

# Fleur's Secret

Script for assessment 3

Draft 1, Revision 3  
(OCT/2016)

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

1

From a hill, we see the beautiful rolling sheep-country, and then focus on a car driving along.

Inside car: mother and daughter's faces.

FLEUR

13 years old, European, anxious. Jeans, T Shirt  
You did phone Grandad we were  
coming, Mum?

MUM

Helen, early 30's, European, v. pretty. Similar jeans and T  
shirt.  
Of course, love.

FLEUR

Is it alright?

HELEN

Is what alright?

FLEUR

He's not mad at us running away  
from Dad?

HELEN

Why on earth would he be mad at us,  
Fleur?

FLEUR

Well, after all the trouble last  
time when dad came down and shouted  
at Grandad and said he was taking  
us away from him.

HELEN

No, darling. Grandad knows what  
he's like. We're not to blame.  
Grandad is looking forward to  
having his only granddaughter to  
stay with him.

Fleur looks out of window and her father appears there as a  
flashback

BILL/FATHER

...I've told you! I never did  
anything with any woman! That  
little bitch and Megan made it all  
up! Why would you believe them,  
instead of your own husband?

BACK TO FLEUR'S FACE LOOKING ANXIOUS

EXT. FAMILY'S FARM/TRACK - DAY

2

The car drives up the track to a farm. Grandad comes out of the farmhouse, waving at them.

Fleur leans out and shouts.

FLEUR

Hi, Grandad! I've got you the chocolates that you like!

Fleur jumps out of the car, hugs her Grandad and gives him the chocolates.

GRANDAD

Early 70's, wearing a boiler-suit and parker and flat cap with boots

Hello my darling!

Grandad holds her out and inspects her.

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

My but you've grown! Hello, Helen, glad you're both here.

HELEN

Hello, dad.

Getting out of the car and coming around to her father, she kisses him on cheek.

GRANDAD

You must both be exhausted driving all the way from Auckland!

Grandad turns to Fleur.

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

I'm afraid we're not like the Big City, in Bakewell, Fleur. You are most welcome, but you'll find us rather quiet, like, you know.

FLEUR

Oh, Grandad, don't be silly. (Taking his hand and leading him towards the door). I'm glad we've left, and there won't be any shouting, any more. Just us three and the sheep.

INT. FAMILY'S FARM/KITCHEN - DAY

3

Kitchen is rather seedy.

Helen in track-suit at the sink, doing the washing-up. Grandad up to the kitchen table, in usual boiler-suit and chequered shirt cleaning a small engine part.

(CONTINUED)

GRANDAD

You're well rid of the swine, now, are you? It's for good this time? Fleur's told me, you know, that he hits you as well as her.

HELEN

Oh, dad, you know what kids are! He did give her the odd clout when she was naughty, but everyone does.

GRANDAD

Yes, but hitting his wife? Were you naughty, too, then?

HELEN

It was just when he's had a few and I nagged him too much. Just the occasional swipe, you know, but it never hurt.

GRANDAD

Never hurt?! Well, you kept that quiet, my girl! ..... It's his drinking, you know.

HELEN

Hummm, I have the odd glass of wine, too: who doesn't? Brian, though, I must admit, ... he's become a bit of an alchy: doesn't know when to stop. I suppose you were right, though, dad. I should have listened to you years ago.

GRANDAD

So, It's the sleeping around bit that's finally made you come to your senses, has it?

HELEN

'Spose so dad... The thought of him and that Julie woman, together, in our bed!... And our little daughter having to see that!

GRANDAD

Laurie phoned from Auckland. She told me about her Megan seeing him kissing a blonde near the cinema.

HELEN

Yes, and that Julie woman from his office has red hair. He obviously has been having lots of women! Well, that's enough for me. I've had enough of it all. I'm applying for a divorce on Monday.

(CONTINUED)

GRANDAD

About time, love. I never knew what you saw in him.

Helen comes around to the table and sides some more dirty pots up and puts them on the draining-board.

HELEN

He was just so smooth. I was taken in, dad. I suppose it was the idea of escape from the backwoods .....sorry,..... You know: just getting out and seeing a little more of the world, and cities and flying around with his job.

Helen comes back to the table for more pots

GRANDAD

Aye well, the grass is always greener. What about Fleur, then?

They look out through the window, at the garden, where Fleur is.

I suppose that you'll be afraid of her turning out a local pudding, then, aye?

HELEN

Sorry, dad. No. I didn't mean that. I'm sure she'll shake down well, here. It's just that Bill seemed glamorous. I couldn't ever fancy a manual working man that just came from one place.

Dad looks insulted.

HELEN (CONT'D)

No, I don't mean you, dad. You're a farmer: they're different. Anyway, I don't need to be attracted to my old dad.

Helen smiles.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Mum loved you, didn't she? No, I've had enough of men, for a while.

Helen dries her hands and then takes her apron off.

HELEN (CONT'D)

IF I ever look again, though, I want a cultured, cosmopolitan gentleman: not a ditching contractor, or a bloke that mends milking machines ...

(MORE)

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3

HELEN (CONT'D)

but I don't suppose that I'd find  
such a one here, anyway, so there's  
no point in our discussing it, is  
there? ...  
Now ...

Helen hangs the apron up.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Where's our rooms, Dad? Are we near  
you?

Grandad gets up from the table and they go out.

EXT. FAMILY'S FARM/GARDEN - DAY

4

Fleur standing looking in at the kitchen window; somewhat  
offset, so that she can't be seen

Fleur tries to discern what her mother and grandad are  
saying.

Fleur gives up and wanders away from the window, looking a  
bit anxious. She circles the garden and then gets distracted  
by the view beyond and wanders off towards the gate.

Camera pulls back and we see the setting of the house in the  
scenery

INT. SCHOOL/HEADMASTER'S OFFICE - DAY

5

Headmaster sitting at desk with Fleur and Helen opposite him.

Head and Helen are in suits and Fleur is in a smart day-dress  
and cardigan.

HEAD

Yes, Fleur can start on Monday. It  
is, admittedly, a little short  
notice, but we are pleased to see  
that she seems to be a willing,  
personable little body, and you  
tell me that she has done well, at  
her Sydney school?

Head smiles at Fleur, who has a slight facial tic, in  
response, and the Head quickly looks away

HELEN

Oh, indeed, Headmaster. Fleur got  
Merits in most of her subjects. She  
particularly likes poetry and  
novels, ... don't you dear?

(CONTINUED)

FLEUR

Yes, Mum

Looks down, embarrassed by her tic.

HEAD

I'm sure that Fleur will quickly fit in here, then, Mrs. Hargreaves.

HELEN

Oh, do call me Helen, please.

HEAD

Are you are local to here, Helen?

HELEN

Oh, yes: Bakewell. I left when I was still in my late teens, though, so I think of myself very much as a city girl.

HEAD

Well, thank you for choosing our school, and we look forward to seeing you both at our school functions.

Headmaster gets up and shakes Helen's hand as she is rising.

INT. ESTATE AGENT'S OFFICE.- DAY

6

Helen and manager.

Manager, greasy hair plastered down; oily, obsequious, and obviously attracted to Helen. Getting up with a piece of paper in his hand and coming from behind his desk, towards Helen and sitting her and himself on two nearby chairs.

MANAGER

(Smug, somewhat affected voice)

Well, yes, you are certainly the sort of negotiator that we are looking for, Mrs. Hargreaves. Your experience in Sydney real estate will be invaluable to our business here. Carford is really changing its demographic profile, now, you know, and we have a lot of money moving into the hinterland. It's no longer only farms and muck. We have several large business parks under way, you know and these will be bringing more professional classes. If you are happy with our terms, I can certainly welcome you to Forbes and Forbes.

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6

HELEN

Thank you Mr. Jones. I look forward very much to working with you, and hope that I can be of some use.  
(Shakes hands)

MR. JONES

Holding her hand too long.

MR. JONES (CONT'D)

I do like my ladies to look smart for the customers and you really do look the part, my dear, hum...  
er...

HELEN

Looking at her hand and pulling it away.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Er... Thanks... (Hurriedly) um, well! I'll see you on Monday, Mr...

MR. JONES

... Oh dooo call me Nigel....  
Helen.

Mr. Jones smiles oilily.

EXT. FAMILY'S FARM/GATEWAY - DAY

7

Helen in car.

Helen is dressed for the office. She drives out of the gateway and down the lane. There is a male, in his late thirties working in the field nearby. He looks up and waves at Helen who, a bit embarrassedly half waves and half smiles back, as she doesn't know him.

INT. FAMILY'S FARM/SITTING ROOM - DAY

8

Phone rings and Helen goes to answer it.

HELEN

Yes, Bill, hello..... You can read can't you?..... It's no good, Fleur saw you.....yes. she said you just got up then, and went out with that Julie woman.....yes.....No, it's all over, now, Bill. I'm applying for a divorce ..... No, it's not just Fleur!

(MORE)

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8

HELEN (CONT'D)

Laurie's Megan saw you kissing another woman near the cinema, so there's no good in pretending any further ... it's all just been a lie.....Our daughter is not a ..... you know. You are the pig that has put poor Fleur through this..... I am ashamed, Bill. I took a lot from you: even when you hit me, but this is the last straw..... Further abuse will get you nowhere!...yes.....yes.....well,I'm going now, Bill.....Yes,goodbye.

Helen puts the phone down and starts to cry, quietly.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

9

Older, sharply spoken teacher comes into classroom. She is elderly, frumpily-dressed and is bad-tempered.

Teacher is standing behind her desk.

TEACHER

Be quiet you lot. I can't hear myself think! You there, girl!

Teacher points at Fleur.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Yes, you! Come out here, please.

Fleur walks shyly out to the teacher's desk

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Today we have a new girl: Fleur. Say 'hello' to your classmates, dear.

Fleur blushes, hangs her head and her tic becomes bad.

Teacher looks at Fleur, and sees her tic.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Hum, yes, well. No need to be embarrassed, Fleur. We were all new once, you know! ....Ummm, back you go.

As Fleur walks back to her place, a very over-weight, insolent-looking girl cruelly mimics Fleur's tic to her face and to her own nearby friends. The girl's two cronies hoot with laughter.

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9

TEACHER (CONT'D)

That's enough noise you girls! ....  
and now can you all copy down these  
notes.....

Teacher writes down on the board.

SHOT: FLEUR, HANGING HER HEAD WITH SHAME AND EMBARRASSMENT  
AND HER TIC TWITCHING. THE GIRL IN THE NEXT DESK LEANS ACROSS  
AND WHISPERS TO FLEUR.

