

'SYDNEY

TALKS

SEX'

6/8 part 50 minute comedy drama series

Written by Barbara Jane Mackie

Episode One - 'Sexual Healing'

Barbara Jane Mackie
11, Winton Street
Ryde, PO33 2BX

Tel: (+44)7856-030123
(barbara.mackie@btinternet.com)

INT. HOUSE. BRISTOL. LEAFY STREET. (1999) DAY.

We are in the kitchen of a comfortable, middle-class household. An intelligent, cheeky-looking, mixed-race child, SYDNEY (10), is munching on her cereal as her father, ROGER (40's) a weary-looking Doctor, Black British, gets ready for work.

VANESSA (30's), SYDNEY'S mother, a frustrated career woman, is resentfully clearing the table, banging plates as she stacks the dish-washer. SYDNEY looks at her parents dolefully. We hear her VOICE OVER. (Hints of a Bristol accent now softened by many years in Cardiff where she attended Drama School).

SYDNEY (V.O.)

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

VANESSA hisses at ROGER, trying to keep her voice down.

VANESSA

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? Please? Not in front of
Sydney!

SYDNEY pushes back her chair and gets up and does a slow tap dance. A fixed smile on her face. They both look at her as they smile sadly.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

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

ROGER and VANESSA both gulp hard as SYDNEY looks from one to other, hopeful, her eyes wide.

EXT. HOUSE. BRISTOL. LEAFY STREET. (1999) DAY.

SYDNEY watches as ROGER goes to his car standing on a step. VANESSA pulls SYDNEY close to her. ROGER is leaving and puts a suitcase into the open boot of his car. SYDNEY's jaw drops.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
 They didn't always laugh however.
 Sometimes they cried!

SOPHIE, tears of anger pouring down her cheeks, clutches SYDNEY to her as ROGER BANGS the car boot shut and walks up to SYDNEY. He crouches down, gulping hard.

ROGER
 Sydney, darling? I'll always love
 you!

We hear ADULT SYDNEY in voice over again.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
 What kind of love was that then,
 Dad? The screw you up kind of love?

ROGER breaks off and hugs her fiercely. SYDNEY glares at him.

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

ROGER blinks back tears and walks backwards towards the car as SYDNEY looks to her mother and towards her father.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
 And I'll send you both my sodding
 therapy bills!

SYDNEY rushes into the house and slams the door.

TITLE fades up: EPISODE ONE - 'SEXUAL HEALING'

INT. SYDNEY'S SEVENTH FLOOR FLAT. CARDIFF BAY/DOCKS AREA.
 2021. DAY. (PRESENT DAY)

ON SYDNEY (29) - witty, mixed-race, neurotic, lying on her massive double bed in a scruffy modern-warehouse style apartment, large photos of film icons on the wall.

ON FOUR PEOPLE - sitting up in SYDNEY'S bed, munching on bowls of cereal. In the middle, ANGUS (29) gay, an unemployed Australian actor, ROY (28) another out of work actor, ANGUS'S partner. MIMI (30's) SYDNEY'S lover is a French Yoga teacher, attractive, short cropped black hair.

ON MIMI - jumping out of bed, naked, and running out to the shower as Sydney tries to pull her back into bed.

SYDNEY
 Non, cherie? Don't go? I need you!

Angus shoots Roy an acerbic look nodding at Sydney.

ANGUS

Needy. Very, very needy!

Sydney hands him her empty cereal bowl. Angus scowls.

SYDNEY

Done the shower yet, Angus? You know the deal. My flat, low rent. Unemployed actors keep it clean!

ANGUS

Huh? What would you know about keeping things clean, Sydney? The theatres are all still closed!

SYDNEY

Ha? Try porn. I would.

ANGUS

What? We may be fit, yeah, we are, but you're suggesting we go prostitute ourselves?

SYDNEY

(munching on her cereal)
Why not? Better an honest whore than a dishonest actor?

Angus smirks and passes his bowl and Sydney's along to Roy.

ANGUS

What about you, Sydney? Did three years of Drama with me to stand up in bars at night, desperately trying to make people laugh then days spent listening to other people spill their guts about sex?

ROY

Who's the whore, eh, Angus?

Sydney groans loudly.

SYDNEY

Out of my bed, you parasites, now!

Angus and Roy moan and get out of her bed as Mimi comes in, wrapped in a towel rubbing her wet hair. Sydney grins at her.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Come to Maman? Allez, cherie!

Sydney lurches for her and pulls off Mimi's towel. Laughing and shrieking, a naked Mimi is pulled back into bed. They kiss passionately, rolling over and over. Mimi stares down at Sydney as she lies on top of her.

MIMI

You're zee sex addict, you are knowing that, Sydney?

Sydney grins, a bit tough, and strikes a pose. We can sense the vulnerability underneath.

SYDNEY

Yeah, I'm knowing it, Meems. I need healing, cherie. Sexual healing!

INT. EUGENE'S BEDROOM. FLAT. PONTCANA. CARDIFF. DAY

ON EUGENE (28) - eyes widening. A black British successful web designer and counsellor, intelligent, sensitive, and his girlfriend BECKA (26), a photographic model, are making love.

An architect-designed minimal open flat. Unopened boxes lie around and we can see these people have just moved in. Becka is under the sheets and Eugene lies flat on his back. Eugene looks unhappy. He breathes very hard.

EUGENE

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

Becka emerges from under the duvet. She looks perplexed.

BECKA

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

Becka, frowning, leans back exhausted on the pillows.

EUGENE

I ... I'm sorry, Beck. My head is overloaded!

BECKA

Maybe you need to see someone?

EUGENE

How can I? I am that 'someone.'

Becka rolls her eyes as Eugene unhappily looks away.

INT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT'. SEX THERAPY/RELATIONSHIP CENTRE. CONVERTED WAREHOUSE. CARDIFF. DAY.

MAEVE (39), 'CONNECT'S' most Senior Sex Therapist, Welsh, groomed, sophisticated, walks through the open plan reception, her designer glasses perched on her nose. She is followed by ANDY (35), a Northerner, warm, mischievous, wearing a leather jacket, tousled blonde hair.

They approach MICKI (26), 'CONNECT'S' Administrator. Welsh, black, beautiful, immaculate, Micki has a troubled history with men. MICKI'S glasses and scraped-back hair disguise her good looks. She wears a face mask. Behind her, on the reception desk, VERA (50's), transfemale, the kindly Welsh Receptionist answers the phone.

VERA (ON PHONE)

Hello, 'Connect?' How can I help, dear? Yes, you can book in for an initial appointment. They can advise on your marriage.

Maeve groans and leans into Andy, rolling her eyes.

MAEVE

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

ANDY

(grinning)

The 'Big M' - could be, Maeve? Can strike at any time, they say!

Andy laughs warmly as Micki hears this and looks irritated.

MAEVE

For feck's sake, Andy? I'm too young?

MICKI

Men get the Menopause too, Andy!

Andy grins at Micki as Maeve suddenly notices a COUPLE OF CLIENTS sitting over the other side of the Reception area. She lowers her voice and hisses to Andy.

MAEVE

Your clients, Andy. Aren't you co-counselling with Sydney?

ANDY

They're a bit early?

MAEVE
Where is Sydney?

Micki groans reading a text on her mobile from Sydney.

MICKI
In the middle of a mindless
archetypal great fuck!

ANDY
'Archetypal great fucks?' Thought
we were all searching for
meaningful relationships in this
dreaded age of Covid, Micki?

Micki smiles wryly, shuffling some papers.

MICKI
Women like a man who listens, Andy,
and a man who really sees her, but,
of you know? With a great
archetypal fuck thrown in!

Andy throws up his hands as Micki hands Maeve a card.

MICKI (CONT'D)
You might fancy this, Maeve? That
posh dating agency my aunty tried?
Met all these Captain of Industry
types, wined and dined rotten she
was! 'Drawing Down the Stars.'

MAEVE
(reeling)
Gosh? Not quite my thing, Micki.

Andy shakes his head sadly.

ANDY
Know what? My cousin had the
menopause at thirty. All her parts
shut down and withered - tragic,
eh?

