

'WOBBLE'

6/8 x 50 minute comedy drama series

by Barbara Jane Mackie

Episode One - 'SEXUAL HEALING'

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INT. HOUSE - BIRMINGHAM SUBURBS, LEAFY STREET - 1995 - DAY

We are in the kitchen of a comfortable, middle-class household. A precocious cheeky-looking, mixed-race child, YOUNG SYDNEY (10), is munching on her cereal as her father, ROGER (40's) a Doctor, Black British, gets ready to leave.

VANESSA (30's), Young Sydney's mother, a frustrated career woman, fills her wine glass up and drinks. Tension is rising. Young Sydney looks at her parents. We hear her VOICE OVER.

YOUNG SYDNEY (V.O.)

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

Vanessa hisses at Roger, trying to keep her voice down.

VANESSA

I've had it with 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!

Young Sydney pushes back her chair and gets up and does a tap dance. A desperate smile on her face. They look at her sadly.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

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

Young Sydney looks from one to other, hopeful, her eyes wide.

EXT. HOUSE. BIRMINGHAM SUBURBS/LEAFY STREET - 1995 - DAY

YOUNG SYDNEY stands on the doorstep and watches as ROGER opens his car boot and puts a suitcase in. Young Sydney's jaw drops, tears coming into her eyes as her face drops.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

(softly)

They didn't always laugh however. Sometimes they cried.

VANESSA, tears of anger in her eyes, clutches her wine glass as Roger BANGS the car boot shut and walks up to Young Sydney. He crouches down, gulping hard.

ROGER

Sydney, darling? I'll always love you. Just remember that, baby girl.

Young Sydney's eyes fill with tears. She wobbles.

YOUNG SYDNEY

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

Roger blinks back tears and walks backwards towards the car as Vanessa, gulping down her wine shrugs, wounded.

YOUNG SYDNEY (CONT'D)

And I'll send you both my sodding therapy bills!

Roger and Vanessa GASP loudly, shocked.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Daddy left like the gutter rat he was and Mummy drank herself silly and ran off to Paris trying to find herself. And me?

YOUNG SYDNEY looks straight at camera.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Been trying to find myself ever since.

SYDNEY (ADULT) (O.S.)

Holes? We've all got them ...

INT. GLEE CLUB/BIRMINGHAM - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

ON SYDNEY (30) a Sex Counsellor by day and Stand up Comic at night - mixed race, honest, witty, complex, needy. Sydney stands in the spotlight in front of an AUDIENCE with drinks in their hands. She rolls her eyes at the audience.

SYDNEY

All those holes we keep on filling?
Food, drink, sex, fags, drugs,
gimme, gimme, gimme! I'm in pain
and must fill my holes! (LAUGHTER)

But whaddya do if you are one needy
mother fucker of a hole, a
cavernous empty well of despair
that can't be filled and keeps on
draining out?

Sydney rolls her eyes wildly, her tongue now hanging out.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

You panic!

The Audience LAUGH as SYDNEY now smiles wryly and shrugs.

INT. SYDNEY'S SEVENTH FLOOR WAREHOUSE FLAT - BIRMINGHAM -
PRESENT DAY - DAY

SYDNEY, naked, leans up on the pillows of her huge double bed, munching on a bowl of cereal. Sydney looks directly at camera, face dead-pan. She shrugs.

SYDNEY

Here's me now. Fantastically fucked
up.

ANGUS (30) gay, an unemployed actor and MIMI (20's) Sydney's lover, a French Yoga teacher, sit in bed either side of her. Mimi jumps out of bed, wrapping a towel around herself and runs out to the shower as Sydney playfully lurches forward and reaches out for Mimi but Mimi runs off laughing.

MIMI

Yoga, yoga! They wait for me.

SYDNEY

I'll wait for? Don't leave me,
cherie?!

Sydney, groaning, flops back on the pillows. Angus raises an eyebrow.

ANGUS

Hey ho? The merry-go-round of
multiple lovers, a path riddled
with sexual traumas and ...

SYDNEY

(interrupting)

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

ANGUS

What would you know about keeping
things clean, Sydney? It's tough
being an actor right now and as a
former drama student stroke
struggling comic stroke sex mad sex
counsellor, you should know!

SYDNEY

Try porn, then, mate. Better an honest whore than a dishonest actor. Out of my bed now, parasite.

SYDNEY throws a cushion at him as he throws one back. Sydney pushes Angus gets out of bed and he walks off as MIMI rushes back in, wrapped in a towel. Sydney lurches at Mimi, pulling the towel off her and pulling her back into bed. Mimi shrieks and giggles as they roll over and over.

MIMI

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

Sydney kisses Mimi but suddenly stops, eyes very wide.

SYDNEY

Shit yeah? I'm knowing it.

INT. EUGENE'S BEDROOM/HOUSE - HARBOURNE/BIRMINGHAM - DAY

ON EUGENE (29) a Black British web designer and Sex Counsellor, intelligent, sensitive, and his girlfriend BECKA (26), Black British, a Model, making love.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Meet Eugene. A fellow sufferer.

An architect-designed minimal open plan bedroom. Becka moves under the sheets but Eugene looks unhappy. He shakes his head as Becka emerges and stares at him.

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'm sorry Beck? All this wedding stuff? It's? My head is overloaded. I feel ...?

Becka turns away impatient.

BECKA

Weddings need planning, Euge, and we couldn't afford a Wedding Planner, could we? Look, babes? Maybe you need to see someone?

EUGENE

How can I? I am that someone.

Becka rolls her eyes as Eugene unhappily looks away.

INT. SYDNEY'S SEVENTH FLOOR WAREHOUSE FLAT/BIRMINGHAM - DAY

SYDNEY and MIMI are making love as SYDNEY'S MOBILE rings by her bed. Sydney leans over to read her text from MICKI.

SYDNEY

Ach? Maeve's on the warpath?

Sydney jumps out of bed, struggling with her clothes.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I'm coming, coming! Don't say it,
Mimi? Joke's been done to death!

Mimi shakes her head as Sydney, struggling with her buttons, lurches around, tumbling out of the room. ANGUS, beaming, comes back in, apron on, feather duster held high.

ANGUS

Hey, people? Just got a call! Panto
at the Hippodrome! Buttons - could
get noticed, agents will come!

Sydney and Angus sing together from 'Cabaret'

SYDNEY/ANGUS

(singing)

*It's gotta happen, happen sometime
Maybe this time I'll win!*

Angus grins and 'dusts' Sydney as she rushes out.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE/STREET - SYDNEY'S APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

SYDNEY struggles to get her bike down the high outside fire escape and manages to get it down to ground level. A young black child, TEZ (10) hangs out from a higher level and climbs out of a window. He runs with ease down the fire escape and rushes over to Sydney, now mounting her bike. They do a complicated hand routine that's only theirs. Tez grins.

TEZ

Yo, Sydney? 'Casablanca' is on
Netflix. Shall we watch it again
later? Mum's made us spotted dick!

Sydney sits on her bike's seat and grins warmly at him.

