they all jump. EUGENE fumbles for it.

EUGENE  
Sorry, people ...?

CUT TO:

INT RECEPTION - 'CONNECT' - DAY

ANDY walks into reception and approaches MICKI and VERA.

ANDY  
Syd around? Prem-ejac clients  
here - he always comes early!

MICKI groans and carries on typing on her computer.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Sorry! Delirious with tiredness.  
Kids were in and out of our beds  
like bloody yo-yos last night!

MICKI hands ANDY a small bottle as VERA turns away.

MICKI  
Rescue Remedy? Great for fatigue,  
stress - life!

ANDY looks interested as EUGENE walks through reception.

EUGENE (ON MOBILE)  
I've spoken to them. Yeah ...!  
They will increase the mortgage -  
yeah and pay for the renovation -  
ok, go for the Mulberry sofas!

ANDY  
Man on the edge. Slow down, Euge  
you'll never survive the wedding!

EUGENE smiles wearily and shoots a quick look at MICKI

EUGENE  
Becka's all stressed up about the  
wedding.

ANDY  
One in three marriages hit the  
rocks - why we're here, right?

ANDY leans in and puts his arm around EUGENE's shoulders, passing him the TINY BOTTLE.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Take a drop of this. 'Rescue  
Remedy' - sorts out your life!

ANDY goes off and EUGENE, looking at the bottle, shoots another look at MICKI, who has her back turned. EUGENE sighs deeply and checks his watch and darts back into his session. MICKI turns to VERA, annoyed.

MICKI  
Why do guys always want rescuing  
by some strong woman?

VERA laughs and shrugs, turning back to reception. ANGLE on MICKI as she whispers to herself.

MICKI (CONT'D)  
How's about someone rescuing me?

MUSIC/DISSOLVE

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. MOMENTS LATER. DAY

EUGENE is carrying on with his counselling session with DOUG the FIREMAN and his wife SALLY. The atmosphere is very tense. DOUG is anguished.

DOUG  
Round our way, a bloke's a bloke,  
and a bird's a bird and now I've  
messed that all up, eh?

EUGENE  
We'll get this mess untangled.  
It's only society that forces  
people to go underground ...

SALLY  
Underground? I'd never take him  
on the tube dressed as a woman?!

EUGENE sighs deeply and wipes his brow.

DOUG  
Look at me, Sal. I'm still me,  
still Dougie!

SALLY  
You left me knickers covered in  
semen, Doug, it was horrible! Me  
Janet Reiger stuff 'an all. Can't  
get the stains off!

EUGENE loosens his tie even further. He makes some notes.

EUGENE

Look, I'd like to take you both into therapy. See you both next week, sorry, need the Gents ...

DOUG

'Gents', 'Ladies' that's what we're struggling with, eh, Euge?

DOUG'S wig slips and he grins at SALLY. SALLY groans, blinks back tears and looks away as EUGENE runs out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT MEETING ROOM - 'CONNECT'. DAY. BIT LATER.

MAEVE is holding forth, chairing a weekly meeting around a big board table, all very professional. MAEVE has her glasses at the end of her nose, looking at Client's notes.

MAEVE

How long has the Client been vaginismic, Micki?

MICKI leans in, very keen, very focused.

MICKI

Four years. The Client's mother was a monster, controlling her daughter through her adolescent years, increasing her sense of claustrophobia. Now the Client has met this man ...

ANDY

Good God! Not a man?!

MAEVE

(irritated)  
Carry on, Micki?

MICKI

She wants to throw off her mother and sort out her vaginismus, but she's still got this terrible fear of vaginal penetration

SYDNEY rushes, in notebook in hand, coffee cup in other. She shoots ANDY a look. A BEAT. They all stare at her. MICKI stifles a SNORT OF LAUGHTER.

MICKI (CONT'D)

Unlike ... Sydney!

SYDNEY

Sorry, people, mad morning!

ANDY grins and passes over a biscuit tin to SYD. SYD smiles at him and takes a biscuit. He grins back shyly. A BEAT. MICKI narrows her eyes, highly disapproving

MICKI

I'd really like the chance to counsel her on my own, Maeve.

MAEVE

I don't see why not? As long as you still organise us all. Andy?

ANDY is lost in thought staring at SYDNEY. MICKI 'clocks' this - she's not impressed and kicks SYD under the table.

ANDY

Sure thing. Micki can counsel me too - penetration sure scares the hell out of me!

SYDNEY snorts with laughter. MAEVE, irritated, carries on.

MAEVE

The prem-ejac couple, Andy? Having read your 'hello' notes, seems like a bit of a two-hander?

ANDY

We're simply talking 'sensate focus'? Why the two-hander?

MAEVE

They're elderly and I feel the woman might feel more comfortable supported by a female counsellor, a woman - Sydney could trail you?

A BEAT. They all look at SYD. SYD stares at ANDY.

MICKI

Sydney's an expert on men who come quickly!

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF. SAME TIME. DAY

EUGENE is up on the roof terrace that is at the top of the building. We see the POST OFFICE TOWER nearby. EUGENE grips hard at the railings, breathing in and out.

EUGENE

Breathe, breathe ... you're in control, Eugene ... breathe!

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF. LATER. DAY.

EUGENE is up on the roof, drinking coffee on his mobile - he is between Client sessions.

EUGENE (ON MOBILE)  
 We can't afford to lose that account ... if the website's crashed then Marcus is the guy to fix it - I'm telling you!

ANDY climbs up the Fire Escape which leads onto the roof - he walks towards EUGENE and lights up his cigarette.

EUGENE (ON MOBILE) (CONT'D)  
 Right, ok. Be in later.

EUGENE clicks off his mobile and sighs deeply.

ANDY  
 I'm worried about you.

EUGENE  
 It's bad. Keep overheating.

ANDY sighs deeply and nods, still staring ahead.

ANDY  
 Know the feeling.

EUGENE  
 Inga ok?

ANDY'S face darkens - we can see his is struggling.

ANDY  
 Inga's ...? Inga.

They stare ahead in silence. A BEAT. ANDY draws hard on his cigarette, staring straight ahead.

CUT TO:

INT. LADIES TOILETS. RELATE. SAME TIME - DAY

SYDNEY is at the washbasin, splashing cold water over her face. MICKI emerges from a cubicle.

MICKI  
 Hmm? Heavy weekend, madam?

SYDNEY  
 Knackered! Ricki was round, Joel was pestering me after the show - and I can't think of any funny material for Friday's show!

MICKI

Base it on your own life, Syd,  
that should crack them up!

SYDNEY

Piss off, nasty little virgin!

MICKI

Hope you're rubbered up with all  
those men you're juggling - HIV  
is alive and well, misses!

MAEVE comes in and stiffens when she sees SYD.

MAEVE

Sydney? Hope you're managing to  
keep a lid on your personal life?

SYDNEY

If we don't screw ourselves,  
Maeve, how can we counsel the  
screwed-up about screwing?

MAEVE

Part of your comedy act, Sydney?  
You're still in training - don't  
let things run out of control!