Maeve and Micki stare at Andy coldly as he nods sadly.

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

Micki smiles slightly and pins the Dating Agency card on her
notice board as Maeve walks off. Micki calls out to them.

MICKI
Masks, guys!

ANDY
What about the Oxy-wotsit air
sanitiser in the rooms?

MAEVE
The guy's coming back to fix them
but I didn't trust him, funny face
he had? I'll chase him up.

ANDY
Why trust a guy, eh, Micki? I
certainly wouldn't!

Micki scowls at him as Andy grins over at her over his mask
as Maeve pulls out her face mask. Maeve lifts up her mask.

MAEVE
Get Sydney out of bed asap, Micki.
She's running out of chances!

INT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM. CARDIFF BAY/DOCKS. DAY

SYDNEY and MIMI are making love. The sex is athletic as they
roll over and over under the sheets as Sydney climaxes
groaning loudly. They giggle and kiss some more.

ON SYDNEY'S MOBILE - ringing by her bed. Sydney leans over to
read her text from MICKI. Sydney groans and flops back on the
pillows as Mimi looks over.

SYDNEY
Ach? Maeve on warpath. Clients
waiting!

Sydney jumps out of bed, struggling with her clothes.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Oh, fuck? Fuck? Fuck? Fuck! I'm
coming, I'm coming!

MIMI
You already came, cherie?

Sydney lurches out of the room, buttoning up her shirt,
nearly falling over as Mimi shakes her head and smiles.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

EUGENE, dressed in a smart business suit, is counselling DOUGIE, big, burly (40's), a Fireman, and SALLY (30's), blonde, conventional. Both of them sit in comfortable chairs opposite Eugene who takes notes. Eugene takes a breath.

EUGENE

This must be very scary for you both. This is a huge change and it will take some adjusting.

Sally, tears in her eyes, shakes her head as Dougie, ashamed, blinks back the tears and looks over to her.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

(gently)

Sally? How did you feel when you first found Dougie in your underwear?

SALLY

Angry, shocked, disappointed, Eugene. And terrified! Dougie ruined me best M & S stuff when he was rifling through my drawers!

Sally blinks back tears of frustration and looks at Dougie.

EUGENE

Dougie? Could you try and explain how you feel right now?

DOUGIE

My whole world is about to fall apart, Eugene!

Eugene, loosens his tie. He keeps focusing hard.

EUGENE

Why fall apart, Dougie?

DOUGIE

I've turned into an 'effing Drag Queen, ent' I?

EXT. STREET. CARDIFF. CITY CENTRE. DAY. (BIT LATER)

SYDNEY rides her bike fast through the traffic, weaving around cars and buses. Around a corner she screeches to a halt as a POSH LADY (50's) grandly walks over the zebra crossing and glares at Sydney as she passes. Sydney mutters.

SYDNEY

Come on, snooty lady, busy day here! What's slowing you down? Got a gerbil stuck up your bum? Call 'Connect.' They'll sort you out!

INT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

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

VERA (ON PHONE)

Hello 'Connect.' Yes, the Counsellors here can advise on sexual problems. Any kind of sexual problem, dear. Thursday at five?

Micki looks up at the Dating agency card she has pinned up and sighs deeply. 'DRAWING DOWN THE STARS.' Vera looks over at her and stands up to read the card.

VERA (CONT'D)

'Drawing down the Stars?' You're a lovely looking girl and you deserve a nice man to make a fuss of you.

MICKI

Nice men are a myth, Vera. They just don't exist like they did back in your day. Where's the client list?

Micki reaches over to grab a big book from Vera's desk as Vera shakes her head sadly and pins the card back up.

VERA

Maybe men were less complicated than back in our days? The whole world's so complicated now, eh?

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT.' CARDIFF. DAY

EUGENE wipes his brow. He's very distracted but trying hard to focus and keep professional.

EUGENE

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

DOUGIE

Haven't told em, Euge. Firefighter like me, six foot three, built like a brick shit house and turns out to be a Tranny? Voof?!

DOUGIE breaks down and drops his head into his hands. SALLY, blinking back tears looks over at Dougie

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

Who would ring a Tranny to put out a fire?!

Eugene is breathless. His pager goes off in his pocket and they all jump. Eugene fumbles for it.

EUGENE

Sorry, people, I'm needed!

INT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

ANDY walks into reception and approaches MICKI and VERA

ANDY

Syd here yet? Prem-ejec Clients here. He always comes early.

Micki rolls her eyes at him sternly.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Sorry, crap joke! Delirious with tiredness. Kids were in and out of our beds last night like bloody yo-yo's!

Micki hands Andy a tiny bottle as Vera turns to her work.

MICKI

Rescue Remedy. Have a couple drops. Great for fatigue, stress - life!

Andy looks interested as EUGENE walks through the reception. Andy places the dropper on his tongue and swallows.

EUGENE (ON MOBILE)

I've spoken to them, Beck. Yeah! They will increase the mortgage and pay for the renovation, babe. Ok, ok. Go for the Mulberry sofas ... ok, if you must, then yeah.

ANDY

Wow? There's a guy who needs
rescuing!

Eugene snaps off his phone and groans. He shoots a quick look over at Micki who catches his eye and quickly turns away.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Sorry to be the prophet of doom but
one in three marriages hit the
rocks, Euge. That's why we're here.

Andy passes him the bottle of Rescue Rememdy.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Rescue Remedy. Sorts out your life.
Micki says and Micki knows!

Andy goes off and Eugene looks at the bottle, shooting another look at Micki. He smiles sadly at her as Micki quickly pulls her mask up. Eugene sighs and darts back into his Counselling room. Micki turns to Vera, irritated.

MICKI

Why do guys always want rescuing by
some strong woman?

Vera laughs and shrugs. Micki whispers to herself.

MICKI (CONT'D)

How about someone rescuing me?

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

EUGENE is mid-session with DOUGIE and SALLY. The atmosphere is very tense. Dougie looks anguished.

DOUGIE

Round our way, a blokes a bloke,
Euge and a bird's a bird and now
I've messed that all up!

EUGENE

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

SALLY

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

Eugene wipes his brow. Sweat is pouring down now. Dougie is anguished and stares at Sally.

DOUGIE

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

SALLY

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

Eugene pulls off his tie quickly and opens his collar.

EUGENE

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

Eugene jumps up.

DOUGIE

'Gents', 'Ladies', that's what
we're wrestling with here!

Doug smiles weakly at Sally who groans as Eugene rushes out.

INT. MEETING/BOARD ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (LATER)

MAEVE is holding forth, chairing a weekly meeting around a
big table. Maeve has her glasses poised at the end of her
nose, looking at Clients' notes in front of her. MICKI and
ANDY sit around the table.

MAEVE

How long has this Client been
vaginismic, Micki?

MICKI leans in, keen, very focused.

MICKI

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

ANDY

Good god? Not a man?

Maeve quickly frowns at Andy who twinkles.

MICKI

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

SYDNEY, breathless, rushes in, a notebook in one hand, a coffee in another. They all stare at her as Micki giggles.

MICKI (CONT'D)

Unlike Sydney!

SYDNEY

Sorry, people, mad, mad morning. Madder than mad!

Andy grins fondly at her and passes Sydney the biscuit tin.

MICKI

I'd like the chance to counsel this Client on my own, Maeve. I'm ready.

MAEVE

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

Andy is staring at Sydney. Sydney munches on her biscuit and stares back. Micki suddenly clocks this and kicks Sydney under the table. Andy now twinkles at Sydney.

ANDY

Sure thing. Micki can counsel me, as penetration sure scares the hell out of me!

Sydney laughs loudly as Micki rolls her eyes.

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'. The male client has problems with early ejaculation but why the two hander, Maeve?

MAEVE

The couple are elderly and I feel the woman might feel more comfortable supported by a female counsellor. Sydney could trail you?

MICKI

Sydney's an expert on men who come quickly. Women too!

Andy's eyes widen as Sydney splutters on her biscuit.

EXT. ROOF. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (BIT LATER).