SYDNEY

Crazy about your mum's spotted dick
You've got my spare key, Tez, so
just set it all up.

Tez nods, grinnig and gives her a thumbs up.

TEZ

Hey, Sydney? 'There will always be
Paris'

Sydney laughs and rides off waving back at him.

SYDNEY

There will always be Paris!

INT. RECEPTION AREA 'CONNECT'. SEX THERAPY/RELATIONSHIP
WAREHOUSE BUILDING. DIGBETH. BIRMINGHAM. DAY.

MAEVE (39), Irish, 'CONNECT'S' most Senior Sex Therapist,
Irish, smart, sophisticated, walks through the open plan
reception, her designer glasses perched on her nose.

She is followed by ANDY (36), Sheffield born, sensitive,
warm, mischievous, casual in his jeans and leather jacket,
tousled blonde hair.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Meet Maeve and Andy. Top brass at
'Connect. Screwed up? Come on now,
people? Who isn't?'

MAEVE and ANDY approach MICKI (27), 'CONNECT'S' Administrator,
Black, serious, focused, hair scraped back, glasses on. Micki
has a troubled history with men.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Micki? An irritant of the highest
order but still my wing woman.

On the reception desk, VERA (50), a warm mother figure, long
time post-operative Trans Female, answers the phone her
manner kindly.

VERA

(on phone)

Hello, 'Connect?' How can I help?
They can certainly advise on your
marriage, dear. Thursday at three?

Maeve groans and leans into Andy as they walk.

MAEVE

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

ANDY

The 'Big M' - could be, Maeve?

MAEVE

Don't be ridiculous. I'm too young.

Micki looks over from her desk and frowns at Andy.

MICKI

Men get the Menopause too, Andy. It's been proved.

Andy rolls his eyes, grinning as Maeve stops and frowns.

MAEVE

Where the hell is Sydney? Can anyone tell me?

Micki groans reading a text on her mobile from Sydney.

MICKI

Hate to say it, Maeve, in the middle of an archetypal great fuck.

ANDY

Wow? Thought we were all searching for meaningful relationships in this brave new world, Micki?

Andy grins wryly as Micki shrugs and hands Maeve a card.

MICKI

That posh dating agency my aunty tried? Met all these Captain of Industry types, wined and dined rotten. 'Drawing Down the Stars.'

MAEVE

Not quite my thing, Micki. Thanks.

Maeve reads the card as Andy shakes his head sadly.

ANDY

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

Maeve and Micki stare as he raises his hands in mock horror.

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

EXT. STREET - CITY CENTRE/BIRMINGHAM - DAY

SYDNEY rides her bike fast through the traffic. She screeches to a halt as a GRAND OLD LADY (70's) in shades, slowly walks her pooch over the zebra crossing. Sydney rings her bell as the GRAND OLD LADY deliberately slows down glaring coldly at Sydney.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
 Ok, lady? I'm guessing your psycho-
 sexual disorders lie somewhere
 around sexual aversion, orgasmic
 disorder with fetishism thrown in,
 often caused by cultural and
 religious repression. But don't
 worry, lady, help is at hand. Just
 ring 'Connect'!

Sydney whizzes off as the GRAND OLD LADY stares.

VERA (O.S)
 (on phone)
 Hello, 'Connect'. Any kind of
 problem, dear. The sky's the limit.

INT. RECEPTION AREA/'CONNECT'- DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

VERA replaces one of the phones at the reception desk as MICKI sits on her computer on the desk next to her. Micki looks up at the Dating agency card she has pinned up and sighs. 'DRAWING DOWN THE STARS.' Vera looks over and smiles gently.

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

MICKI
 Nice men are a myth. They don't
 exist like they did back in your
 day, Vera.

VERA
 Men were less complicated in my day
 that's for sure, Micki. Women too!

Vera chuckles warmly.

VERA (CONT'D)

I was the exception of course!
Moirra stayed with me even when I
transitioned, bless her. The kids
found it very hard, mind you.

MICKI

(gently)
Suzy still not in touch?

VERA

No, dear. Nor Bradley. Hey ho? I
follow them all on facebook.

Vera blinks, grabbing the desk diary as Micki bites her lip.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

EUGENE, dressed in a business suit, is counselling DOUGIE,
big, burly (35), a Fireman, and SALLY (30's), blonde,
conventional, anxious. They sit in chairs opposite Eugene.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

(softly)
So this is what we do. Make or
break relationships. Us
counsellors, we're human like you
guys. Just watch us unravel ...

Eugene takes a breath and looks at them both. A BIG SILENCE.

EUGENE

This must be very scary for you
both. It's a huge change and it
will take some adjusting to.

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

EUGENE (CONT'D)

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

Why fall apart, Dougie?

DOUGIE

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

EUGENE loosens his tie, distracted.

SALLY

Please don't say that, Dougie.

DOUGIE

I'm just saying it as it is, love. We've got to be honest here.

Sally shakes her head again and looks away. Dougie sadly looks at Eugene.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

Sals didn't want to come but I was keen to flush it all out, Euge, give things a proper hose down.

EUGENE

There's a big difference between being a Cross Dresser and being Transgender, Sally. Dougie's clearly happy to remain as a man but enjoys dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex. Look at, you know? The Elizabethans.

SALLY

Sorry, who? What ...?

EUGENE

The Elizabethans. With all their silks, frills and finery. Society has dressed men in stiff suits and rough uniforms for years and pushed the more kind of feminine dressing, in satins and silk, underground.

Dougie beams at Eugene.

DOUGIE

Spot on, Euge, spot on! We all like a bit of frills and fluff.

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 Cross dresser. Voof?!

DOUGIE gulps very hard. SALLY, blinking back tears, looks over.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

I mean, who would ring a Tranny to put out a fire?

Eugene is a bit breathless. His pager goes off in his pocket.

EUGENE

Sorry, people. An emergency!

INT. RECEPTION AREA/'CONNECT'- DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

ANDY walks into reception and approaches MICKI and VERA

ANDY

Delirious with tiredness. Kids were in and out of our beds last night like yo-yo's! Ach?!

Micki hands Andy a tiny bottle of Rescue Remedy.

MICKI

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

Andy looks interested as EUGENE walks into the reception on his mobile phone.

EUGENE

(on phone)

I'm in a session, babes?! They will increase the mortgage and pay for the renovation, yeah, they will. Ok, Beck, go for the Mulberry sofas. Yep, fine. Gottago!

Andy drops some drops onto his tongue.

ANDY

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 grins wryly and passes him the bottle of Rescue Remedy.

ANDY (CONT'D)

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

Andy walks off as Eugene looks at the bottle, shooting a look at Micki. Eugene sighs and darts back into his Counselling room. Micki turns to Vera, irritated.

MICKI

Why do guys always need rescuing by some strong woman?

Vera smiles and shrugs. Micki whispers to herself.

MICKI (CONT'D)

How about someone rescuing me?

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM - 'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

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

DOUGIE

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

EUGENE

We'll get this mess untangled, Dougie. Don't worry now, we will. As said, it's society that forces people to go underground.