ABBY

Hi, I'm Abby, and that snot face  
cow down there is Cara-Lou effin  
Boggins and the thickos she calls  
her friends are as ugly as she is.  
Don't let them get to you, Fleur.  
They're just not worth it. Her mush  
makes me sick. I was new here, last  
year and that cow gave me hell,  
until I threatened to tell the head  
about it being her that nicked the  
silver tennis cup. I found out 'cos  
she sold it to my brother's  
friend....duhhh.

FLEUR

Hum .....thanks...er, Abby..... My  
face doesn't do it all of the time:  
only when I'm nervous, or  
something. It's not me: it's my  
nervous system. We had, like, some  
trouble at home, and then it  
started.

ABBY

(Airily. )

Oh, trouble at home?! Don't worry  
about that! I'm on me third dad,  
and me mam and me are always  
scrapping. Sayyyyyy: which bus do  
you take?

FLEUR

The Bakewell one.

ABBY

Yo! I take that and get off at  
Winham. You can sit next to me.

FLEUR

Thanks, Abby.

ABBY

Whatever.....

Abby shrugs and grins.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

10

FLEUR WALKING HOME THROUGH THE COUNTRYSIDE. WIDE SHOT: HER WALKING, AND ZOOM IN

Fleur is singing.

FLEUR

All things bright and beautiful,  
the lord god made them all. All  
things wise and wonderful, the lord  
god made them all. He made their  
tiny wings. He made their  
...something, things. He made their  
something, something, things, he  
made their something things. All  
things bright and beautiful the  
lord god made them alllllllllllllll.

Fleur stops, sighs, and looks about her.

CAMERA ZOOMS OUT AND PANS TO SEE HER BEAUTIFUL SURROUNDINGS

INT. FAMILY'S FARM/KITCHEN - DAY

11

Grandad alone in boiler-suit and chequered shirt. He is drinking beer, in the kitchen with the Ministry of Agriculture forms. Fleur comes in from school and puts her bag on the floor.

FLEUR

Hello Grandad.

Fleur kisses Grandad on the top of the head.

Grandad does not look up from forms.

GRANDAD

Umph...yer right?

FLEUR

What are you doing Grandad?

GRANDAD

I'm doing these bloomin' reports  
for the Min. of Ag. They think that  
we've got all this time just to sit  
doing their bloomin' reports.

FLEUR

What's the Min of Ag, grandad?

GRANDAD

You don't know what the Min of Ag  
is, child?

(CONTINUED)

FLEUR

No

GRANDAD

(irritably)

Well it's about time they started teaching you something at that school. The Ministry of Agriculture is what is in charge of farms and stuff. And their purpose is to snoop and get as much information about farmers as they can, and then they can just bury us with their rules and their taxes. I suppose that you don't know what all Ministries are, either?

FLEUR

Sorry, grandad, no.

GRANDAD

Yah! What's the point of a girl: they're useful for nothing! Should have had a boy!

Fleur raises her voice, and her tic starts.

FLEUR

Well, my mom was a girl and I'm glad, ..... or maybe I wouldn't be here! You shouldn't say that sort of thing, grandad!

GRANDAD

Don't you come the High And Mighty Miss with me, girl! Do you hear? I won't have that sort of thing in my house! You're a guest here! Remember that!

Fleur looks upset and hurries out of the door.

Then the phone rings and Grandad goes and picks it up.

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

(Impatiently)

Yes! .....

No, you can't speak to Helen!  
.....You what?!..... Don't you speak to me like that! You're just a drunken moron who's been mistreating my daughter and granddaughter! We want nothing more to do with you, see! Filth like you should stay in its pit, and not bother decent people..... .. Oh, you will, will you? Well, we'll see about that!

(MORE)

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11

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

I rued the day she married you with  
yer fancy ways and yer fast car and  
yer sunglasses in the house.....  
Oh yes?! Just bugger off do you  
hear?! (Slams the phone down).

EXT. STREET - DAY

12

Fleur walking with school bag. (Wearing jeans, sweat shirt).  
Cara-Lou Coggins suddenly appears from behind Fleur and grabs  
Fleur's bag, proceeding to dance around Fleur, waving the bag  
provokingly.

CARA-LOU

Ooh! What have we here? A real POSH  
bag for POSH cows for Sydney! You  
don't need this! I'LL have it!

Fleur attempts to grab the bag back while Cara-Lou swings the  
bag out of the way.

CARA-LOU (CONT'D)

Now, now, now! It's mine, it's  
mine!

FLEUR

Give me my bag back! Mum's just  
bought it! It's new!

CARA-LOU

(Sing song voice) Oh, mummy  
whummie's just bought it for us,  
has she? Good! I want a nice new  
one! (Changes to a harsh,  
threatening tone).....And come  
near me, bitch, and I'll kick yer  
'ead in, OK?

Fleur stops trying to retrieve the bag, looks frightened at  
the threat and backs slowly away starting to cry. She stands  
there as Cara-Lou swaggers down the road, swinging the bag  
and then suddenly throws it over the fence into someone's  
garden.

Voice comes from behind Fleur.

ABBY

Fleur! You OK? (Abby comes puffing  
up to Fleur) Soz, I'm late! Old  
Higgins kept us late! Let's get yer  
bag!

FLEUR

(Sobbing)  
Thanks, Abby

(CONTINUED)

ABBY

You shouldn't let that cow bully you, you know! She only does it because she knows that she can get away with it! She wouldn't dare touch me 'cos she knows that I would scratch her eyes out, if she tried to lay a finger on me! Stand up to her! Grab your bag back! Run after her and give her a good kicking!

FLEUR

It's not that easy, Abby! She'd only hurt me more!

ABBY

What have you got to lose? She's hurting you anyway! But, if you have a go back at her, she won't do it next time, and then yer OK, huh?

FLEUR

She laughs at my tic, and then it gets worse.

ABBY

Only because yer afraid. Stuff her and then you won't have that tic!

FLEUR

It's easy for you to say that, Abby. You're not me.....

They walk down the road and Abby puts her arm around Fleur's shoulder.

INT. FAMILY'S FARM/LIVING ROOM - EVENING.

13

Helen (wearing a sweat-suit) using a PC on a table in the corner. Grandad (wearing boiler-suit) comes through from the kitchen with his beer and stands over her reading the VDU.

GRANDAD

What are you doing on that bloody machine, Helen?

HELEN

Oh, I'm just on a dating site.

GRANDAD

What, 'dating' as in boys?

HELEN

I just thought that I'd have a look, being as I've started divorce proceedings, now.

(CONTINUED)

GRANDAD

Eh, you're quickly after another, now, then?

HELEN

Well, I'm in my thirties, and if I'm to leave it a year, or two, it'll be too late to find anyone. Anyway, it's a bit lonely by yourself.

GRANDAD

What do you mean, by yourself? You've got me and Fleur, haven't you?

HELEN

Yes, but you're not the same as a husband.

GRANDAD

Oh, marriage, is it now?

HELEN

Well, not straight away, but I've got to start looking, haven't I, or I'll never find one and have to stay an old spinster.....well, sort of!

GRANDAD

Eh, I don't know.

Grandad sits down and watches TV.

EXT. CARFORD HIGH ST. DAY

14

Helen with Fleur (both in casual day-clothes) carrying bags up the High Street.

FLEUR

It's quite small here, isn't it, Mum?

HELEN

What do you mean, quite small?

FLEUR

Oh, you know, there's only a few streets, not Queen Street and K Road, or Sydney, and you can't go all over the place and they've only got one park!

HELEN

Well, what do you think, child? It's not the capital, is it?

(MORE)

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CONTINUED:

14

HELEN (CONT'D)

We'll go to Auckland shopping one day, shall we?..... You can get to know people better here, though, and you'll feel more at home, eventually.

FLEUR

Yeh, but it does mean that I keep being pestered by that horrid Cara-Lou Boggins. She's everywhere. She was just in the last shop, but she didn't see me, thank goodness.

HELEN

You shouldn't let girls like Cara-Lou bother you. Just try and stay away from them and then they won't pick on you.

FLEUR

What do you mean? Do you mean that I should pretend that she isn't doing it, when she mimics my tic and all of her friends laugh and everyone looks. How can I pretend it isn't happening?!

HELEN

Is she bullying you, then? Shall I have a word with the school?

FLEUR

Her and her friends are just aggressive cows. What's the point of my complaining that aggressive thickos are behaving like aggressive thickos, then? They'll only make it ten times worse for me after a complaint. I'd rather you didn't say anything mum.

HELEN

Well, if it gets any worse, you tell me, love. It's quite enough for you with all of the change of house and school, without having to put up with predators like that. You just keep away from them and don't let them see your tic.

FLEUR

Thanks, mum. Love you.

They arrive at and unlock the car.



INT. FAMILY'S FARM/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

15

Helen (in sweat clothes) using the tablet on her knee and Grandad (boiler suit and shirt sleeves) watching the TV.

HELEN

Oh, it's all very difficult to find even one that's reasonable....they all look the same....and then I'll bet they make up half of it!

GRANDAD

Half of what, Helen?

HELEN

I'm sure that they make up half of the tales about themselves

GRANDAD

Who?

HELEN

These men on these dating sites.

GRANDAD

What they just advertise themselves like whores, then?

HELEN

Dad! They're 'dating websites'.... It's quite normal you know.

GRANDAD

So, you're putting yourself on there, too, are you.....with yer picture and all?

HELEN

Dad, it's quite OK...

GRANDAD

...and I suppose it'll be quite OK when you get another real nutter, then! You're rather quick, girl!.....Off with the old and on with the new, egh? Yer not even divorced, yet and yer after men already!

HELEN

(Preoccupiedly, but tolerantly)

...Dad.....

Helen shakes her head.

EXT. FAMILY'S FARM/FIELD - DAY

16

Grandad (farm clothes) walking out of the field of sheep with Fleur (jeans, T shirt and anorak). Grandad turns and starts fastening the gate, while Fleur waits for him.

FLEUR

Grandad, why do some of the ewes have red paint on their bottoms?

GRANDAD

They've been tuppied, girl.

FLEUR

What's tuppied?

GRANDAD

They've been with the ram.

FLEUR

Oh, you mean that they are going to have lambs, then?

Grandad straightens up and stands watching his flock.

GRANDAD

Aye, they're due in December. I want to get them to market for the Christmas season.

FLEUR

.....Grandad, do they not mind?

GRANDAD

Who mind what?