EUGENE is up on the huge, flat roof which overlooks the industrial landscape of the city. Eugene grips hard on the railings, breathing in and out.

EUGENE

Breath, breathe! You're in control, Eugene. Breathe!

INT. LADIES TOILETS. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

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

MICKI

Heavy weekend, madame?

SYDNEY

Mimi was round last night and Joel is pestering to see me again, but he only talks about property, and I can't think of any funny material for Friday's show?

MICKI

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

SYDNEY

Piss off, you nasty little virgin!

MICKI

Hope you're well rubbered up with all those lovers you're juggling, misses. HIV is still alive and well as is Covid. Remember Covid?

MAEVE comes in and stiffens when she sees SYDNEY.

MAEVE

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

Sydney smiles sweetly at Maeve.

SYDNEY

If we don't fuck ourselves how can we counsel the fucked up about fucking?

MAEVE

Part of your Comedy act, Sydney? You're still in training so don't let things run out of control.

Maeve enters a cubicle as Sydney makes a face at Micki, who stifles a giggle as they rush out. Maeve's toilet flushes and Maeve emerges and suddenly stares at herself in the mirror.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

'Drawing down the Stars?' Hello? Maeve O' Mara ...

EXT. ROOF. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

EUGENE is on the roof on his mobile, a coffee in front of him balancing on the wall that surrounds the huge roof.

EUGENE

(on mobile)

We can't afford to lose that account, Dan. If the website's crashed then Marcus is the guy to fix it. Yeah, he is!

ANDY walks up onto the roof, roll up cigarette behind his ear. He crosses the roof and approaches Eugene smiling warmly. Eugene looks very stressed as Andy lights up.

EUGENE (ON MOBILE) (CONT'D)

Right, ok, Dan. Be in later.

Eugene clicks off his phone. Andy looks over at him.

ANDY

You ok, mate? I'm a bit worried about you, Euge.

EUGENE

I keep overheating!

Andy inhales his cigarette and looks out over the city scape.

ANDY

Yup. Know that feeling.

Andy sighs hard and Eugene now looks hard at him.

EUGENE

Inga ok? She must be due soon?

ANDY

Due in three months. Fifteen years in and we're still churning them out. Marriage is ...? Marriage is marriage.

Andy looks glum as Eugene shrugs, confused. He walks off leaving Andy smoking and thinking hard.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT.' CARDIFF. DAY. (BIT LATER)

SYDNEY and ANDY are co-counselling RONALD (60's) and MELISSA (60's). Ron is very dapper in a blazer and tie and Melissa a Womens' Institute member. Andy leads the session.

RON

I keep coming too quickly.

MELISSA

Ronald, really?!

ANDY

Melissa, it's ok. Carry on, Ronald.

Andy looks at Ronald encouragingly. Ronald gulps hard.

RONALD

I feel pressure to perform, plus there's a framed photo of James, hubby number one, near the bed. James could keep it up all night, according to Melissa.

Melissa shuffles around and readjust her pearl necklace.

RON

It's all pressure and it affects my performance in the boudoir.

MELISSA

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

Andy looks at Sydney and Sydney smiles kindly at Melissa.

SYDNEY

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? Do you think you're comparing Ronald to your first husband James?

MELISSA

No, Sydney, not really.

RONALD

Oh come on, Mel? James was a real stud by all accounts?

MELISSA

It's just that ...? How do I say this? James could shoot straight!

RONALD

Shoot straight? This isn't a firing range we're talking about? It's me, Ronald, working my balls off!

Andy nods - he will make the next move. Sydney nods back.

ANDY

Let's get back to the nitty gritty. Ron, you tell us your version and Melissa, you then tells us yours.

RONALD

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

Melissa recoils and looks horrified as Sydney and Andy look at each other. Andy scratches his head thoughtfully.

ANDY

Flipper the penguin?

SYDNEY

Flipper the dolphin, Andy. Don't you watch TV Gold?

Sydney twinkles slightly at Andy.

EXT. ROOF 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (BIT LATER)

MAEVE is standing on the large roof smoking a Gauloise cigarette. She looks thoughtful. ANDY approaches via the Fire Escape and walks over. Maeve smiles as Andy lights up a roll up as they lean on the wall and look out over the city.

MAEVE

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

ANDY

That's grim. You ok, Maeve? Micki's locking up, fancy a half? I'll ring Inga and beg to be let off duty.

MAEVE

I'm ok, thanks, Andy. I've got a dinner party lined up.

ANDY

Dinner party for one?

MAEVE laughs wryly and inhales her cigarette.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Actually, dinner for one sounds fab! I'm cooking spaghetti hoops for five six year old girls - a sleep over. What sadist invented the sleepover? They never sleep for fuck's sake?!

MAEVE

The single life has it's benefits, I guess.

ANDY

I'm outahere. Chaos beckons!

Andy shrugs and walks off across the roof.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Hey? Don't forget that dating agency Micki mentioned. You'd be having dinner for two then.

Maeve smiles as Andy walks off. She shakes her head.

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

INT. EUGENE'S BEDROOM. CARDIFF. DAY. (NEXT DAY)

EUGENE and BECKA are mid sex. Suddenly Eugene pulls off and rolls away as Becka collapses back on the pillows.

BECKA
We don't talk, sex is automatic and
I don't know who I'm engaged to
anymore?

Eugene sighs hard and looks away.

EUGENE
I don't know either, babe.

BECKA
What about your dad? Is he coming
to the wedding, Euge?

EUGENE
I haven't got a dad, you know that.
The business, the wedding plans,
this flat - it's all falling in on
me, Beck ...!

BECKA
It's the counselling that's
screwing you up, Eugene!

Eugene gets out of bed and wraps a sheet around him.

EUGENE
I just want to stop people from
making the same fuck ups that mum
and dad did. I volunteer at
'Connect' because I care.

BECKA
How's about you caring for me?

Eugene walks off to the shower as Becka shouts after him.

BECKA (CONT'D)
Walk away, Eugene? Back to your
flaming freaks and weirdos!

A door slams and Becka, fuming, punches a pillow hard. The pillow splits and the feathers come out all over her.

EXT. STREET. CARDIFF. DAY. (NEXT DAY)

DOUGIE the Fireman is walking down the street, swinging a handbag, clip-clopping in his high heels and a tight dress. He straightens his lopsided blonde wig. He wears full make up.

SALLY walks next to him, embarrassed. She hides behind her shades as a PASSER BY looks over. TWO WORKMEN on some scaffolding smile and wave down at Dougie. Doug waves and beams - he's passed!

DOUGE

How am I doing, Sal?

Dougie laughs and stumbles over a paving stone as Sally grabs his arm and steadies him. She sternly grips onto his arm.

DOUGIE

Man underneath and woman on top!

INT. SYDNEY'S SEVENTH FLOOR FLAT. CARDIFF BAY/DOCKS AREA.
DAY. (SAME TIME)

SYDNEY is writhing around on top of TRUDI (20's), a beautiful ballet dancer. There is a knock n the bedroom door. It's ANGUS, Sydney's flat mate bearing a plate of muffins.

ANGUS

Muffins, me dearies?

Trudi smiles and reaches out for one and hands one to Sydney. Sydney grins and munches as Angus lies down next to them.

SYDNEY

We've got to stop eating like this.
Stand up this friday. 'Women talk
Dirty.' Be there, peeps!

ANGUS

Stand up? You? Miss Flat on her
Back?

SYDNEY

Bah? Horrid little failure!

TRUDI

Go on, Sydney. Do your act. I'm
taking a class, so can't be there,
but wish I could!

Sydney sits up and addresses an imaginary AUDIENCE. Her eyes widen and she/we almost hear the CLAPPING and LAUGHING.

SYDNEY

Sex is something I've always been fascinated with, even at my primary school, I was sexually curious. I was forever in the woodshed with the boys and sometimes. You know? I'll show you mine if you show me yours ...

ANGUS

Show you my what?

SYDNEY

I'll show you my willy if you show me your fanny.

ANGUS

But you haven't got a willy?

Sydney lifts up a pillow and beats him over the head.