SALLY

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

EUGENE

(gently)

You've been through an enormous shock, Sally, and it will take time to adjust to the new relationship.

Sally nods quickly and blinks back tears.

SALLY

I wish I could, Eugene! I just feel so scared and what about my mum?

EUGENE

Your mum?

SALLY

Mum and dad paid for our wedding and wanted everything to be perfect for their baby girl.

Eugene reels back and wipes his brow. He gulps hard.

EUGENE

Your wedding ...? Perfect?

SALLY

Cost a fortune but they loved my choice of husband too. A fireman, a real man was Dougie! How can I tell them Dougie is now a 'she?'

DOUGIE

(desperate)

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

Sally looks at Eugene, eyes filling with tears.

SALLY

He even said he wanted to be called 'Diana'? Princess Diana next.

DOUGIE

Know it's a bit overwhelming, love, I do.

SALLY

Your telling me, Diana?! You left me knickers covered in semen. Can't get the stains out!

Eugene is breathing hard and loosens his tie as sweat starts to trickle down his forehead.

EUGENE

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

Eugene dashes out as Dough and Sally look at each other.

DOUGIE

'Gents', 'Ladies', that's what we're wrestling with here, eh, love?

Doug smiles weakly as Sally groans softly.

INT. LADIES TOILETS/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

SYDNEY pushes on the door of the Ladies and rushes to the washbasin, splashing cold water over her face. A toilet flushes and MICKI emerges from a cubicle. Sydney grins at her.

SYDNEY

Phew? Knackered! Mimi was round last night and Trudi's is pestering to see me and so is Marcus and can't think of any funny material for the show - help me?!

Mimi moves to the basin next to Sydney's to wash her hands.

MICKI

Base it on your life, Sydney, that should crack them up.

SYDNEY

Piss off, ya nasty little virgin.

They laugh as MAEVE comes in and stiffens seeing Sydney.

MAEVE

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

Sydney smiles brightly and stands to attention.

SYDNEY

(sweetly)

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

Maeve raises her eyebrows, unimpressed.

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 leave. Maeve's toilet flushes and she emerges and stares hard at herself in the mirror.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

(softly)

Drawing Down the Stars? Maeve O'
Mara. Single, a widow, lonely as
hell and about to lose control.

EXT. ROOF - 'CONNECT' - CITY CENTRE/DIGBETH - LATER - DAY

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

EUGENE

Breathe! Just Breathe!

INT. BOARD ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - LATER - DAY

MAEVE is chairing a weekly meeting around a big table her Clients' notes in front of her. MICKI and ANDY and SYDNEY sit around the table. Sydney clocks Andy who smiles warmly at her. Sydney smiles back but quickly looks away.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

(softly)

Meet Andy, Object of Lust. Very
very fuckable but forbidden fruit
as horribly married!

MAEVE

How long has this Client been
vaginismic, Micki?

MICKI

Four years, Maeve. The Client's
mother was a monster, controlling
her daughter throughout her
adolescence. Now the Client has met
this man so she wants to sort out
her vaginismus, but she's still got
this terrible fear of vaginal
penetration.

Maeve nods impressed with Micki. Micki gulps nervously.

MICKI (CONT'D)

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

MAEVE

I don't see why not, Micki. Andy?

Andy darts a look at Sydney.

ANDY

Micki can counsel me as penetration scares the hell out of me!

Sydney snorts with laughter as Andy grins, pleased, and Maeve frowns.

MAEVE

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

Andy clicks into professional mode.

ANDY

We're talking 'sensate focus'. The male client has problems with early ejaculation but why the two hander?

MAEVE

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

Micki grins over at Sydney.

MICKI

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

Micki groans loudly as Sydney, smiling sweetly, kicks her under the table.

EXT. ROOF/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

EUGENE is on the roof, leaning on the wall, on his mobile talking to his business partner. He's stressed and wipes his brow.

EUGENE

(on mobile)

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

ANDY walks up onto the roof via the fire escape, roll up cigarette behind his ear. He approaches Eugene.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

(softly)

The guys off load. Sweet aren't they guys when they open up?

ANDY

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

Andy comes to lean on the wall next to Eugene.

EUGENE

God knows? I'm ...? I keep overheating.

Andy nods, lights his cigarette and inhales and looks out over the city scape all around them.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

Inga ok? She must be due soon?

ANDY

Four months now. Ten years in and we're still churning them out. I don't want to put you off, Euge? Marriage is, you know? Marriage.

Andy looks strangely glum as Eugene shrugs. He blinks hard and looks out over the city.

EUGENE

That's what I'm worried about. Marriage being marriage!

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - LATER
- DAY

SYDNEY and ANDY are co-counselling RONALD (60) and MELISSA (55). Ron is very dapper in a blazer and tie and Melissa a Women's Institute member. Andy leads the session.

RON

I keep coming too quickly!

Melissa wriggles around, very uneasy.

MELISSA
Ronald, really?

ANDY
It's ok, Melissa.

Andy looks at Ronald encouragingly. Ronald gulps hard.

RONALD
I feel under 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 readjusts her necklace.

RONALD (CONT'D)
More pressure and it affects my
performance in the old boudoir.

MELISSA
I just? I ...?! I feel under
pressure too. When we get into bed
my heart starts fluttering, I get
all tense, you know, I ...?

SYDNEY
(gently)
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 reels back, eyes wide.

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

Andy nods at Sydney. He will make the next move. Sydney nods.

ANDY

Let's get back to the nitty gritty.
Ronald. Pick up from where you left
off ...

RONALD

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
blimmin' Flipper.

ANDY

Flipper the penguin?

Sydney grins over at Andy.

SYDNEY

Flipper the dolphin, Andy. TV Gold!
Keep up now.

Andy nods quickly, still focused, as Ronald gulps hard.

RONALD

Me and the old gal have been
together for donkey's years and I
always took pride in my Johnson and
the family jewels. Everything
always worked a treat. Eh, Melissa?

Melissa nods sadly.

MELISSA

Yes, but everything's now gone a
bit pear shaped.

RONALD

Melissa's right. Me old banana has.

Sydney breathes hard, as Melissa widens her eyes.

MELISSA

Turned into a pear it did. All soft
and squidgy!

SYDNEY (V.O.)

(softly)

Aye, aye, aye? Old age and sex?
Will anyone want me when my vagina
dries up, turning into a wrinkled
prune?

Melissa beats back tears and looks at Sydney.

MELISSA

Sydney? Is there hope for a couple
of old codgers like us?

Sydney blinks, suddenly moved. She nods gently.

SYDNEY

Yes. There's always hope, Melissa.
Always.

Andy shoots Sydney an admiring look as Melissa brightens.
Sydney looks at Andy and smiles slightly.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Reel him in slowly, Sydney. Gently,
gently, catchy monkey, whatever
that was ...

EXT. ROOF/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - EARLY EVENING

MAEVE is standing on the roof vaping. ANDY approaches via the
Fire Escape and walks over. Andy lights a roll up as they
lean on the wall and look out over the city. Maeve sighs.