MAEVE enters a cubicle. SYD makes a 'huge face' as MICKI  
stifles a laugh and walks out.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. BIT LATER.

SYDNEY and ANDY are 'co-counselling' RON (60's) and MELISSA  
(late fifties). RON is very 'dapper' in a striped blazer,  
MELISSA very 'flowered hat'. SYDNEY is concentrating hard,  
jotting down notes. ANDY leads the session.

RON

I keep coming too quick!

ANDY 'twinkles' at SYDNEY and she quickly looks away.

MELISSA

Ronald, really ...?!

ANDY

Melissa, it's ok, really ...?

ANDY looks at RON encouragingly.

RON

Well, I feel under pressure to perform, plus there's a picture of James, Hubby number One near the bed. He could keep it up all night, according to Melissa.

MELISSA shuffles around in her seat awkwardly. SYDNEY catches her eye and smiles supportively.

RON (CONT'D)

It's all pressure and well? It affects my performance.

MELISSA

I'm not putting you under pressure, Ronald. I just, well? Oh dear, I ...?!

ANDY looks at SYDNEY and SYDNEY leans forward and smiles

SYDNEY

(gently)  
Carry on, please, Melissa ..?

MELISSA

I feel under pressure too. When we get into bed, my heart starts fluttering and I get all tense.

SYDNEY

Melissa? Are you comparing Ron to your first husband?

MELISSA

No, Sydney, not at all.

RON

Oh come on, Mel?! 'Charlie Boy' was a real stud by all accounts?

MELISSA suddenly looks very embarrassed.

MELISSA

It's just, you know, Charles could shoot straight!

RON

Shoot straight?! This isn't a firing range we're talking about, Mel! It's me, old Ron, working his blimmin' balls off?!

ANDY gulps and shoots a quick look at SYDNEY, who's focusing hard. ANDY 'nods' - he will make the next move.

ANDY

(gently)

Let's get back to the nitty-gritty, guys. Ron, you tell us your version and Melissa, you tell us yours. Sound reasonable?

RON

Okey-dokey. I like my rumpy-pumpy, Andy, and I know Mel does too, but every time I'm inside her, I come too quick - squirt all over the bedspread like bloomin' Flipper!

MELISSA looks horrified. SYD and ANDY look at each other, eyes widening - SYD twinkles at ANDY.

MUSIC/DISSOLVE

EXT. ROOF 'CONNECT' - AFTERNOON - BIT LATER

MAEVE is standing on the large flat roof, having one of her 'Gauloise' cigarettes. She looks thoughtful, a bit sad. ANDY approaches via the fire escape - she waves over as he walks towards her. MAEVE smiles as ANDY lights up.

MAEVE

Just had a bit of a sad session. A widow trying to find a man, at sixty. Hasn't had sex for eighteen years since her husband died ...

ANDY

Micki's locking up, fancy a half? I could ring Inga and beg to be let off duty ...?

MAEVE

That's sweet, thanks. Got a dinner party lined up ...

ANDY

For one?

MAEVE

Sad fecker, eh?

ANDY smiles warmly and shrugs.

ANDY

Dinner for one sounds good. I'm cooking spaghetti hoops for six - a sleepover. What cruel bastard invented fucking sleepovers?! They don't sleep!

MAEVE  
The single life has it's  
benefits' I guess?

ANDY  
I'm outahere. Chaos beckons!

MAEVE  
Things ok at home, Andy?

ANDY wriggles around - he's not sure.

ANDY  
You know, great, crap. That's  
life, isn't it?

ANDY shrugs, and walks away across the roof.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Hey? Don't forget that dating  
agency Micki told you about?  
You'd be having dinner for two if  
you rang 'em?

We ANGLE ON MAEVE as she laughs, shaking her head.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Think of the Widow? No sex for  
eighteen years?!

MAEVE smiles - a BEAT.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EUGENE'S BEDROOM. NEXT MORNING. DAY.

EUGENE and BECKA are mid-sex. EUGENE is on top - the sex  
is athletic and they roll around - a little desperate.  
Suddenly EUGENE pulls off and rolls away from BECKA and  
stares up at the ceiling.

BECKA  
Baby, we have to get things  
straight.

EUGENE looks miserable.

BECKA (CONT'D)  
Since you've started doing your  
'counselling' you've stopped  
sharing things with me.

EUGENE  
Sharing? What sort of things?

EUGENE sits up and leans back on the pillows.

BECKA

We don't make love, we don't talk  
- I don't know who I'm engaged to  
anymore!

EUGENE sighs deeply and looks away.

EUGENE

I don't know either, babe. That's  
the problem.

BECKA

What about your dad - is he  
coming to the wedding, Euge?

EUGENE looks away, angry.

EUGENE

I haven't got a dad, you know  
that? The business, the wedding  
plans, this flat ... it's all  
fallin' in on me, Becks!

BECKA

It's the counselling that's  
screwing you up. Jake says you're  
never in the office?!

EUGENE gets out of bed walks towards the window.

EUGENE

I wanna stop people from making  
the same fuck ups Mum and Dad  
did.

BECKA

That's great for your clients,  
but not so great for us, eh?

EUGENE turns away and walks towards the shower. BECKA  
furious shouts after him.

BECKA (CONT'D)

(shouting)

That's right? Slam the door! Back  
to your goddamned weirdos!

A DOOR SLAMS. BECKA, furious, punches a pillow. It splits  
and the feathers come out all over her.

CUT TO:

EXT STREET. NEAR 'CONNECT' - SAME DAY.

We angle on DOUGIE the FIREMAN, walking down the street,  
swinging a bag, clip-clopping in high heels as he  
straightens his lopsided blonde wig. DOUGIE is dressed as  
a woman, in full make up.

SALLY walks next to him, chronically embarrassed. TWO WORKMEN whistle at DOUGIE from across the road - DOUGIE looks thrilled - he's 'passed'!

DOUG  
How am I doing, Sal?

DOUGIE giggles, nearly stumbling over a paving stone, SALLY grabs his arm to stop him falling.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
(giggling)  
Man underneath and woman on top!

CUT TO:

SYD'S BEDROOM. CHALK FARM. DAY.

SYDNEY is writhing around on top of JAMIE, an unemployed Actor - a friend of ANGUS's, SYD's gay Actor/Australian flatmate. There is knock at the door - it's ANGUS with a plate of muffins, which he brandishes very theatrically.

ANGUS  
Muffins, me dearies?

JAMIE laughs as SYDNEY grabs a muffin. SYDNEY rolls back onto the bed and munches. ANGUS lies on bed the other side.

SYDNEY  
We've got to stop eating like  
this. Stand up this Friday,  
'Women talk dirty' be there!

ANGUS  
Stand up? You? Miss `flat on her  
back'?

SYDNEY  
Horrid little failure? Why are  
all you actors unemployed?

JAMIE  
Go on then, Syd - do your act?

ANGUS groans as SYD addresses an 'imaginary audience'

SYDNEY (AS 'STAND UP COMIC')  
Ok ... Sex is something I've  
always been fascinated with -  
even at primary school. I was  
forever in the woodshed with the  
boys, you know, I'll you show me  
your willy if I'll show me mine.

