

INSIDE REACH

Written by

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EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

JACK CORRAL [4] sits buckled in the rear seat of the family car, his father driving and his mother in the front passenger seat as they listen to music coming from the radio.

The boy looks out the side window at the passing woodland as his mother unbuckles her seat belt to reach back for her bag that sits wedged beside the car door next to the boy.

She strains her body to reach the bag just as a deer jumps out into the road in front of the car.

JACK'S FATHER

Jesus!

Jack's father wrenches the steering wheel to the right but the car fails to evade the animal as it ploughs off the road towards the woods. The boy's mother screams in terror as the vehicle crashes through woodland brush towards the trees, the suspension bouncing the car uncontrollably. With an almighty crash a thick tree branch smashes through the windscreen before the car collides with brutal force into a tree, the bonnet of the car crumpling like a tin can.

A minibus with tourists, that had been following, brakes abruptly, the tyres smoking against the tarmac before coming to a standstill. Instantly, the driver is out of the bus and running towards the car crash while some of the distraught tourists gather at the side as others watch from inside the vehicle.

As the bus driver reaches the mangled car, he retrieves his mobile phone.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

He bends down beside the passenger door and tries to open it as he speaks to an emergency operator.

BUS DRIVER

Ambulance!

FADE OUT.

FADE IN

INT. PRESENT TIME: APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Superimpose: Present Time

The apartment is large and airy with 5 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and a bar kitchen area adjacent to a large living room within an open plan layout. Old wooden floorboards, partially covered by a square Persian rug, support soft furnishings strategically placed around the room while a large flat screen TV sits in a corner displaying a news programme.

The place is clean and organised with a mirror (which only reflects Jack's image) sitting above a mantelpiece below which stands a tiled fireplace that is no longer in use.

JACK CORRAL [25], sits in an armchair with headphones on listening to music while eating a bowl of cereal flicking through his mobile, a hot beverage on a side table next to the chair as the other flatmates wander around the flat.

LIZZY [24] with blond frizzy hair and wearing dungarees, stands behind the kitchen bar leaning on the counter and watching the news while ANNETTE [26], dressed in black, sits on a bar stool opposite reading a photographic magazine.

The morning sun radiates through the tall bay windows, spreading its glow across the room.

LIZZY

Is it just me or is it already getting warm in here?

ANNETTE

They're predicting forty degrees today.

LIZZY

We definitely need air com in this place.

ANNETTE

It was supposed to be installed weeks ago.

LIZZY

Maybe someone should speak to the agency.

ANNETTE

That's Jack's domain.

Lizzy circles the bar and walks over to Jack.

LIZZY

Jack.

Jack is looking down at his phone on his lap as Lizzy pulls the headphones off his ear.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Jack! The air-con. When's it getting installed?

Disturbed, he looks up at Lizzy.

JACK CORRAL
Their waiting for parts. Next week hopefully.

Jack places the empty bowl by the cup of tea and notices the time on the clock that hangs on the wall.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
(mumbles)
Shit.

No-one is paying attention to him. He rises from the chair leaving his mobile behind. The news is covering a story about industrial strikes and protests.

LIZZY
(exasperated)
God it's unbearable.

REES [27], in jeans and a sports t-shirt, enters the room passing Jack who is heading in the opposite direction.

JACK CORRAL
(to Lizzy)
Just keep drinking lots of fluids.

REES
Has anyone seen the charger for my phone?

Annette picks up a folding fan that is lying on the bar and offers it to Lizzy who is unimpressed.

REES (CONT'D)
I thought I'd left it around here.

LIZZY
Rees, you spend way too much time on that. The radioactivity will fry your brains.

REES
Oh Jeez. Not that again. We've been over this.

ANNETTE

They use a different frequency.

Rees searches the room for the charger.

REES

Thought I left it in here.

Jack returns to the room with a charger, grabs his phone and plugs it in while Rees frustratingly watches.

REES (CONT'D)

Sure that's mine.

Jack sighs as he takes his cup and bowl to the kitchen area.

JACK CORRAL

You're always losing it Rees.

He opens a drawer in the kitchen and fumbles before retrieving a phone charger and placing it on the bar. Rees reacts in appreciation and collects the charger.

REES

Thanks, man.

Jack acknowledges with resignation as he leaves the room.

LIZZY

(to Rees)

You know the air-con is gonna take another week?

REES

Has he still not got that sorted?

SIMON [26] wafts into the room with an air of confidence, the sunlight glinting on his glasses as he makes for one of the armchairs where he sits to watch the television.

SIMON

(to Lizzy)

Bennets down the road has air fans on offer!

LIZZY

(surprised)

Really?

SIMON

They had a big stock in. I guess with the weather and all.

Jack re-enters and squeezes past Rees to fill a glass of water. Placing the glass down he opens a clear bottle of pills that is nearly empty.

JACK CORRAL
I'll get one on the way back from work.

SIMON
Just one?

JACK CORRAL
Actually I'll get five and strap them to my back. How's that sound?

Rees silently raises an eyebrow and looks at Lizzy with disdain as Jack swallows the medication before taking a drink.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Right I'm heading out.

He places the glass on the bar and begins to head towards the door.

LIZZY
(to Jack)
Your phone.

Jack pivots and crosses the room to retrieve his mobile phone.

JACK CORRAL
Thanks.

LIZZY
Have a good day.

Jack smiles and exits.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. MUSEUM/REAR ENTRANCE - DAY

Jack shows his ID card to security and enters the museum.

MUSEUM GUARD
Morning Jack. That's a hard fixture your team have tonight.

JACK CORRAL
I think they'll be up for it Bill.

MUSEUM GUARD
Care to wager?

JACK CORRAL
(laughs)
I'm not a betting man. You know
that.

Jack continues towards the office where he works. He passes other staff members who he acknowledges as he heads up a flight of stairs to the first floor.

INT. MUSEUM/FIRST FLOOR - DAY

PETER HILL [29], dressed in an office suit, advances towards Jack.

PETER HILL
Jackie boy!

Peter pats him on his upper arm in affection.

PETER HILL (CONT'D)
You missed a good one at the
weekend. The place was jumping!

Jack laughs.

JACK CORRAL
Are you not getting on a bit for
that place?

Peter shrugs his shoulders and smiles.

PETER HILL
C'mon. You're never too old. Age is
just a number for chrissake.

The two men walk along the corridor.

PETER HILL (CONT'D)
You watching the game tonight?

JACK CORRAL
Hoped to.

They reach the doorway of an office.

PETER HILL
Want to meet up at Hardy's? They're
showing it.

JACK CORRAL
Yeah that would be good.

PETER HILL
Cool. About seven. Catch you later.

Peter continues along the corridor as Jack enters the office.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. MUSEUM/JACK'S OFFICE - LATER

Staff administrators sit at their desks in the open-spaced office as Jack types on his keyboard. He stops and reads from the screen before checking the time that indicates mid-day.

He rises from his chair.

JACK CORRAL
Gonna head out.

His colleague sitting at the adjacent desk looks over.

STAFF COLLEAGUE
See you later.

INT. MUSEUM/GROUND FLOOR EXHIBIT AREA - DAY

Jack passes members of the public viewing exhibits. AMY LEE [26] is sitting at a bench drawing on a pad piquing his curiosity to walk over and stand behind, looking at the drawing then at the exhibit.

JACK CORRAL
You've really captured it.

Amy reacts in surprise as she turns to face him.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Sorry. I was just admiring your work.

AMY LEE
I'm not sure about the shading here.

JACK CORRAL
Looks fine to me.

AMY LEE
You draw?

JACK CORRAL

Oh God no! Stick figures are about my limit.

Amy places her sketch to one side as Jack circles round to face her.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

You're here quite often.

AMY LEE

You're not stalking me, are you?

JACK CORRAL

Sorry. No. I work here.

AMY LEE

Ah. Lovely place to spend your days.

JACK CORRAL

And get paid for the pleasure.

He offers a hand which she shakes.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

Jack.

Amy offers a charming smile.

AMY LEE

Amy. Pleased to meet you.

He sits down beside her.

JACK CORRAL

You do this full-time?

She nods affirmatively.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

Nice.

He looks down at the drawing between them.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

I'd buy it.

Amy laughs with amusement.

AMY LEE

My agent would be pleased.

JACK CORRAL
(surprised)
You have an agent?

AMY LEE
She organises my exhibitions.

JACK CORRAL
(impressed)
Wow.

Amy studies the young man in front of her, the corners of her mouth rising.

AMY LEE
How long have you been here?

Jack checks the time on his phone.

JACK CORRAL
Since about half eight this morning.

AMY LEE
(laughs)
No, I mean how long have you worked here?

JACK CORRAL
Five years. Started as a junior and here I am.

AMY LEE
Working with these priceless items.

JACK CORRAL
Ha. They wouldn't let me near them. All thumbs.

The couple momentarily admire each other.

AMY LEE
I was about to grab some lunch. You care to join?

JACK CORRAL
Yeah.

AMY LEE
Cool.

Amy picks up her drawing pad and they rise to depart.

INT. MUSEUM/CANTEEN - DAY

At a balcony that looks over the city the couple sit at a table with their food and drink.

AMY LEE
It's a beautiful view from here.

JACK CORRAL
Would make a nice painting.

Amy chuckles.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
I can see my apartment from here.

AMY LEE
Where?

He points in the direction.

JACK CORRAL
Over there. To the left of the steeple. That block of red brick.

AMY LEE
Oh yeah. I see it. How long have you been there?

JACK CORRAL
Moved in a few years back.

AMY LEE
Popular area.

JACK CORRAL
Yeah. It has a nice community feel to it.

Amy nods.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
And the park over there is handy...for running.

She squints her eyes in the sunlight as she points in the opposite direction.

AMY LEE
I'm over there to the west. Chester Avenue.

JACK CORRAL
I know it well. Barry's Bagels is
just down the road.

AMY LEE
You go to Barry's?

JACK CORRAL
Well I try to control the urge.
Watching my weight.

AMY LEE
I don't think you have much to
worry about there.

There is a moments silence. Jack takes a bite of his
sandwich. A bit of food drops to the table.

JACK CORRAL
(embarrassed)
Can't take me anywhere.

He picks up what he dropped and places it on the plate while
Amy giggles before taking a bite of her sandwich.

AMY LEE
So you live alone?

JACK CORRAL
Wow. Straight to the point.

AMY LEE
Did that sound too direct?

JACK CORRAL
No. No. Just wasn't expecting that.

He raises his cup to his lips in brief silence.

AMY LEE
So do you?

JACK CORRAL
Do I what?

AMY LEE
Live alone?

JACK CORRAL
No. It's a flatshare. Five of us.

AMY LEE
I'm not sure I could share my space
with so many. Prefer my privacy.

JACK CORRAL
 We have our moments but generally
 we get on pretty well.

Her phone buzzes so she retrieves it to read. Jack watches her then rises from his chair.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
 (mime)
 Another coffee?

Amy nods as she reads the message.

INT. MUSEUM/CANTEEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jack returns with two cups to see Amy is still on her phone texting.

AMY LEE TEXT
Having lunch with him.

STEPH TEXT
Get his number! [smiley]

He places the cups on the table.

JACK CORRAL
 Something funny?

AMY LEE
 A friend offering advice.

JACK CORRAL
 Wise words, I hope.

Amy returns the phone into her bag as she chuckles.

AMY LEE
 My own personal therapist.

JACK CORRAL
 That's what friends are for, I
 guess.

There is a moments pause as she takes a sip from her cup.

AMY LEE
 I have a confession to make.

JACK CORRAL
 Oh yeah. Serious?