MAEVE

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

Maeve gulps hard, staring out, vaping.

ANDY

Wow? That's grim. Grim as fuck.
Micki's locking up, fancy a half?
Looks like you might need it?

Maeve wriggles around awkwardly.

MAEVE

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

ANDY

(gently)
A dinner party for one?

Maeve shrugs and laughs wryly. Andy groans now.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Me? I'm cooking spaghetti hoops for five six year old girls - the sleep over. What sadist invented the goddamned sleep over? Nobody sleeps!

Maeve laughs gently as they look out over the city.

MAEVE

The single life has its benefits, I guess?

Andy walks off across the roof and turns back.

ANDY

Don't forget that dating agency. Be dinner for two then! Think of that widow, Maeve? No sex for eighteen years. There's always hope, Maeve. Sydney said that.

Maeve nods, slightly impressed, as Andy walks off. She raises her eyebrows and blows out a stream of smoke.

INT. BIRMINGHAM CITY CENTRE - GLEE CLUB - NIGHT

SYDNEY is holding the mic in the spotlight, in front of a small CROWD, some propping up the bar. She looks excited, intense, holding a bottle of beer, swigging from it.

SYDNEY

Marriage? Any experts here on this rather weird state of affairs?

A FEW LAUGHS and SEVERAL PEOPLE put their hands up.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Tell me, please, people? As a fucked up failure of a broken marriage, I seriously need to know!

HECKLER (#1)

It's a prison sentence, love!

HECKLER (#2) (CONT'D)

I'm in fifteen years, me. A lifer!

The HECKLER'S WIFE digs him in the ribs as PEOPLE LAUGH. Sydney grins but carries on.

SYDNEY

So what is marriage really? A contract? A piece of paper invented in Mesopotamia in 2350 BC by some male village elders. (LOW MALE VOICE) You, woman, are my goods and chattels, you have no rights and I will beat you, woman, when I drink too much of the meade and you will give me the very good sexing! Bum deal, eh, ladies? Life's lonely, and ...?

HECKLER (#1)

Lonely as shite, love!

SYDNEY

Then you get married and as the years pass, you rot and atrophy as your body parts wither and fall off and turn to dust. Might as well end it all now, ladies, as those Mesopotamian fuck fathers really did it for us girls!

The AUDIENCE laugh and SEVERAL WOMEN WHOOP and CHEER.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I'm Sydney Smith, see you all again next friday. 'Women Talk Dirty'!

INT. BEDROOM/EUGENE'S FLAT - HARBORNE - NEXT DAY - DAY

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

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Another lamb to the slaughter. The long march to the altar.

BECKA

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

Eugene sighs hard and looks away.

BECKA (CONT'D)

What about your dad? Is he coming to the wedding or not, Euge?

EUGENE

I haven't got a dad, you know that. He's dead to me. The business, the wedding plans, it's all falling in on me, Beck?!

BECKA

It's the counselling that's screwing you up, Eugene. All that digging into peoples' sex lives and dirty dark secrets - it would do anyone's head in.

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

Huh? That so, Eugene? How's about you caring for me?

Eugene gets out of bed and walks off to the shower as Becka shouts after him.

BECKA (CONT'D)

Walk away, why don't you? Back to your freaks and weirdos!

A door slams and Becka, fuming, punches a pillow hard.

EXT. STREET/BIRMINGHAM SUBURBS - NEXT DAY - DAY

DOUGIE 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. A PASSER BY looks over. TWO WORKMEN on some scaffolding smile and wave down.

DOUGIE

How am I doing, Sal?

Dougie laughs and stumbles over a paving stone as Sally grabs his arm and steadies him. Dougie smiles gratefully at her.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

Man underneath and woman on top!

INT. SYDNEY'S SEVENTH FLOOR WAREHOUSE FLAT/BIRMINGHAM -
PRESENT DAY - DAY

SYDNEY is semi-naked writhing around on top of TRUDI (31), a Black Ballet Teacher. ANGUS walks in, bearing a plate of muffins waving them around. He sits on the bed as Sydney and Trudi grab a muffin.

SYDNEY

Stand up this Friday, people 'Women
talk Dirty.' Glee Club. Be there!

ANGUS

Stand up? You? Miss Flat on her
Back?

TRUDI

(giggling)

Do your act, Sydney. I'm taking a
dance class, so can't be there.

Sydney sits up and addresses an imaginary AUDIENCE.

SYDNEY

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

ANGUS

Hang on? Aren't you meant to be co-
counselling this morning with Mr.
Married and Out of Bounds?

TRUDI

'Mr. Married'? Hold it? What the
hell, Sydney ... ?!

Trudi glares at Sydney, horrified, and jumps out of bed as
Sydney smiles weakly at Trudi as she runs out.

SYDNEY (O.S.)

Marriage just seems so redundant
these days ...

INT. ATTIC ROOM/THERAPIST'S HOUSE - MOSELEY - BIT LATER -
DAY.

IAN (40's), handsome, bearded, sensitive smiles as he listens
to Sydney. Sydney sits in a comfortable arm chair.

SYDNEY

A mockery really as we're all biologically predisposed to be polygamous and unfaithful. Women too. It's not just some male hunter-gatherer prerogative.

Ian stares intently at Sydney. She stares back.

IAN

Whenever you've made up your mind you're going to do something destructive, Sydney, you work hard to justify it. Like now.

SYDNEY

(wriggling around)
Really? How so, Ian?

IAN

People who have been abandoned as a child, a young teen, often self-sabotage or sabotage the relationships of others. You grew up with infidelities all around you, a lot of let downs. I'm guessing you're very comfortable with infidelity. And I sense the huge anger within you.

SYDNEY

You're saying I'm about to get into deep shit with a married man because I'm unfaithful like my dad was and I'm angry?

Ian nods gently. Sydney wriggles around awkwardly. Ian checks his watch and picks up one of Sydney's Fliers from the coffee table.

IAN

Time to wind down now. 'Women Talk Dirty'? Your release, Sydney? Sex can also be a release.

Sydney jumps up and shrugs grabbing her bag.

SYDNEY

I'm filling holes, I know thanks, Ian, gaping holes. Might as well be counseling myself here!

Ian laughs fondly as Sydney grabs her bag, rushing out.

INT. RECEPTION AREA/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - 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,
dear?

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

(laughing)

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. Sydney dashes off as Amelia narrows her eyes, very creepy and marches over to Vera at reception.

AMELIA

I need to see a therapist and it
must be 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

Got a copy of '*Harpers & Queens?*'

VERA

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

Amelia rolls her eyes as Dougie sees Sydney's fliers on the coffee table and looks over at SALLY a bit sadly.

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' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

MICKI comes out of a cubicle to find SYDNEY staring at herself in the mirror. She looks thoughtful.

SYDNEY

I've had it with women, Micki. Mimi, Trudi, they're all too needy, so hungry sucking on my teat. Gonna clear them all out!

MICKI

Hmmm? Ok, Sydney? Sure it's them who are too needy?

Micki leans into a basin and washes her hands. They both look into the mirror. Sydney gulps slightly.