ANGUS  
Willy? Yours?

SYDNEY  
I'll show you my willy if you'll  
show me your fanny!

ANGUS  
But I haven't got a fanny?!

SYDNEY lifts up a cushion and beats him over the head.

ANGUS (CONT'D)  
Aren't you 'co-counselling' with  
Mr. Married-and-Out-of-bounds  
today? Better get dolled up, eh?

JAMIE suddenly shoots SYDNEY a look - jealous. SYDNEY  
shoots an uneasy smile at JAMIE as ANGUS leaves. JAMIE  
stares at SYDNEY, hurt

JAMIE  
Are you messing me around?

SYDNEY wriggles around awkwardly. She sighs deeply

SYDNEY  
No, I'm ...? Course not, I'm ...?  
Ok, yes. I am.

JAMIE looks away. SYDNEY sighs deeply, she feels bad.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. EXT. SYDNEY'S FLAT. BIT LATER.

SYDNEY struggles to get her bike down the outside stairs.  
Her flat is on the first floor of a large Georgian house.  
A YOUNG BLACK KID, TEZ (9) hangs out of the next door  
window and shouts down.

TEZ  
Yo, Sydney ...?!

SYD looks up as she struggles with her bike and waves

TEZ (CONT'D)  
Can I watch your plasma?  
'Casablanca' is on Moviemax?

SYDNEY  
What does a nine old kid  
understand about 'Casablanca'?

TEZ grins broadly and shouts down.

TEZ  
Plenty! 'There will always be  
Paris'?, Sydney!

SYD looks frustrated as she struggles to unlock her bike chain - she puts on her helmet.

TEZ (CONT'D)  
Shall I make tea, Sydney?

SYD gets on her bike and rides off.

SYDNEY  
(shouting)  
Ok, but not the peanut butter pie, again, please, Tez?!

TEZ grins and waves as she rides off.

TEZ  
I'll do a 'Nigella'!

MIX TO:

INT. EUGENE'S BUSINESS OFFICE. ISLINGTON

We are in the smart office of EUGENE's website business 'NEW WAVE' - he talks to his business partner JAKE (30's). EUGENE looks tense.

JAKE  
The VAT man wants £75,000 plus, Euge. Since the 'New Media Gazette' site has gone down, we're a bit fucked.

EUGENE  
So no wages for you and me for how long ...?

JAKE  
Three months at least ...

EUGENE looks stressed, the sweat appears on his forehead and he loosens his tie.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
We might be ok if the Conran deal goes through ...

EUGENE  
Need some air - later!

JAKE watches EUGENE leave and sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM. DAY. SYD'S THERAPIST'S

We are in the attic room of SYD'S therapist, IAN, a kindly bearded man. IAN smiles, his eyes narrowing as he listens.

SYDNEY

Marriage is so meaningless these days? A complete mockery as we're all biologically predisposed to be polygamous anyway ...

IAN smiles fondly at her.

IAN

Whenever you've made up your mind you're going to do something destructive, you try and justify it with generalities.

SYDNEY is stumped. IAN stares at her - tough.

SYDNEY

Are you suggesting that I'm about to get into deep shit with a married man because I'm like my dad? Seducing all his students?

IAN smiles as if to say 'well?'. SYD wriggles around very awkwardly - humour will help her here. She grins at him.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I'm analyzing myself, Ian!

IAN laughs and looks at his watch, the session is over.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION - 'CONNECT' SAME TIME

MICKI is busy at her computer as VERA answers the phones in the background. We see DOUG THE FIREMAN (dressed as a woman) and SALLY sitting in reception, waiting to see EUGENE. They're early and he's late. MICKI goes over to DOUG and SALLY. She smiles at them politely.

MICKI

Eugene's been delayed - are you happy to hang on for half an hour?

DOUG grins, his wig slipping a little.

DOUG

I'm hanging on for dear life here - half an hour's nothing, love!

MICKI

Teas and Coffees over there ...

SALLY smiles, deeply embarrassed. A WOMAN comes in - AMELIA, (50's) a 'PRINCESS ANNE' type, very 'SLOANE RANGER', HERMES headscarf on, Barber jacket.

She looks around the reception, very imperious and marches up to MICKI. SYDNEY comes in, wheeling her bike to the back room, she shakes her hair out of her helmet and comes over to reception, placing a pile of LEAFLETS on reception. VERA looks interested and picks them up and giggles loudly.

VERA (READING)  
A 'NO NUTS' Comedy night? Ooo,  
Sydney? What are you like?!

AMELIA comes nearer to SYD and SYD reels round to face this creepy woman. AMELIA is up very close to her.

SYDNEY  
Hello there? These fine ladies  
will help you ... coffee needed!

VERA smiles fondly as they watch SYD dash off. AMELIA narrows her eyes, she's very 'posh'. Very creepy.

AMELIA  
(hissing)  
I need to see a therapist - and  
it must be her!

VERA nods politely.

AMELIA (CONT'D)  
How long I must wait?

VERA  
There's a session spare with  
Sydney at five thirty, later  
today.

AMELIA narrows her eyes and nods.

VERA (CONT'D)  
There's some mags over there,  
dear, and coffee.

AMELIA  
Have you a copy of 'HARPERS &  
QUEENS'?

VERA  
Oh no, dear. We never get harpers  
but we sometimes get 'queens'.

ANGLE on DOUGIE THE FIREMAN, adjusting his nylons as he smiles and shuffles up the seats, making room for AMELIA to sit down. VERA sticks up one of SYD'S POSTERS near where they are sitting. DOUGIE leans over to SALLY.

DOUGIE  
No nuts Comedy show? Don't think  
they'd let me into that one, eh,  
Sal?

SALLY raises her eyes to the high heavens

CUT TO:

INT. LADIES TOILETS - 'CONNECT' SAME TIME.

MICKI comes into find SYDNEY staring at herself in the mirror.

SYDNEY

I've had it with dumb men, Micki.  
Gonna clear them all out - want  
someone more cerebral. A zipless  
fuck with a brain attached.

MICKI's jaw drops and she suddenly grabs SYD'S arm.

MICKI

(hissing)  
No?! Don't do it, Sydney! It  
will be suicide!

A BEAT. SYDNEY stares at MICKI. MAEVE comes in

MAEVE

Sydney? How's the co-counselling  
with Andy?

SYDNEY

(brightly)  
We've done the history-taking and  
the 'hello' interview, Maeve, and  
now we're ready to ...

SYD looks defiantly at MICKI. A BEAT.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Rock and roll!

MAEVE's glasses slip down her nose a little as SYDNEY,  
grinning rushes out. She stares enquiringly at MICKI.

MICKI

Syd's dead serious about this  
job, Maeve. She's just a serial  
screwer, that's all.

MAEVE

Anyone would think she was the  
only around here who was sexually  
active?!

A BEAT. MAEVE and MICKI look at each other.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Must dash - got my widow coming  
in, talking to her about her ...?

MICKI raises a quizzical eyebrow. MAEVE mutters.

MAEVE (CONT'D)  
You know? Lack of sex.