Amy laughs.

AMY LEE
I was hoping we'd meet.

Jack looks slightly confused as he listens.

INT. FLASHBACK: MUSEUM/STREET/BUS STOP - DAY

Amy is standing at a bus stop opposite the museum where she spots Jack leaving by the main entrance towards her, awkwardly carrying a Christmas tree, wrapped in open-ended cellophane packaging.

AMY LEE (V.O.)
You were carrying a Christmas tree
towards me.

INT. BACK TO PRESENT: MUSEUM/CANTEEN - DAY

She laughs.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
I mean it was such a sight.

JACK CORRAL
I thought you looked familiar!

INT. FLASHBACK: BUS - DAY

The bus is cramped with travellers as Amy walks up the aisle towards the back of the bus followed by Jack behind a couple of other passengers. Holding the upright tree, the bus begins to move as the passengers attempt to maintain their balance.

INT. FLASHBACK: BUS - MOMENTS LATER

As the bus makes its way along the street, the cellophane begins to rise up the tree and branches begin to ping out and hit the seated passengers who begin to grumble.

PASSENGER #1
Really?

Jack suddenly notices and tries to fix the cellophane but the movement of the bus makes him lose his balance and he almost falls into the lap of a passenger.

JACK CORRAL
Sorry.

Amy, watching, stifles a giggle as he tries to compose himself while fighting with the tree.

He looks up to see his stop is approaching and urgently tries to carry the tree to the front of the bus, more branches escaping and slapping into the disgruntled passengers.

Someone rings the bell for the bus to stop as he frantically tries to exit.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

Wait!!

Amy leans over to see him standing on the pavement struggling to get the cellophane back over the tree as the bus pulls away. She smiles with amusement as he disappears into the distance.

EXT. BACK TO PRESENT: MUSEUM/CANTEEN - DAY

AMY LEE

So I've always hoped we'd get a chance like this.

Jack chuckles as he takes a drink from his cup.

JACK CORRAL

Well I'm glad you did.

Amy smiles.

AMY LEE

(prim)

Thank you.

JACK CORRAL

So you wanna meet again?

AMY LEE

I'd like that very much.

Jack retrieves his mobile and shows her his number.

JACK CORRAL

Here. Call me and we can arrange something.

Amy laughs.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lizzy sits in the armchair fanning herself as Jack enters the living room with a boxed air fan.

LIZZY
You got one?

JACK CORRAL
Yeah. Hopefully this will stop the griping.

LIZZY
Thank god. It's like an oven.

Jack begins to unpack the box.

JACK CORRAL
Where is everyone?

LIZZY
Simon is studying. Rees is sleeping
and Annette is in the darkroom.

Jack switches on the air fan and sighs as he enjoys the cool air.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Oh...that's better.

Lizzy rises and walks towards the air fan.

JACK CORRAL
It's the simple pleasures that one
appreciates.

Jack heads to the kitchen area, takes a carton of juice from the fridge and guzzles it eagerly.

LIZZY
How was your day?

JACK CORRAL
Quiet.

He places the carton to one side and leans on the bar.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
I met someone today at the museum.

LIZZY
(surprised)
Really?

JACK CORRAL
Yeah. A girl.

LIZZY
Jack Corral. You Casanova.

JACK CORRAL
She was really nice. An artist.

LIZZY
Ooh. The Bohemian type?

JACK CORRAL
Not sure if that's how I'd describe
her but very pretty.

He takes another drink from the carton.

LIZZY
And?

JACK CORRAL
We went for lunch and just chatted.

LIZZY
Sounds like romance is in the air?

JACK CORRAL
Jeez. Don't get ahead of yourself.
We haven't been on a date yet.

LIZZY
I think you'll find you just have.

JACK CORRAL
(thoughtful)
Hmm. Well don't tell the others.
The last thing I need is them
poking their nose around.

Suddenly there is the sound of voices from the hallway.

ANNETTE (O.C.)
Are you serious?

REES(O.C.)
They should sack them all.

Annette and Rees enter the room.

ANNETTE
This ignoramus seriously suggests
just sacking all the strikers.

REES

There'll be rats on the streets.
You'll see.

Jack returns the carton to the fridge and walks over to the television, grabbing the remote control and switching it on.

ANNETTE

They have every right to strike.
It's them or us fella!

REES

(to Jack)

Check the news. They won't be happy
till the place grinds to a halt.

ANNETTE

The government is screwing us over!

Rees dismisses Annette as he advances towards the electric fan while Jack changes channels till he gets the news.

JACK CORRAL

Here we go.

NEWSCASTER

Across many industries, unions are
saying enough is enough. Inflation
is overtaking wages fivefold and
households are struggling to heat
and feed themselves.

ANNETTE

Outrageous!

REES

You know, the government doesn't
have an endless supply of money to
bail everyone out.

ANNETTE

(to Rees)

Utter nonsense!

Annette stomps out leaving the others transfixed to the TV.

NEWSCASTER

Indications are that interest rates
will go up further, putting
pressure on the cost of living.

LIZZY

Should we be worried?

JACK CORRAL
 Nah. They'll find a compromise
 ...eventually.

REES
 Companies have to make a profit
 otherwise they'd go under.

NEWSCASTER
 Health, transportation, law, refuse
 and communications are some of the
 services likely to be hit in the
 coming days.

Jack turns off the television.

JACK CORRAL
 It's too depressing.

ANNETTE(O.S.)
 Power to the People!

LIZZY
 She really needs to calm down.

Jack rises and walks towards the door.

JACK CORRAL
 I'm going down to Hardy's to watch
 the game tonight.

LIZZY
 You have all the fun.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. HARDY'S BAR - NIGHT

Friday night and the sports bar is bursting with customers
 chatting and laughing as they prepare to watch the sports on
 the television screens plotted around the venue.

As Jack walks through the crowd he sees Peter, standing at
 the bar, waving at him to join.

JACK CORRAL
 (to Peter)
 Sorry I'm a bit late.

PETER HILL
 The usual?

JACK CORRAL
Yeah.

PETER HILL
(to barman)
Soda.

Peter turns to his friend.

PETER HILL (CONT'D)
Still dry?

JACK CORRAL
You know I can't. The medication
doesn't allow it.

Peter accepts the drink from the barman and hands it to his friend.

PETER HILL
The crosses we have to bear.

JACK CORRAL
Doesn't bother me.

Peter raises his glass.

PETER HILL
Cheers.

Jack responds in kind before the crowd cheer in excitement as the match begins.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN

INT. HARDYS BAR

It's half time in the game and, still standing at the bar, Peter places his near empty glass down.

PETER HILL
Back in a mo'.

JACK CORRAL
You want another?

PETER HILL
Cheers.

Peter leaves for the bathroom as Jack orders fresh drinks from the bar.

JACK CORRAL
Same again.

While Jack waits for the drinks, he retrieves the pill case. He looks to see how few are left.

BARMAN #1
Here you go.

JACK CORRAL
Thanks.

Just as he drops a pill into his palm a passing customer accidentally nudges into him causing the tablets to spill onto the crowded floor. Before he can react, people are trampling on them as they move through the crowd.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Shit.

He looks at the pill case to see there are only a handful left, the rest are on the floor, crushed.

INT. HARDY'S BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Peter returns to see his colleague looking uncomfortably resigned.

PETER HILL
You ok? You look like you've seen a ghost.

JACK CORRAL
I'm fine.

Peter notices the fresh pint on the bar.

PETER HILL
Is that for me?

JACK CORRAL
Yeah.

The crowd roar as the game re-starts.

EXT. APARTMENT/STREET - NIGHT

Jack is walking back to the apartment. His phone rings.

JACK CORRAL
Hi.

AMY LEE (O.S.)
I just wanted to say thanks for
lunch.

JACK CORRAL
I didn't bore you then?

Amy laughs.

AMY LEE
If you had, I wouldn't be calling
to ask if you fancied meeting
again.

JACK CORRAL
I'll clear my calendar. Name the
day.

Amy is clearly amused.

AMY LEE
Well you're not hard to get.

JACK CORRAL
Do I sound that desperate?

AMY LEE
Of course not....More like
enthusiastic.

JACK CORRAL
I'll take that.

AMY LEE
I'll text the details.

JACK CORRAL
Cool. See you later.

AMY LEE
Bye.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Simon is alone in the living room reading a book, which has a blank cover, as Jack enters and sits down at one of the vacant armchairs. Tired, he flops his head back and looks up at the ceiling.

SIMON
Long day?

JACK CORRAL
Yeah but I had an accident at the
bar.

He pulls the medication bottle and studies it.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
A guy bumped into me and I spilled
it.

He squints his eyes to see how many are left.

SIMON
People have no sense of personal
space.

JACK CORRAL
It was pretty crammed. I should've
known better.

SIMON
You got enough to keep you going?

JACK CORRAL
For a few days. I'll just need to
get to the clinic at some point for
more.

SIMON
You do know they're striking?

Jack sighs as he remembers. He pulls out his phone and
browses till he finds the information he is looking for.

JACK CORRAL
Seven fuckin days! Seriously!

Simon places the book down on a side table next to his
chair.

SIMON
(calm)
You'll be fine.

JACK CORRAL
(incredulous)
You think?

He rises from his chair with resignation.

SIMON
(to Jack)
You have the aptitude to problem
solve.

JACK CORRAL
(surprised)
Really?

SIMON
Statistically, placebos are just as
effective.

Disbelieving, Jack heads towards the door.

SIMON (CONT'D)
It's all in the mind!

Jack leaves the room with a worried look on his face.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. SKINNERS BAR - NIGHT

Saturday night and Jack enters the dimly lit bar and spots Amy sitting in a corner waving him over.

JACK CORRAL
Hi. You look good.

AMY LEE
Thought I'd make the effort.

Jack sits next to her.

JACK CORRAL
I haven't been here before.

AMY LEE
It's quite new.

A waiter arrives.

JACK CORRAL
A club soda for me. You?

AMY LEE
Vodka lemonade. Thanks.

There is a pause then both are about to speak at the same time. They laugh.

SWIPE

INT. SKINNERS BAR - CONTINUOUS

The waiter returns with drinks and places them on the table as they sit chatting.

AMY LEE
Teetotal?

JACK CORRAL
This? Yeah. Doctor's orders.

AMY LEE
(intrigued)
I'm curious. Tell me.

JACK CORRAL
It might put you off our first date.

She chuckles dismissively.

AMY LEE
Unlikely.

Jack takes a drink.

JACK CORRAL
I was in a car accident when I was four.

AMY LEE
(concerned)
That's terrible.

JACK CORRAL
My parents didn't survive, leaving me to live with relatives.

Amy says nothing but is clearly shocked.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
But they were good to me and I wanted for nothing.

She fixes her eyes on him as he sips his drink.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
(dismissive)
It's just one of these things.

He forces a smile.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Anyway, the upshot was these
tablets.

Jack shows her the pillbox which he shakes.

He chuckles before taking another drink.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Could be worse.

She shakes her head in admiration.

AMY LEE
That takes a lot of strength.

JACK CORRAL
You can't let it define you. Life's
too short.

AMY LEE
Living with two brothers is about
as challenging as it ever got for
me.

JACK CORRAL
Younger or older?

AMY LEE
I was the youngest so I was always
shadowing them. It conditioned me
to stand up for myself.

JACK CORRAL
So there's an edge to you?

AMY LEE
Oh yeah. Scrapes and fights. That
sort of thing.

JACK CORRAL
Sounds like you had your own
character-building regime.

She nods while chuckling.

AMY LEE
The school of knocks?

JACK CORRAL
Exactly.