SYDNEY

I want a more cerebral lover. You know? A zipless fuck but with a real brain attached.

Micki shakes the water off her face and reels back.

MICKI

No?! Don't do it, Sydney! The one rule here, remember ... ?!

A LOUD CHAIN FLUSH. MAEVE emerges from a cubicle.

MAEVE

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

SYDNEY

(brightly)

We've done the History taking and the 'Hello' interview and now we're ready to rock and roll!

Sydney grins and rushes off. Micki looks at Maeve.

MICKI

Sydney's dead serious about this job, Maeve.

(MORE)

MICKI (CONT'D)

Says she's polyamorous, but she's
clearly a sexaholic but she's
working on herself, she is!

Maeve narrows her eyes as she dries her hands.

MAEVE

That so, Micki? Anyone would think
Sydney was the only around here who
was sexually active?

Maeve and Micki suddenly look at each other. Maeve gulps.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Ok, must dash! Got my widow coming
in, talking to me about her?
Her lack of? You know ...?

Maeve dashes out as Micki rolls her eyes knowingly.

INT. A COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - 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, guys? Well
done! Very brave. How did you feel,
Dougie, out in the open as a woman?

Dougie looks very pleased with himself.

DOUGIE

I felt like me for the very first
time in me life, Euge. Felt like
the real Dougie. Bit scary, mind.
Couldn't balance on these heels?!

EUGENE

You made it too, eh, Sally?

Sally, calmer and happier, nods with determination.

SALLY

I'm not changing lanes now, Eugene,
even if Dougie is.

Dougie blinks hard and stares gratefully at Sally. Sally
smiles back at him. Eugene, sweating, is distracted.

EUGENE

Small steps ... well done!

SALLY

Dougie's clip clopping in those high heels, what's he like? I'm going to get him some shoes that fit as he's lurching around like a drag act! I mean...?

DOUGIE

It's ok, love. It's ok. All the terms can get a bit fiddly ...

Sally smiles gently at him and he smiles back.

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.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

All that hate? It can darken the soul. You've got to confront the past, Euge, unlock it then throw away the key ...

Eugene, transfixed, nods very slowly. Dougie smiles brightly.

DOUGIE (CONT'D)

You have to face up to yer demons. 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' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - SAME TIME - DAY

ANDY is on the roof having a roll up. SYDNEY comes up the fire escape and approaches slowly and leans on the wall.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Object of Lust and me? Finally alone!

Andy laughs and points out the COUPLE in the nearby office below as they embrace.

ANDY

The kissing couple! When will they stop? 'Rear Window' or what?

SYDNEY

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

Andy twinkles at her warmly.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Oh, you know? Men stuff.

ANDY

(twinkling)

Just... men stuff?

SYDNEY

Micki's got a big mouth. Ok, women stuff too.

They laugh awkwardly as Sydney now stares hard at him.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

What's it like to be married, Andy?

ANDY

What's it like to be polyamorous, Sydney?

SYDNEY

I don't love everyone, just can't imagine vowing to be loyal to just one person. A total mind fuck for me.

Andy breathes hard and looks out over the city.

ANDY

Marriage? You know? It's ..? Well, it's for life.

SYDNEY

Wow. Sounds like a prison sentence?

ANDY

More an open prison. But there are rules I but ... ?

SYDNEY

Rules? Those meddling old men in Mesopotamia who invented marriage have a lot to answer for, eh?

Andy laughs softly as Sydney sighs and looks out across the city. Andy now turns to Sydney and stares hard at her as Sydney stares back, her eyes now widening.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
 (softly)
 You've seen it in the movies,
 folks, and you're seeing it right
 here, right now!

MICKI shouts over, popping her head up from the fire escape.

MICKI
 Wooooeee? Clients waiting
 downstairs, guys!

SYDNEY (V.O.)
 Ach?! The Demon from below!

Andy smiles wryly and stubs out his cigarette.

ANDY
 Better get down there, eh, pardner?
 Marriages to mend!

They stare at each other and Sydney nods slowly biting her lip as Andy walks off across the roof, shaking his head.

INT. RECEPTION AREA/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

MICKI looks up from her computer as MAEVE walks past.

MICKI
 You're Four o'clock woman has
 cancelled, Maeve. Said something
 about she'd met some man on a date
 and was happy. Reckons she doesn't
 need any more counselling.

Maeve looks thrown but walks on. EUGENE walks past. Micki looks over, a bit concerned. He looks very shaky. Eugene grins bravely, the sweat pouring down his forehead.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

SYDNEY and ANDY are co-counselling RONALD, who is now on his own without MELISSA. Andy nods gently as Sydney takes notes. The atmosphere is very charged. Sydney stares over at Andy.

ANDY
 Premature ejaculation is very
 common, Ron.
 (MORE)

ANDY (CONT'D)

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, you know ...?

Andy indicates his own groin as Sydney gulps quickly.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Please don't do that again, Andy. please don't say ...?!

ANDY

The penis.

Sydney looks down, struggling.

ANDY (CONT'D)

This is a second marriage for you both, a lot at stake. Let's dig deeper. Close your eyes, please, Ron. Think hard and tell us about your earliest sexual experiences. Free associate.

Ronald closes his eyes but opens one eye and grins.

RONALD

Bit like 'free love' or something?

ANDY

Earliest memories please, Ron?

Ronald closes his eyes hard. Sydney shoots a quick look at Andy who is focusing hard and she focuses on Ronald too.

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 ... There was nowhere for me to wank off without one of me sisters coming in.

(MORE)

RONALD (CONT'D)

Used to do it quickly in the lav,
but they were always me sisters
knocking on the door, wanting to
fix their hair or make up, so never
any time. Story of my life really!

Ronald slowly opens his eyes. He looks more relaxed.

SYDNEY

You did really well and you're
working it all out for yourself,
Ron.

RONALD

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

SYDNEY

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

Ronald brightens slowly. He grins over at Andy.

RONALD

She's alright, isn't she, Andy? Not
a bad lass, eh? Spot on I reckon!

Andy now looks at Sydney who looks back at him.

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. Funny thing
is, I quite enjoyed it! But don't
tell Melissa about Roger. She'll
chop off me todger!

Sydney splutters as Andy rolls his eyes.

EXT. ROOF/'CONNECT'- DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - LATER - DAY

MAEVE is between sessions looking furtive as she vapes from a cigarette holder, alone apart from a solitary PIGEON. Maeve takes out a small bottle of brandy and takes a quick slug. The pigeon stares at Maeve and Maeve stares back.

MAEVE

I'm Irish, a screwed up convent
girl so I'm allowed to drink. It's
me heritage, bejaysus?!

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, single,
thirty seven. Widowed.

The pigeon stares hard, blinking at her.

MAEVE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

I'm a Sex Therapist. Why would that
put some men off? Put down Marine
Biologist then! Friday, ok. Thanks.

Maeve clicks off her mobile and notices the pigeon staring up at her. Maeve giggles and puts her finger to her lips.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Our little secret! Beak shut, ok?