ANGUS (CONT'D)

Aren't you meant to be co-counselling with Mr. Married and Out of bounds?

Angus rolls his eyes and jumps off the bed as Trudi pulls back, her eyes widening. Sydney scowls at Angus.

TRUDI

'Mr. Married?' Are you messing me around, Sydney?

SYDNEY

No, I'm not, Trudi. I'm ... ?

TRUDI

(beating back tears)
I really thought we were onto something good here, Sydney?

SYDNEY

Look, I'm just?

Trudi gets out of bed and storms off as Sydney sighs deeply.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

(to herself)
All screwed up!

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE/STREET. SYDNEY'S APARTMENT BLOCK. DAY.
(LATER)

SYDNEY struggles to get her bike down the outside stairs. Her flat is on the first floor of a large house. A young black child, bright, confident, TEZ (10) hangs out of the lower window and shouts up.

TEZ
Yo, Sydney? How you doing?

SYDNEY
I'm ok, Tez. You?

TEZ
'Casablanca' is on Netflix again,
Sydney. Shall we watch it again?
Mum's made us some popcorn!

SYDNEY
Ok, yeah, Tez. You've got my key so
just set it up.

Tez grins and puts his thumb up.

TEZ
'There will always be Paris!'

Sydney gets on her bike and rides off, shouting back.

SYDNEY
And bring some your Granny's
spotted Dick. I keep dreaming about
her spotted dick!

Tez nods and shuts his windows as Sydney rides off.

INT. OFFICE. EUGENE'S WEB BUSINESS. CARDIFF. DAY

We are in the smart offices of EUGENE'S Web/Computer business 'NEW WAVE'. He talks to his business partner, DAN (30's), smart suited like Eugene. Eugene looks tense.

DAN
The VAT man wants £75,000, Euge.
Since the 'New Media Gazette' site
went down, we're a bit fucked!

EUGENE
So, no wages for you and me, Dan?

DAN
Not for three months, I reckon.

Eugene looks stressed. He loosens his tie.

EUGENE

Three months? I'm surrounded by
bills and weddings don't come
cheap!!

INT. ATTIC ROOM. THERAPIST'S HOUSE. CARDIFF. DAY.

We are in the attic room of SYDNEY'S therapist, IAN (40's) a kindly, handsome, bearded man. Ian smiles as he listens to Sydney. Sydney sits in a comfortable arm chair opposite Ian.

SYDNEY

Marriage seems so redundant these
days. A complete mockery as we're
all biologically predisposed to be
polygamous, aren't we?

IAN

Are we?

SYDNEY

Yeah, women too! It's not just some
male hunter-gatherer prerogative,
Ian.

IAN

I've noticed something, Sydney.
Whenever you've made up your mind
you're going to do something
destructive, you work hard to
justify it with generalities. Like
you're doing right now.

SYDNEY

I do?

Ian smiles fondly and nods slowly.

IAN

You grew up with infidelities,
Sydney. I'm guessing you're very
comfortable with them.

SYDNEY

(reeling)
What? I'm about to get into deep
shit with a married man because I'm
like my dad?

IAN

You said your dad was always
seducing his younger assistants?

Sydney ruffles her hair, perplexed. Ian looks at his wrist watch. Session over. Sydney nods. Ian picks up a FLIER she's placed in front of him on a coffee table.

IAN (CONT'D)

Thought I might come to your show?
'Women Talk Dirty'.

SYDNEY

You can come, Ian, but you'll have
to sit at the back as I don't want
you there analysing me as I work.
Stay in the dark!

Ian smiles warmly and nods.

INT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

MICKI is busy at her computer as VERA answers the phones. We see DOUGIE THE FIREMAN and SALLY sitting in reception. They're early for EUGENE. Micki walks over to them.

MICKI

Eugene's been delayed. Are you
happy to hang on for half an hour?

Dougie grins, his wig slipping slightly.

DOUGIE

I'm hanging on for dear life!

A WOMAN comes into reception. AMELIA (50's), a Princess Anne type, a Hermes head scarf and a Barber jacket on. She looks around, very imperious and marches over to Micki.

SYDNEY comes in, wheeling her bike through reception and places a pile of Comedy Night leaflets on the coffee table and Reception desk. Vera picks one up and giggles.

VERA (READING)

A *'No Nuts Comedy Night!'* Ooo,
Sydney? What are you like?

Amelia walks over to Sydney and Sydney reels around to face her. Amelia stands very close to her, breathing hard, her teeth yellow. Sydney gulps, a bit spooked.

SYDNEY

Hello?

Sydney dashes off as Vera shakes her head fondly. Amelia narrows her eyes, very posh and creepy.

AMELIA

I need to see a therapist and it must be her. Only her! How long must I wait?

VERA

There's a session free at twelve thirty, dear. A bit of a wait but there are some mags over there.

AMELIA

Mags? Have you got a copy of *'Harpers & Queens?'*

VERA

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

ON DOUGIE - adjusting his nylons as he smiles, making room for Amelia on the sofa. Amelia stares coldly at him and sits down. Dougie sees Sydney's fliers on the coffee table and looks over at SALLY, who is seated nervously next to Doug.

DOUG

'No Nuts Comedy Night?' Don't think they'd let me into that one, Sal?

Sally groans quietly and rolls her eyes.

INT. LADIES TOILETS. 'CONNECT.' CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

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

SYDNEY

Know what, Micki? I've had it with women. They're too needy.

MICKI

Sure it's them who are too needy?

SYDNEY

Gonna clear them all out. Want someone more cerebral. A zipless fuck with a brain attached.

Micki's jaw drops slowly. She shakes her head.

MICKI

No? Don't do it, Sydney! It will be suicide. This is your career and you're not fully qualified yet?

Sydney stares at Micki who stares back. MAEVE emerges from a cubicle and we hear the chain flush.

MAEVE

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

Maeve walks over to the sinks and washes her hands.

SYDNEY

We've done the History taking, Maeve, and the 'Hello' interview and now we're ready to ...?

Sydney now stares at Micki and smiles slowly.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Rock and roll!

Micki glares at her as Maeve's glasses slip down her nose a little as Sydney rushes out. Maeve stares at Micki.

MICKI

Sydney's dead serious about this job, Maeve. She's just a serial screwer, that's work in progress.

MAEVE

Hmm? Anyone would think Sydney was the only around here who was sexually active?

Maeve and Micki look at each other. Maeve gulps.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Ok, must dash! Got my widow coming in, talking to her about her ...?

Micki raises an eyebrow politely.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Her lack of? You know?

Maeve dashes out as Micki hides a wry smile.

INT. ANOTHER COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

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

EUGENE

You made it back here. Very brave!
How did you feel, Dougie, out in
the open as a woman?

Dougie looks very pleased with himself.

DOUGIE

You know something, Euge? I felt
like me for the very first time.
Felt like the real Dougie. Blimmin'
scary, mind you. Couldn't balance
on these heels!

Sally suddenly looks over at Dougie. We can see there is love there, even though she feels a revulsion with Dougie's appearance. Eugene, sweating now, listens as hard.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

When I was a boy, Euge, I had this
mop of blonde 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 and he wanted
to stamp it out.

Eugene nods slowly and breathes deeply. He wipes his brow. Dougie breathes hard, his face twisted.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

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. He looks unsteady.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

(brightly)

And me? For the first time in me
life I feel a bit normal!

Dougie grins broadly, his wig slipping as Sally groans softly. Eugene looks very shaky and clutches his notes.

EXT. ROOF. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

ANDY is on the roof having a roll up. SYDNEY comes up the fire escape and see him. She stops and gulps as he turns round and waves over. She approaches slowly and leans on the wall next to Andy and looks out. Andy smiles warmly.

ANDY
Howdy, pardner? Quick smoke before
our session ...?

Sydney smiles and nods. She is a bit uneasy.

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

SYDNEY
Light relief or hand relief? Sorry!
Thinking about my act.

Andy laughs. Andy points out the COUPLE in the nearby office.

ANDY
The snogging couple! Look?