A band begins to play music.

EXT. SKINNERS BAR/STREET - NIGHT

Jack and Amy are outside the bar.

JACK CORRAL
That was excellent.

AMY LEE
You liked them?

JACK CORRAL
Yes. Very...quirky.

There is an awkward pause.

AMY LEE
My place is nearby.

JACK CORRAL
I'll walk you there, if it's OK.

AMY LEE
Sure.

They start walking.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
I told my friend Steph I was meeting you. She's always trying to give advice on dates which is ironic given she's single too.

JACK CORRAL
I tend not to divulge much to the others...except for Lizzy. She's more reliable.

AMY LEE
What are your flatmates like?

JACK CORRAL
Oh they're a mixed bunch. Simon is very precise. He's doing a maths degree. Annette is more 'out there'. Opinionated. Rees does modelling. Don't ask me what. Bit of a ladies' man or so he thinks...and Lizzy is a bit of a free spirit. Not too complicated.

AMY LEE
Sounds like a real mixed bag.

JACK CORRAL
 Yeah but we've got used to each
 other over the years so it works
 pretty well.

EXT. AMY APARTMENT/STREET - NIGHT

In the quiet street, the couple arrive, arm in arm, at a modern tenement block, the warm evening air drifting past them.

AMY LEE
 Here we are.

JACK CORRAL
 You're right, it wasn't far.

As they advance towards the entrance Amy gives a gentle tug on his arm.

AMY LEE
 Would you like to come up?

JACK CORRAL
 You sure?

AMY LEE
 I wouldn't have asked if I wasn't.

He offers a warm smile as their eyes meet affectionately.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
 C'mon then.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. JACK'S BUILDING/STAIRWELL/LANDING - DAY

The following day (Sunday) and Jack reaches the landing of the tenement as his neighbour, MRS CRENSHAW [69], with her back to him, struggles to get her small dog to move .

MRS CRENSHAW
 Fifi! It's weewee time!

JACK CORRAL
 Morning Mrs Crenshaw.

The old lady turns in surprise.

MRS CRENSHAW
 Jack! How are you?

He smiles as he slips his key into the door lock.

JACK CORRAL
That dog has a mind of its own.

She shakes her head before stiffly bending down to pick up the dog.

MRS CRENSHAW
(to the dog)
You're a naughty dog.

Jack enters the apartment leaving his neighbour to carry the dog down the stairs..

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

The warm, morning sunshine radiates across the living room as Jack enters to find all the others are present.

SIMON
Hey. The wanderer returns!

Making for the kitchen, Jack fills a glass of water and drinks.

LIZZY
Out all night?

REES
That's not like you.

ANNETTE
Maybe he was working overtime.

REES
(to Annette)
On a Saturday?

Jack forces a smile and pulls out his mobile, casually browsing as he leans on the bar.

REES (CONT'D)
Reckon you've been on a date bud.

ANNETTE
(dismissive)
We would've known if he was.

She turns to Jack with a curious look.

ANNETTE (CONT'D)
(to Jack)
You weren't, were you?

He makes his way over to the fan and switches it on.

JACK CORRAL
Are you not hot?

The fan begins to whirr as it spread the cool air around the room.

SIMON
There is a high probability if you
look at the variables.

Lizzy looks over at Simon with incredulity.

LIZZY
Seriously?

Jack crosses the room, between the furniture and retrieves the remote control for the TV and switches it on before navigating through various channels till he finds the news. Standing between the others he watches intently.

JACK CORRAL
Are you guys finished?

NEWSCASTER
...with the government in talks
with unions it is still expected
the go-ahead of strikes across many
services including health,
transportation and environment will
go ahead this week.

Images appear on-screen of picket lines and protests.

SIMON
Seriously the country's falling
apart.

NEWSCASTER
Advice being given by union leaders
is they are in it for the long
haul.

ANNETTE
What's her name?

Jack exposes a look of irritation as he glances at Annette.

ANNETTE (CONT'D)
Jeez, you're touchy today.

Shaking his head in disbelief at the pictures on the TV, he turns it off.

REES

Hey, I was watching that!

Jack throws the control over to him and makes his way out of the room.

ANNETTE

What's eating him?

LIZZY

Maybe less of the third degree.

INT. APARTMENT/JACK'S BEDROOM - DAY

The spacious, tidy bedroom is decorated in neutral colours with ample cupboard space, interspersed with a mix of ageing posters of musicians and planetary science.

Sitting at the edge of the bed, he holds the near empty bottle of pills which he proceeds to spill into the palm of his hand to reveal he has four left. He sighs and pours them back in the bottle, his concern apparent as he places the bottle on the bedside table before laying back on the mattress and closing his eyes.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT/JACK'S BEDROOM - DAY

There is a knock at the door which wakens him.

LIZZY

(softly)

Jack?

The door slowly opens to reveal Lizzy peering around as he brushes his fingers through his hair and slowly rises.

JACK CORRAL

Hey.

Lizzy enters the room almost in a cautionary manner, offering a strained smile.

LIZZY

You OK?

He rubs his face to in an attempt to freshen himself.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

Annette kept badgering everyone but my lips were sealed.

JACK CORRAL
Christ it's none of her business.

Lizzy nods in acknowledgement.

LIZZY
You know how protective she gets.

Jack has a look of resignation as he rises from the bed.

JACK CORRAL
It can be suffocating at times.

Lizzy offers him a hug and holds him tight before pecking him on the cheek and releasing him.

Appreciating her support, he briefly smiles.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
I need to get some air.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

From Jack's bedroom, a long hallway stretches towards the living room door, flanked with doors on either side that lead to the other bedrooms and the bathroom.

Coat hooks, with a couple of jackets, line one wall next to the front door, while opposite stands a door that contains a plaque with the word "Darkroom" engraved.

Jack opens the front door.

JACK CORRAL
(to Lizzy)
Thanks.

She smiles as he leaves the apartment.

SWIPE TO:

INT. HUXLEY STREET/SHOP - DAY

In a local shop, the Asian shopkeeper closes the till as Jack picks up a can of juice from the counter he has just paid for.

JACK CORRAL
Thanks.

EXT. HUXLEY STREET - CONTINUOUS

He exits the shop and begins drinking from the can as he walks along the quiet street, the sun baking down on the pavement. Suddenly his attention is drawn towards the sound of a female voice.

WOMAN FIRE

Help! Help!

Jack runs in the direction of the voice and reaches a side street to see a lady leaning out of a third-floor window holding a small child, with smoke billowing around her. A couple of people stagger out the main door stunned and disorientated as they cough and splutter from inhaling the smoke.

JACK CORRAL

Jesus!

Jack rushes towards the building in the empty street as a couple of passersby arrive from behind.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

Someone call nine nine.

A member of the public begins dialling as Jack positions himself directly under the window and stares up.

WOMAN FIRE

My baby! Help! Oh God!

JACK CORRAL

Give me the baby!

The woman looks down, panic in her eyes as she chokes on the smoke.

WOMAN FIRE

It's too high!

JACK CORRAL

I'll catch it!

By now, Jack is oblivious to other people arriving at the frantic scene with some recording the event on their phones.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

I'll catch it! I promise. Drop the child!

The woman leans as far forward as she can then carefully lowers the child.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
That's it! It's OK. I'll catch.

WOMAN FIRE
Please!

People are shouting for her to release the child.

JACK CORRAL
I'm ready. Do it...Now!

Sirens can be heard in the distance as the woman releases the baby. Everyone watches as the child flails through the air towards Jack who braces himself to catch. Within the briefest of moments, he has the child securely in his arms as he retreats from the building.

WOMAN FIRE
Oh God!

JACK CORRAL
The fire service is coming. You'll be OK.

People begin clapping in support as the fire service arrives at the scene. Officers jump out from the vehicle and race into the building while others bring out the hose pipes as a ladder is directed towards the woman for an officer to begin climbing towards her.

PASSERBYE #1
(to Jack)
You did well.

JACK CORRAL
I'm shaking.

People continue to applaud as the woman is led down the ladder by a fire officer.

PASSERBYE #1
I'm not surprised. You're a hero.

Just then two ambulances appear and a paramedic advances towards Jack who hands the child over.

By now the rescued woman is being shepherded to the back of an ambulance as other residents are being brought out of the building. The woman points to Jack but he is already walking away from the scene, unnoticed by the onlookers.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

As Jack enters the apartment, he can hear an argument behind the closed door of the living room.

ANNETTE (O.S.)
Goddammit Rees that was a whole
film almost wasted!

REES
I said I was sorry. You've saved
most of them.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jack enters the room still holding his can of juice, attracting the attention of the arguing couple as Annette waves a roll of film in the air.

ANNETTE
(to Jack)
Can you believe it? He almost
ruined a whole spool.

Rees, wearing a sports top, calmly stands with his hands deep in the rear pockets of his jeans.

REES
(to Annette)
You invited me into your fuckin'
darkroom. It's all new to me.

Shrugging his shoulders with indifference, Jack turns on the fan before taking a seat as Rees retreats from the argument towards the kitchen.

ANNETTE
In future, don't open the door till
I'm finished. Even a knucklehead
like you should get it!

Rees grimaces at Jack who is observing before he leans back in the armchair and drinks from his can.

REES
(to Annette)
Careful!

Jack looks up at the ceiling in resignation.

JACK CORRAL
Annette...ease up.

The girl grits her teeth as her eyes are directed at Jack, then storms out of the room leaving the two guys together in a solemn silence that is broken by the slamming of a door.

Rees sighs as he crosses the room to take a seat.

REES

Her and that fucking darkroom.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. HEALTH CENTRE/ENTRANCE - DAY

The Monday morning and Jack enters the health clinic. Behind him there is a large crowd of noisy people, who are part of a picket line, holding up placards.

INT. HEALTH CENTRE/RECEPTION - DAY

Jack stands at a counter facing a female receptionist.

HEALTH RECEPTIONIST

Hi.

JACK CORRAL

I need a new prescription for medication.

Jack hands her his pill box.

HEALTH RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry but you'll need to go online. Emergencies only.

JACK CORRAL

This is an emergency.

HEALTH RECEPTIONIST

Is it life threatening?

JACK CORRAL

No, but -

HEALTH RECEPTIONIST

Then it isn't an emergency.

He offers a look of disdain at the receptionist but she is unmoved.

HEALTH RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

If you go online you should get the medication within seven days.

JACK CORRAL
Seven days!

She authoritatively returns the bottle to him which he reluctantly accepts.

HEALTH RECEPTIONIST
Blame the strike.

JACK CORRAL
Madness. Sheer madness!

He turns and walks away.

HEALTH RECEPTIONIST
People need to survive, you know!

EXT. MUSEUM/CANTEEN - DAY

Jack and Amy are sitting opposite each other at a table, having finished their lunch, each drinking a coffee. He faces the interior of the canteen, which she has her back to while around them sit a few museum visitors quietly chatting.

AMY LEE
This is becoming a pleasant habit.

She smiles assuringly then takes a sip of her drink. Jack nods in agreement.

JACK CORRAL
Glad you could make it.

The couple sit in comfortable silence for a moment.

AMY LEE
Did you see that on the local news about the tenement fire? Not far from your place.

He feigns ignorance as he continues drinking.

JACK CORRAL
No.

AMY LEE
(excitable)
Talking about some hero who saved a child.

Jack tries to play it down.

JACK CORRAL
They need some alternative story to
deflect from what's going on.

AMY LEE
The strikes?

He nods in resignation.

JACK CORRAL
The chaos it's causing.

AMY LEE
(impressed)
Pretty amazing all the same.

JACK CORRAL
What?