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - LATER
- DAY

SYDNEY is sorting out her notes as ANDY rearranges the chairs. RONALD has just left. Sydney looks over at him as they tidy up the room and pull the chairs back.

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.

(MORE)

ANDY (CONT'D)

We should try and keep Ron's
heterosexual side up and running
and keep the marriage together ..

Andy and Sydney suddenly stare at each other. Andy,
imploding, suddenly grabs his rolling tobacco.

SYDNEY

You can't smoke in here? The rules!

ANDY

Oh, fuck the rules!

Andy pulls Sydney towards him, embracing her hard. They
tumble over a chair as Sydney SHRIEKS as the coffee table
falls backwards.

INT. RECEPTION AREA/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - SAME
TIME - DAY

A THUD! MICKI, at her computer, looks up. VERA is tidying her
desk and Micki notices AMELIA, the posh, upper class woman
approaching the reception desk. She is outraged.

AMELIA

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

Micki looks over to one of the closed doors of a counselling
room and hears SYDNEY'S LAUGHTER and her face slowly drops.
MAEVE walks into reception and she also hears the noises and
stops in her tracks. Amelia puts her hands on her hips.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

(very posh)
Are they fucking in there or what?

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

Sydney and Andy are kissing passionately, Sydney lying back
against a chair. A LOUD KNOCK and Sydney jumps up as Andy
pushes back his hair. MAEVE pops her head in and knits her
brows seeing an upturned coffee table. Andy smiles weakly.

ANDY

Hi Maeve? The last client? We had
to move the furniture around? Had
such deep emotions to release we
had to ...?

Sydney is nodding like a nodding dog.

SYDNEY
Make some space!

ANDY
Yes, space, space! He wanted to?

SYDNEY
Relax! He needed to let off steam,
as did we, fuck no! Mean him, him?!

Maeve, befuddled, looks from one to the other, shrugs and leaves. Andy wipes his brow, staring at Sydney, and as they both laugh softly. Sydney pulls back, grinning, breathless

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
What the hell was that?

ANDY
That was bloody lovely, that's
what!

Sydney shakes her head, amazed as MICKI KNOCKS loudly on the door. They both jump again.

MICKI (O.S.)
Next client, Sydney, now!

EXT. STREET - HANDSWORTH/BIRMINGHAM - 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 frowns and taps her pen on Eugene's car window. Eugene winds down the window as Rita stares sternly at him.

RITA
You can't park your fancy car here,
young man. Residents Parking.

Rita gets out a ticket and slaps it on his windscreen.

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

Eugene gets out of the car and blinks very hard.

EUGENE
I'm on the edge, Mum. As close as
you can get. I'm wobbling!

COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

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

AMELIA

I love to shag. 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 slowly, wide eyed, grabbing her clip board. Amelia leans towards Sydney, smiling creepily.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I knew you were the same as me, Sydney.

SYDNEY

(weakly)

I, I ... I am? You did?

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!

Sydney reels back, clutching onto her clipboard.

SYDNEY

You, you could ...?

Amelia sits up brightly and smooths down her skirt.

AMELIA

Yes, indeed, dear! And I knew I could share my little problem with you.

SYDNEY

(wide eyed)

Your ... 'little problem?'

Amelia nods brightly leans forward and smiles, revealing yellow teeth as Sydney recoils. Amelia announces proudly.

AMELIA

I've got three vaginas!

Amelia jumps up and lifts up her skirt, revealing old fashioned lacy underwear, bloomers style. She smiles.

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

Sydney's jaw hits the ground as Amelia leans in to pull down her underwear.

EXT. STREET - HANDSWORTH/BIRMINGHAM - SAME TIME - DAY

SYDNEY (O.S.)
 Nooooooooooooo ...?!

EUGENE and RITA are both leaning on Eugene's convertible car. Rita has her Parking Warden hat pushed back. She smiles.

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!

EUGENE
 Mum? Why did you live with Dad for
 all those years? The way Dad would
 get drunk and smash things up? We
 had to hide on the roof, remember?

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

RITA
 How could I forget? I was sixteen,
 Euge, a child and I married another
 child. You babies just kept on
 coming ...

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

RITA
 Probably but we didn't have the
 names for it back then. Now we do,
 eh?

They now walk slowly down the street.

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

Eugene suddenly stops on the pavement and blinks hard at Rita

EUGENE (CONT'D)
 Maybe I'm like Dad and want to
 smash everything up? History can
 repeat itself, right?

RITA
 No, Eugene. No! You're nothing like
 him, nothing like him at all!

Rita comes close to him.

RITA (CONT'D)
 You and your mad friends just do
 far too much digging, Euge. You've
 forgotten how the rest of us live
 up here. And now, with all the
 wedding stress, you're having a bit
 of a wobble. Not surprising?

Eugene nods slowly. Rita suddenly brightens and grins.

RITA (CONT'D)
 Hey? I've got my new slip for that
 wedding of yours. Just call your
 mum the scarlet woman!

Rita giggles and lift up the skirt of her uniform to reveal a
 red silk petticoat. Eugene brightens a little.

RITA (CONT'D)
 Got something for you.

Rita pulls up a large plastic bag and hands it to him.

RITA (CONT'D)
 Patties. Made sixty of them for the
 wedding. If you decide not to go
 through with it, Euge, just eat
 them patties and pack your bags!

Eugene breathes hard and nods, eyes widening.

EXT. ROOF/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - EARLY EVENING

SYDNEY and MICKI are sharing a couple of beers on the roof,
 leaning on the wall which overlook the City. Sydney rolls her
 eyes wildly, running her fingers through her hair.

SYDNEY
 I don't want to end up like that
 woman, desperately needing help and
 attention. She was insane?!

MICKI

You mean neuro-divergent, Sydney.

SYDNEY

Ok, smart arse. Yes, whatever?

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

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I'm cutting down on meaningless sex. Being polyamorous is taking its toll on me so no more filling holes. Only meaningful sex from now on, Micki!

Micki's eyes widen with alarm.

MICKI

No?! I heard you both laughing in there. We all did! Andy's married and having a baby!

Sydney reels back, shocked.

SYDNEY

A baby ...?!

MICKI

A baby! He's off limits and you'd be committing professional suicide!

ANDY has come up the fire escape and hears this. Andy gulps and slowly walks across the roof towards them. Micki walks off quickly as Sydney, reeling, looks away as Andy leans on the wall next to her and blinks very hard.

ANDY

(gently)

I told Inga two kids were enough but she didn't listen. I was going to tell you, Sydney, I was!

Sydney spins around, her eyes blazing.

SYDNEY

You're wife is pregnant and we're groping in the office ... Jeez?!

Andy shakes his head and walks closer to her.

ANDY

All my life I've been a window
shopper, Sydney, seeing things I've
wanted, never daring to touch. But
now I've touched, I want to go on
touching!

Sydney springs back horrified.

SYDNEY

I may be a serial shagger, but
Inga's pregnant, you're wedlocked
and me? I'm forbidden fucking
fruit!

Andy blinks hard and stubs out his cigarette and staggers
off.