FLEUR

Do the ewes not mind just having any old ram and then not having any choice ....I mean if they don't want to.....you know.

GRANDAD

Don't you worry about choice, ma girl. You can't really go wrong with a ram for a dad.....presuming the bloodline's right, of course. It's not like people. You've got to get it right with real fathers.

FLEUR

What if I get it wrong, Grandad?

GRANDAD

Just because your mam got her choice wrong, doesn't mean to say that you will, girlie

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CONTINUED:

16

Grandad smiles and cups Fleur's chin fondly.

CAMERA PANS BACK TO FIELD AND THEN THE SURROUNDINGS.

INT. FAMILY'S FARM/SITTING ROOM - DAY

17

Grandad coming in with a cup of tea from the kitchen, to join Helen and Fleur. Helen is watching the TV and Fleur is at the table doing her homework (both in sloppy clothes). Grandad hears a car pulling up and looks out of the window.

GRANDAD

I don't know that  
car.....who's?.....Oh,oh!....Helen,  
it's your husband!

FLEUR

(Sounds frightened)  
It's dad?!

Fleur and Helen come to the window

HELEN

(angrily)  
Well, he can bloody well go back to  
Sydney, because I'm not discussing  
anything!

Door bell rings and Helen and Fleur quickly go and sit on the sofa, while Grandad goes to answer the door.

Heard out in the hall

DAD

Hello, .....

GRANDAD

Hello,..... You'll be wanting Helen,  
then?

DAD

Yes, please, I'll just go in shall  
I?

GRANDAD

Well, I suppose....

Dad enters the sitting room:

He is a medium sized man in his late thirties, with a face like thunder

DAD

Helen, I've come to take you back

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

(brightly ironic)

Oh, no "Hello, Helen", or "I've missed you Helen", or how about "Sorry for being an unfaithful swine, Helen"?

DAD

You know what I mean, Helen!

HELEN

No, I don't know what you mean, ...

DAD

I haven't been with that woman, Helen! Or that other woman! It's been made up by Fleur. Look I've flown all the way from Sydney to take you back...and I'll even forgive Fleur.

HELEN

Is this just until the next time you have a 'drinking do' and then you'll take it out on her? Or will it be me? And how many women will you be seeing in the meantime?

DAD

(Shouting)  
i've told you, i haven't been with any women and I haven't touched a drop since you went!

HELEN

Well, I'm sorry, but .... I've started divorce proceedings. The drink was bad enough, but I will not tolerate infidelity...

DAD

It's that bitch, Fleur! She's cooked it up with Laurie's girl, Megan. She wants to get rid of me, I...

HELEN

That "bitch" is our daughter and will you kindly moderate your language in front of your wife and daughter...

DAD

I'll tell you what I will do, I'll ...

Door bell rings and people freeze

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17

SHIRLEEN (V.O.)  
 (From hallway)  
 Coooeee, it's only me, Shirleen!

Shirleen comes into the sitting room

SHIRLEEN  
 Well, now, here we all are!  
 Everyone's here... How nice to see  
 you angel (looks at Helen) .....How  
 long is it? Oh, must be six years,  
 now.....and little Fleur, too! I've  
 pacifically (sic) come across here  
 to meet you and your daughter. Good  
 morning, Edward, ....I'll just...

DAD  
 (irritatedly)  
 I'm off! It's not finished, you  
 know!

Dad storms out and slams the door

SHIRLEEN  
 Oooh, am I interrupting something?

Shirleen looks at Helen

SHIRLEEN (CONT'D)  
 Goodness, the man's got a fine  
 temper on him!

HELEN  
 Yes, and I've had enough of it!...

SHIRLEEN  
 .....Hello...? You split up then?

HELEN  
 Bill says Fleur is lying about him  
 being in bed with a woman...

SHIRLEEN  
 Oh? He says Fleur is casting  
 nasturtiums (sic) then eh?.....  
 s'pose he would though wouldn't he?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
 Helen and Nigel at a table

18

NIGEL  
 This is so good of you to come out  
 to a little dindins with me, Helen.  
 I mean, there's nothing to say that  
 we can't mix business with  
 pleasure, is there?  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

18

NIGEL (CONT'D)

Even though we're 'office pals', I never get tired of seeing my employees, especially if they are lovely ladies like you. Hum, mm. I feel that I must exert myself to show new employees around the town, a little.

HELEN

It's very kind of you to take the trouble, Nigel, but, really....

NIGEL

No, no! I won't hear of thanks! Peter, you know our franchisor: the one who set up all of these estate agencies,..... the chap who has that wonderful, black Maserati well, he says that one really should get to know one's employees out of work, yes...hum,... mmm

HELEN

Well, I'm afraid that I don't have too much time, out of work, because I have a daughter..

NIGEL

... Ahh, the lovely Fleur!...

HELEN

Yes, but there's the farm..

NIGEL

....Oh, but, my dear, really..... You shouldn't bury yourself down on the farm, and as for ruining your complexion....out in all weathers!...

HELEN

No, it's dad....he needs help from time to...

Nigel leans over the table and grabbing Helen's reluctantly given hand

NIGEL

....but if you bury yourself, Helen, you will miss excellent opportunities for meeting 'like minds' and then end up an embittered divorcee!....It's so..

WAITER

(loudly and abruptly) )  
Menus, Sir?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

18

NIGEL  
 (looking up distractedly)  
 humph?!

INT. SCHOOL/BACK OF THE SCHOOL HALL - DAY

19

Fleur and her friend Abby (in school uniform) are lounging in the doorway, as the choir, in the hall, practises a two-part song with piano

ABBY  
 I often come here and listen. Dunno why. I can't sing. Don't 'ticularly want to learn. But you know, it's nice to listen. Can you sing?

FLEUR  
 Well, to myself. I'd like to learn tho'. Maybe I'll learn, one day.....I'd like to be in a choir.

ABBY  
 What would you do, yunno, with your tic, like? In case git faces like Boggins had a go?

FLEUR  
 Oh, please, Abby, I'd rather not think about these things, if you don't mind.

ABBY  
 Sorry

Abby shrugs

ABBY (CONT'D)  
 ..... My big sis sings....she's at school,'ere, yunno. She's like.... out of it! Yunno...a wild child!

FLEUR  
 What? She's been in trouble?

ABBY  
 Well, only been caught the odd time,..... not so much, but..... Oh my god,.... she takes no shit!

FLEUR  
 You mean she's violent?

ABBY  
 Naaagh!.... Well, yeeeeeeh!..... Well, like....  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

19

ABBY (CONT'D)

there were these boys, see, and they were mucking around and blocking her going,.....yunno, near the outside of the school wall where it runs by Alfie's chippy...you know? Then one of them snatched her pencil case sticking out her bag.....

FLEUR

What happened?

ABBY

Well, she went like, yunno like, like nuts! Grabbed her hockey stick and beat three degrees of shit out of him!....She did!

FLEUR

What happened with his parents?

ABBY

Nothin! 'E was so ashamed that a girl had beat him that he made 'is mates swear they wouldn't tell, and she got off, but I tell you, they'll think twice before they try it on with 'er a second time.....she don't take no shit, like!

FLEUR

Awwwwwsome! .....Wish I had a sister like that.....

SHOT OF CHILDREN SINGING

INT. FAMILY'S FARM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

20

Helen comes into the farmhouse in a temper. Grandad drinking in an arm chair, by the TV. Helen throws herself down on the sofa, throwing her bag down, too. She is dressed smartly in evening wear: short skirt, sparkly top and high heels Grandad is in boilersuit and shirt.

Grandad looking up from the T.V. screen says

GRANDAD

You're early?

HELEN

Yes, I know. Did Fleur get your dinner, dad?

(CONTINUED)



GRANDAD

Err, yup,.... sort of. So why are you early?

HELEN

I wasn't going to stay with that octopus..... All these dates only want one thing.

GRANDAD

I don't know why they don't just go down the whorehouse..... unless it's your clothes, like.....yunno, set's 'em off...

HELEN

....What do you mean, dad: my "clothes"? I'm not a teenager to be told off, you know! I think that by my age, I might have an idea of what's the right thing to wear.

Grandad turns round to talk to her

GRANDAD

Well,..... you must know that a short skirt like that, together with the heels and that blouse, mean like,..... you know,..... mean that yer willing.

HELEN

Willing? Dad! That's an appalling thing to say! In your day, maybe men thought that, but we've had Women's Lib, you know. Women are in charge of their own bodies, now, and we can decide whether we want babies, or not. We're not just baby machines.....(sniffs) Madonna showed that women can be strong, but still desirable.

GRANDAD

If that's that pop singer who goes about with her bra on and not much else, all I can say is that if she walked down Carford High Street, she'd get what's coming to her.

HELEN

Anyway, I go to wine bars, and not rough pubs, Dad. And I don't stand around by bus stops, and places.

GRANDAD

No. You drive. And that's worse!

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

If I wore boring office gear all the time, I should never have anyone be interested in me, you know. You set these dates up on the website and then they come to meet you. I've had loads of my friends who've sat there, and the bloke has walked past, seen them, and quickly walked away, 'cos they didn't look good, you know? I won't have to dress up all the time, once I'm with someone.

GRANDAD

Aye, but it's the person that you've ended up with, dressed like that... that's the problem.

HELEN

Dad.....I know that you're worried about me, but you don't need to, you know.

GRANDAD

Fleur's worried too, you know.

HELEN

I'll have a word with her.

GRANDAD

Look, there's a new chap in the neighbourhood, he's a farmer...

HELEN

Oh, oh, not more mucky hands and beer...

GRANDAD

Helen, if you'll just let me speak: Ralph, he's the son of Chip, next door, but one. He went away into the army. He was a Captain, you know. Now Chip's dead, though, Ralph's come home to work on the farm for his Mother, Shirleen.

HELEN

Er, yeeees. I sort of remember him a bit, dad. Well, we'll see....I've just to get out of this stuff. Night, night, dad.

Helen gets up, kisses him on the cheek and leaves room

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

20

GRANDAD

(Calling after her) )

Well, I'll just have a word with  
Ralph, then, shall I?

24

INT. FAMILY'S FARM/KITCHEN - DAY

21

Fleur (sloppy house clothes) sitting at the table reading and  
eating a muffin. Phone rings. Fleur answers it

FLEUR

Hello, 0358.....Oh, hello, Megan.  
What do you want? ....Ummm...why?  
.....well I don't see that you need  
to worry about  
it!.....(whispers)Guilty? Why do  
you feel..... Yeh, but you  
promised!..... Megan, you're  
fine! Dad won't bother you and  
Auntie, honest!..... That's  
silly.....Yes, I know.....I'm  
sorry, but.....Well, thanks again,  
Megan.....! I DO appreciate it,  
you know I do....(Grandad comes in)  
oh, Grandad's here. I've got to get  
his tea. See ya, Megan!(Puts phone  
down)

GRANDAD

That our Megan, then, love?