They look over at the COUPLE kissing passionately through their office window. Sydney laughs softly, shaking her head. The COUPLE suddenly see them and quickly pull the blind down. Sydney and Andy both laugh hard.

SYDNEY
Sex, eh? We're surrounded by it!
I'm trying not to think about sex.

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

Sydney wriggles around a bit.

SYDNEY
Oh, you know? Men stuff.

Andy twinkles knowingly at her.

ANDY
Just men stuff?

SYDNEY
Micki's got a big mouth, eh? Yeah,
women stuff too!

Sydney now stares hard at him.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
What's it like to be married? I
just can't imagine vowing to be
loyal. It's a mind fuck for me.

Andy sighs and smokes hard.

ANDY
Marriage? It's for life!

SYDNEY
Sounds like a prison sentence?

ANDY
Yeah, it is, but a nice prison ...

SYDNEY
An Open Prison?

Andy turns away. He smokes hard.

ANDY
Not an open prison. No. There are
rules.

Andy nods slowly. Sydney looks away as she sighs hard.

SYDNEY
This place? Peoples' dark problems,
their tragic lives, I don't know if
we're making a difference?

ANDY
We try and disentangle broken
relationships. Make things better
between people.

They both stare at each other and gulp slightly.

ANDY (CONT'D)
If ...? There's love there?

MICKI shouts over popping her head up from the Fire escape
onto the Roof

MICKI
People? Clients waiting downstairs.
Get a wiggle on!

Andy waves over at her as Sydney glares over at Micki.

ANDY
Better get down there, eh, pardner?
Broken marriages to mend.

Andy, back in professional mode, walks off as Sydney snarls at Micki who stands there, arms crossed, waiting for Sydney. Sydney hisses at Micki as she passes.

SYDNEY
Horrid little virgin!

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (LATER)

We're in EUGENE'S session with DOUGIE the Fireman in full make up, wig and dress and SALLY, biting her lip, very tense.

SALLY
Am I married to a man or a woman,
Eugene? I'm just still can't get my
head around it all ...!

Eugene, a bit breathless, loosens his tie.

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

INT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

MICKI looks up from her computer as MAEVE walks past.

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

Maeve suddenly stops in her tracks.

MAEVE
Happy ...?

MICKI
Reckons she doesn't need any more
counselling. One happy customer, I
guess?

Maeve looks thrown and walks on. EUGENE walks past. Micki looks over, a bit concerned. He looks very shaky.

MICKI (CONT'D)
You ok, Eugene?

Eugene nods and grins bravely, the sweat pouring down his forehead. Micki shrugs and turns back to her computer.

Eugene suddenly stops, wipes his brow and steps forward to say something to Micki, but then shakes his head. Micki frowns in confusion as Eugene walks off quickly.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

SYDNEY and ANDY are co-counseling RONALD, the dapper man (60's) who is now on his own without MELISSA. Andy is leading the session and Sydney makes notes on a clipboard on her lap.

ANDY

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

Andy touches his chest lightly as Ron nods intently.

RONALD

The biceps?

ANDY

No, the heart, Ron. The emotions. And ...?

Andy indicates his groin as Sydney watches and gulps quickly.

ANDY (CONT'D)

The penis.

RONALD

Oh? Think I see what you mean there, Andy?

ANDY

This is a 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 quickly and breathes deeply.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Close your eyes, Ron. Think hard and tell us about your earliest sexual experiences. Free associate, if you can?

Ronald closes his eyes but opens one eye and grins.

RONALD

Bit like 'free love' or something, Andy?

ANDY

Earliest memories, Ron?

Ronald closes his eyes hard. Sydney shoots a look at Andy who shoots a look at her. They both gulp and look away.

RONALD

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

Sydney frowns, trying to concentrate, jotting down notes.

RONALD (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 or make up, so there was never any time. Story of my life really. No time!

ANDY

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

Ronald slowly opens his eyes. He looks more relaxed.

RONALD

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

ANDY

You're making the connections, Ron. It's all about time. I don't think it's Melissa who is putting pressure on you. You're putting the pressure on yourself.

Ronald brightens slowly. He suddenly grins at Sydney and indicates Andy.

RONALD

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

Sydney smiles and nods, very uneasy, looking over at Andy. Ronald clears his throat now, looking from one to the other.

RONALD (CONT'D)
 If I am baring my soul? There is
 another thing ...

Ronald lowers his tone, very conspiratorial.

RONALD (CONT'D)
 A year ago, before I retired from
 Rover, there was this bloke in the
 Accounts department.

Andy and Sydney both look at Ronald as he smiles weakly.

RONALD (CONT'D)
 I was leaning over the photocopier,
 doing me spreadsheets and this
 bloke, Roger, Head of Marketing, he
 took me from behind!

Ronald laughs nervously as Sydney and Andy both blink hard.
 RONALD leans in to them, voice lowered.

RONALD (CONT'D)
 Funny thing is, I quite enjoyed it!
 But don't tell Melissa about Roger?
 She'll chop off me todger!

Ronald bursts out laughing very loudly as Sydney stifles a
 shriek of laughter, coughing hard.

EXT. ROOF. 'CONNECT.' CARDIFF. DAY. (BIT LATER)

MAEVE is between sessions looking a bit furtive as she
 smokes. She is alone apart from a solitary PIGEON, which
 looks at her. Maeve takes out a small bottle of brandy from
 her bag and takes a quick slug. The pigeon stares at Maeve
 and Maeve stares back.

MAEVE
 What are you looking at? I'm
 feckin' Irish, a screwed up convent
 girl so I'm allowed to drink. It's
 me feckin' heritage!

Maeve puts the small bottle back in her bag and takes out her
 MOBILE PHONE. She quickly dials, her voice furtive.

MAEVE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
 Is that 'Drawing down the Stars?'
 I'd like to register with you ...
 Maeve Morgan ... yes, horribly
 single ... forty ... Cardiff.
 Divorced. Widowed. How sad am I?

The pigeon stares hard, blinking at her.

MAEVE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
I'm a Sex Therapist. Why would that
put men off? Put down Marine
Biologist then! Friday, ok. Ten
o'clock. I'll be there. Thank you!

Maeve clicks off her mobile and quickly crosses herself, giggling. She notices the pigeon still staring up at her. Maeve puts her finger to her lips.

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

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT' SAME TIME. DAY

SYDNEY is sorting out her notes as ANDY rearranges the chairs. RONALD has just left. Sydney looks over at him.

SYDNEY
What are we going to do about Ron
lying to Melissa? That's difficult?

ANDY
Ron could be 'bi' and could go
either way. He's clearly protecting
Melissa. We should try and keep
Ron's heterosexual side up and
running and keep .. ?

Andy and Sydney stare hard at each other.

SYDNEY
Keep ...?

ANDY
Keep the marriage together.

Andy gulps hard and grabs his rolling tobacco.

SYDNEY
You can't smoke in here, Andy? The
rules!

ANDY
I want to break some rules!

Andy comes close. She shakes her head as Andy leans in to kiss her. Sydney giggles as Andy buries his face into her neck and kisses it passionately.

INT. RECEPTION AREA. 'CONNECT.' CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

MICKI looks down at her watch. Where is SYDNEY? VERA is tidying her desk as she notices AMELIA, the posh, upper class woman in the Hermes head scarf, approaches the reception desk. She had forgotten about her.

AMELIA

Where is my therapist? I've been waiting all afternoon!

Vera looks around at her. She had forgot.

VERA

Ah? Of course, dear! Micki? Seen Sydney?

Micki rolls her eyes and frowns. We see her thinking.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT.' CARDIFF. DAY. (MOMENTS LATER)

SYDNEY and ANDY are kissing and it's heated. Sydney grabs at Andy's flies, giggling, as they struggle. Sydney laughs loudly as they tumble over a sofa and knock off some books.

EXT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

MICKI flicks through the appointment book and looks across reception to one of the closed doors of a counselling room. She hears LAUGHTER (SYDNEY'S) and her face drops slowly.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. DAY. (SAME TIME)

SYDNEY has her hand down ANDY'S trousers and there is LOUD KNOCK on the door. They freeze as they hear MICKI'S voice

MICKI (O.S.)