AMY LEE
Saving that kid.

He realises they are on different wavelengths.

JACK CORRAL
Hmm...it is.

She takes a drink of her coffee.

AMY LEE
Oh, by the way we're having a small
gathering at Kafkas on Wednesday to
celebrate.

He looks up with interest.

JACK CORRAL
Yeah?

Amy looks proudly at him.

AMY LEE
My upcoming exhibition.

JACK CORRAL
(flabbergasted)
That's brilliant!

She reaches a hand out across the table.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Where about?

He takes her hand.

AMY LEE
 (excited)
 Poland.

JACK CORRAL
 Wow!

As he looks into her eyes he catches sight of Annette walking through the canteen glancing briefly at him before exiting the room.

Amy, noticing his reaction, turns to look behind her before returning her gaze at him.

AMY LEE
 You OK?

Jack composes himself and smiles uncomfortably.

JACK CORRAL
 Thought I recognised someone.

AMY LEE
 Who?

She glances behind then back at Jack.

JACK CORRAL
 (dismissive)
 It's nothing. My mistake.

AMY LEE
 It's the way our mind can play tricks.

She sips her coffee.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
 Our brain takes shortcuts to interpret what we see.

He chuckles.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
 It's true!

Jack checks the time on his phone.

JACK CORRAL
 Well this brain is being told I need to get back to work.

He rises from his chair and she follows suit.

AMY LEE
Yeah I probably should be shooting
off too.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. TV STUDIO SET - DAY

Anchors RACHEL HATHAWAY [35] and JIM DEVINE [41] are sitting behind a long desk. A large screen behind displays film footage of street protests.

RACHEL HATHAWAY
..with strikes spreading, opponents
are asking what the government are
doing to resolve the situation.

The film footage cuts to a photo of the fire from the previous day with the woman leaning out of the window and the child falling into Jack's arms whose face is hidden as he rescues the child.

JIM DEVINE
Meanwhile, you may remember
yesterday's story about the heroic
rescue of a young child.

RACHEL HATHAWAY
Calling him The Angel Catcher we
sent Brendan Clements out to find
out more.

EXT. HUXLEY STREET - DAY

News reporter BRENDAN CLEMENTS [37] stands outside the location of the fire, holding a microphone. Behind him, the charred window has been boarded up.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Rachel, I'm standing here in Huxley
Street where onlookers witnessed
the astounding moment a child was
dropped from the third floor into
the arms of an unknown man who has
been described as The Angel
Catcher.

The reporter glances back at the charred window before facing the camera.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
 All the talk now is "who was this
 hero?".

INT. TV STUDIO SET - DAY

RACHEL HATHAWAY
 (to Brendan)
 Are we any closer to identifying
 this hero?

EXT. HUXLEY STREET - DAY

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
 Not as we speak, as he was quick to
 depart the scene, but I'm sure
 there's more to come.

INT. TV STUDIO SET - DAY

RACHEL HATHAWAY
 Thanks Brendan.

Rachel turns to her co-anchor and shakes her head in
 disbelief.

RACHEL HATHAWAY (CONT'D)
 (to Jim Devine)
 Quite something.

JIM DEVINE
 Incredible story.

Rachel turns to the camera.

RACHEL HATHAWAY
 We'll be back in a moment with the
 rest of today's news.

The two news anchors relax. Hathaway shuffles her notes as
 Devine peers towards the staff standing behind the camera.

JIM DEVINE
 Harry! Is Brendan trying to locate
 this guy?

EXT. HUXLEY STREET - DAY

The news reporter strolls over to the crew and hands the
 microphone to an assistant.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Are you ok to wrap up and head back
while I check out some of the
locals?

CAMERA MAN

Sure.

Brendan leaves the crew packing up their equipment and heads
off in the opposite direction.

EXT. HUXLEY STREET/SHOP - DAY

Brendan enters a shop where a shopkeeper sits idly watching
a video play on his mobile phone. The reporter retrieves a
packet of gum and places it on the counter as he pulls out
some coins from his pocket.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Hi. That was some fire yesterday.

The bored shopkeeper continues to watch the video.

SHOPKEEPER AMAD

(disinterested)

Yeah.

The reporter pulls out his phone and begins navigating
before showing the shopkeeper.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

I've got this video -

The shopkeeper raises his head and silently watches whatever
is on the screen. Once it has ended, he looks at the
reporter.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)

Look familiar?

The shopkeeper shrugs his shoulders with indifference as he
watches Brendan retrieve his wallet and place some notes on
the counter protected by his hand.

SHOPKEEPER AMAD

I've seen him around. Gave me some
tickets once for the museum. Think
he may work there.

Brendan pulls his hand back from the money which the
shopkeeper takes.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Thanks.

INT. MUSEUM/GROUND FLOOR ENTRANCE - DAY

In the ground floor of the museum, Jack and Amy hold each other as they kiss before separating, with smiles on their faces.

AMY LEE
Catch up later?

JACK CORRAL
Sure.

She pivots and advances towards the main entrance, glancing back one more time and waving. Jack returns in kind before she leaves the building. He swings round to suddenly catch sight of Annette standing up on the balcony taking a photograph of him.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Annette!

She lowers her camera and stares at him then rushes away into another room.

Jack urgently crosses the exhibition area and runs up the stairs that lead to the balcony, passing visitors unaware of his chase.

Reaching the room she had entered, he looks around but he realises his effort to catch her has been in vain so he retraces his steps back to the balcony only to see Annette exit at the main entrance with her back to him.

Jack looks perplexed as he watches her outside in the street, crossing the road and disappearing into the crowd.

INT. MUSEUM/JACK'S OFFICE - DAY

Entering the open plan office, Jack sits down at his desk, still trying to figure why his flatmate was so elusive.

An office colleague sitting opposite him looks over.

OFFICE STAFF MALE #1
Extended lunch?

Jack ignores the quip as he notices a folded piece of paper lying on his desk. Unfolding it he reads the message.

"Dark ventures approach"

Jack looks over at his colleague sitting at the desk opposite.

JACK CORRAL
Anyone been at my desk while I was
away?

OFFICE STAFF MALE #1
No.

He ponders thoughtfully for a moment before scrunching up the note and throwing it into the waste bin then he leans back in his chair and stares at the blank computer screen.

INT. MUSEUM/REAR ENTRANCE - DAY

Brendan stands afar from the rear entrance watching people leave the building.

INT. MUSEUM/JACK'S OFFICE - DAY

Staff are packing up for the end of the day.

OFFICE STAFF MALE #1
I'm off. See you tomorrow.

JACK CORRAL
Night Gary.

Jack watches as employees begin to file out of the office before briefly looking down at the waste bin. He rises from his chair, placing a satchel over his shoulder, and follows the others.

EXT. MUSEUM/REAR ENTRANCE - DAY

As Jack enters the street, Brendan catches sight of him then follows from a safe distance.

INT. BUS - DAY

In the crowded bus, the reporter sits at the rear watching Jack who looks out the window watching the world pass by.

EXT. APARTMENT/STREET - DAY

Jack enters the main entrance of the apartment block, watched by Brendan who rushes across the road and stops the door from closing with his foot. He waits for a moment before opening the door and entering, spotting Jack making his way up the stairway. Quietly, he closes the door before reaching the foot of the stairway to see Jack climbing the stairs. He waits to see what floor Jack stops at before following.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dropping his satchel in the hallway, Jack enters the living room to find Lizzy and Rees sitting silently facing each other. They turn their attention to Jack as he crosses the room to turn on the fan before heading for the kitchen, glancing at the pair.

JACK CORRAL
God that air-con is needed.

Jack reaches into the fridge and retrieves a carton which he drinks from, all the while the others remain silent.

He puts down the carton and studies the others.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
You're quiet.

Rees and Lizzy look at each other with an air of apprehension.

LIZZY
(to Jack)
Annette knows about the girl.

Jack grits his teeth.

JACK CORRAL
Where is she?

REES
In the darkroom.

Instantly, Jack heads out the room, a steely determination in his eyes.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

Jack bangs once on the door of the darkroom.

JACK CORRAL
Annette!

Silence fills the thick air as he stares at the door before he places an ear against it to hear if there is any movement inside. Nothing. He bangs the door again.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
I know you're in there!

The door handle begins to turn then the door slowly opens to reveal Annette.

Jack, angry, retreats as she steps out into the hallway, protectively closing the door behind and a stoic look on her face.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
What was that all about today?

ANNETTE
You lied to me.

She pushes past Jack and enters the living room, closely followed by him.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Annette determinedly crosses to the centre of the room, Rees and Lizzy apprehensively watching as Jack follows in behind, exasperated.

JACK CORRAL
You have a bloody nerve!

Lizzy tries to interject.

LIZZY
Jack -

He swiftly raises a hand to stop her saying any more.

JACK CORRAL
When did you become my keeper?

Annette takes an aggressive step forward.

ANNETTE
Since you started taking that medication!

Lizzy and Rees look startled as Jack, surprised, steps back and takes a deep breath.

JACK CORRAL
Oh really?

He turns to Lizzy and Rees who are dumbfounded. Rees shakes his head in silence as he raises his hands with his palms open in defence.

LIZZY
(apologetic)
She didn't mean it like that.

Jack's eyes are open wide, anger running through his veins as he turns to Annette who remains unmoved.

JACK CORRAL
Oh I think she does.

ANNETTE
(cold)
In your condition you should know
better.

Jack twists his mouth in frustration as he stomps out the room.

JACK CORRAL
Maybe it's time I moved on.

INT. APARTMENT/JACK'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Carrying his satchel, he enters his bedroom, quietly closing the door and advancing to the bed where he sits down, dropping the satchel at his feet.

As if in defeat, his head drops into his hands before he runs his fingers through his hair. For a moment, he remains in the same position then jolts upright, dispelling the mood of defeat that was swallowing him up.

He reaches into the satchel and grabs the medication bottle, emptying the contents into the palm of his hand. Two tablets left. In disgust, he throws them across the room.

Just then there is a gentle knock at the door. Before he has time to respond, Rees opens the door and steps in.

REES
She was out of order man.

He advances confidently towards Jack, his chest puffed out.

REES (CONT'D)
I mean you have every right at
picking up a chick. I'm with you on
that.

Jack stares disbelievingly up at his flatmate.

JACK CORRAL
Shut the fuck up Rees.

Rees shrugs off Jack's response.

REES
C'mon, the bitch is obviously
jealous.

Jack rises determinedly to his feet and pushes Rees on the shoulder.

REES (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm on your side man!

Just then the doorbell rings. The room falls into silence with Rees looking questionable before Jack passes him and heads for the main door closely followed by Rees.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

Jack advances to the main door with Rees a few steps behind, as Lizzy and Annette approach from the living room. Jack stares hard at Annette who remains light-lipped.

He opens the door just enough to see Brendan Clements facing him.

INT. APARTMENT/ENTRANCE - DAY

Brendan, smiling, stands at the apartment doorway facing Jack but glancing behind the occupant. All he can see is a cupboard door through the gap.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Sorry to bother you. My name is
Brian Clements.

He offers a business card to Jack who accepts it and studies.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
I'm with RTV.

JACK CORRAL
I'm busy.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
It's about the fire.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

Jack glances to his side at Lizzy and Annette who both appear apprehensive.

Brendan notices this side glance before he shows Jack the video on his mobile.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
You're a bit of a hero....mister...

Annette urgently waves her hand to suggest Jack should end the conversation.

JACK CORRAL
(hesitant)
I...really need to go.

Brendan tries to peer into the hallway but Jack turns and blocks his movement.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Sorry...you have company?