FLEUR

Yes, grandad

GRANDAD

Did she say anything, then?

FLEUR

Yes, to give you a kiss, Gramps

Fleur gives him one

GRANDAD

Aye, well, I'll bet it's about  
boys!

Grandad gets a beer out of the fridge

EXT. HILL - DAY

22

Helen walking up a hill with a handsome man in his late  
thirties (Ralph).

RALPH

It's good of you to accept my  
invitation, Helen.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

22

RALPH (CONT'D)

Your dad said that you'd come home. I remember you at St. Cuthbert's primary, you know. You just started the year I was leaving.

HELEN

Oh, I really believe that, Ralph! As if some great grown up lad in the top class would notice a tiny moppet.

RALPH

No? Well, my mum pointed you out as our near neighbour when she came to collect me a couple of times. And I saw you down at the church, from time to time.

HELEN

Ah, well, that would only have been while my mam was alive. My dad isn't a church man, himself and didn't bother making us go, thank goodness.

RALPH

I have to admit, I'm not much of church goer, these days.

As they walks along, Helen pauses, as she steps into some mud, and lifts up her foot to see the mud, appalled.

RALPH (CONT'D)

I run my cattle up on the tops, in the summer, and they get up quite high on Black Hill, so I have to go up, every so often, to make sure that they're OK. I hope that you don't mind my dragging you up here. The view's wonderful and I thought that you might like to see it.

HELEN

Ah, yes. I like a good view, and the best thing about being on a hill, is that you can always get a signal.

RALPH

Who from?

HELEN

No, the phone.

RALPH

Oh, a mobile phone.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN  
Don't you have one?

RALPH  
Yeh, I've got an old brick of a thing, but I almost never use it. If I want to call someone, I wait till the evening, back home.

HELEN  
(Looking mystified)  
Yeh, but what if you want to send a text?

RALPH  
What for? If I want to write to someone, I do my paperwork generally on a Saturday morning.

HELEN  
Yeh, but...

Helen trips and Ralph catches her arm, but she embarrassedly relinquishes it

HELEN (CONT'D)  
what if you want to send a message in a hurry?

RALPH  
I'd telephone

HELEN  
But a written message

RALPH  
I'd send an email, wouldn't I?

HELEN  
Ah, you've got an iPad, then?

RALPH  
Those laptops that people lug around with them, you must be joking. It'd get smashed by the dogs, in the ute.

HELEN  
No, an iPad is different than a laptop, it's smaller.

RALPH  
Oh, well, it's all the same to me. I've got a PC and can send emails if it's desperate.  
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (3)

22

RALPH (CONT'D)

I can't really see myself, up on Black Hill, trying to cut another silly ewe out of the barbed wire with the bolt croppers, in the pouring rain, while sending a text on an iPad with my other hand to the vet, who isn't going to be coming up there..... not in that rain, anyway.

Helen, pauses, and looks slowly all the way up towards the summit, with dislike

HELEN

Well....I suppose that this isn't Auckland, of course, so I suppose that maybe people use these things less.

Ralph pauses a moment and then walks on.

RALPH

I suppose that you must miss the city. What did you do in your spare time, in Sidney.. Or now.. in Bakewell, even?

HELEN

Oh, lots! There's lots to do, in Sydney!

RALPH

Yeh?.....

HELEN

Oh, well,...um I went out with my friends, yunno: wine bars, nightclubs, and stuff.

RALPH

Did you not go out much with your husband?

HELEN

Well, we went out for the odd dinner and things, but he liked his golf, and would go off with the boys at weekend to that sort of thing, you know. He was in a club, and they drank a lot.....That's why I've left him, you see. I dunno if Dad's told you I'm getting a divorce.

RALPH

Yeh, sorry about that. Sounds like you were a drinking/golfing widow, then.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

22

Helen laughs

HELEN

...Yeh, sort of!.....What do you do in your spare time, Ralph?

RALPH

Well, I suppose that it sounds rather dull, but I read: I rather like C19th novels, and like gardening, too. You know, veggies and flowers: around the outside of house, and also for my mam to pick for her vases.

HELEN

Oh, gardening....that's quite interesting (sounding completely bored).Do you do anything more active?

RALPH

Oh, a bit of singing, in the choir with my mam. Oh, and I still keep my hand in with a bit of scrambling, when I can, but I only solo to around E3. My climbing partners are the daring ones: I'm a bit 'slow and steady'.

HELEN

Ummmm, 'slow and steady' (again, looking uninterested) .....Do you not mind moving home, then?

RALPH

"Mind"? I chose to. My mam could have sold the farm and gone into a cottage near her sister, but she asked me if I was interested in it, and I thought, yes, one day, before it's too late, perhaps I will be in a position, to have a family. The army's no place for a family. Everyone ships their kids off to boarding schools. I wouldn't want that. What's the point in having them, then?.....Are you ready for some lunch, Helen, I've brought some food with me?

HELEN

Oh, at last! I'm famished, and I didn't think to pack anything.

23

EXT. THE STOCK MART - DAY

23

The mart is busy and we see Grandad who is shouting and waving at Ralph, who we see through the crowd.

GRANDAD

Ralph!

Coming up to Ralph who is leaning on a barrier regarding some cows.

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

You after more cows, then?

RALPH

No, just watching what they're bringing before I get some more. Some of my old girls are passed their best. You after a bigger herd?

GRANDAD

Aye, just a few. I want to increase my sucklers. (They both lean over the holding pens and inspect the stock). Look at that one! She's got fine quarters!

RALPH

Helen is a really bonny woman, and a good companion...at least, I enjoyed her company on our little picnic.

GRANDAD

Aye, but do you think that you could like that company permanently?

RALPH

Edward, what are you asking me,.....huh? Are you asking me if I would like to wed her? I've only met her once..... really!

GRANDAD

But you must have an idea...?

RALPH

Then, yes, Edward. I like her very much, but it's not up to me, is it? In the end, these things are up to the woman, and your daughter is very much a city woman.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

23

RALPH (CONT'D)

I don't know that she'll even stay, you know, in the countryside.....probably get some high flying Auckland job, with some high-flying Auckland man... 'Beema-Man', with a Wynyard flat and a bach in Maharangi.

GRANDAD

That's not the idea. If you're interested, man, you've got to step out lively, before some other bugger gets her.

RALPH

I know, Edward. And I have asked her out again. It's just that I realize that I'm not the sort of man she wants, or admires, and I can't pretend that I am. I'm not an office type. I'm not the city slicker that Helen is after, and I don't intend to change into one, either, I'm afraid.

GRANDAD

You're as stubborn as she is. Eh, well, she'll go back to Sydney, or end up with some poncy estate agent type, here, I don't doubt....Eh, I should have had a son. (Shakes his head and looks back at the stock)

EXT. EDWARD'S FARMHOUSE/GATEWAY - DAY

24

Helen is coming out in her car

Helen drives down the lane, to work, and she sees Ralph working in the field. He waves to her and smiles. She waves and smiles back and drives away. He turns and nearly trips backwards over his dog manages to save himself, and then pets the dog.

RALPH

Sorry mate!.... falling over my own dog because of a woman (sighs).... Come on! Let's get going, boy!

He then slaps his thighs and runs off backwards, playing with the dog.

INT. EDWARD'S FARMHOUSE/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT.

25

Helen sitting on the sofa and following her dating site on the laptop, while drinking wine and Fleur is doing her homework at the table with the TV on.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Aren't you supposed to be doing your homework in your bedroom?

FLEUR

Why, mum?

HELEN

Because you can't concentrate with the TV on and people talking in the living room.

FLEUR

You're not talking to anyone, Mum.

HELEN

You know what I mean, Fleur. Dad didn't like you doing your homework in the sitting room.

FLEUR

What's dad got to do with things, all of a sudden?

HELEN

You know what I mean. He may have drunk too much, but he still tried to be a good father.

Fleur turns around to look at her mother

FLEUR

Yes!..... The 2% of the time when he wasn't drunk. The other 98% of the time, he was a horrid to me and you, mum. I don't forget you know! He made you cry lots of times....and me!

HELEN

He didn't used to be so bad, when I married him, Fleur. It was just that the stress of things made him drink. You know, so that he could cope with things.

FLEUR

Yes, well I was a 'thing' that didn't like being coped with..... I'm glad we got away, mum!

HELEN

Well, I suppose that...

Grandad comes in from the yard

CONTINUED: (2)

25

GRANDAD

.....Well, I must say, you two seem to be enjoying yerselves!

HELEN

(Defensively)

I've just finished work, and Fleur is doing her homework, dad. I can't work day and night you know.

Grandad sniffs and says:

GRANDAD

Hmph!

Grandad goes into the Kitchen and comes back drinking from a bottle of beer. Fleur looks at her mother and grimaces about Grandad's mood

Grandad sits on the sofa

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

I manage to work day and night, you know. I was out in that top field with a ewe, at 10.00, last night!

HELEN

That's because you're farming, dad. I'm not a farmer and Fleur is at school.

GRANDAD

Eh, but in some households, when a man gets back after a hard day's slog, the womenfolk get off their backsides and make him a cup of tea.

HELEN

But dad, you just got a beer!

GRANDAD

What's that got to do with it, then? You could have been making my bloody supper, instead. Or Fleur could have been doing some washing up, or some'at.

FLEUR

The pots are clean, grandad...

GRANDAD

and don't you give any lip to me, my gir...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

25

HELEN

....Don't you start on her. Dad!  
Just because you haven't had a beer  
in a while and are like a bear with  
a sore head. No need to go for my  
daughter, is there?!

GRANDAD

Oh, I see! You can sit there, ladi-  
da, with your wine, but I'm not  
allowed the odd beer, is it? Too  
working class, is it? Too dirty  
boots, is it? And just you remember  
that you're my daughter and I'm  
having to have both of you in this  
house...

Fleur looking from one to the other.

FLASHBACK TO HER DRUNKEN FATHER SHOUTING AT HELEN AND THEN  
HITTING HER AND HELEN FALLING TO THE FLOOR. THE CAMERA THEN  
LOOKS AT FLEUR'S HORRIFIED FACE BEFORE THE FATHER TURNS TO  
AND THEN ADVANCES UPON HER...