MAEVE dashes out and MICKI hides a wry smile.

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER COUNSELING ROOM.

EUGENE is mid-counselling with DOUGIE THE FIREMAN (dressed as a woman) and SALLY. EUGENE focuses hard, but we can see he's a bit distracted.

EUGENE  
You made it back here - very  
brave. How did you feel, Doug,  
out in the open?

DOUG looks bright, very pleased with himself.

DOUG  
You know something, Euge? I felt  
like me for the very first time.  
Felt like the real Dougie.  
Blimmin' scary, mind you!

SALLY suddenly looks at him - we can see there is love there, even though she feels revulsion at DOUG's appearance. EUGENE, sweating now, listens hard. DOUG gulps hard and lowers his tone.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
When I was a boy, Euge, I had  
this blond curly hair, blue eyes -  
I was a bit of a picture. And my  
Dad - oh blimey ... ?! He used to  
beat me rotten. He knew there  
was a woman under the man, if you  
see what I mean, and he wanted to  
stamp it out.

EUGENE slowly nods his head and breathes deeply. A BEAT.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
(darkly)  
All that hate - it can darken the  
soul. You've got to confront the  
past, unlock it, then throw away  
the key ...

EUGENE, transfixed, nods slowly as he listens. DOUG is in a 'reverie'.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
You have to let the past go, Euge  
...

EUGENE loosens his tie - he's breathing hard.

EUGENE  
(breathless)  
You're right ... unlock the past,  
let it go ...!

DOUG  
(brightly)  
And me? For the first time in me  
life I feel a bit normal!

DOUG grins broadly, his wig slipping - SALLY groans as we  
ANGLE ON EUGENE, who looks a bit wobbly.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF. SAME TIME.

ANDY is upstairs having a quick smoke - SYD comes up the  
fire escape and sees him. SYDNEY approaches and leans on  
the wall next to him, looking out. ANDY grins warmly.

ANDY  
Howdy 'pardner'? Quick smoke  
before our session!

SYDNEY smiles and nods

ANDY (CONT'D)  
I'm coming to see your act on  
Friday - need some light relief!

SYDNEY  
Light relief or 'hand' relief?  
I'm sorry - I'm trying not to  
think about sex!

ANDY reels back, thrown, and laughs. A BEAT.

ANDY  
Why ... are you not trying to  
think about sex, Syd?

SYDNEY  
Men stuff, you know?

A BEAT. ANDY clears his throat nervously. A BEAT.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
What is it really like to be  
married? I'm in training,  
remember?

ANDY  
Marriage is for life.

SYDNEY

Sounds like a prison sentence?

ANDY laughs nervously and looks away. SYD sighs wearily and draws on her cigarette surveying the view.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

This place, you know, peoples' dark problems, tragic lives, I don't know if I'm making a difference ...

ANDY

Guess we try and disentangle broken relationships. Make things better between people.

ANOTHER BEAT. They both gulp. SYD stares hard at ANDY

ANDY (CONT'D)

If ... there's love there.

A BEAT. SYDNEY Looks up at ANDY, inhaling hard. MICKI pops her head up over the FIRE ESCAPE

MICKI

Oi? You lot?! Clients waiting!

ANGLE ON MICKI as her eyes narrow.

ANDY

Better get down there? Broken marriages to mend!

ANDY quickly walks off. SYD curses silently and 'snarls' at MICKI, who stands there, arms crossed.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM 'CONNECT' - BIT LATER

We're in EUGENE'S session with DOUG THE FIREMAN in full make up (now smudged) wig and dress and SALLY, who is biting her nails, very tense.

SALLY

Am I married to a man or a woman?

EUGENE, a bit breathless again, loosens his tie.

EUGENE

Dougie ...?

DOUG

I guess I want to feel like a woman - but that doesn't make me not a man, does it, babes? Me 'bits' are still operational!

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION - 'CONNECT' SAME TIME

MICKI looks up from her computer as MAEVE passes by.

MICKI

You're four o'clock woman has cancelled, Maeve. The widow. Said something about she'd met some man and was happy ...

MAEVE stops in her tracks.

MAEVE

Happy ... ?

MICKI

Reckons she doesn't need any more counselling. One happy customer!

MAEVE looks thrown and walks on. EUGENE walks past - MICKI looks over, a bit concerned. He looks a bit shaky.

MICKI (CONT'D)

You ...ok?

EUGENE grins bravely, the sweat pouring down his forehead.

EUGENE

Not really - but thanks!

MICKI turns away. A BEAT. EUGENE sighs and wipes his brow. He steps forward about to say something - then thinks better of it. ANGLE ON MICKI, frowning in confusion. EUGENE walks off.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM - SAME TIME.

SYD and ANDY are co-counselling RONALD, the dapper man in his sixties - this time RON is on his own without MELISSA. ANDY is leading the session and SYD has the clipboard on her lap, taking notes and listening hard.

ANDY

(gently)

Premature ejaculation is very common, Ron. We men often fail to make the connection between their emotions here ...

ANDY touches his chest and RON nods intently.

RON  
The biceps?

ANDY  
No, the heart - the emotions,  
Ron. And ...

ANDY now indicates his groin and looks a bit awkward. He gulps and shoots an embarrassed look at SYDNEY.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
The penis.

RON  
(befuddled)  
Oh ... ? Think I see what you  
mean there, Andy?

ANDY  
This ... is second marriage for  
you both, there's a lot at stake.  
No wonder you're ejaculating too  
quickly, Ron. Let's go deeper  
...

SYDNEY looks at ANDY and breathes deeply.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
(gently)  
Close your eyes, Ron, think hard  
and tell us about your earliest  
sexual experiences ... free  
associate if you can?

RON has closed his eyes, but opens one eye cheekily.

RON  
(grinning)  
That like 'free love' or sommat?

ANDY  
Earliest memories, Ron ...?

RON closes his eyes again and thinks hard, screwing his face up. SYD looks up at ANDY who's looking back at her. A BEAT. They both gulp hard and quickly look away.

RON  
Where I was born, Andy, it wasn't  
too pleasant. Me and me sisters  
all cooped up in a flat, back of  
the Elephant, plus Grandad  
staying there - dirty old sod  
that he was ...

SYD frowns hard to concentrate, jotting down notes.

RON (CONT'D)

There was nowhere for me to wank off, without one of me sisters coming in. Used to do it quickly in the lav, but they were always knocking on the door, wanting to fix their hair so there was never any time. Story of my life, really.

ANDY

(softly)

You did really well dredging all that up, Ron. And you're working it out for yourself, really.

RON slowly opens his eyes. He looks more relaxed.

RON

You mean, I still come quick, 'coz that's what I've always done, Andy?

ANDY

You're making the connection I'm making. I don't think it's Melissa putting any pressure on you - you're putting the pressure on yourself.

RON brightening, suddenly grins at SYDNEY.

RON

He's alright, isn't he, Sydney? Not a bad lad, eh?

SYDNEY smiles - looking directly at ANDY now. A BEAT. RON clears his throat now - looking from one to the other.