Jack, uncomfortable, faces Brendan.

JACK CORRAL
It's not a good time.

Brendan can sense the occupant is about to end the conversation.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Look, there's every chance you're gonna have a line of reporters knocking on your door. You really want that?

Jack reads the business card again.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
A quick interview. That's all I ask. What you did was amazing.

JACK CORRAL
(resigned)
Not here.

The reporter acquiesces as he acknowledges with a raised hand.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
How about a quiet spot? The Bandura. We can grab a coffee. Tomorrow. Twelve.

Jack glances to Lizzy who nods while Annette protests in silence. He looks back at the reporter and sighs.

JACK CORRAL
Fine. Tomorrow.

Brendan smiles with relief and he takes a step back.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Excellent. It'll be fine. Honestly.

Jack remains unconvinced as he edges the door forward to close it.

JACK CORRAL

Bye.

The door closes and the four occupants stand in silence.

INT. APARTMENT/ENTRANCE - DAY

Brendan stares at the door, a look of perplexity on his face. He pivots to walk away but turns back for one more hesitant glance before heading down the stairs.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

Jack's flatmates are surprised and confused as he defensively leans back against the door.

REES

What was that about man?

LIZZY

Fire? Hero?

A bedroom door opens for Simon to appear, wiping his glasses before putting them on.

ANNETTE

(to Simon)

Did you hear all that?

He nods affirmatively. Lizzy becomes animated.

LIZZY

(excited)

A hero!

She turns to head into the living room.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

You've gotta tell us more!

Annette, stiff faced, follows Lizzy ahead of Simon as Rees brings up the rear, smiling.

REES

(to Jack)

Wow, man.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The five occupants are spread around the room. Rees and Lizzy are seated while Annette sits at the kitchen bar with Simon leaning against the wall close to the doorway. Jack stands behind Rees, his hands pressed against the back of his chair as he looks quizzical at the others.

JACK CORRAL
It's no big deal.

LIZZY
(ecstatic)
That is amazing!

ANNETTE
(stoic)
Just do the interview tomorrow but
no more reporters here!

SIMON
Settle Annette. The guy's not
interested in us. Jack can meet
him. Do the story and move on.

Rees turns to look up at Jack, grinning.

REES
Think of the exposure man. Babes
will be lining up.

ANNETTE
Shut up Rees for Chrissake!

Rees stares at Annette and gives her the finger as Jack rises, composing himself.

JACK CORRAL
I just don't need any fifteen
minutes of fame crap.

SIMON
(thoughtful)
It'll pass. Before you know it
people will have forgotten all
about it.

Simon turns to leave the room.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Their attention span is short-
lived.

Rees chuckles as he rises from his chair. He turns to Jack and high fives him but Jack doesn't respond.

REES

Chill, man. Wish it had been me.

Swivelling to face Annette, Rees imitates firing invisible pistols at her but she remains stiff-faced as he exits the room, leaving it in awkward silence.

LIZZY

Well that was exciting!

Jack looks over to Annette.

JACK CORRAL

Did you leave that note on my desk?

Annette clenches her jaw while Lizzy turns to her in confusion.

ANNETTE

What note?

Jack, clearly still angry about their earlier confrontation, digests her response as he slightly nods his head.

JACK CORRAL

Dark ventures approach?

Lizzy glances at Annette who raises her hands in defence.

ANNETTE

That is nothing to do with me!

REES

Weird.

Jack feels a bead of sweat trickle down his temple. He wipes it away.

JACK CORRAL

It's really getting insufferable.

SIMON

I did suggest more that the one fan.

Jack walks past Simon towards the door.

JACK CORRAL

(to Simon)

We really are on different planets.

Jack exits the room. Lizzy glances at Simon with a shake of her head.

SIMON

What?

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. THE BANDURA CAFE - DAY

Tuesday and the bright, Americana-themed cafe is moderately occupied with staff busy serving tables, the sound of espressos being prepared, filtering through the myriad of conversations plotted around the open space.

In a quiet spot, Brendan sits at a table drinking his coffee, an empty plate layered with crumbs in front of him. He places his cup down as he spots Jack advancing.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Thanks for coming.

Jack shows no emotion as he takes a seat opposite as a young male waiter approaches.

JACK CORRAL

(to waiter)

Americano please.

The waiter leaves as Brendan takes another sip of his drink.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Your rescue made quite a splash.
It's all over social media.

Jack remains calm as he leans forward on to the table.

JACK CORRAL

Junk news for the masses.

The reporter smiles.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Maybe, but it's a feelgood story.
People need some inspiration from
the real world.

The waiter returns with Jack's order, accepting the payment before leaving.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
 A quick interview. Something about
 what went through your head at the
 time -

Jack cuts him off.

JACK CORRAL
 Look, I don't really need that kind
 of attention. The kid and his
 mother are safe. Leave it at that.

He empties a sachet of sugar into his cup and begins to stir. The two sit in silence as Brendan studies his opposite number.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
 I don't even know your name.

The reluctant hero looks at his counterpart as he gently places the teaspoon down.

JACK CORRAL
 Jack.

Brendan leans back, glancing around the cafe.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
 I get it Jack but what you did
 really touched our audience. Valour
 is a rare thing these days.

Jack relaxes and takes a drink from his cup while the reporter watches. He ponders on what he is about to say.

JACK CORRAL
 My family had the experience of
 dealing with the press once
 before...many years ago. It wasn't
 pleasant. So, you could say my
 faith in your type really isn't...

With a serious look, he clenches his fist.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
 ...strong.

The reporter digests these words as he lifts his cup to his lips. They say nothing for a moment.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
 Nice area you live in.

JACK CORRAL
Yeah, we've had it a few years now.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
We?

Jack nods his head in affirmation holding the cup in front of his face as he stares at the journalist. Brendan sighs.

JACK CORRAL
Flatshare.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
They weren't too keen on my presence either?

JACK CORRAL
We seem to be on the same page.

Brendan places the cup back down.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
It all just seems a bit...paranoid.

Jack remains stiffly unresponsive.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
Like I'm asking for you to reveal your inner secrets.

Jack focuses on his drink, remaining unresponsive.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
I mean we could have had it over and done by now.

JACK CORRAL
I think we're in a cul-de-sac of opinion Mr Clements. The only way out is to agree to disagree.

Clements can see he is getting nowhere.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Well, I guess we're done here.

He rises from his chair.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
Nice meeting you, Jack. Pity I couldn't persuade you. Could've done a world of good.

JACK CORRAL
There's a kid that might think I've
already done that.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Touché.

Brendan begins to move away from the table.

JACK CORRAL
So I won't hear from you again?

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Unless you save another life.

As Brendan departs, Jack relaxes and drinks the rest of his coffee. Looking around the cafe, he suddenly spots an older man watching him from the far end in a dimly lit corner.

With wavy, silver hair and wearing a dark pin-striped suit, KP [53] remains fixed on Jack.

Jack looking around to confirm the man was maybe watching someone else, he realises it is himself under surveillance and he rises before advancing towards the toilet which leads him towards the stranger. As he approaches, the man's eyes follow him.

With an emotionless look on his face, KP shuffles across and pats the seat for Jack to join him who glances around the unoccupied area and takes a seat next to the man, facing the emptying cafe where activity is slowly dissipating.

The stranger's eyes remain fixed ahead, his hands resting on his lap.

KP
(soft, educated voice)
Dark ventures approach.

Jack instantly turns to face KP as he recognises the significance of the phrase.

KP (CONT'D)
Keep looking ahead.

Instantly, he follows the instruction, watching the occupants go about their business.

KP (CONT'D)
The girl is in danger.

Jack, looking downwards, edges his head to one side.

JACK CORRAL
(whisper)
Who?

KP remains stiff and upright.

KP
(whisper)
Amy.

Stunned, he raises his head to see a waiter wiping a table and removing crockery.

JACK CORRAL
(whisper)
Who the hell are you?

KP
My name is KP...government
operative.

Jack places a hand over his mouth to muffle his reaction.

JACK CORRAL
(whisper)
You're shitting me.

KP
I'm serious.

JACK CORRAL
She's just an artist. What's she
got to do with the government?

KP
(whisper)
She's undercover.

Jack takes a deep gulp of air.

JACK CORRAL
(whisper)
Jesus.

KP
(whisper)
What she does supports our
security...including yours.

The younger man doesn't know where to look as he shakes his head with incredulity.

JACK CORRAL
(whisper)
Mine? I'm just an ordinary guy.
What's this got to do with me?

KP
There are forces out there bent on
creating havoc. We are all
susceptible to them.

JACK CORRAL
How is she involved?

KP
Her role brings parity that weakens
their influence.

JACK CORRAL
This is madness.

KP
(whisper)
No, this is very real but, unknown
to her, she may have been
compromised. We believe an agent by
the name of Gerrat Tensh has been
sent to eliminate her. Project
Reach has been established to
protect both her and us all, before
it is too late.

Jack turns and stares at KP.

KP (CONT'D)
We are all in danger.

JACK CORRAL
(whisper)
Why the hell are you telling me
this?

KP
(whisper)
This agent won't know of your
existence. When the time comes I'll
contact you to take her to your
place where she will be safe. We
can take care of the rest.

Jack retrieves his mobile phone but KP reaches forward.

KP (CONT'D)
(whisper)
What are you doing?

JACK CORRAL
I need to call Amy.

The agent sternly shakes his head.

KP
She mustn't know of this. Her
reaction could make things worse.

KP rises from the seat and circles around the table as Jack looks up at him.

KP (CONT'D)
Only I know of your existence. Can
you do this?

Jack nervously nods in agreement as he watches KP slowly walk away, following another customer towards the front door and out into the street.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

EXT. MUSEUM/REAR ENTRANCE - DAY

Jack is nervously pacing back and forth as Peter Hill steps out into the street.

PETER HILL
Hey bud. What's up?

Instantly, he can see the frantic look in his colleague's face.

JACK CORRAL
(urgent)
I need to take some time off. Can
you sort it? Say I'm ill or
something.

Peter places a comforting hand on his shoulder.

PETER HILL
Of course. Christ you look like
shit.

Jack rubs his chin in thought, his mind clearly elsewhere.

Retaining his composure, he appreciatively slaps the upper arm of Peter.

JACK CORRAL
I've gotta go.

Peter curiously watches Jack depart.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. MUSEUM/GROUND FLOOR EXHIBIT AREA - DAY

Brendan enters the busy museum speaking to Rachel Hathaway on his mobile.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

(softly)

...something isn't right...without
his full name I can't
progress...it'll get me access to
other records...see you later.

He casually strolls to the staircase that leads towards the staff offices before climbing upwards.

INT. MUSEUM/TOP OF STAIRS - DAY

At the top, large glass doors, to the left, lead to the staff area while onwards circles around the balcony.

Through the doors he can see a wide, straight corridor flanked on either side by glass pane offices.

He turns and leans on the banister watching the melee of visitors criss-crossing the ground floor.

Patiently he waits, turning his head to one side and looking out of the corner of his eye for any sign of movement behind.

The moment arrives when a member of staff opens the door to exit before making their way along the balcony. As the door slowly closes, the reporter dashes over and slips through then proceeds to advance through the corridor.

INT. MUSEUM/OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

Passing doors on either side, he reads the door plaques that contain the names of the staff.

As he approaches a door he hears a voice behind.

OFFICE STAFF FEMALE #2 (O.S.)

Can I help you?

He spots the plaque on the door with the name he is looking for: Jack Carrol.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Jack asked me over to see him.

The woman studies him with a serious look on her face.

OFFICE STAFF FEMALE #2
Where's your ID?