HELEN

Well, if you've suddenly decided  
that you don't like your daughter  
and your granddaughter, we can soon  
sort that o.....

Fleur jumps to her feet and shouts:

FLEUR

.....Stop it! Stop it, both of you!  
I thought when we left dad's house  
this screaming was finished, but  
now it's just started all over  
again! I can't do my homework with  
all this!

Runs up to her bedroom and slams the door. Grandad and Helen  
look at each other and Helen walks slowly and sheepishly out  
to the kitchen. Grandad turns to the TV.

INT. RALPH'S FARMHOUSE/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

26

Shirleen, Ralph's mother sitting on the sofa and pouring  
tea. (She is wearing a dress, tan tights, and slippers with a  
full flowered nylon 'house coat/pinny over the top). Helen is  
sitting in jeans, shirt and jumper, sitting in the arm chair,  
eating a biscuit off a plate in her hand

SHIRLEEN

So, moved back have you? Well, your  
dad will be pleased to have his  
daughter back, I dare say.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26

SHIRLEEN (CONT'D)

It's nice to see old friends, 'cos  
to all intensive porpoises (sic) we  
are old friends aren't we.

She leans over and pats Helen's knee

HELEN

Thanks, Mrs. Evans, but I have  
doubts about my dad.

SHIRLEEN

Oh, call me Shirleen, love! I dare  
say you don't remember me much,  
though, as you went away when you  
were....ooh, eighteen, it was and I  
have only seen the odd glimpse of  
you when you've popped back  
occasionally? And what's the  
problem about your dad? Of course  
he likes you back!

HELEN

I think that he feels that we are  
in his way  
(embarrassedly)

SHIRLEEN

Nohhhh!..... Why should he feel  
that, then? Its just a pigment  
(sic) of your imagination

HELEN

Oh, just that he seems a little  
irritable with us

SHIRLEEN

Nohhh....and why should that be  
then, love?

HELEN

I, I don't really know...I think  
tha.....

SHIRLEEN

(Harsh voice: totally  
different from that used  
with H and looking up for  
a while, towards Ralph)  
Have you done the cows then and  
what about the parlour lights?!

Ralph goes out. Shirleen bends her head confidingly back  
towards Helen and returning to her honeyed social tones.

SHIRLEEN (CONT'D)

Tut, tut,..... Your dad loves  
you.....Maybe it's the beer.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

26

SHIRLEEN (CONT'D)

It sometimes makes them tetchy. But a man's got to have something.

HELEN

Oh no, my father isn't a .....he doesn't drink. It's not that!..... I'm sure..... I think that he just gets a little tired.

SHIRLEEN

Oh, is that it, then? He just needs a worker: a man for the outdoors. Mind you, you can't trust them, you know. We had several of them.....in the parlour, you know, and doing deliveries, when we were young. But, crafty as snakes! You couldn't take your eyes off them. I could milk a cow, by hand in twice the time them great wazzacks did it!

HELEN

Oh, I don't think that my dad could afford an employee, they cost so much now, you know..

SHIRLEEN

No, indeed! (Sniff) We kept our two workers up in the loft, and they had the scrapings off the joint, with lots of turnip the sheep didn't want. It didn't cost me that much,..... except the excersize of my tongue, you know.

(Sniffs)

My Chip was too easy with them and they took advantage when they could. I had to keep them in order. Its not that I believe in subjuging (sic) people though! There's employer's (sic) rights you know!

HELEN

I'll tell my dad to think about it, Shirleen.

SHIRLEEN

You do that..... Now,..... tell me! Has your.....

Ralph comes in the door and turns to collect Helen's coat off the chair

RALPH

.....If you've finished with Helen, Mother, I'm taking her out to see our waterfall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

26

SHIRLEEN

Oh, well..... we must have a chat  
another time, now you're home,  
love!

HELENE

Er, thanks, Shirleen.... for the  
tea. It was very kind of you and I  
liked your scones, very much...

SHIRLEEN

Then I must...

Ralph helps Helen into her coat

RALPH

....See you soon, mum!

DAY- ROCKY INCLINE APPROACHING A WATERFALL

RALPH (CONT'D)

Sorry about mam. She so rarely sees  
anyone, with her knees, you know,  
that she likes to hear all the  
gossip.

HELEN

Oh, I don't have any gossip. I'm  
not really part of the farming  
'community', you see.

RALPH

Well, you must handle leases, and  
stuff for the farmers around here?

HELEN

Yes, but, 75% of my chats are with  
the girls in the office, when I'm  
not out showing a client around a  
property.

RALPH

Do you sell many farms, then?

HELEN

Quite a few, and they take some  
showing, I can tell you. Some of  
them are really quite large and  
it's a full day showing someone  
around a six hundred acre farm.

RALPH

So you're good at walking, are you?

Helen smiles and looks at her unsuitable nice shoes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

26

HELEN

Well, work's work, isn't it?

Ralph looks up at another incline with exasperation.

RALPH

Would you like to come to the local  
botanic gardens with me one day?

HELEN

(Somewhat rushedly) )  
Oh, no!...Er, thank you, Ralph,  
but, no..er, just not at the moment.

RALPH

You have a lot on at work, then,  
Helen?

HELEN

Yes! Rushed off my feet! Perhaps  
some other time...

(Helen looks down, embarrassedly.)

RALPH

(Chagrined)  
Yes, yes. Of course, then. Some  
other time

HELEN

Oh, look! There's the waterfall

Helen walks off.

SHOT OF THE WATERFALL

EXT. LOW HILL FARM/GATEWAY - DAY

27

Helen driving out

Helen drives down the lane and sees Ralph working in the  
field. He gives her a big cheery wave and smile. Helen is a  
bit more cool, in her wave and she smiles embarrassedly.

INT. EDWARD'S FARM/SITTING ROOM - DAY

28

(Fleur, in sweat pants, tee shirt, and bare feet is reading  
in the arm chair)

The phone goes and Fleur answers it

FLEUR

Hello, Low Hill?.....Yeh, hello  
Megan  
(sounds reluctant)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

28

FLEUR (CONT'D)

.....yeh, I know you didn't want to,  
but you did...I know.....I  
know!.....Want  
what?.....But that was Gran's,  
she gave it to me.....well,  
that's not my fault...I don't see  
how Gran's chain would make you  
feel better, anyway.....It's all  
I've got left of Gran, I don't w...

Grandad comes in and nods at Fleur

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Oh,...I... I'd better go, Megan.  
Grandad wants his tea

Puts phone down and turns away looking unhappy.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

29

Helen and Fleur (Jeans and T shirts) are standing in the  
queue. Shirleen comes into the shop with Ralph

SHIRLEEN

There you are then, dear!

HELEN

Oh, hello, Shirleen. How nice to  
see you.....and you, Ralph.

SHIRLEEN

Yes, we're just off to the choir  
meeting and this is your daughter,  
then? I've only ever seen her a  
couple of times from a distance on  
your flying visits.

HELEN

Yes, Shirleen, this is Fleur.  
Fleur, these are our next door-but-  
one neighbours, Shirleen, and  
Ralph, her son.

FLEUR

(Shyly)

Hello

SHIRLEEN

Oh, but she's a chip off the old  
block. She's just like your dad! I  
can see him!

RALPH

(Rescuing Fleur)

How are you finding your new  
school, Fleur?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

29

FLEUR

Um, it's OK, thank you

Smiles and looks down, her tic starting

SHIRLEEN

Oh, Fleur, what do you do of an evening, when your mum is out?

FLEUR

Nothing much, Mrs. Evans

SHIRLEEN

Call me Shirleen, love! Well, will you come with me to our choir meeting, just once a week, as we're very short of high voices.....sopranos, you know?

FLEUR

Don't you have to stand on stage and stuff?

SHIRLEEN

We do give a little concert, once a year, but if you want, love, you can stand at the back with me, and we'll be quite invisible!

FLEUR

Oh, well,..... um, yes please..... if that's alright with mum.....is it, mum?

HELEN

Of course it is, darling. I think that it's an excellent idea. Thanks for this, Shirleen.

Turns to Ralph

HELEN (CONT'D)

Will you be picking her up, Ralph?

RALPH

Yes, of course, we'll just drop in on our way there. I'll "email" you both the time, etc.

HELEN

Thanks. Thanks, both of you.

FLEUR

Yes, thank you, Shirleen.

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY

30

Helen and Fleur are about to go into a shop, when their access is blocked by the person coming out. It is Nigel, much to Helen's distaste

NIGEL

Well, it's Helen! Hello, dearie.  
 (Ignores Fleur)  
 I'm still waiting to hear from you  
 since our lovely night out!

Helen clearly uninterested and wanting to escape

HELEN

oh, er, hello, Nigel.

NIGEL

We had a lovely time didn't we?  
 You're just the sort of woman that  
 I like. You look really good in a  
 classy restaurant, which is always  
 what I take my ladies to.....

HELEN

Sorry, Nigel, but I really must get  
 this shopping as my father is  
 waiting for his supplies.

She attempts to edge around Nigel, who blocks her in the doorway.

NIGEL

No problem, my dear. You just tell  
 me when we are getting it together  
 again, egh? I'm just on the way to  
 see my franchisor. He's to show me  
 around in his black Mazerati... A  
 bit of a Le Mans spin .. Hmm hmmm?

HELEN

Um, yes.... bye. We'll sort  
 something out.

Manages to push past him into the shop and Fleur dives past too.

NIGEL

Yes, well.....No need to rush, is  
 there? We're office pals now.  
 (He is rather put out)

INT. INSIDE THE SHOP - DAY

31

Fleur gets hold of a trolley and manoeuvres it in to the aisle where Helen is selecting vegetables.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

31

FLEUR

Muuuum! Where did you get that creep?

Helen selects vegetables and puts them into the trolley while saying.

HELEN

His name is Nigel, and he is the franchisee for our estate agency. He's very well off, but he has a bit of a thing for the guy who owns the franchise's lifestyle.

FLEUR

What? He's gay?

HELEN

No, silly! He likes the guy's Mazerati...I think he wants one himself.

Eughw! I don't care if he wants Microsoft, he's just the biggest creep out! You didn't let him kiss you, did you, mum?

HELEN

Fleur! Just you mind your own business and don't be so disgusting!

FLEUR

I'm not the one who is disgusting: he is!

HELEN

Finding a respectable, decent man, in your later years isn't so easy you know, Fleur. I could do without the comment.

FLEUR

Just so long as I don't end up with a creep for my step dad, mum!