RON (CONT'D)

Um ...? There is another thing, if I'm baring all?

RON lowers his tone, very conspiratorial.

RON (CONT'D)

A year ago, before I retired from Rover, there was this bloke in the accounts department ...

ANDY and SYD both look at RON. RON smiles weakly.

RON (CONT'D)

I was leaning over the photocopier, doing me spreadsheets and this bloke, Roger, head of marketing, he took me from behind

RON laughs nervously, as SYD and ANDY both catch each other's eye. A BEAT. RON leans in very conspiratorial.

RON (CONT'D)  
 Funny thing is, I quite enjoyed  
 it really, but don't tell Melissa  
 about Roger ...!

SYDNEY starts to splutter, jaw dropping.

RON (CONT'D)  
 She'll chop off my todger!

RON bursts out laughing as ANDY gulps hard.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF. 'CONNECT' DAY - BIT LATER

MAEVE is between sessions looking very furtive. She is alone apart from a Solitary PIGEON looking at her. MAEVE takes out a small bottle of brandy from her bag and takes a quick slug. THE PIGEON stares at her - she stares back.

MAEVE  
 What you lookin' at? I'm feekin'  
 Irish so I'm allowed to feekin'  
 drink - it's my feekin' heritage!

MAEVE puts the bottle back in her bag and takes out her MOBILE PHONE. She quickly dials, her voice lowered.

MAEVE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
 (hissing)  
 Is that 'Drawing down the Stars'  
 dating agency? I'd like to  
 register with you .. Maeve  
 Delaney ... 37 ... Crouch End.  
 Divorced. Yes, I'm wanting to  
 date a man. I wouldn't want to  
 date a feekin' woman, would I?

THE PIGEON stares, blinking hard.

MAEVE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
 I'm a Sex Therapist. Why would  
 that put men off? Put down  
 'Marine Biologist' then ...  
 Friday at ten. Thank you.

MAEVE clicks off the MOBILE and quickly crosses herself. She notices the PIGEON staring at her. MAEVE puts her fingers to her lips.

MAEVE (CONT'D)  
 Our little secret. Beak shut, ok?

CUT TO:

INT. CONSELLING ROOM. SAME TIME. DAY

SYDNEY is sorting out her notes as ANDY rearranges the chairs - RON has just left. SYD looks over.

SYDNEY  
What are we going to do about Ron  
lying to Melissa?

ANDY  
(distracted)  
Ron could be 'bi' and could go  
either way. He's clearly  
protecting Melissa.

SYDNEY  
So what should we do?

A BEAT. ANDY stares hard at SYD.

ANDY  
We should try and keep Ron's  
heterosexual side up and running  
and keep ...?

ANOTHER BEAT. ANDY looks down quickly.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
The ... marriage together.

ANDY takes a roll-up cigarette from behind his ear and  
lights it.

SYDNEY  
You ... can't smoke in here?

ANDY  
I want to break some rules!

A BEAT. SYD breathes in hard - her eyes widening.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION. SAME TIME.

MICKI looks at her watch - where's SYD? VERA is tidying  
away as she notices AMELIA, the SLOANE woman in the HERMES  
headscarf approach the desk - she'd forgotten about her.

AMELIA  
Where's my therapist? Been  
waiting all day!

VERA looks around.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. SAME TIME.

SYD and ANDY are kissing, it's heated. As they get more passionate, SYD grabs at ANDY's flies and unzips them. ANDY giggles nervously.

CUT TO:

EXT. RECEPTION. SAME TIME.

ANGLE ON MICKI. She flicks through the Appointments book.

MICKI

Syd should still be here ...?

MICKI looks across reception to one of the closed doors to the Counselling Room. Her eyes widen with horror.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. SAME TIME.

SYDNEY has her hand down ANDY's trousers - it's heated. SYDNEY laughs gently. LOUD KNOCKING ON THE DOOR. They hear MICKI'S VOICE (OOV)

MICKI (OOV)

Anyone in there ...?

ANDY tucks his shirt in his trousers as SYDNEY quickly buttons up her opened shirt buttons.

SYDNEY

Shit?! Just ... um, clearing ...  
up?!

A LOUD KNOCKING. They leap apart as MAEVE pops her head in.

MAEVE

Last client here, Sydney!

SYD nods and gulps. ANDY grins weakly. MAEVE looks confused.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. HARROW - SAME TIME.

We see EUGENE drive slowly down a street in his BMW Convertible. He parks outside a small terraced house. A TRAFFIC WARDEN, RITA (50) large, West Indian comes walking down the road - she sees him and comes over. RITA shakes her head sternly when she checks the meter - he hasn't paid. RITA taps her pen on the window and EUGENE slowly winds it down.

RITA  
 You can't park your smart car on  
 the yellow. Residents parking!

EUGENE raises his eyes to the heavens. RITA gets out a  
 ticket and places it on his windscreen. EUGENE groans.

RITA (CONT'D)  
 Going to have to book you, young  
 man!

EUGENE  
 Got enough problems without  
 getting grief from a Parking  
 Warden!

RITA stands back and smiles slightly.

RITA  
 And what kind of problems you  
 got, then, boy?

EUGENE slowly gets out of the car, very weary. He leans  
 back on his car, his hands in his coat pockets.

EUGENE  
 We need to talk. I'm on the  
 edge, Mum!

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. SAME TIME.

SYDNEY is in a trance as she counsels AMELIA the strange,  
 hissing SLOANE, 'HERMES' Headscarf still on. AMELIA is mid-  
 flow, her voice whiney and strange.

AMELIA  
 (hissing)  
 I love to shag. I'll take a man  
 anywhere and when I shag a man, I  
 shag him hard, squeezing the  
 juices right out of him!

SYD still looks a bit dishevelled from her entanglement  
 with ANDY. She steadies herself with the clipboard.

AMELIA (CONT'D)  
 In the stables, on the stairs -  
 even have sex in the cellar, if I  
 have too ...

AMELIA suddenly leans towards SYD as SYD's eyes widen.

AMELIA (CONT'D)  
 You see, I knew you were the  
 'same' as me?

SYDNEY  
The 'same' as you?

AMELIA  
As soon as I saw you, I could  
tell that you loved to shag and  
that sex was the driving force in  
your body.

SYD reels back, gripping onto her clipboard.

AMELIA (CONT'D)  
I could tell you were in touch  
with your vagina.

SYDNEY  
(weakly)  
You ... could?

AMELIA  
I knew I could share my little  
problem with you ...

SYDNEY shuffles around in her seat, trying hard to retain control but AMELIA is very 'creepy', strangely 'powerful'.

SYDNEY  
And ... what is your little  
problem, Amelia?

AMELIA leans forward, smiling, revealing very yellow teeth.

AMELIA  
I'm a bit of a freak, you see.  
You won't laugh at me? I've got  
three vaginas!

SYD rearranges her mouth as AMELIA jumps up and starts to lift up her tweed skirt.

AMELIA (CONT'D)  
(brightly)  
Would you care to see them?