A TIME LAPSE. THE CLOUDS ROLL BY OVER THE CITY

Sydney looks out over the city, tears of anger rolling down
her eyes as she sings softly from Gus Kahn's 'Making Whoopee'

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

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

She wipes away the tears that are rolling down her cheeks.

INT. BEDROOM/ANDY'S HOUSE - MOSELEY - LATER - NIGHT

ANDY is lying in bed next to INGA (34) a Dutch Yoga teacher,
beautiful, serene and pregnant. She is sleeping and Andy,
eyes wide, is lost in thought.

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 on his back and stares up at the ceiling.

INT. BEDROOM/ EUGENE'S FLAT - HARBOURNE - NIGHT

EUGENE lies there rolled over, away from BECKA who is asleep. He is 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!*

INT. SYDNEY'S SEVENTH FLOOR WAREHOUSE FLAT/BIRMINGHAM - LATER
 - NIGHT

SYDNEY and TEZ lean back on cushions on top of a duvet on Sydney's bed eating popcorn as they watch 'Casablanca.' Sydney's looks bleak. On the TV Ingrid Bergman mutters the famous words.

INGRID BERGMAN (ON TV)
 'We'll always have Paris!'

Sydney wriggles around as she blinks back tears.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
 Me and Andy? We didn't even have
 Birmingham let alone Paris!

Tez notices and he leans over and gently pats her hand.

TEZ
 Mum always says to me to 'stay
 positive' if I'm not ok. Good
 things will happen, they will, but
 stay positive, Sydney!

SYDNEY
 Ever thought of being a counsellor,
 Tez? You're a natural.

Tez looks proud of himself as Sydney slowly brightens.

INT. BEDROOM - MAEVE'S FLAT - JEWELLERY QUARTER - NEXT DAY -
 DAY

We hear some BUZZING - an electrical gadget is being used. MAEVE, lying under her satin sheets, her silk eye mask over her eyes. Maeve is hung over and we see an empty whiskey bottle by her bed. She's using a vibrator and groans.

MAEVE

Ahhhhhh?!

Maeve slowly crosses herself, gasping.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Forgive her, Father, for she knows exactly what she does! Ooooooof?!

Maeve's pooch OSCAR, a Yorkshire Terrier, trots in and sinks his teeth into the satin sheet tugging it off.

EXT. ROOF/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - LATER - DAY

ANDY and EUGENE slurp from their takeaway coffees as they look out over the view. Andy looks rough and unshaven. Andy notices something in the nearby window of an Office. A COUPLE of OFFICE WORKERS are kissing passionately.

ANDY

They're at it again. All that animal lust is impressive!

They both look out laughing gently.

ANDY (CONT'D)

And the blind comes down. Damn it! It's refreshing to see office work mates having sex. What's wrong with human spontaneity? We're all so boxed in these days! How's the wedding prep?

Eugene shrugs and looks glum, looking out over the city.

EUGENE

I'm boxed in.

Andy, lost in thought, suddenly stares over at Eugene.

ANDY

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

Eugene shakes his head, smiling slightly.

EUGENE

A man in crisis. Wriggling on a pin? And a married man at that! A bit of human spontaneity, you mean?

ANDY
 (awkward)
 Yeah, something like that.

Eugene now looks away and breathes very hard.

EUGENE
 I might. Yeah, I just might.

They both now look out, eyes widening, side by side.

EXT. CITY CENTRE/BIRMINGHAM - STREET - DAY

SYDNEY on her bike whizzes past a TAXI DRIVER who HOOTS his horn angrily as she cuts him up.

ANGRY TAXI DRIVER
 (bellowing)
 Learn to drive, ya poxy lesbo!

SYDNEY
 Bi-sexual! Everyone's bi these days, mate, didn't ya know?

Sydney whizzes off holding her hand up in a one-fingered salute as the Angry Taxi Driver glares at her and HOOTS his horn again. Sydney grins as she rides fast.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
 Stay positive, Sydney. Stay positive!

INT. ATTIC ROOM/SYDNEY'S THERAPIST - MOSELEY - DAY

IAN (40's), SYDNEY'S therapist listens intently to her as they sit in two comfortable armchairs.

SYDNEY
 This crazy client I had the other day made me think of me with her three vaginas. I'm clearing them all out, Ian, my three lovers. Meaningless fucks can fuck off!

IAN
 Ok? And making space for whom?

SYDNEY
 For myself. It's time for me.

IAN

You said you were seeking clarity
when you first came in here,
Sydney? Is this the road to
clarity?

Sydney ruffles her hair, unsettled. She checks her watch.

IAN (CONT'D)

Maybe space for someone else as
well as you? Keep steady, Sydney.

Sydney reels back and checks her watch.

SYDNEY

Oops? Gotta go, show tonight!

Sydney jumps up and rushes off as Ian shakes his head.

INT/EXT CAR. STREET/BIRMINGHAM - SAME TIME - DAY

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Here's a man who needs therapy. Oh,
Brother, does this brother need
help!

EUGENE is driving around the streets, his window open, sweat
pouring down his forehead. His MOBILE PHONE goes on his
dashboard and he clicks it on as he drives.

BECKA (O.S.)

(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.

EUGENE

(on phone)

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

BECKA (O.S.)

(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 (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (on phone)
 Euge? Euge?! Euge? Speak to me?!

Eugene looks grey as he struggles to breathe.

INT. LIFT/'CONNECT' BUILDING - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - DAY

DOUGIE the fireman (dressed as a woman now) and SALLY enter the lift. SYDNEY follows them in struggling to get her bike in as she squeezes past them.

SYDNEY
 Whoops? Sorry, people ...?

DOUGIE
 No problem, love. Want me to help?

Dougie pulls up the sleeves of his dress to reveal bulging muscles and lifts the bike up on one end and shoves it into the corner of the lift. Dougie smooths down his dress and beams at Sydney as she smiles politely.

INT. COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH/CITY CENTRE - SAME TIME - DAY

ANDY is sitting opposite RONALD and his wife MELISSA. Andy is waiting for SYDNEY but checking his watch.

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 more relaxed. Ronald looks at Melissa, blinking back tears and smiles gently.

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

MELISSA
 You bet, Ronald. Marriage is for keeps. I even agreed to call him 'Princess', Andy, but I'm not doing the Diana bit. Princess will do!

Dougie smiles gratefully at her. SYDNEY comes in.

SYDNEY
 So sorry, folks. Traffic terrible!

MELISSA

Just talking about marriage,
Sydney. It's for life, eh?

Sydney, confused, sits down. She smiles politely.

SYDNEY

I don't believe in marriage,
Ronald, or maybe marriage just
doesn't believe in me? Ask Andy,
he's the expert!

Andy smiles quizzically at her. Sydney stares straight ahead picking up a notebook and pen very professional.

RONALD

You not married then, Sydney? A
lovely lass like you?

Andy quickly clears his throat.

ANDY

Ok, people? Let's start the
'sensate focus'. We're going to be
talking about stopping and starting
sex for you, Ron, to get some...?