Helen Sighs

INT. SCHOOL/CORRIDOR - DAY

32

Fleur walking along corridor when suddenly Cara-Lou comes up behind her and yanks Fleur's hair, holding on to it.

Fleur desperately holds on to her hair roots.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

32

FLEUR

Owww! Owww! Let go! Ooowwww!

CARA-LOU

(tight short skirt,  
heels, hair up, very  
tight tee shirt)

Changes her attack to Fleur's bag, snatching it from Fleur's shoulders.

CARA-LOU (CONT'D)

Sooooo, stolen my bag again, have  
we? (Holding it up out of reach)

FLEUR

You know it's not your bag! It's my  
bag and.....

CARA-LOU

(Sneering threateningly  
and using a menacing  
voice.)You trying to get funny with me  
again, Hargreaves?

CARA-LOUs two cronies appear by her side (aggressive, thick, slutty looking) and leer threateningly at Fleur

FLEUR

It's just.....no...no...

CARA-LOU

Say "I'm sorry" and then I'll give  
your bag back

FLEUR

(Mutters)

Sorry...

CARA-LOU

Bit louder?

FLEUR

Sorry

Cara-Lou throws bag down the corridor and saunters off hooting with laughter with her cronies.

EXT. VILLAGE HALL - EVENING (LIGHT)

33

Ralph, Shirleen and Fleur, plus another man: the Choir master, Derek, who is breezily camp, with an impeccable neat clothes, are talking while the choir are taking their leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

33

DEREK (CHOIRMASTER)

Well, thank you for coming,..... was it 'Fleur'?

FLEUR

Yes, Mr. Jones.

DEREK

Call me Derek, please, love! And have you had vocal lessons, previously, Fleur?

FLEUR

No.....I haven't.

DEREK

But, perhaps you've sung in choirs before, then?

Shirleen puts her arm around Fleur's shoulders

SHIRLEEN

No, really, it's her first time in a choir, isn't it, love?

FLEUR

(looks a bit embarrassed)

Yes

DEREK

Well, you've done a good job finding us such a very fine soprano, Shirleen. You don't often get this quality of voice in one so young! Her timbre is so rich! She has a natural vibrato and her command of the top register is effortless!

Derek turns to Fleur

DEREK (CONT'D)

You sing like a little nightingale, my dear!

FLEUR

(Smiles, blushes and looks down. Her tic appears a little)

(whispers)

Thank you.

RALPH

Well, if you'll excuse us, Derek, I'll take the ladies home, now, as Fleur's mum will be expecting her. Thank you for the work out. We'll see you next week.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

33

Derek helps Shirleen on with her cardigan.

DEREK

Oh, indeed

Derek smiling, waving, and walking away.

SHIRLEEN

Wellllll...You've made quite an impression, there, Fleur! He'll be choosing you for one of his apacella (sic) groups soon.

They turn and leave.

INT. LOW HILL FARM/ SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

34

Phone rings. Helen comes into the room, calling out

HELEN

I'll go dad!

Helen picks up the phone.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Hello, Low Hill....Oh.... Hello Nigel  
(looks depressed)  
...Um, well...not this week, Nigel.  
I'm afraid that we've got a lot on.  
Oh, next? Oh, not Tuesday, I've  
got yoga ...ummm.....ummmm...Well, it's  
just that I'm so busy at the  
moment. Can we just leave it and  
I'll give you a ring when I'm  
free.....No! I'm not avoiding  
you!.....I don't have a type!  
...No!.....No!.....There is no  
one else. Look, we'll talk next  
week. I don't know....perhaps. I've  
got to go now, Nigel. My dad's  
waiting. Ok, sorry...yes, I  
am...sorry, OK. Goodbye...

Helen puts phone down.

HELEN (CONT'D)

...wheewwwyyy

Helen blows a raspberry

HELEN (CONT'D)

...Absolutely not again! No...I've  
had enough of him already!..and I'm  
stuck working with him.

Helen walks out of the room irritatedly.

INT. LOW HILL FARM/ SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

35

Helen sitting in armchair drinking the dregs of a wine glass and pouring another. Fleur working at the table

HELEN

(She's a bit tiddly)

Take your elbows off!

FLEUR

Huh?

HELEN

You heard, take your elbows off the table! How many times must I tell you?

FLEUR

(Looks mystified) )

You've only just mentioned it, Mum!

HELEN

What do you mean only just mentioned it? I've been going on about it for years!

FLEUR

No, I mean tonight.

HELEN

Then do it!

FLEUR

Sorry Mu...

HELEN

...and your dad phoned. He keeps saying that he had nothing to do with that Julie woman. WHAT were they doing? Were they actually in bed together?

Fleur looks uncomfortable

FLEUR

Yeh, they were...

HELEN

I mean without any clothes on, you know...

FLEUR

Mummmmm, it's embarrassing...yeh...you know...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

35

HELEN

Oh, well..... Anyway..... I had to hang your school uniform up, this evening. This is the last time I will tell you about your room...

FLEUR

But, you sent me to get the bread and then I had to lay the table when I got back...and then it was tea. I would have hung them up afterwards!

HELEN

Don't you "Would have" me.....I've had enough of your sauce, young lady. You can go up to your room!

FLEUR

But Mu...

HELEN

Up!

Fleur leaves the room, angrily, outraged at the treatment she has received.

INT. A HOUSE/SITTING ROOM - DAY

36

Helen showing a man and a woman around. They are just entering the sitting room

Helen (walking in first and gesticulating):....

HELEN

and this, of course, is the sitting room. We....

As the couple enter the room, we hear a voice from the hallway

NIGEL (V.O.)

Cooee! Anyone there? Helen?

Couple look at the door perplexedly and Nigel pokes his head around.

NIGEL

Oh, there you are!

HELEN

Er, yes. Do you want something, Nige....oh, sorry! (Turns to the couple) Mr and Mrs Smith, this is my boss, Nigel Winterbottom.

(CONTINUED)

NIGEL

Ah, yes! I was..... (he moves forward and steps heavily on Mrs. Smith's foot, who recoils back rubbing it).

MRS. EVANS

Ow! Tha...my foot!

NIGEL

Oh, I do apologize, Madam (moving towards her with his hand out to shake hands and as he does he drops the pile of folders he's holding on her other foot).

MRS. SMITH

Ow! That's, that's my other foot now! (Rubbing it and looking astonished and hurt).

Mr. Smith moves up to Nigel, belligerently.

MR. SMITH

Say, what is this? You attacking my wife on purpose?!

Helen is murmuring apologies to Mrs. Smith and picking up the papers, while Mrs. Smith is rubbing her two feet and Nigel is just rubbing his hands and looking on.

NIGEL

Oh, good grief! No! I just popped along to see if you were up to...to the house.

MR. SMITH

What do you mean "up to"?

NIGEL

Oh, just making sure that you match the.....the level of the house...

MR. SMITH

....."Level"?

NIGEL

It's just that we sometimes get people who are not really able....ummm...ummm...perhaps the value can be a little above their...umm...um

MR. SMITH

What?! You're saying we're paupers who can't afford this little house? Is that what you're saying?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

36

HELEN

Mr. Smith, Nigel is just going now  
(furiously grimacing at Nigel to  
get out). He didn't mean that. He  
just.....

Scene fades out aurally and we see Nigel rubbing hands,  
apologising and bowing his way out while couple are angrily  
preparing to leave.

INT. SCHOOL/CORRIDOR - DAY

37

Fleur and her friend see the bullies and avoid them by  
ducking down another corridor

FLEUR

Come on, Abby! We're late for  
Science!

ABBY

Oh, it's only old Bedge. He never  
knows who's who and wouldn't miss  
half the class if they weren't  
there, anyway.

FLEUR

Yeh, but.....oh, oh!

Fleur grabs Abby and hides in doorway

ABBY

(muffled)  
Waassa marrer

FLEUR

Cara-Lou and her four fat  
friends.....again!

ABBY

Peering out around the corner  
She's everywhere.....like a  
disease!..... She been taking the  
piss about yer tic again?

FLEUR

It's not just that. Last time she  
cornered me, she snatched my bag,  
in the corridor, when there was no-  
one around. When I went to get it  
back, two of her cronies gave me a  
good kicking on my legs while I was  
trying to get it off Cara-Lou. She  
always goes around in a gang, and  
so I can't defend myself, or even  
fight back, because there's too  
many of them!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

37

Abby walks off along the corridor with Fleur.

ABBY

Yeh, she hangs around our village in a group of the morons, drinking and necking. She lives there, worse luck. Every time I have to go out for something, there she is jeering and stuff. You told yer mum?

FLEUR

Sort of, but I asked her not to say anything just yet, as Cara-Lou will just get worse with me. There's no winning, really. The teachers just say "Naughty girl. Have a detention!" But this doesn't stop a cow like Boggins! She just gets much worse, in revenge.

ABBY

Have you met her Ma?

FLEUR

No, why?

ABBY

Well, let's seeeeeeee  
(smirks) )  
Yunno how Cara-Bog is round and aggressive and has tattoos on her neck?

FLEUR

Um?

ABBY

Well, her Ma is half the height, twice the width, has blonde hair down to her bum, tattoos on her nose, and says Fuck every other word. The woman is vicious! And Cara-Bog was a late baby, her only one. Cara is the apple of her eye...yurchhhhhh !

Abby and Fleur make vomiting noises and actions

FLEUR

So, I suppose, Cara-Bog is quite normal compared with her mother.

ABBY

Mrs. Hargreaves, the Music Teacher, once told Cara-Bog to go out of her lesson, for belching in time to the song.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

37

ABBY (CONT'D)

Boggins' ma came up to school and the Head fed Mrs. Hargreaves to her. The woman chewed up poor Hargreaves and spat her out.....with lots of F...s! Poor cow was crying all afternoon! She couldn't do choir that day, yunno! My sis had to take choir for her. I tell you what, if Boggins ever laid hands on me, my sis would wipe her face off with a hammer!

FLEUR

Wish I had a sis like that.

They turn into a room

EXT. OUTSIDE WINE BAR - NIGHT

38

Helen (dressed in cocktail frock and high heels with handbag) coming out from a colleague's leaving party with Nigel following her.

HELEN

Tara then, Deidre! Hope you remember us in our new job!.....  
What? ...No, I'm fine: only had a couple of glasses. See you!

Makes her way, unsteadily, to her car, and fumbles with the lock.

Nigel leans across and gently pushes her hand away.

NIGEL

No, my dear. You really must let me drive you home....

Waves his finger admonitorily at Helen.