SYD's jaw hits the ground.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. HARROW. SAME TIME - DAY

EUGENE and RITA are both leaning on EUGENE's Merc - RITA has her hat off and they are both deep in conversation.

RITA

You always wanted to dig deep,  
Euge, even at the age of four you  
was drivin' us crazy with all  
your questions!

EUGENE

Mum ... I need to unlock things  
here? Why did you live with Dad  
for all those years?

RITA groans and laughs

EUGENE (CONT'D)

The way Dad would get drunk and  
smash things up, I used to drag  
the others onto the fire escape.  
We thought he was gonna kill  
you?!

RITA sighs hard and tips back her WARDEN'S hat.

RITA

I was sixteen, a kid and I  
married another kid. You babies  
just kept on coming ...

RITA shrugs and she's not going to dwell on things.

RITA (CONT'D)

Got my new slip for that wedding  
of yours. Just call your Mum the  
'scarlett woman'?

RITA giggles and lifts up the skirt of her uniform to  
reveal a RED SILK PETTICOAT. EUGENE raises his eyes to the  
high heavens.

EUGENE

This marriage? Me and Becka,  
we're kids - like you and Dad?

RITA moves towards him now and gives him a big hug.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

Maybe ..? I'm like Dad and want  
to smash everything up?

EUGENE beats back the TEARS in his eyes.

RITA

You're nothing like him. Nothing  
- thank the lord!

EUGENE now sobs and RITA now hugs him hard.

RITA (CONT'D)  
 You been eating enough? Becka  
 ain't no cook, I'm tellin' ya?!  
 Maybe she isn't the wife for you?

EUGENE suddenly brightens - he looks shocked. A BEAT.

RITA (CONT'D)  
 I'm not saying nothing! You and  
 your mad friends do far too much  
 talking and digging. Forgotten  
 how the rest of us live up here!  
 Oh? Got something for you?

RITA hands EUGENE a large SUITCASE and grins broadly.

RITA (CONT'D)  
 Patties - two hundred of them for  
 the wedding.

EUGENE takes the bag wearily. He wilts again.

RITA (CONT'D)  
 If you don't go through with it,  
 just eat them patties and pack  
 your bags!

EUGENE'S eyes widen with excitement - he breathes hard.  
 RITA grins broadly.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF. EARLY EVENING - HOUR OR SO LATER.

SYD is smoking hard and MICKI is roaring with laughter.  
 They are both sharing a bottle of wine on the roof.

SYDNEY  
 Help me, Micki? I don't want to  
 end up like a crazy woman,  
 desperately needing help and  
 attention!

MICKI  
 (giggling)  
 It's called 'aversion therapy'!

SYD draws on her cigarette - she is secretly elated by her  
 groping session with ANDY.

SYDNEY  
 I'm cutting down on meaningless  
 sex!

MICKI  
 To make way for ... who?

SYDNEY

Don't ... you mean - for 'whom'?

MICKI

He's married and I've just heard  
that Inga's expecting a baby.

SYDNEY, shocked, is reeling - she clutches the wall. ANDY comes up the Fire escape - he's still here. MICKI steps back and smiles, a bit disapprovingly at ANDY.

MICKI (CONT'D)

Sydney has just been spooked by a  
client - be gentle with her!

ANDY wriggles around, embarrassed and quickly rolls a cigarette as MICKI walks off. ANDY stares at SYDNEY.

ANDY

I told Inga three kids were  
enough but she didn't listen.

SYDNEY, looks the other way - blinking back the tears.

ANDY (CONT'D)

All my life I've been a window  
shopper. Seeing things I've  
wanted, looking, wanting, but  
never daring to touch ...

SYDNEY, crying, draws hard on her cigarette.

ANDY (CONT'D)

And now ... I've touched. And I  
want to go on touching!

SYDNEY spins round, her eyes blazing.

SYDNEY

I may be screwed up, but I'm not  
some lurking bit of 'nooky'  
waiting for scraps? I'm worth a  
whole lot more than that!

ANDY smiles sadly. A BEAT.

ANDY

You are, Syd. You're unique.

SYDNEY

You're wedlocked, she's pregnant  
and I'm forbidden fruit. And  
we're both fucking marriage  
counsellors, for fuck's sake?!

ANDY sighs and stubs out his cigarette with his foot and slowly walks away. Tears rolling down her cheeks, SYDNEY turns away, looking over the city skyline.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
 (singing softly)  
 Another bride,  
 Another June,  
 Another sun, my honeymoon ...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM. ANDY'S HOUSE. STOKE NEWINGTON. NIGHT.

ANDY is lying there, staring at the ceiling, his Dutch wife, INGA, rolled over in the other direction, asleep.

SYDNEY (OOV)  
 (singing softly)  
 It's really killing,  
 That she's so willing,  
 For makin' ... whoopee.

ANDY stares up at the ceiling, deep in thought. He bats back the tears in his eyes.

MUSIC/DISSOLVE

INT. EUGENE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

EUGENE lies there rolled away from BECKA, he can't sleep and sits up on the edge of his bed - his head in his hands. EUGENE looks over at BECKA asleep, she looks beautiful and EUGENE sighs, he's in deep torment ...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MAEVE'S BEDROOM - CROUCH END. NEXT MORNING

We hear the sound of some 'BUZZING' - an electrical 'gadget' being used. MAEVE, lies between her satin sheets, her silk eye mask for her hangover over her eyes. One of her hands is under the bedclothes - she's using a VIBRATOR and groans, and writhes around, tossing and turning.

MAEVE  
 Come on, now! Oh Jeez? Yes! For  
 feck's sake, can't yer' see my  
 feckin' 'g' spot? Mary Mother of  
 holy feckin' Christ???! Ahhhhhh!

MAEVE wilts back onto the satin pillows. She slowly crosses herself.

MAEVE (CONT'D)  
 Forgive her ... Father, for she  
 knows not what she does!

CUT TO:

INT/EXT - SYD'S KITCHEN. CHALK FARM. MORNING

SYD is munching on her cereal, seated by a large, sash window (which is open) ANGUS, her gay flatmate, sits opposite munching. SYD is very thoughtful. Suddenly TEZ (11), their neighbour, pops his head through the open window and climbs in. They both scream.

ANGUS

Jesus! Syd's in mourning and it's the show tonight - so 'shhh'!  
Genius at work!

SYD sticks her tongue out at ANGUS and TEZ laughs.

TEZ

Couldn't you sneak me in, Syd?

SYDNEY

It won't be funny, Tez.

SYD puts a cigarette in her mouth, but TEZ grabs it.

TEZ

The fags, them dozy lovers - all gotta go. Think positive, Sydney, positive!

SYD suddenly looks at TEZ and slowly brightens.

SYDNEY

Hmmm? Ever thought of being a counsellor, Tez?

TEZ grins broadly, pleased with himself.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. DAY. HALF AN HOUR LATER.

SYDNEY is cycling through the traffic on her mountain bike. She chants to herself as she cycles.

SYDNEY

Positive, positive ...!

Suddenly a BLACK TAXI 'honk's at her.

TAXI DRIVER

Move it, ya poxy fuckin' lesbo!