Guys? Client waiting!

Andy jumps up as Sydney falls to the floor and she scrambles up. She quickly buttons her shirt up as Andy does his flies up and pushes back his hair. He rolls his eyes at Sydney

SYDNEY

Just cleaning up the room Micki?!

A KNOCK and MAEVE pops her head in. They both jump to attention as Maeve looks from one to another.

MAEVE

Your last client is here, Sydney!

Sydney smiles as Maeve knits her brows seeing an upturned armchair. Andy jumps in.

ANDY

Oh, the last client? We had to move the furniture around and ...?

SYDNEY

He wanted space. Space! To relax and? Let it all hang out!

Maeve shrugs and leaves. Sydney giggles and looks at Andy

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Fuck ... me?!

Andy grins broadly, breathless.

ANDY

I nearly did!

EXT. LEAFY STREET. CARDIFF. SUBURBS. DAY.

We see EUGENE drive slowly down a street in his new BMW Convertible. He parks outside a small terraced house. A TRAFFIC WARDEN, RITA (50's) large, Afro-Caribbean, dignified, walks down the road in her uniform.

Rita sees Eugene who parks. Rita shakes her head when she checks the Parking Meter. Rita frowns and taps her pen on Eugene's car window. Eugene winds down the window.

RITA

You can't park our fancy car here, young man. Residents Parking!

Eugene rolls his eyes as Rita gets out a ticket and slaps it on his windscreen.

RITA (CONT'D)

Going to have to book you!

EUGENE

Got enough problems without getting grief from a Parking Warden!

Rita stands back and smiles slightly.

RITA
 And what kind of problems are
 those, young man?

Eugene gets out of the car and leans his back on the bonnet,
 his hands in his pocket. He gulps slowly.

EUGENE
 I'm on the edge, Mum!

Rita rolls her eyes and tears off the parking ticket.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

SYDNEY is in a trance, smiling to herself, as she counsels
 AMELIA, the creepy Upper class woman. AMELIA is mid-flow, her
 voice harsh.

AMELIA
 (hissing)
 I love to shag!

Sydney chokes and sits bolt upright out of her reverie now.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
 I'll take a man and shag him
 anywhere and when I shag a man I
 shag him hard, squeezing the very
 juices out of him!

Sydney nods, wide eyed, grabbing her clip board.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
 In the stables with the groom when
 he's mucking out, on the stairs, I
 even had sex in the cellar with the
 coal delivery man ...

Amelia leans forward to Sydney as Sydney's eyes widen.

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

SYDNEY
 (weakly)
 The same?

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

SYDNEY reels back, clutching onto her clipboard.

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

SYDNEY
(gasping)
You ... could?

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

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

AMELIA leans forward and smiles, revealing yellow teeth.

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

Sydney rearranges her mouth as Amelia jumps up and lifts up her tweed skirt, grinning brightly.

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

Sydney's jaw hits the ground.

EXT. STREET. LEAFY STREET. CARDIFF SUBURBS. DAY. (LATER)

EUGENE and RITA are both leaning on Eugene's convertible car. Rita has her Parking Warden hat pushed back and they are both deep in conversation.

RITA
You always wanted to dig deep,
Euge, even at the age of five you
were drivin' us all crazy with all
your questions! Always digging you
were. 'Why, mum?' and 'How, Mum?',
Oh, lordy? Dig, dig, dig!

Rita laughs gently as Eugene nods.

EUGENE
Mum? Why did you live with Dad for
all those years?

Rita groans and laughs wearily.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

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

Rita sighs hard and tips back her Warden's hat.

RITA

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

EUGENE

Do you think Dad had issues, mum? Mental health stuff?

RITA

We didn't have the names for it back then, Euge. Now we do, eh?

Rita suddenly brightens.

RITA (CONT'D)

Hey? I've got my new slip for that wedding of yours, Euge. Just call your mum the scarlet woman!

Rita giggles and lift up the skirt of her uniform a bit to reveal a red silk petticoat. Eugene rolls his eyes hard.

EUGENE

Me and Beck, we're kids, just like you and dad.

Rita moves towards him and hugs him hard. Eugene breaks down.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

(tearful)

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

RITA

No, Eugene. No. You're nothing like him, nothing like him at all. I got you out of Grangetown, pushed you onwards and made sure of that!

Eugene sobs and Rita hugs him hard. She pulls back.

RITA (CONT'D)

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

Eugene brightens a little and thinks hard.

RITA (CONT'D)

I'm not saying anything. You and your mad friends do far too much talking and digging. You've forgotten how the rest of us live up here. Hey? Got something for you!

Rita pulls a large plastic bag from her shoulder bag and hands it to Eugene.

RITA (CONT'D)

Patties. Made sixty of them for the wedding. More coming! And if you decide not to go through with it, Eugene, just eat them patties and pack your bags!

Eugene's eyes suddenly widen. He breathes hard and nods.

EXT. ROOF. 'CONNECT.' CARDIFF. EVENING (LATER)

SYDNEY and MICKI are sharing a couple of beers on the roof, leaning on the wall which overlook the City view. They laugh loudly and Micki shakes her head.

SYDNEY

Jeez?! I don't want to end up like that crazy woman desperately needing help and attention!

MICKI

(laughing)

She could help cure you, Syd? Put your off sex for good!

SYDNEY

What aversion therapy?

They laugh and drink their beers. Sydney stares at Micki.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I'm cutting down on meaningless sex, Micki.

MICKI

I heard you both laughing in there,
Sydney. He's married and is having
a baby!

Sydney shocked, is reeling.

SYDNEY

A baby? Really? I didn't ...?

MICKI

(loudly)

Yes! Andy's having a baby! A baby!

ANDY has come up the fire escape and heard this. A roll up tucked behind his ear, he approaches. Andy laughs nervously and quickly lights his cigarette and leans on the wall with them overlooking the city. Micki walks off as Sydney gulps uneasily.

ANDY

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

Sydney looks the other way, her eyes filling up with tears. Andy stares at her and comes closer.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Hey ...?

Sydney shakes her head, blinking back 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. But now I've touched,
Sydney. And I want to go on
touching!

Sydney spins round, her eyes blazing.

SYDNEY

I may be a screwed up serial
shagger, like my last crazy client,
but you're wedlocked, Inga's
pregnant and I'm forbidden fruit!
We're both fucking marriage
counsellors?!

Andy stubs out his cigarette with his foot. He nods and walks away across the large roof. Sydney looks out over the city. Sydney, eyes widening, sings softly from Gus Kahn's song -
'Making Whoopee'

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
 (singing softly)
*Another bride
 Another June
 Another season, another reason For
 makin' whoopee.*

INT. BEDROOM. ANDY'S HOUSE. ROATH. CARDIFF. NIGHT. (LATER)

ANDY is lying in bed next to INGA (35) Dutch, kind, controlling, beautiful and pregnant. She is rolled over in the other direction sleeping. ANDY blinks very hard.

SYDNEY (O.S.)
 (singing)
*Another year or maybe less
 What's this I hear?
 Well, you can't confess
 She feels neglected, and he's
 suspected
 Of makin' whoopee!*

Andy rolls back and stares up at the ceiling, eyes wide open.

INT. EUGENE'S BEDROOM. CARDIFF. NIGHT. (SAME TIME)

EUGENE lies there rolled away from BECKA, unable to sleep.

SYDNEY (O.S.)
 (singing)
*A lot of shoes, a lot of rice the
 groom is nervous, he answers twice
 It's really killin'
 That he's so willin' to make
 whoopee!*

Eugene sits up on the edge of his bed, head now in his hands. Eugene looks over at Becka. Becka looks beautiful, the light on the pillow near her. Eugene sighs deeply.

SYDNEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (singing softly)
She sits alone most every night ...

INT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM. CARDIFF BAY/DOCKS. NIGHT. (SAME TIME)

SYDNEY lies next to a sleeping MIMI, the French yoga teacher. SYDNEY stares, eyes wide, up to the ceiling.