HELEN

...too much drinkies.

They both get in Nigel's car. Nigel drives very jerkily backwards and Helen look alarmed. Nigel smiles deprecatingly and changes gear. The car lurches forward and hits (loud crunch off scene) another parked car. Nigel looks horrified and Helen tries to hide a grin while getting out and waving, while getting into her own car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

38

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

View of road out of the windscreen driving along. car Driving a bit fast and swervy, on the road. Helen's face, peering into the gloom ahead, trying to see. The car takes the corner a bit late and narrowly misses a tree. Helen yanks the wheel around to avoid tree and breaks hard...panting and shocked

HELEN (CONT'D)  
 (Talking to herself) )  
 Must have had too many.....no  
 good..... shouldn't do  
 this....oh....two bloody miles in  
 heels!

Helen gets out, locks car and walks off, unsteadily.

INT. LOW HILL FARM/KITCHEN - DAY

39

Fleur is standing at the table and applying a paste face mask on Helen who is sitting on a chair next to the table.

HELEN  
 Just a bit more over my eyebrows,  
 love.

FLEUR  
 Britney put a face mask on last  
 weekend and she got it in her eyes,  
 and they all came up red and puffy.

HELEN  
 Well, if you put the stuff in the  
 right place, on my forehead,  
 instead of up my nose, piglet

Helen raises her nose worriedly.

HELEN (CONT'D)  
 it'll.....uhhhh!

FLEUR  
 ...Oops, sorry mum!

Fleur tries to scrape that bit off with her fingers

HELEN  
 That's OK, sweetheart, this is your  
 first go. I'll do you next, if you  
 want and then you'll look beautiful  
 for when you go dating.

FLEUR  
 Mmmmmmm!..... I'm only  
 thirteen!.....

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I know, Fleur, but you'll be dating before you know it.....just like me!

FLEUR

Yeah.....(looks down) but you didn't have a tic, mum.

HELEN

Oh, don't worry love. Just turn your face away when you're ticking, and no-one will see it.

FLEUR

Yeah, I do hide it. .... Anyway, look at who you end up with.....Nigel and Co.!

HELEN

Ah, yes, but you haven't met Gary, yet.

FLEUR

Who's Gary?

HELEN

He's rather a dreamboat. He's in software sales and can make thousands if he sells a big piece of software to a factory, you know. Gary's got his mortgage paid off and has two cars. I'm sure we'd be very comfortable with him, Fleur, love.

FLEUR

Cutting off two slice from a cucumber, at the table  
WHAT? I haven't even MET him and you're already thinking of marrying him?!

Fleur puts the cucumber onto Helen's eyes and stands back to admire her handywork

HELEN

Well, I was only looking to the future. I mean I haven't obviously said anything to Gary, yet. We have only emailed and Skyped. He's certainly no Nigel, though.

FLEUR

Yeh.....Well...you're done now, mum.

Fleur holds up a mirror for Helen.

CONTINUED: (2)

39

Er, you'll have to take the cucumber off, Mum. I'll think about having mine done some other time, if that's OK...?

HELEN

Helen removes the two pieces of cucumber and takes hold of the mirror, looking into it.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Of course, sweetie! Well done, poppet! You've done a good job.

Phone rings

FLEUR

I'll get it, mum

Fleur goes to the phone and picks it up.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Hello, Low Hill.....oh, hello (looks dejected)...yeh, I know...yeh...look, it's mine, you...yeh.....ummmmmmm.....well, I..

HELEN

Who's that, darling?

FLEUR

Oh, it's just a friend from school, mum!

Fleur whispers into the mouthpiece

I know. I'll think about it..

(louder)

I've got to go, now, my mum wants me

Fleur puts phone down and looks miserable

EXT. GATEWAY OF LOW HILL FARM - DAY

40

Helen driving out of the gateway. She drives down the lane and Ralph is working in a nearby field. He waves and smiles at Helen. Helen waves and smiles coolly.

INT. THROUGH KITCHEN WINDOW - DAY

41

Expensive car drives up. Fleur looking out through the window

FLEUR

Muum!

(CONTINUED)



HELEN

Shouts down from upstairs  
Is he here?

FLEUR  
(Shouting back up) )  
Suppose so. It's some dude in a  
fast car

HELEN  
Not "dude" darling! It's Gary!

Fleur answers knock on door

FLEUR  
Hullo

Bit embarrassed, and looking down)

GARY  
(Sports jacket, shirt, jeans, good  
shoes; good looking and he knows  
it)  
(Plummy English voice) )  
Well, hello. You must be Fleur.  
I've heard a lot about you, Fleur.  
Pleased to meet you

Puts out a hand

FLEUR  
Um, yeh....whatever...

(Fleur half puts out a feeble finger in a sort of wave, and  
opens the door. Gary strides through)

HELEN  
(Shouting down)  
That you, Gary?

GARY  
Sure is, darling!

HELEN V.O.  
Down soon. Just sprucing up a  
little! Get Fleur to give you some  
wine. There's a bottle open...

GARY  
Don't worry darling: I'm already  
tanked up and so I'm OK for a  
while.

Gary smiles, lazily at Fleur, goes through into the sitting  
room and throws himself on the sofa, seemingly, a bit drunk.  
Fleur follows him in and stands uncertainly by the window.

(CONTINUED)

GARY (CONT'D)

So, mu' dear, what do you do with yourself?

FLEUR

I'm at school.

GARY

Yes, but what do you do when you're not?

FLEUR

I've joined a choir here.

GARY

Singing? How very cultured!

FLEUR

Cultured?

GARY

All young ladies should have accomplishments to show off.

FLEUR

Sorry, I don't know wha.....

GARY

Never mind mu' dear: you're a pretty girl and all you'll need to know is how to smile and bat your eyelids. That's all we men really need, you know...

Helen comes into the sitting room.

GARY (CONT'D)

Ah, Helen, the lovely Helen! The face that launched a thousand ships! Just what I need to ornament my arm.

Gets up, takes her hand and kisses it, then leads her out into the hall. Helen seems quite 'taken' by the kissing action.

Come into my car...said the spider to the fly...grrrr.

HELEN

Oh, Gary! You're just as bad in the flesh as in Skype!

GARY

And as dishy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

41

HELEN

Tsk, go ON!....

Turns to Fleur, while putting on her jacket  
Don't wait up, darling. Grandad  
will tuck you in. Night, angel!

GARY

Et au revoir, ma cherie!

FLEUR

(Pointedly)

Night, Mum.

Helen and Gary go out the door and Fleur watches the car roar  
away

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Ugh!

43

EXT. A SHED ON THE FARM - DAY

42

Grandad drenching a sheep. Fleur comes in

FLEUR

Hi, Grandad.

GRANDAD

You come to give me a hand, then,  
love?

FLEUR

Silly, I can't lug sheep, can I?

GRANDAD

Ah, but you can squeeze the drench  
gun, can't you?

FLEUR

Noooo.....Really, I don't want to,  
grandad. It might bite me.

GRANDAD

Now you're being the silly, Fleur!  
These old ewes bite anyone?! Well,  
half of them would have to gum you  
to death, anyway, but they don't  
bite, bless them. Now if I was  
drenching the ram lambs, you might  
have to watch out for them head  
butting you, but I wouldn't give  
you those to deal with would I,  
then?

FLEUR

No, Grandad.

(CONTINUED)

GRANDAD

So where's your mam, then?

FLEUR

She's gone out with this new man

GRANDAD

Which one's that, then, egh?

FLEUR

He's called Gary and he's got a fast car and he speaks all posh!

GRANDAD

So what do you think of him, then?

FLEUR

He's a toe-rag

GRANDAD

You won't be wanting him for a stepdad, then, will you?

FLEUR

Ugh, I won't be wanting him for anything!

GRANDAD

You don't fancy any of these men from the internet thing for stepdads either?

FLEUR

Of course not! They're all weirdos. I don't know why mum keeps trying to find them. She's got this thing about finding a 'gentleman', but that's stupid..... just because they have a sports car and speak posh, doesn't mean that they're gentle, does it?

GRANDAD

No, yer right! You've just put your finger on it, Fleur. You just stay with your old Grandad and tell your mother not to go chasing these city slicker-types.

Gets up from doing his work and stretches backwards

Fleur gives him a hug

FLEUR

Well, I'm happy to stay, Grandad, but I can't seem to stop mum chasing another husband on these internet sites.

(CONTINUED)

GRANDAD

Gives her a squeeze, and sets off out of the shed with his arm around Fleur.

Eh, I don't know. She could get a Jack the Ripper calling in our kitchen, one of these days!

FLEUR

Granddad!

They go out

INT. IN GARY'S CAR - DAY

43

Facing Gary and Helen

GARY

What do you think of her, then?

HELEN

She's very fast, isn't she (holds on to the strap, anxiously)

GARY

0 - 100 in four seconds.....Grand Prix stuff, you know.

HELEN

Umm.....yes.....Could you just...

GARY

...What, babe?

HELEN

Well, if you could just drive a little slower, please.....I'd..

GARY

What?! Slower than this? You must be joking, darling! She can hardly go any slower, can you, old girl?

Slaps dashboard.

No, just watch this, for acceleration, egh!

Revs up and drives faster

HELEN

Oh! No! Pleeeeeease, Gary! Please! I really don't like it, you know!

GARY

Oh, Miss High and Mighty is telling other people how to drive their cars, is she?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

43

GARY (CONT'D)

You're saying that I don't know how to drive and you feel that you can tell me what to do, then, egh?

Revving up and driving faster

HELEN

No, Gary.....I'm sorry, I didn't mean that, but could you please just drive a little slower, as I feel rather ill.

GARY

What do you mean, ill, Helen? You're just fussing.....We're here, now, anyway. Go on!.....Pop out, I'll just park around the front where people can get an eyeful of my babe!

He stops and Helen gets out, looking a bit sick and frightened.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

44

Fleur washing up at the sink. Gary (chinos, shirt and sweater) comes in and sits down at the table

GARY

Where's your mum, then? Isn't she supposed to be cooking me my 'romantic dinner' tonight?

FLEUR

(off handedly, and not turning around)  
She's still in the shower

GARY

Oh, so there's just the two of us, then...

FLEUR

What?!

GARY

Gary gets up and comes around to the sink and Fleur  
...and you all chained to the sink,  
like little Cinderella

reaches out and strokes Fleur's bottom, caressingly

FLEUR

What-are-you...?!.....Get off you perv!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

44

GARY

Now, now! I know that you fancy me, secretly, but you'll just have to wait your turn. A man can't spread himself so thinly, you know, but you and me will just have our little secret, you know.