SYDNEY quickly the driver the 'one fingered salute' to the ANGRY TAXI DRIVER as she whizzes past.

SYDNEY  
Positive, positive, negative -  
no, shit?! Positive!

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF. CONNECT. MORNING

ANDY and EUGENE slurp from large takeaway coffees. ANDY, rough and unshaven, smokes a roll-up. EUGENE, immaculate in his suit, looks exhausted and very stressed. Suddenly ANDY notices something in the window of a nearby OFFICE BLOCK - a COUPLE of OFFICE WORKERS kissing furtively.

ANDY  
Euge - look at that? Fuck!

ANDY grins and EUGENE, distracted, looks quizzical.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Over there, look? They're giving  
it some throttle ...?!

EUGENE now notices and smiles slightly in spite of his worries. ANDY laughs loudly.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
The shirts's coming off and the  
hand is going into her blouse -  
classic - 'Rear Window' or what?!

EUGENE smiles slightly as ANDY cranes to see

ANDY (CONT'D)  
And the blind comes down!

ANDY sighs and draws on his cigarette. He looks at EUGENE.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Euge ...? All these women we work  
with? Have you ever thought ...?

EUGENE  
Thought what, Andy?

ANDY  
Would you, ever, you know? With a  
female counsellor? Would ... you?

EUGENE stares at ANDY.

EUGENE  
A man in crisis wriggling on the  
pin and a married man at that?

ANDY is in anguish - he's waiting for EUGENE's answer.  
EUGENE suddenly looks away - he's thinking of MICKI.

EUGENE (CONT'D)  
I might - yeah, I just might.

ANDY sighs deeply. EUGENE sighs sadly.

CUT TO:

INT. SYD'S THERAPIST. NORTH LONDON

IAN, Eve's therapist is listening to SYD, mid flow.

SYDNEY  
This crazy client I had, she made  
me think of me - with her three  
vaginas ...

IAN looks quizzical as he listens hard.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
You know, juggling my three  
lovers. I'm clearing them all  
out, I'm getting back in charge  
of my body ...

IAN nods approvingly.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
The meaningless fucks can fuck  
off. Gonna become a one-woman  
vagina!

IAN  
You're starting to intervene in  
your own life, Syd. Very  
positive.

SYDNEY  
The show tonight - I'm terrified.  
Why do I put myself through it?  
Is it my desire to break the  
tension, like when I was a kid  
and mum and dad were fighting ...  
Or am I just funny?

IAN  
You're funny. But you're also  
more than that, Syd.

SYD stares at him gratefully and nods with determination.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT CAR. STREETS OF ISLINGTON - SAME TIME.

EUGENE is driving around the streets of Islington - his  
window is open, but the sweat is pouring down his face.

He rubs his face as His MOBILE PHONE RINGS. It's BECKA - EUGENE listens to the PHONE on the handset.

BECKA (OOV)  
Baby - spoken to the people about  
the reception, only £15,000 for  
the whole thing, champagne  
included ...

EUGENE breathes hard, he looks very 'grey'. He's sweating. EUGENE wipes his eyes - his hands gripping the wheel.

EUGENE  
Becka ... we're kids. Gotta ...?  
Sort out my head ... dig deeper!

BECKA (OOV)  
(shrill)  
Are you crazy?! Don't do a  
wobbly on me now, babes ...  
Eugene are you there?!

A CAR HOOTS and EUGENE swerves suddenly. EUGENE pulls the car over to the side of the street.

BECKA (OOV) (CONT'D)  
Eugene ...!?! What's happened?!

EUEGNE slumps over the wheel and 'greying out' he's having a 'panic attack'.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECEPTION - 'CONNECT' - BIT LATER

MAEVE and MICKI are clutching their coffee cups and looking out into reception, from behind MAEVE'S office door, in amazement. They are staring at ROBERT, a square-jawed, handsome, 'GEORGE CLOONEY' lookalike, smooth, forties, wearing a highly expensive, double-breasted suit.

MICKI  
It's is George Clooney - I'm  
telling you!

MICKI giggles and shoots a quick look at MAEVE

MAEVE  
Don't be daft, Micki. I've got a  
date tonight, a widowed breast  
surgeon - nervous, must admit!

MICKI looks at ROBERT, the 'GEORGE CLOONEY' lookalike.

MICKI  
Sex Addict, isn't he?

MAEVE nods, a bit imperious - but she's smiling. MICKI looks at MAEVE 'meaningfully' as if to say 'well?'

CUT TO:

INT. LIFT. 'CONNECT' BUILDING - SAME TIME.

DOUGIE THE FIREMAN (DRESSED AS A WOMAN) and SALLY, his wife are getting into the lift. SYD follows them in, lifting up her mountain bike.

SYDNEY  
Whoops?! Sorry, people ...!

DOUGIE  
No problem, love - want me to help?

DOUGIE rolls back his sleeves of his dress to reveal bulging muscles. He lifts up the bike on one end and shoves it in the corner of the lift

DOUGIE (CONT'D)  
Sorted!

DOUGIE smooths down his dress and grins broadly at SYDNEY. SALLY stares upwards, still embarrassed by DOUG's appearance. SYD smiles at them both as the lift takes off.

SYDNEY  
Useful to have a man around ...

DOUG's face suddenly falls. SYD adds quickly.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
And a woman! Two women, that is!

DOUG looks more pleased and grins proudly at SALLY.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. A BIT LATER. DAY.

ANDY is sitting opposite RONALD (60's) very dapper and his wife MELISSA (60's). ANDY is waiting for SYD, but decides to start without her.

ANDY  
We're talking two hours therapy a week here and then several hours 'homework' at home - it's a big commitment.

RON and MELISSA both nod. They look a bit more relaxed. ANDY smiles warmly at them, but he's very nervous about seeing SYD. RON looks at MELISSA and smiles gently.

RON  
 What do you think, old girl? Can  
 we make it?

MELISSA  
 (smiling)  
 Of course we can - marriage is  
 for keeps, isn't that right,  
 Andy?

ANDY stares at them and gulps hard. He slowly nods as SYD  
 pops her head in - she looks good, bright, clear. ANDY and  
 SYD stare at each other. A BEAT. MELISSA smiles at SYD,  
 who comes over and sits next to ANDY, opposite them.

MELISSA (CONT'D)  
 Just talking about marriage, Syd.  
 It's for life, isn't it, dear?

SYD, confused, nods slowly and looks at ANDY

RON  
 What about you, Sydney? A corker  
 like you must have the fellas  
 knockin' on yer door, eh?

ANDY shoots SYD a look. SYD now breathes in hard.

SYDNEY  
 My life is completely my own -  
 and that's the way I want to keep  
 it.

A BEAT. SYDNEY shoots a 'meaningful' look at ANDY and ANDY  
 gulps hard and they all look quizzically at him.

ANDY  
 Ok, let's start the 'sensate  
 focus' and we're going to be  
 talking about ...

ANDY clears his throat quickly - this is very hard for him.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
 Stopping and starting sex for,  
 um, you, Ron, to get some ...?

SYD stares at him now - very 'in control'

RONALD  
 Penis control? Okey-dokey, lets  
 shoot!