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
I'm just a friend.

OFFICE STAFF FEMALE #2
Then you shouldn't be here.

Brendan begins to manoeuvre around the woman who's eyes remain fixed on him.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
I'll just...wait outside...call
him.

EXT. TV STUDIO/RACHEL HATHAWAY OFFICE - DAY

Sitting behind her desk, Rachel Hathaway looks up to see Brendan entering her office as she holds a phone to her ear.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Got it.

She waves him in.

RACHEL HATHAWAY
Ok...yes...tomorrow...bye.

She returns the phone to the cradle as the reporter sits down in the chair opposite.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Jack Corral is his name.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. TV STUDIO/RACHEL HATHAWAY OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Having listened to what Clements has to say, Rachel leans back in her exec chair.

RACHEL HATHAWAY

If he doesn't want to speak, just move on.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Oh I've moved on, I can assure you, but curiosity just got the better of me.

He shuffles in the chair to get comfortable.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)

I just had a feeling not everything was at it appeared.

Brendan pulls out a folded document from inside his jacket and places it on the desk. Rachel studies it.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)

Got these census records.

He runs a finger down the first and points at an entry then shows the next document and does the same.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)

He's the only one registered to be there, yet he says they've been living there for years.

RACHEL HATHAWAY

His flatmates?

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

Yeah.

Self-congratulatory, the reporter leans back and faces his colleague who continues to study the documents.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)

Well?

RACHEL HATHAWAY

(unconvinced)

I don't know. Seems like much ado about nothing.

She pushes the documents towards the reporter.

RACHEL HATHAWAY (CONT'D)

You think he's trafficking?

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

No!

RACHEL HATHAWAY

Then what?!

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

He lied to me! Why would he lie over such a small thing? When I was at his flat, something just didn't seem right. Like he was under duress or being coerced.

RACHEL HATHAWAY

For chrissakes Brendan. You need a holiday. You're acting like he's some criminal when it's the opposite.

The news anchor pulls leans across the desk and lifts a manilla folder which she drops in front of the reporter.

RACHEL HATHAWAY (CONT'D)

You have another assignment. Don't waste your time on dead ends. There's more important things to be getting on with.

Brendan shows his frustration as he folds the documents and places them back in his jacket before grabbing the folder and rising from the chair.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

I thought you, of all people, would understand.

He walks towards the door.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)

But I guess not.

RACHEL HATHAWAY

Brendan...

He exits the office.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Arriving from the museum, Jack enters the living room appearing flustered.

Lizzy is sitting at the kitchen bar reading a psychology magazine but turns to watch her flatmate as he turns on the air fan then takes a seat and stares at the blank television.

He sighs.

LIZZY
You look so stressed.

Jack appears distracted elsewhere.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
That's when meditation can work wonders.

A worried look on his face, he turns to face her.

JACK CORRAL
It's like I'm blindfolded on a roller coaster and not knowing what's ahead.

Lizzy swivels round on the high stool and offers him her full attention.

LIZZY
You wanna talk? Client confidentiality and all that.

She smiles disarmingly, inducing him to relax.

JACK CORRAL
Just the craziest thing happened today.

Lizzy walks over and sits in the chair opposite him.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Where do I begin?

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lizzy takes a deep breath.

LIZZY
First thing. Do you love her?

Jack nods.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
OK. So, you're safer in numbers here.

(MORE)

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Despite recent disagreements there
are three big guys, a crazy
woman...and me.

She chuckles.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
No-one is gonna get in here. This
place is like Alcatraz.

The tension in Jack slowly eases as he smiles
appreciatively.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
You and me keep tight-lipped and
when the call comes you get her
right over here and we hunker down
till it's blown over.

Lizzy gets out of her chair and walks over before bending
down to give him a reassuring hug.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
You'll be fine and so will she.

She steps back, looking for affirmation which he
acknowledges.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
(upbeat)
Good. Now shake yourself down and
pick yourself up!

INT. APARTMENT/BATHROOM - DAY

The following morning (Tuesday) and Jack runs the tap with
cold water splashing it over his face. The apartment is
still with the distant sound of traffic reaches through the
open door of the bathroom that exposing the dim hallway
behind.

He faces himself in the mirror and stares long at his
reflection.

Bending down, he pours more water over his face then glances
back at the mirror.

He jolts back in brief horror at the sight of a shadowy,
shimmering figure of a suited man standing in the hallway
which has transformed into darkness. Instantly he swivels to
face an empty hallway basked in sunlight.

Standing motionless, his hands clutch the sink behind as water trickles down his skin, a look of fear gripping his face.

He pivots to face the mirror, his heart pulsating as he stares at the reflection of the empty hallway that has returned to its original state. Grabbing a towel from the handrail, he dries his face and stares again at the mirror.

All seems normal again.

Suddenly he hears the sound of shuffling movement from the darkroom next door as he slowly returns the towel to the handrail, continuing to listen to the movements followed by the muffled sound of voices.

ANNETTE (O.S.)
(He is) becoming erratic
(in his) behaviour.

REES (O.S.)
(Could it) affect us?

GERRAT TENSH (O.S.)
(There is a) danger he
(impacts) the objective.

SIMON (O.S.)
(We need to) manage (the)
configurables (with a)
degree of skill (or this
could) unravel fast.

Jack stares at the wall from where the voices are coming from as the apartment falls into silence.

Abruptly, he rushes out into the hallway.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

He thuds once on the door of the darkroom.

JACK CORRAL
Hey! I hear you!

Jack retreats as the door begins to edge open and he watches Rees, Simon then Annette slip between the gap and into the hallway.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Who else is there?

The three flatmates show no emotion as Annette proceeds to close the door but Jack grabs the edge of it to stop her.

ANNETTE

(abrupt)

Careful! I've got film developing.

She fights against his resistance till he releases the door which slams shut. Jack suspiciously eyes each of them as Lizzy appears from her bedroom in a confused state.

JACK CORRAL

You hiding someone?

REES

Get real bruv. You're acting weird.

ANNETTE

What difference does it make?
You've made it clear you plan to
leave.

SIMON

(to Jack)

I don't understand the logic behind
that.

JACK CORRAL

Whether I leave or stay, it's my
decision. What right have any of
you got to be telling me what to
do? In a matter of days, I'm being
spied on and plotted against.

He turns to Rees.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)

And you say get real!

REES

Chill man. There's no conspiracy
going on. Your head's working
overtime.

SIMON

We're just concerned for you.

JACK CORRAL

You're not my fuckin' parents!

ANNETTE

But we're all you've got!

Lizzy steps in to try and calm the situation.

LIZZY

Annette.

ANNETTE

(to Lizzy)

No! Through all these years, we've been the ones to fall back on. Carrying the can. Picking him up. Now we're the bad guys?!

LIZZY

Can everyone just de-stress?

SIMON

She's right.

LIZZY

Jack isn't leaving. He's been under a lot of pressure and we've talked it out. So, can we all just take a step back and calm down?

The group stand silently gathering their thoughts.

INT. TV STUDIO/MAIN OFFICE - DAY

The expansive editorial office is filled with staff working at their partitioned desks. Large screens silently transmit the various channel programmes under translucent lights.

Brendan manoeuvres his mouse across a pad as he studies information on his screen.

In front of him is displayed a news article detailing a fatal car crash.

"CHILD LOSES PARENTS IN FATAL CAR CRASH"

A black and white photograph of a crumpled car with a thick tree branch piercing the windscreen prominently fills the page.

Brendan intently reads the article through the din of surrounding chatter.

RACHEL HATHAWAY (O.C.)

You have a job to do.

Brendan swivels round to see Rachel standing behind him.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS

I'm just going.

He notices her attention is drawn to the news article and with a slight of hand he closes the page.

RACHEL HATHAWAY

Good.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

In the blazing heat of the morning sun, Jack sits on a bench under the shade of a large tree. Passersby, dressed for the weather, stroll through the park while children play with a frisbee on the dry, patched grass.

He spots Amy walking towards him carrying a handbag over her shoulder, smiling. Before waving at her, he cautiously scans the area.

Casually, she approaches and sits down next to him, briefly raising an arm around him before gently pecking his cheek.

AMY LEE

Not been here for a while.

Jack nervously glances around again then forces a smile.

JACK CORRAL

You could easily forget you're in the city.

She retrieves two bottles of water from her bag and hands one over to him.

AMY LEE

Here.

Twisting off the top, she proceeds to drink from the bottle then sighs appreciatively.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)

Can't stay too long. Meeting my agent about the exhibition. Tie up loose ends.

Jack nods.

JACK CORRAL

I take it you'll be in safe company while you're over there?

Amy looks quizzical at him then chuckles.

AMY LEE

It's Poland.

JACK CORRAL
(defensive)
I know...What'll you do while
you're there?

AMY LEE
To be honest it'll be a bit of
schmoozing with the clientele.
Drinks and canapés. Needs must
though.

JACK CORRAL
Isn't that what your agent is for?

AMY LEE
Well...yes...but I have to show
face.

The couple sit in silence watching the world go by.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
You seem...unsure.

Jack attempts to lighten the mood.

JACK CORRAL
Sorry. I didn't mean to be so
inquisitive. I was just curious.

She leans forward and kisses him on the lips.

AMY LEE
Anyway it's only for a couple of
days.

Jack unscrews the top off his bottle and takes a drink.

JACK CORRAL
Hopefully things will have cooled
by the time you get back.

AMY LEE
Hmm. I'm not sure. The forecast is
it will get hotter before there is
any respite.

JACK CORRAL
(sardonic)
Great!

Amy chuckles then wraps her arms around him and pecks him on
the cheek.

AMY LEE
You are so serious today. Is something wrong?

JACK CORRAL
If we're to make a thing of this, you want total honesty, don't you?

AMY LEE
Of course. I'd want it no other way.

JACK CORRAL
There's been a bit of tension in the flat.

AMY LEE
What about?

JACK CORRAL
Annette's been acting weird. She was taking photos of us at the museum.

AMY LEE
What?

JACK CORRAL
Yeah...strange.

AMY LEE
Did she say why?

He takes a drink from the bottle as he shakes his head.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
That is fuckin weird.

JACK CORRAL
And there's that story about the Angel Catcher.

He leans in closer to her.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
That was me.

Amy reacts in complete shock.

AMY LEE
Get out of it! Seriously?

Jack winces almost in embarrassment.

JACK CORRAL
I did what anyone would have done.

AMY LEE
Ok, so next you're gonna tell me
you have your own cape and tights!

She laughs.

JACK CORRAL
No...but I had this reporter
wanting to interview me, but I just
don't need that hassle.

AMY LEE
What did you do?

JACK CORRAL
I told him I wan't interested. He
wasn't too pleased. Tough shit.

AMY LEE
Damn right. No-one owns you.

JACK CORRAL
He got the message.

AMY LEE
Sounds like all's well that ends
well. I don't think you have
anything to worry about. As for
Annette? I think you have a secret
admirer. Let it slide. She just
better not do it again...there's
another side of me that can get
angry.

Jack lets out a stifled laugh.

JACK CORRAL
You gonna protect me?

AMY LEE
I'm a killer with a paint brush.

EXT. COUNCIL BUILDING - DAY

Brendan is standing in the vicinity of a picket line in front of the municipal building. Bin bags are stacked in the nearby streets while the sound of honking horns from the protesters pierces the air.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
...This is Brendan Clements for
RTV.

The cameraman gives a thumbs up and the reporter advances,
handing the microphone to the sound recordist.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
Job done.

The reporter watches his colleagues check their equipment
then glances at his mobile phone.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
We've got a couple of hours before
the next one.