SYDNEY (O.S.)
 (singing softly)
*He doesn't phone her, he doesn't
 write
 He say's he's busy, but she says
 'Is he?'
 He's makin' whoopee!*

INT. MAEVE'S BEDROOM. CANTON. CARDIFF. DAY. (NEXT DAY)

We hear some BUZZING - an electrical gadget is being used. MAEVE, lying between her satin sheets in her beautifully decorated house, her silk eye mask over her eyes.

Maeve is hung over and we see a half empty whiskey bottle and glass by her bed. One of Maeve hands is under her bed clothes. 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 Christ?! Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh?!

Maeve flops back onto the satin pillows. She slowly crosses herself, her eye mask still on.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
 Forgive her, Father, for she knows
 exactly what she does!

Maeve's small POOCH, a Yorkshire Terrier, trots in and sinks his teeth into the satin sheet tugging it off, snarling. Maeve pulls up her eye mask and groans. The Yorkshire Terrier jumps up onto the bed and licks her face.

INT. SYDNEY'S SEVENTH FLOOR FLAT. CARDIFF BAY/DOCKS AREA.
 DAY.

SYDNEY is munching on cereal at the breakfast bar as ANGUS sits opposite eating his breakfast, his boyfriend ROY, bare chested, muscular, fixing some coffee.

Sydney is lost in thought. TEZ, their young neighbor, wearing his mask, climbs in from the fire escape through the open window. Sydney and Angus scream as Tez grins warmly.

TEZ
 Hey? Why you guys not wearing your
 masks? Gotta stay safe!

ANGUS

We're beyond redemption, honey!
Syd's working on her show - it's
tonight, Tez, so shhhh!

Tez comes up to Sydney as Angus hands him a slice of toast as Tez lowers his mask. He's part of the family.

TEZ

Flat white please, Roy. Couldn't
you sneak me in, Sydney? You know I
love show bizz!

Roy hands Tez a coffee as Sydney shakes her head, lost in thought.

SYDNEY

It won't be funny, Tez.

TEZ

You're a comedian, Sydney? It has
to be funny. Think positive!

SYDNEY

Positive?

TEZ

Yeah, positive, Sydney!

Sydney stares at Tez and slowly brightens.

SYDNEY

Ever thought of being a counsellor,
Tez?

Tez shakes his head, eating his toast as they all laugh fondly.

EXT. STREET. CARDIFF. CITY CENTRE. DAY. (LATER)

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

SYDNEY

Positive, positive, positive!

A TAXI HOOTS at her as she rides and cuts him up. The ANGRY TAXI DRIVER bellows.

ANGRY TAXI DRIVER

Learn to drive, ya poxy lesbo!

SYDNEY

Naaa! Polyamorous, mate! Everyone's
bi or polyamorous these days. All
over insta! Even you, mate!

Sydney whizzes off holding her hand up in the air in a one-fingered salute as the angry taxi driver glares at her.

EXT. ROOF. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (BIT LATER)

ANDY and EUGENE slurp from their takeaway coffees as they look out over the view. Andy looks rough and unshaven. Eugene is immaculate in his business suit, but looks very stressed. Andy notices something in the nearby window of an Office. A COUPLE of OFFICE WORKERS are kissing passionately.

ANDY

Look at that, Euge? They're at it
again!

Eugene looks at the nearby Office Block where Andy is pointing and smiles slightly. Andy shrieks.

ANDY (CONT'D)

The shirt's coming off? And the
hand is going into her blouse?
Classic stuff! 'Rear Window' or
what, mate?

Eugene laughs softly as Andy still stares over.

ANDY (CONT'D)

And the blind comes down. Damn it!

Andy sighs and draws on his cigarette.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Euge? Would you ever, you know?
With a female colleague ...?

Eugene stops and stares hard at Andy and smiles wryly.

EUGENE

A man in crisis. Wriggling on a
pin. And a married man at that?

Andy blinks hard at him as Eugene now looks away, thoughtful.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

I might, Andy. Yeah. I just might.

INT. ATTIC ROOM. SYDNEY'S THERAPIST. CARDIFF. DAY.

IAN (40's), kindly, bearded, supportive, SYDNEY'S AMERICAN therapist listens intently.

SYDNEY

This crazy client I had the other day, made me think of me with her three vaginas. You know, juggling my four lovers. I'm clearing them all out, Ian, getting back in charge of my own body. The meaningless fucks can fuck off! Gonna become a one woman vagina!

Sydney smiles triumphantly over at Ian.

IAN

You're starting to intervene in your own life, Sydney. But four lovers? Mimi? Trudi and Joel makes three? But four?

SYDNEY smiles weakly. IAN smiles gently, quizzical.

INT/EXT CAR. STREET. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

EUGENE is driving around the streets, his window open, sweat pouring down his forehead. He grips the steering wheel. His MOBILE PHONE on a handset goes.

BECKA (ON PHONE)

Baby? I've spoken to the people about the reception at that hotel, only £35,000 for the whole thing! Champagne included for two hundred!

Eugene breathes hard, he's starting to look grey. He wipes the sweat from his eyes, gripping the wheel.

EUGENE

Beck? Look? I've got to sort my head out - dig deeper!

BECKA (ON PHONE)

Are you crazy, Eugene? Don't do a wobbly on me now?!

A CAR HOOTS and Eugene swerves and pulls over. He slumps over the wheel, having a panic attack.

BECKA (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Euge? Euge?! Euge? Speak to me?!

INT. MAEVE'S OFFICE/RECEPTION. 'CONNECT.' DAY. (BIT LATER)

MAEVE and MICKI are clutching their coffee cups and are looking out into the reception, from behind Maeve's office door, in amazement. They are staring at ROBERT (50), a square-jawed handsome George Clooney look alike, smooth, wearing an expensive double breasted suit. Micki gasps.

MICKI

It is George Clooney, I'm telling you!

Micki giggles and shoots a look at a wide-eyed Maeve

MAEVE

Don't be ridiculous, Micki! He's just a client. I've got a date tonight, a widowed breast surgeon - nervous, must admit.

Micki looks at ROBERT, the GEORGE CLOONEY lookalike.

MICKI

Sex addict, Gorgeous George, isn't he?

Maeve nods quickly but we can see she's breathing hard. Micki grins at looks at Maeve and raises her eyebrows.

INT. LIFT. 'CONNECT' BUILDING. DAY. (SAME TIME)

DOUGIE THE FIREMAN (still dressed as a woman) and SALLY, his wife, are getting into the lift. SYDNEY follows them lifting up her bike on its end. She squeezes past them.

SYDNEY

Whoops? Sorry, people ...?

DOUGIE

No problem, love. Want me to help?

Dougie rolls back the sleeves of his dress to reveal bulging muscles. He lifts up the bike on one end and shoves it into the corner of the lift. He beams at Sydney.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

Sorted!

Dougie smooths down his dress as Sydney smiles politely at them.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (BIT LATER)

ANDY is sitting opposite RONALD (60's) very dapper as ever and his wife MELISSA. Andy is waiting for SYDNEY but checking his watch. He clears his throat and starts.

ANDY

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

Ronald and Melissa both nod. They look a bit more relaxed than when we last saw them. Andy smiles warmly, but he's a bit on edge. Ronald looks at Melissa and smiles gently.

RONALD

(gently)

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

MELISSA

Of course we can, Ron! Marriage is for keeps. Isn't that right, Andy?

Andy stares at them and nods, blinking hard. SYDNEY pops her head in. She looks good - bright, clear. Andy stares quizzically at her. Melissa smiles at Sydney who comes over and sits next to Andy in another chair, opposite them.

SYDNEY

So sorry, folks! Traffic terrible!

Sydney grabs her notebook and pen, smiling brightly at them all.

MELISSA

Just talking about marriage, Sydney. It's for life, isn't it?

Sydney smiles, confused and looks at Andy.

RONALD

What about you, Sydney? A corker like you must have the fellas knocking on yer door?

Sydney breathes hard, very uneasy.

SYDNEY

I ...? Something like that, Ron. Andy's the marriage expert, not me.