RONALD

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

Sydney breathes hard, clutching her notebook, refusing to look at Andy.

INT. ANOTHER COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - SAME TIME - DAY

EUGENE is counselling DOUGIE THE FIREMAN and SALLY. Eugene looks terrible, his face grey, sweat pouring down his face. Sally is crying as DOUGIE looks concerned for her.

SALLY

Dad would lose control and he
would? Oh, I can't?!

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

DOUGIE

Her Dad used to beat Sal's mum,
Doreen, black and blue when he'd
had a bad day. I'm telling you,
Euge, if Sal's rotten Dad was alive
now I'd rip his head off!

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

EUGENE

Wanna ... rip Dad's head off for he
did to mum! Rip my head off?! Empty
it, start again?

Sally and Dougie look very confused and their eyes widen.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

I would ... like to take you, I
mean me, no, you - 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. Sally shrieks.

EXT. RECEPTION AREA/'CONNECT' - SAME TIME - DAY

MICKI looks over from her desk as MAEVE rushes over and
lowers her voice.

MAEVE

(hissing)

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

SALLY and DOUGIE rush out into reception, their eyes wide.

SALLY

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

Micki's eyes widen and she jumps up.

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

ANDY is counselling RONALD and MELISSA - the atmosphere is
highly charged. SYDNEY is struggling to keep control of her
emotions. Andy's voice is low, sensual almost.

ANDY

(softly)

Melissa?

(MORE)

ANDY (CONT'D)

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 Sydney looks away quickly.

ANDY (CONT'D)

And, you know, no touching of ... you know? Of the ... the?

SYDNEY

(unable to resist)
Genitals?

Sydney rolls her eyes as Andy gulps hard, focusing hard.

ANDY

This is a voyage of discovery. Unique and very, very sensual. Few people touch each other in this detailed way. This mustn't turn into anything sexual ...

Sydney now stares at him directly. Ronald opens one eye.

RONALD

Hrrumph? Sorry to interrupt, Andy?

Sydney and Andy are now oblivious to Ronald. Melissa opens her eyes and sees Sydney and Andy staring hard at each other.

MELISSA

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

INT. OTHER COUNSELLING ROOM/'CONNECT' - SAME TIME - DAY

EUGENE, lying on the floor, looks up at MICKI who is kneeling down beside him, wiping his brow with a wet flannel. MAEVE, SALLY and DOUGIE are all looking at him. Dougie grins.

DOUGIE

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

EUGENE

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

Micki leans in, blinking hard.

MICKI
 You should have tried my Rescue
 Remedy, Eugene.

EUGENE
 (breathless)
 Rescue me, Micki? I need healing
 ... sexual healing!

Micki reels back, her eyes widening.

INT. LIFT/'CONNECT' - DIGBETH - BIT LATER - EARLY EVENING

A weary SYDNEY gets into the lift, jamming her bike into the corner. She pushes the button but ANDY rushes in, juggling two large bags of groceries. Sydney, breathing hard, quickly looks away as the lift descends. Andy laughs nervously.

ANDY
 Money, sex, shopping - three major
 causes of friction in a marriage!

Andy lowers the shopping bags as a couple of toilet rolls fall out. They both bend down to get them and Sydney passes him a toilet roll. The lift judders to a halt. Sydney groans.

SYDNEY
 Jeez? Reckon we're stuck?

Andy smiles at her, very uneasy. Sydney glances at him.

ANDY
 Yes, we're stuck, suspended in
 life's metaphors and restrictions!

Andy sighs sadly, his head drooping down. Sydney turns away.

ANDY (CONT'D)
 Oh, shut up, Andy? It's not your
 fucking day!

Sydney suddenly spins round to face him, eyes wide.

SYDNEY
 Yes, it is! It is your fucking day!

Sydney grabs Andy's face and kisses him hard. Andy drops his bags, toilet rolls and vegetables falling to the ground. They kiss passionately, slowly sliding down the wall of the lift.

INT/EXT. LIFT CORRIDOR/'CONNECT' BUILDING. MINUTES LATER -
 EVENING

THREE FEMALE OFFICE CLEANERS, with their mops and buckets look in as the lift doors open. They see ANDY and SYDNEY with her hand down his trousers as the lift doors close again as it judders upwards. They gasp loudly, eyes rolling.

INT/EXT. DIFFERENT FLOOR/LIFT/'CONNECT' - MINUTES LATER - DAY

The lift door opens as MAEVE stands there. Her jaw slowly drops as she sees ANDY and SYDNEY making love, Sydney's shirt off, Andy's trousers around his knees. Sydney, panting, smiles very weakly at Maeve and gives her a little wave, as the door closes. Maeve reels backwards, horrified, and crosses herself.

MAEVE

Holy Mary, Mother of ... fuck?!

INT. GLEE CLUB/CITY CENTRE/BIRMINGHAM - LATER - NIGHT

SYDNEY, mid-act, is in the spotlight, in front of a curtain, holding a mic. She is glowing and grins broadly..

SYDNEY (V.O.)

Tez was right. You gotta stay positive as anything can happen!

A SMALL CROWD, holding their drinks, watch her. Sydney, elated, grabs the mic grinning wickedly into the spotlight.

SYDNEY

Ever had sex in a lift shaft? Ok, a few of you have I can tell, dirty bunch that you are!

The CROWD laughs loudly.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

It's my duty to advise the women here tonight that when the lift goes up, you've gotta go down, down, down if you want him to keep it up, ladies. It will, I can assure you, be the best 'lift shaft' you've have ever had, and you'll be floating up, up and away!

Laughter and squeals from the Crowd. Sydney sings from the song 'Up, Up and Away'

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

(sings)

*Would you like to ride in my
beautiful balloon
We could float among the stars
together, you and I
For we can fly, yes we can fly!
'Up, up and away! In my beautiful,
my beautiful balloon!
Oh, we can fly, yes we can fly!'*

Sydney grins, eyes rolling, suddenly shocked at herself.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Sorry! I'm in meltdown! What the fuck was that song about anyway? I'm just trying to help you all here. I'm a Sex therapist you see (A JEER) I am! Ok, don't believe me, mate, but don't come to me when your penis droops!

The Crowd LAUGHS and WHOOPS as Sydney beams into the spotlight. She suddenly sees ANDY over at the bar, pint in hand, grinning over at her. Sydney, delighted, waves over as he waves back.

In the other corner of the dark nightclub, MAEVE stands there, staring over coldly at Sydney. Sydney's face now drops as she staggers back and splutters into the mic.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Where's that balloon when I need it? Beam me up! Up, Up and away!

Series Bible and Storylines for 'WOBBLE' available.

Mollie Graneek, a BACP Senior Accredited Psycho-Sexual Counsellor and Psychotherapist is provisionally attached as Consultant to the series. (hsfc.org.uk)

Michelle Bridgman, Transfemale Psychotherapist, Consultant and Speaker on Gender Identity, is also provisionally attached to the series and she was Drama consultant on 'Silent Witness' and Tiger Aspect's 'Boy Meets Girl.' Michelle is also a Stand Up Comedienne.