CAMERAMAN
We'll just hang around.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
OK. I'll be back soon.

The reporter starts to head off.

CAMERAMAN
Don't be late!

Brendan acknowledges with a wave of his hand then flags down
a taxi cab. The two men watch as the cab joins the moving
traffic and leaves the vicinity.

SWIPE TO:

INT. APARTMENT/ENTRANCE - DAY

Brendan reaches the top of the staircase for Jack's
apartment and approaches the door. Nothing stirs as he bends
down and flips open the letterbox. A deathly silence sweeps
through the hallway along with a warm breeze that drifts
from an open window inside.

He listens for any sound of life but it is apparent that the
place is empty.

MRS CRENSHAW (O.C.)
What are you doing?

Taken by surprise, the reporter stands up and turns to the
neighbour who is holding her dog.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
I was looking for Jack but he's not
in.

The old lady looks at him with mild suspicion.

MRS CRENSHAW
He'll probably be at work.

She gently places the dog down, keeping a grip of the lead.
The dog runs towards him and sniffs his trouser leg.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Yeah. None of his flatmates seem to
be around.

Mrs Crenshaw stares quizzically at the reporter.

MRS CRENSHAW
Flatmates?

She pulls the lead and the dog saunters back to her feet.

MRS CRENSHAW (CONT'D)
He lives alone.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

She checks her watch then stuffs the bottle of water into
her bag.

AMY LEE
Right...I better go.

She rises from the bench.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
Up, up and away superman!

Amy offers one last kiss then departs.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
See you at Kafka's. Seven.
Remember.

Jack watches her depart then glances nervously around.

EXT. APARTMENT/STREET - NIGHT

In the quiet street, Jack slowly walks towards his
apartment, his mind elsewhere, when suddenly Brendan appears
from behind.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Jack!

He turns to see the reporter approaching, his face changing
to exasperation.

JACK CORRAL
Oh, c'mon.

Instantly, he increases the pace to get away from the reporter.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Wait. Just a quick word.

The reporter rushes to catch up with him.

JACK CORRAL
I thought we were done.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
We are...it's about your flatmates.

Jack stops in his tracks to face the reporter.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
You haven't been honest with me.

JACK CORRAL
(frustrated)
This is harassment.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
What are you hiding?

JACK CORRAL
Self-preservation from people like you.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Look, you told me you'd been sharing the place but there's no record of anyone else.

He leans in towards his opposite.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS (CONT'D)
Why lie over such a minor point?

Jack is clearly irritated as the reporter steps back.

JACK CORRAL
What fuckin' business is it of yours? My life belongs to me!

He aggressively pokes the reporter in the chest.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Does that sink in?

Brendan defensively steps back in shock.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
I'm sorry. I just thought...was
someone forcing you...

JACK CORRAL
The only one doing any forcing is
you!

Jack begins to walk away.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Just go...for chrissake.

The reporter watches him walk away.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - NIGHT

In the darkness of the hallway, Jack closes the front door
of the apartment and leans back, exhausted.

LIZZY (O.C.)
Is that you Jack?

He remains still, reluctant to respond.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

He enters the living room to find it also in darkness, a
breeze wafting from the open window. Ahead, he can make out
an unfamiliar male figure sitting in an armchair. There is
the sound of a low sigh then the blink of red eyes. He
switches on the light. He sees Lizzy sitting in a lotus
position on the armchair with her eyes closed. She instantly
opens them.

JACK CORRAL
(curious)
Lizzy?

LIZZY
Thanks. I was meditating.

Jack hesitates before crossing towards the kitchen.

JACK CORRAL
I need a drink.

He retrieves a beer from the fridge. The anger still running through his veins, he opens the can and takes a long drink.

His flatmate leaves the armchair and walks towards the door. Opening it, she calls through.

LIZZY
(loud)
Can you all get through here?

Jack begins to fill his cup with the water.

JACK CORRAL
What're you doing?

Lizzy returns to her armchair.

LIZZY
We need a reset.

He holds the can to his mouth.

JACK CORRAL
Do we have to?

Just then, the three other flatmates file into the room. Rees and Simon occupy the vacant chairs while Annette advances to the kitchen bar and positions herself on a bar stool.

ANNETTE
I was out of order. I'm sorry.

Jack acknowledges her apology then takes a sip from the cup.

REES
Me too, bud. I blame the heat.

Placing his cup down, he grabs a bread stick from a bowl and quietly crunches on it.

LIZZY
Maybe things just got a bit testy earlier. We've had a long chat while you were out and accept you've been put under undue pressure.

SIMON
Since the rescue.

Jack takes another bite of the bread stick.

JACK CORRAL
(to Annette)
No more photographs?

ANNETTE
Correct.

LIZZY
We each deserve some solitude.

Rees gets up out of his chair and walks towards the door. He chuckles.

REES
We'll soon have the air-con.
That'll ease things.

Simon follows suit.

SIMON
He's kind of right even if he can
be a jerk.

REES (O.S.)
I heard that!

Annette watches Jack, whose attention is drawn to her.

ANNETTE
Are we cool?

He nods in agreement.

She lifts herself off the stool and walks towards the door, leaving Jack and Lizzy alone in the room. They sit silently for a moment.

LIZZY
You do need to tell them about this
'situation' with Amy. We need to be
as one on this.

JACK CORRAL
I know.

LIZZY
You having second thoughts?

JACK CORRAL
No...I tried to be honest with her
today but she said nothing about
this crazy stuff she's involved in.

LIZZY
 Isn't it part of their way of doing
 things? To be secretive.

Jack sighs with exasperation as he places the beer on the
 kitchen counter.

JACK CORRAL
 This time last week life was
 normal.

LIZZY
 Every day, we step into the
 unknown.

He walks towards the door.

JACK CORRAL
 Hopefully we'll turn that corner to
 some sanity.

INT. APARTMENT/JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is in darkness as Jack slips under the covers of
 his bed. With the side of his face sinking into the pillow,
 the apartment falls silent. Slowly his eyes close and he
 falls into a deep sleep.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT/JACK'S BEDROOM - LATER

The room is pitch black. Nothing stirs. Suddenly there is a
 creak but Jack remains fast asleep.

Across the room, the curtain gently wafts from a breeze that
 enters the open window.

Remaining in a deep state, he turns over on to his other
 side.

Out of nowhere a rough, East European voice breaks the
 silence.

GERRAT TENS (O.C.)
 (softly)
 What you know you may not see.

Jack bolts upright in utter shock. His eyes adjust to the
 darkness to see what he thinks is a figure standing in the
 corner of the room.

Fumbling to find the side lamp, he switches it on.

The room is empty.

He sits upright against the headrest and breathes in deep.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

The following morning (Wednesday) and Jack makes his way to the bathroom. Appearing rough from his disturbed sleep he watches Rees enter the darkroom.

REES
(upbeat)
Morning. All good?

Jack forces a smile.

JACK CORRAL
All good.

INT. APARTMENT/BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

He enters the bathroom and approaches the sink. Gripping the basin, Jack stares at his reflection then glances to check there is no-one behind while the sound of movement from the darkroom can be heard.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lizzy is standing at the window with her back to Jack as he enters the room and makes for the kitchen.

LIZZY
(softly)
All these people...each in their
own little universe...careering
through space.

She pivots to face Jack as he draws the carton of juice to his lips, oblivious to her remarks.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
How are you today?

He indicates a feeling of so-so by waving his hand before placing the carton down on to the bar then filling the toaster. As he waits, his hand reaches for a knife and butter.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She walks towards the armchair as the toast pops up. Listening to the scraping of the knife spreading butter, she crosses her legs on the seat of the chair and closes her eyes before humming.

Jack watches her as he munches on the toast, glancing over to the open window before returning his gaze to his flatmate.

JACK CORRAL
Someone was in my room last night.

Lizzy's eyes remain closed as she breathes in deeply.

LIZZY
You sure?

He continues to eat the toast.

JACK CORRAL
It wasn't the first time.

LIZZY
Who was it?

With the last piece of toast swallowed, he takes another gulp from the carton.

JACK CORRAL
I don't know.

LIZZY
Is Rees sleepwalking again?

JACK CORRAL
I don't think so.

LIZZY
You don't think so?

JACK CORRAL
It wasn't him.

Lizzy opens her eyes and stretches her neck in circular rotations.

LIZZY
Maybe you need to see a therapist.

Jack grinds his jaw as he returns the carton to the fridge.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
I'm serious.

She stops and looks at him.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
You taking your medication?

He shakes his head.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Jesus Jack! Since when?

He places the palms of his hands on to the kitchen bar.

JACK CORRAL
Since the weekend.

Lizzy shows her disbelief as he innocently raises an eyebrow.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
I was angry. Anyway, we're in complete shut-down just now.

LIZZY
(frustrated)
Excuses, excuses. There's good reason why you need them.

Jack remains tight-lipped as she rises from the chair and approaches him.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
You need to help yourself. I can only do so much.

EXT. KAFKAS BAR/STREET - NIGHT

Jack approaches the bar in the busy street with customers exiting as he enters.

INT. KAFKAS BAR - CONTINUOUS

Gentle, soft lighting fills the bar that is plotted with posters relating to Frank Kafka's books and related movies. Soft red-cushioned seating flanks the walls surrounding flooring filled with tables and chairs where customers are laughing, drinking and chatting to the sound of chilled background music, while waiters deliver plates of food.

Passing the long bar occupied with an eclectic spread of clientele, staff busy themselves fulfilling orders.

Continuing through towards the rear of the property, Amy sits with a small group of friends at a long wooden table in a large alcove area partially partitioned and off-set from the main populated area.

As he manoeuvres around standing customers, Jack advances towards Amy's table. Laughing with her four friends, RORY [28], SAM [29], ABBEY [27] and LUCY [26], she spots him and waves him over. He smiles as he approaches.

AMY LEE

You made it!

She points to the vacant seat next to her which he accepts, removing his jacket and placing it on the back of the chair.

JACK CORRAL

It's busy.

AMY LEE

I love it! One of my fave spots.

On the table, laid with cutlery and drinks, stands two candle lanterns at either end emitting a warm glow that supplements the soft lighting.

Jack's girlfriend hands him a bottle of beer which she places next to his empty glass.

JACK CORRAL

Beer?

AMY LEE

(upbeat)

It's non-alcoholic!

He grins in acknowledgement and begins to pour the beer into his glass.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)

Folks, this is Jack! Who you all know about.

Her friends welcome him, with some raising a glass to his presence.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)

(softly)

You're no longer a secret.

She giggles as he responds to her friends before taking a drink.

Sam, wearing black-rimmed glasses, intercedes. Dressed in casual, beige slacks and white shirt, he leans forward opposite Jack.

SAM
 (to Jack)
 We were just discussing movies
 based on Kafka's work,
 appropriately enough.

JACK CORRAL
 I did see The 93 version of The
 Trial.

Rory, athletic in build and wearing jeans with a sports
 branded t-shirt chuckles boyishly.

RORY
 I'm more the blockbuster type.

JACK CORRAL
 It is a good movie.

SAM
 The shifting balance of power
 within paranoid.

RORY
 Deep, man.

Rory drinks his beer with conviction.

LUCY
 (to Amy)
 What time's your flight on
 Saturday?

Jack's attention is drawn to Amy and her two girlfriends.

AMY LEE
 I've to be there for six thirty.

ABBEY
 (to Jack)
 She's quite the star. Leading by
 example.

Amy laughs dismissively.

AMY LEE
 (to Jack)
 Abbey does sculptures.

Jack is impressed.

ABBEY
With limited success.

AMY LEE
Lucy...