Sydney shoots a look at Andy. They look quizzically at him. Andy quickly clears his throat.

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

Andy coughs slightly. This is hard for him.

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

Sydney raises an eyebrow, a smile on her lips.

RONALD
Penis control. Okey-dokey? Let's
shoot!

Sydney quickly rolls her eyes but remains professional mode.

INT. ANOTHER COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY.

EUGENE is counselling DOUGIE THE FIREMAN and SALLY. Eugene looks terrible, his face grey with the sweat pouring down his face. Sally looks a bit breathless as Dougie squeezes her hand. Eugene takes out a handkerchief and wipes his forehead.

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

Sally breaks off in floods of tears. Dougie steps in.

DOUGIE
(gently)
Her Dad would get pissed up and
used to beat Sal's mum, Doreen,
black and blue. He would start on
Sal and her sister and Doreen would
step in to protect them and ...?
Ach? If Sal's rotten Dad was alive
now, I'd rip his blimming head off!

Eugene is panting. He is slowly sinking down in his chair.

EUGENE
Rip his ... head off? I wanna rip
his head off for he did to mum. Rip
my head off, I mean?! Empty it ...
start again?

Sally and Dougie suddenly notice that Eugene is looking very unwell.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

I would ... like to take you, I mean me - into therapy!

DOUGIE

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

Eugene hits the floor with a loud THUD.

EXT. RECEPTION AREA. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

MICKI looks over at ROBERT, the SEX ADDICT, the George Clooney look alike. He gives her a sexy smile but Micki quickly looks away pulling up her mask. MAEVE rushes over to her and lowers her voice, hissing angrily.

MAEVE

The feckin' Breast Surgeon has blown me out?! Thought I looked to much like his wife - his dead wife! I know I look old, but do I look dead? Bejaysus?!

Micki indicates Robert, the sex addict and whispers to Maeve.

MICKI

You're prayers have been answered, Maeve. George Clooney on a plate! Bet he's into breasts!

Maeve looks out at Robert and crosses herself. SALLY and DOUGIE rush out into reception, their eyes wide.

SALLY

It's Eugene? Think he's having a heart attack!

Micki jumps up, lowering her mask, and looks very worried.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. CARDIFF. DAY. (SAME TIME)

Andy is counselling RONALD and MELISSA - the atmosphere is very charged. Andy and Sydney wear their masks. SYDNEY is fighting hard to keep control of her emotions and breathes hard. Andy's voice is very low, sensual almost.

ANDY

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

Andy catches Sydney's eye and looks away quickly. He blinks hard. He keeps professional as does Sydney.

ANDY (CONT'D)

(gently)
And, you know, no touching of ...
you know? Of the ... the?

SYDNEY

The genitals.

Andy gulps hard and nods quickly.

ANDY

This is a voyage of discovery.
Unique and very, very sensual. A
magic moment ...

Sydney breathes very hard.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Few people touch each other in this
detailed way. This mustn't turn
into anything sexual ...

Sydney now stares at him directly. Ronald and Melissa now have their eyes closed and are breathing hard. Sydney shakes her head very slowly at Andy. Ronald opens one eye.

RONALD

Hrrumph? Sorry to interrupt, Andy?

Sydney and Andy are becoming oblivious to Ronald and Melissa. Melissa snaps open her eyes and sees Sydney and Andy staring hard at each other and she nudges Ronald hard.

MELISSA

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

INT. OTHER COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. DAY. (SAME TIME)

EUGENE looks up at MICKI who is leaning over him, wiping his brow with a wet flannel. MAEVE, SALLY and DOUGIE are all looking at him. Eugene smiles weakly and Dougie grins.

DOUGIE

Me fireman's 'life' worked a treat,
but he asked for you, Micki?

Micki gulps very hard, thrown. She smiles down at Eugene who stares up at her fondly, blinking hard.

EUGENE

A panic attack, I reckon, Micki?
Nothing ... I can't handle!

Micki smiles shyly at him.

MICKI

You should have tried my Rescue
Remedy!

Eugene starts breathing hard.

EUGENE

Rescue me, Micki? I need some ...?

INT. OTHER COUNSELLING ROOM. 'CONNECT'. DAY (SAME TIME)

MAEVE is seated opposite ROBERT, the handsome SEX ADDICT.

ROBERT

Healing. Sexual Healing!

Maeve splutters and her glasses slip down her nose.

INT. LIFT. 'CONNECT' BUILDING. CARDIFF. DAY. (BIT LATER)

SYDNEY gets into the lift, jamming her bike into the corner. She turns round to push the button but ANDY rushes in, juggling two huge bags of shopping. Sydney looks away quickly as the lift slowly descends. Andy laughs weakly, struggling with the shopping bags.

ANDY

Money, sex, shopping - three major
causes of friction in a marriage.
Comes up time and time again!

Andy laughs nervously and lowers the shopping bag.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'm a cliché. I know!

The lift suddenly judders to a halt. Sydney's eyes widen as one of the shopping bags splits, spilling items onto the floor. A box of *Tampax* rolls out and bursts open.

Sydney, breathing hard, bends down and picks up a couple of Tampax which she hands to Andy. She stares him hard in the eye. ANDY jokes weakly.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Romance is dead when you have to
buy your wife Tampax!

Sydney shakes her head and looks away as Andy now stares deeply at her. A BIG JOLT. Sydney looks up at the lift.

SYDNEY
Guess we're stuck?

ANDY
Stuck, suspended in life's
metaphors and restrictions!

Andy groans and slaps his head.

ANDY (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shut the fuck up, mate? It's just
not your day!

Sydney suddenly pulls Andy towards her by his collar.

SYDNEY
Yes it is. It is your fucking day!

They kiss passionately, sliding down the wall of the lift. They start to pull off each other's clothes.

INT/EXT. LIFT. 'CONNECT' BUILDING. DAY. (BIT LATER)

A FEW OFFICE CLEANERS, with their mops and buckets gasp loudly as the lift doors open and shut again. They see ANDY and SYDNEY making love, Andy's trousers down, Sydney, skirt hitched up, and their jaws drop. The Lift judders upwards

INT/EXT. LIFT. 'CONNECT' BUILDING. DAY. (MINUTES LATER)

The lift door opens as MAEVE stands there, coat on, ready to go home. Her jaw drops as ANDY and SYDNEY, semi-dressed, dishevelled, post-coital, groceries all over the floor, stare out at her, in a state of bliss. Maeve, horrified, shakes her head as SYDNEY smiles and shrugs and presses the lift button as the door closes. Maeve crosses herself and splutters.

MAEVE
(gasping)
Forgive me Father for they know not
what they do ...?!

INT. LIVE LOUNGE. CITY CENTRE. CARDIFF. NIGHT.

SYDNEY, mid act, is in the spotlight, in front of a curtain, holding a mike. A SMALL CROWD, holding their drinks, watch her. We hear LAUGHTER and Sydney looks elated and grins.

SYDNEY

Ever had sex in a lift shaft? Not quite the 'mile high' club, but something like that. Ok, a few of you have, I can hear, you dirty lot! (LAUGHTER) I'm telling the women here tonight that when the lift goes up, you must go down, if you want him to keep it up then you girls have to keep that lift going up, up, up as you go down, down, down!

THE AUDIENCE LAUGH and WHOOP. Sydney grins at them, wiping her brow, grinning at them.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

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

LOUD WHOOPS and LAUGHTER. Sydney grabs the mike and grins broadly the audience and looks over at MICKI, ANGUS and his boyfriend, ROY, watching from a table holding their beers. They all clap and laugh as Sydney grins and bows.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I'm Sydney Smith! Thank you for coming to the 'No Nuts Comedy Night!' We're 'Women talking Dirty' here every friday night. See ya again!

Sydney, elated, walks off the stage, coming down into the audience. She comes over and hi-fives Micki and Angus. Micki, reeling, suddenly nudges Sydney.

ANDY waves over from the other side of the club, alone, clutching his drink. His eyes wide, smiling fondly, he waves shyly as Sydney spins round, her eyes widening.

(END CREDITS)