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER COUNSELLING ROOM - SAME TIME.

EUGENE is counselling DOUGIE the FIREMAN (dressed as a woman) and SALLY. EUGENE looks terrible - the sweat pouring down his face, and he looks very dishevelled. SALLY looks very scared, a bit breathless and DOUGIE squeezes her hand. EUGENE takes out a handkerchief and wipes off the sweat - his vision is going in and out of 'focus'.

SALLY

Dad would get drunk and ... Oh, I can't, really, I can't ..?!

SALLY breaks off in floods of tears - and DOUG steps in.

DOUGIE

Her Dad would get pissed up and beat up Sal's Mum. When Mum was black and blue, he would start on Sal and her sister ...! If he was alive now, I'd rip his bleeding head off!

EUGENE is panting. He is sinking down in his chair.

EUGENE

Rip ... my ... head off. Empty out ... start again?

SALLY and DOUGIE suddenly notice EUGENE

EUGENE (CONT'D)

I would ... like you ...to take me into ... therapy!

SALLY looks very confused.

DOUGIE

Great stuff, Euge! We'll make a fresh start, Sal as a man and me as a woman!

EUGENE hits the floor hard with a LOUD THUD.

CUT TO:

EXT. RECEPTION - SAME TIME.

MICKI looks over at ROBERT, the SEX ADDICT, who gives her a 'sexy' smile. MICKI looks away, unimpressed. MAEVE rushes over to her and lowers her voice - she's fuming.

MAEVE

The Breast Surgeon has blown me out after seeing my picture - thought I looked too much like his feckin' dead wife!

(MORE)

MAEVE (CONT'D)  
 I know I look old, Micki, but do  
 I look really look dead?!

MICKI looks at MAEVE and nods at ROBERT THE SEX ADDICT. The  
 'GEORGE CLOONEY' lookalike. MICKI hisses at MAEVE.

MICKI  
 You're prayers have been  
 answered, Maeve. Bet he's into  
 breasts!

MAEVE looks at ROBERT and MAEVE crosses herself quickly.  
 Suddenly SALLY and DOUG rush out into reception.

SALLY  
 It's Eugene - think he's having  
 some kind of heart attack?!

ANGLE ON MICKI looking very worried and jumps up.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM

ANDY is counselling RON (60's) and MELISSA (60's) the  
 atmosphere is very 'charged'. SYD is fighting hard to keep  
 'control' of herself.

ANDY  
 Melissa ...? When you do this  
 exercise, I want you to turn over  
 onto your back ... relax and Ron  
 will touch you all over, but no  
 touching of the breasts ... um?

ANDY catches SYD's eye but looks away - he's using all the  
 professional skills that he has! A BEAT.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
 And, you know, of the ...?

SYD steps in - very professional

SYDNEY  
 Genitals?

ANDY gulps hard and looks at her - he nods quickly.

ANDY  
 This is a voyage of discovery,  
 unique and very, very sensual.

SYD breathes in hard. A BIG BEAT. ANDY looks down.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
 Few people touch each other in  
 this detailed way. This mustn't  
 turn into anything sexual.

SYD stares at him directly. A BEAT. SYD shakes her head slowly as she looks at him. ANDY stares back at her.

RON  
Hrrumph! Sorry to interupt?

SYD and ANDY are now completely oblivious of RON and MELISSA. MELISSA leans forward and nudges RON.

MELISSA  
(hissing)  
Leave it, Ron? They're having a magic moment!

CUT TO:

INT. OTHER COUNSELLING ROOM 'CONNECT'

ANGLE ON EUGENE as he looks up to MICKI, who is leaning over him, wiping his brow, MAEVE, SALLY and DOUG are all looking down at him. EUGENE smiles weakly. DOUGIE grins

DOUGIE  
Me fireman's 'lift' worked a treat, but he wanted to see you, Micki?

MICKI gulps hard - very thrown. She smiles down at EUGENE, all her 'coolness' momentarily gone.

EUGENE  
Just a ... panic attack ... nothing ... I can't ...handle?

MICKI  
(gently)  
You should have tried my 'rescue remedy', eh?

EUGENE  
I ... need to get some ...?

MICKI leans in enquiringly.

EUGENE (CONT'D)  
Some ...?

CUT TO:

INT OTHER COUNSELLING ROOM.

MAEVE is seated opposite ROBERT, the handsome SEX ADDICT. ROBERT is 'mid flow' and MAEVE is concentrating hard, gulping hard, her glasses on her nose.

ROBERT  
Healing ... sexual healing.

MAEVE glasses slip down her nose.

CUT TO:

INT. LIFT. 'CONNECT' BUILDING

SYD gets into the lift, jamming her bike into a corner. Exhausted she turns round but ANDY rushes in, juggling two huge bags of shopping. SYD looks away quickly as the lift slowly descends. ANDY laughs weakly. ANDY struggles with the shopping bags, he's lifting.

ANDY

My turn to do the 'shop'. Money,  
sex, shopping - three major  
causes of friction in a marriage -  
comes up over and over again.

ANDY laughs nervously as SYD stares coolly at him.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'm a cliché. Pathetic!.

The lift suddenly JUDDERS to a halt. SYD eyes wide. Suddenly one of the SHOPPING bags SPLITS, spilling items all floor. A box of TAMPAX rolls out and bursts opens. SYD, cool, bends over and passes ANDY a couple of TAMPAX.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Romance is dead when you buy your  
wife, Tampax, eh ...?

ANDY stares directly at SYDNEE pleadingly, winningly - she's starting to melt. SYDNEE looks away - she's struggling. ANDY stares. A BEAT.

SYDNEE

Guess ... we're stuck?

A BEAT - ANDY now drops the BAGS and stares hard at her.

ANDY

We're ... stuck.

SYDNEE gulps very hard. ANDY looks away, cursing softly.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Oh, shut the fuck up, Andy - it's  
just not your fucking day!

SYDNEE steps towards him and pulls him towards her.

SYDNEE

Yes it fucking is!

ANDY GASPS as they kiss passionately, sliding down the wall of the lift. The Lift JUDDERS and slowly moves off.

MUSIC/DISSOLVE

CREDIT SEQUENCE: INT. COMEDY CLUB. NIGHT.

SYD is in the spotlight, in front of a curtain, holding a mike. We hear LAUGHTER. SYD is grinning. She looks elated.

SYDNEY

Ever had sex in a lift?

SYD demonstrates a crouched position. MORE LAUGHTER.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

The lift goes up, you go down,  
and I tell you, ladies, if you  
want him to keep it up, and  
that's often hard as we al know,  
then you have to keep that lift  
going up, up, up, as you go down,  
down, down!

THE AUDIENCE start to LAUGH and WHOOP. SYDNEY brightens.

MORE!

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Believe me, you'll experience the  
most amazing lift-shaft you've  
ever had!

LAUGHTERS. SYDNEY grabs the mike and grins broadly.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I'm Sydney Smith. Thankyou and  
goodnight!

SYDNEY walks off. CLAPPING.

END CREDITS.