Lucy, wearing dungarees, points to herself enthusiastically.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
...is a yoga teacher.

RORY
All ying and yang stuff.

Rory clasps his fingers in mocking yoga-style.

AMY LEE
(to Jack)
Rory does fitness, as you can see.
Him and Lucy are together.
Opposites attract, so to speak.

LUCY
Needy, like all men!

Rory throws a peanut across the table at her.

ABBEY
And Sam teaches psychology at the
university.

JACK CORRAL
Quite an eclectic bunch.

SAM
(to Jack)
What about you Jack?

He sips his drink.

JACK CORRAL
Not quite as fancy. Exhibition
coordinator at the museum.

LUCY
Wow!

Amy adoringly smiles at him.

AMY LEE
Where we met, of course.

Just then a waiter arrives at their table.

KAFKA WAITER
Are you ready to order?

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. KAFKAS BAR - LATER

The group of friends are in full discussion around the table of empty plates and half-filled glasses.

Rory rises from his chair.

RORY
I think we need another round.

He scans his friends.

RORY (CONT'D)
Same again?

The group are in agreement and he departs for the bar.

Amy, in conversation with Lucy and Abbey, gently places a comforting hand on Jack's thigh, briefly glancing at him with a smile while Sam is engrossed in his mobile phone.

Jack, relaxed, responds alike. As he goes to pick up his drink his attention is drawn to a familiar figure walking through the bar.

It is KP.

His body stiffens as he watches the agent walk through the crowd.

LUCY
(to Amy)
How is your mother?

AMY LEE
Not great. I'm staying at hers tonight.

ABBEY
(reassuring)
Once the antibiotics kick in she'll be fine.

As Jack watches KP drift out of sight towards the toilets Amy turns her attention towards him.

AMY LEE
 (to Jack)
 Hope you're OK with that?

She smirks apologetically at her distracted boyfriend.

JACK CORRAL
 Of course. I hope she gets better.

She pecks him on the cheek then turns to her girlfriends while Jack silently thinks about KP as he sips his drink.

EXT. KAFKAS BAR/STREET - NIGHT

The group of friends stand chatting outside the bar in the warm air saying their farewells and leaving Jack and Amy alone.

She wraps her arms around his neck and kisses him.

AMY LEE
That was a lovely night.

He pulls her in towards her till their bodies are pressed tight.

JACK CORRAL
 Quite a bunch.

She nods affirmatively and kisses him again for longer.

AMY LEE
 Won't see you till next week now.

Amy chuckles lightly.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
 Will you manage?

Jack sees the humour in her comment and he kisses her briefly on her lips.

JACK CORRAL
 I'll try.

The couple separate.

AMY LEE
 I better go.

Jack is reluctant to end the moment as their hands gently clasp..

JACK CORRAL
OK. Have a good trip. Stay safe.

Amy edges away from him, their eyes fixed on each other.

AMY LEE
(joyful)
It's only seven days!

The couple depart in opposite directions and eventually they are both out of sight of each other.

Jack warmly smiling to himself, with his worries briefly forgotten, continues walking along the quiet street.

EXT. STREET MURDER - NIGHT

As he passes a lane, he hears a familiar voice.

KP (O.C.)
You ignored my invitation?

Jack stops in his tracks and turns to see KP walking towards him. He braces himself as the agent closes in.

JACK CORRAL
Stay away.

KP continues to advance.

KP
You're both reliant on each other
as I am on you.

Jack turns to walk away.

JACK CORRAL
I don't believe you!

KP grabs the shoulder of Jack who pivots to face the agent.

KP
(calm)
You think I am here on some
pretence?

JACK CORRAL
(agitated)
You've got the wrong
person...or...there's some mix-up!

The agent leans forwards within inches of Jack, his face seriously grim.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The phone rings as he enters the hallway.

JACK CORRAL
(urgent)
C'mon Amy. Pick up!

The phone rings out indicating the other phone is switched off.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
Jesus!

He is about to try again when the darkroom door begins to open.

Jack grabs the door and pulls it wide to reveal the interior of the darkroom.

INT. DARKROOM - CONTINUOUS

In a red glow, the room is deceptively large as it disappears into darkness towards the rear. A sink and worktop occupy one side of the room with trays of developer solution and a light box. Draped across the ceiling hangs photographs slowly drying as droplets of liquid fall to the linoleum floor.

His four flatmates stare at him defiantly as he tries to comprehend what he is seeing. His eyes dancing between each flatmate, he looks up at the black and white photographs, like bunting in the night.

They contain images of him.

His flatmates move aside as he slowly enters the room, his eyes fixed on the photos that show scenes from his childhood up to the present including the car crash and him with Amy in the museum.

JACK CORRAL
What the fuck!

He reaches up and pulls a photograph down, staring at it in disbelief. It shows him standing by the graveside of a funeral, holding the hand of an adult.

Lizzy steps back as he angrily waves it in her face.

JACK CORRAL (CONT'D)
What is this?

Annette burst forward between them.

ANNETTE

It was all about protecting you.

Jack glances at the photograph then throws it in her face with disgust.

JACK CORRAL

This is insanity!

LIZZY

(calm)

Quite the opposite Jack. This is your reality.

He pushes through the group and begins to yank the photos down one by one.

JACK CORRAL

(determined)

This ends now! I want you all out!

SIMON

That won't be so easy.

Jack turns to his flatmate, his face contorted with rage.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You have Amy to consider.

Jack grabs Simon by his t-shirt and forces him backwards.

JACK CORRAL

Who the fuck do you think you are?

REES

You should ask Mister Tensh.

Jack abruptly stops and releases Simon, turning to Rees in stunned silence.

REES (CONT'D)

I believe he's no stranger to you.

A sudden creak emanates from the back of the room. Jack peers into the darkness as a shadowy figure edges forward, the whites of his eyes revealing his presence before the rest of his shape takes form for all to see.

Before them stands GERRAT TENSH [52] a tall, sharply dressed man with a neatly trimmed greying beard and slick-back shoulder length hair. A chiselled face with high cheek bones, he emits a sense of power and control as he graces the red glow of the room.

Jack fearfully retreats towards the edge of the doorway of the darkroom, grabbing a pair of scissors next to the sink as the man slowly advances. With trepidation, he holds the scissors up in defence.

Lizzy reaches out to placate him.

LIZZY
He's on our side Jack.

Jack wields the scissors across her bow as he retreats.

JACK CORRAL
He's a murderer. He'll kill us all.

REES
You're crazy, man! Listen to yourself.

Gerrat Tensh slowly shakes his head as he intensely stares at Jack.

GERRAT TENSH
(to Jack)
It is not you I am after...but you already know that.

JACK CORRAL
And you know that I will protect her!

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Jack steps into the hallway, the light begins to flicker.

GERRAT TENSH (CONT'D)
It is your protection that is at stake Jack.

He continues to retreat as Gerrat Tensh steps out of the darkroom. The light cuts out allowing the red glow in the darkroom to spread out into the hallway.

GERRAT TENSH (CONT'D)
Because she is no angel for all you might think.

Jack reaches behind and unlocks the door, while keeping his eyes firmly fixed on Tensh.

JACK CORRAL
She is no threat to anyone!

Swinging the scissors, his hand grabs the door handle as Gerrat Tensh clasps his arm holding the weapon.

LIZZY

JACK!

The door swings open and the two men pull each other out of the apartment and into the landing, quickly followed by the flatmates as the lights in the stairway flicker before turning off.

With only the light from the night sky filtering onto the landing, the two men struggle to gain control as they manoeuvre step by step while grappling with each other.

Haphazardly, they edge towards the banister, the face of Gerrat Tensh calm in contrast to Jack, who grimaces as he struggles with his stronger opponent.

GERRAT TENSH

She will destroy everything.

Lizzy tries to intervene, pulling at Gerrat Tensh to release her flatmate.

LIZZY

NOT THIS!

Tensh loses his grip and both men separate allowing Jack to lunge the scissors down through his foe's collar bone as a fist slams into the face of Jack.

Tensh retreats, his body swivelling till his back hits against the banister, his face contorted with pain while Jack stumbles back towards the edge of the landing steps.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

NO!!

Both men simultaneously lose their balance as Tensh tips over the banister and falls like a stone towards his death at the foot of the building while Jack desperately flaps his arms in the air as he falls down the stairs to lie in a heap half way down.

Concussed, he blearily looks up to see his flatmates staring down at him before they slowly fade away.

INT. APARTMENT/BUILDING/STAIRCASE - LATER

Brendan Clements rushes up the staircase to see Jack lying unconscious with blood running down the side of his face.

Urgently, he retrieves his mobile phone and calls for an ambulance.

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
Ambulance.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. HOSPITAL/PRIVATE WARD - DAY

Jack is lying in the bed, his head bandaged, arm in a plaster and his face badly bruised. He winces in pain at Amy who is sitting by his bedside with a look of concern with Brendan calmly standing behind her.

At the foot of the bed, a doctor holds a clipboard writing notes.

AMY LEE
You're a lucky guy.

Jack attempts to get more comfortable in his bed.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
Christ what happened?

HOSPITAL DOCTOR
(to Amy)
He mentioned the name Gerrat Tensh.
You know this person?

Amy shakes her head then turns to Jack who remains silent.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (CONT'D)
(to Jack)
And notwithstanding these injuries,
you have a certain issue that needs
discussing.

Jack painfully turns his head towards the doctor.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (CONT'D)
The medication you've been on...

The doctor looks down at the clipboard.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (CONT'D)
...can be improved.

Amy and Brendan glance over to the doctor with interest.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 (to Amy and Brendan)
 As a child he suffered severe head
 injuries that left him with
 hallucinatory episodes.

The doctor returns the clipboard to a hook at the end of the
 bed.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 (to Jack)
 But we can eradicate it completely.
 Something you should have been
 informed of before now.

The doctor advances towards the door.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 (to Amy and Brendan)
 For now he needs rest.

The three occupants watch the doctor leave.

AMY LEE
 (to Jack)
 What happened?

He shakes his head as if reluctant to speak.

JACK CORRAL
 (softly)
 The others?

BRENDAN CLEMENTS
 Gone.

FADE TO:BLACK

FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT/ENTRANCE - DAY

The following week and Amy, having returned from Poland,
 slowly walks beside Jack towards the front door of the
 apartment, his face showing signs of healing and a sling
 replacing the cast.

He retrieves a key and unlocks the front door which opens to
 a calm of silence.

He steps into the hallway that looks different from what he
 was used to seeing.

There is no darkroom and there are no bedrooms which once housed his flatmates. Instead, there is one door leading to his bedroom and one door leading to the bathroom. No hook rack hangs on the wall.

They stand in the hallway as he closes the door.

JACK CORRAL
Wait in the living room.

Amy walks towards the living room as he advances towards his bedroom.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Amy enters the living room which is small in comparison to what was there before.

Two armchairs sit opposite an old fireplace while a television stands in the corner. The only similarities are the air fan in one corner and the kitchen bar minus the high stools.

She stands in the middle of the room surveying all around while she waits.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack enters with a rucksack.

AMY LEE
You get everything for now?

Jack nods as he looks around.

AMY LEE (CONT'D)
We can pick up the rest later.

Jack suddenly remembers something.

JACK CORRAL
Just one thing.

He lays down the satchel and returns to the bedroom.

INT. APARTMENT/JACK'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Opening the bedroom door, Jack enters the silent room, the curtains closed dimming the light that reaches in. He picks up a rucksack to fill from one of the drawers before turning to head for the bedside table.

On the bed he sees a folded piece of paper. Reaching down, he unfolds the note.

Dark ventures approach