FLEUR

Or what?!

GARY

Or Helen will get upset, and you don't want that, do you, Fleur? She might even think that you are trying to steal her new boyfriend who she is so fond of.....

FLEUR

You're a hideous creep and if I want to tell my mum that you've been groping me, I will!

GARY

Fine, be it on your head.....your mum might have to decide that she better move back in with your dad, to keep you away from me, then....?

Fleur flings out of the room. She pauses, in the hallway, looking worried, and goes to her room: not her mum's

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

45

Phone rings and Fleur picks it up

FLEUR

Hello, Low Hi...oh, it's you. ....I know, Megan, but....., I know, OK, OK, YES! OK, I'll send it to you, but this is blackmail, you know! It's....yessss.OK..... I'll send it.

Puts phone down and walks away dejectedly

INT. LOW FARM/HALLWAY EVENING (LIGHT)

46

Knock on door. Grandad goes to the door and answers to Ralph

GRANDAD

You right, mate? You'll be wanting Fleur, then, eh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

46

RALPH

Yes, my mum and I are just going along to choir practise. Is she ready?

GRANDAD

I dunno with girls, like. They can take an age!

Calls upstairs

Fleur, Ralph is here for your choir. Are you ready, yet?

FLEUR

Calling down from upstairs

Won't be long!.....Sorry Ralph!

GRANDAD

I'm just finishing my tea: you go along into the sitting room, then. Fleur won't be a moment.

RALPH

Thanks. Are you well, then?

GRANDAD

I will be when I've got a couple of beers inside me!

Grandad goes back into the kitchen. Ralph goes into the sitting room and as he comes through the door, he sees Helen half sitting/half sprawled on the sofa kissing Gary, ardently. Helen looks up surprised and Ralph pauses on the threshold.

RALPH

Oh, sorry, sorry...!

HELEN

Righting herself, and tugging at her clothes, just a little  
No, Ralph, it's alright. This gentleman is Gary, he's just come for dinner.

RALPH

I suppose that you are the hors d'oeuvres, then.

HELEN

Silly! (Kisses Gary, on the ear).  
Gary, this is our neighbour, Ralph.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

46

GARY

Bored and looking around: not at Ralph, drawls  
How do you do?

RALPH

Hello. I'll just..

HELEN

No, it's alright. I'll get Fleur.  
I'll hurry her up.

She gets up and goes out and Ralph and Gary regard each other  
with hostility

INT. FLEUR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

47

Fleur sitting on her bed getting a necklace chain out of a  
small box and looking at it, sadly.

FLEUR

Bye, Granny....

She wraps it in a piece of tissue and puts it into an  
envelope, sighing. She looks out of the window at the field.

CAMERA ZOOMS OUT OF THE WINDOW AND WIDENS ACROSS THE FIELD.  
IT'S A LOVELY EVENING

INT. SCHOOL/A CLASSROOM - DAY

48

Fleur has her hand up

FLEUR

Miss!

TEACHER

Yes, what is it.....er...?

FLEUR

Fleur, miss.

TEACHER

Yes, Fleur, what do you want?

FLEUR

I don't feel well, miss. Can I go  
to the toilet, please, I think I'm  
going to be sick!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

48

TEACHER

Yes, yes, of course! You go now!  
Um,..... who's your friend so she  
can go with you?

ABBY

Putting up her hand and getting out of her chair  
It's me, Miss! I'll take her, no  
prob!

TEACHER

Yes, OK, then, Abby, and then come  
straight back when things are  
sorted.

Abby comes and puts her arm around Fleur's shoulder and the  
girls go out down the corridor

FLEUR

Oh, I feel awful. I've felt sort  
of sick and dizzy since  
lunch.....and sort of hyper...you  
know, giddy. Ohhhhh

she weaves a bit as she walks down the corridor  
...errgghh...I better be quick and...

She dives into the toilets and the nearest cubicle. Loud  
vomitting noises, then silence

ABBY

Standing outside of the cubicle  
You alright there, Fleur? Shall I  
fetch a teacher?

FLEUR

Ohhhh, no...I'm just throwing  
up!.....It never killed anyone. I  
can't think why I should just feel  
like this, just after lunch. It  
can't be the food, 'cos I just  
brought some jam sandwiches and you  
can't get foo...  
awwwgh.....(retching noise)  
You can't get poisoned by jam, can  
you?

ABBY

Oh, oh!....I bet I know what it  
is!..... At lunch, I got back from  
the serving hatch and you were in  
the aisle talking to old Mad  
Hatters about your Maths, remember?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

48

FLEUR

So...?

ABBY

Well, when I got back, Boggins-face was just leaning back to her table behind. I'll swear the cow had just put your juice bottle back. I asked her what she was doing and she said that someone had just knocked your bottle off the table and she had picked it up for you.....I should have known...the bitch! I bet she's spiked it with vodka, or someat!..... You're drunk, that's what you are!

FLEUR

God! Drunk? This is what it's like...whyever do people do it on purpose? I feel awful...ohhhhh!

ABBY

Look, Fleur, have you finished throwing up? We'll have to go to sick bay. We'll have to tell nurse, you know. You might have to go to hospital. You got the bottle, still? It's proof, that is!....What a cow!

Cubicle door opens and Fleur emerges looking pale. Abbey takes her by the arm and they go out, with Fleur groaning

INT. LOW FARM/SITTING ROOM - DAY

49

Fleur reading a book and Helen is at the laptop up to the table. Phone rings

HELEN

(picking it up)

Hello, Low Hill...oh, hello, Lauren. How you doing? I haven't hear...you what? What, Fleur?..... Megan?..... She WHAT?.....but, why would.....Oh!... A lie?! ...I'll.....look, thanks, Lauren. Just let me deal with this (sounds furious) .....talk later. She puts the phone down

CAMERA ON A WORRIED FLEUR'S FACE

HELEN (CONT'D)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

49

Helen walks up to Fleur and stands near her, with her hands on her hips

Apparently, you are being  
blackmailed, Fleur  
(sarcastically)  
You told Megan to lie about your  
dad!

FLEUR  
Mum, I can exp.....

HELEN  
This probably means that you lied  
too, huh?

FLEUR  
No, that was real, bu....

HELEN  
Oh, yes. One little girl lies about  
my husband kissing  
women.....stands to reason that  
the other one lied about him in  
bed, too!

FLEUR  
(Swallows)  
Well, I just thought...

HELEN  
You just thought that you would  
make up a disgUSting story and ruin  
my marriage, did you? (Shouting)You  
thought that you would smear your  
dad with filth, did you?

FLEUR  
Mum, he was always drinking and  
hitting us, anyway and I wanted to  
stop...

HELEN  
It was only the odd swipe! And you  
got hit because you were naughty,  
anyway!.....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

49

FLEUR

...Mum, he used to hit me because he 'didn't like the way that I looked at him' or because 'he didn't like the tone of my voice', or because he just thought that perhaps I was thinking things that he didn't like.....he used to come in the bedroom, and then hit me 'cos I woke up and then he said that I was staying awake listening, an...an...

HELEN

This has nothing to do with the fact that you lied. You lied and ruined my marriage! Get up to your bedroom!!

Fleur sobs and runs out

INT. LOW HILL FARM/SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

50

Gary and Helen both with empty wine bottles and an opened one, from which Gary is pouring

HELEN

(a little tiddly)

Look, you! I took the afternoon off work, so that I could see the Headmaster about Fleur being poisoned. You're going to make me late!....

Pushing his advances away

Gerrof! Honestly, you're all hands.

GARY

(also a bit drunk) )

I can be more than just hands, darling...mmmmm..

HELEN

Stop it! Look, I'm going up to get changed. You've spilt your wine on this blouse! I can't face the head in this, can I? I've asked him to bring Fleur down to his office and then she can tell him how ill she was. They actually poisoned her with vodka, or something you know, Gary!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

50

GARY

Now, hang on, there! I wouldn't actually describe what we've just had with our lunch as poison.

HELEN

It is, Ralph. I don't let Fleur drink alcohol. I don't want her getting the habit, and ending up like her dad, do I?

GARY

Don't you think that you may be over-reacting a little, darling? It's probably because of the stress of moving here and getting away from that swine.

HELEN

(irritated) )

Well, anyone would be stressed sharing a house with a drunken oaf, Gary, but that doesn't mean that I'm overreacting, now. These children are bullies.....it's not the first time they've had a go at poor Fleur, and now they have poisoned..."intoxicated"

Said sarcastically, and getting off the sofa and standing nearby

her and made her sick. I'm not having it! You haven't any of your own, or you'd understand my wanting to protect her.

GARY

Ok, ok! Keep your hat on! I was only saying that it seemed that way to me. Anyway, if you feel that you need to see the Headmaster, I think that you will need a father figure with you, don't you?

HELEN

What do you mean? You're not her father!

GARY

Father "figure", sweetheart.

Getting up and twining his arms around Helen

GARY (CONT'D)

...you know, the one who deals with all the horrid things that little women would otherwise have to face.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

50

GARY (CONT'D)

I'm here, now, darling. Let me come along and sort things out for you.

HELEN

No, I don't think that that would be an idea, Gary. You've been drinking...

GARY

So have you!

HELEN

Yes, but more than me, and it's...

GARY

Oh, so it's a competition to see who can be the most sober? I'm a drunkard, too, am I? Just because I happened to join you for lunch on your day off, with my little surprise of pate de foie gras and a little champagne!..... I'll know where to go with it, next time!

HELEN

No, I don't mean to sound ungrateful Gary. It was lovely. Thank you very much. I do appreciate your kindness in trying to help me, but I just thoug.....

GARY

Sooooo....?? Let me come along with you. I'm looking smart enough, don't you think, dear? (Gets up and twirls around). I'm sure that the Head will think um..."appropriate".

INT. SCHOOL/HEAD'S OFFICE - DAY

51

HEAD

Opening his door

Ah, Mrs.Hargreaves ....and Mr...?

GARY

Just call me Gary. Good friend of the family, you know: here to accompany Mrs.Hargreaves.

HEAD

Ah, yes. Uh, do sit down, Mrs Hargreaves

The head sits down, by the desk, at 90 degrees, to Gary

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

51

Now, you mentioned bullying, on the phone. I must tell, you that we are quite firm on this point at this school, and will brook no bullying. We are quite concerned to hear that Fleur has been the subject of this treatment and we wish to nip anything in the bud, as soon as poss.....

GARY

(Pugnaciously)

Yeh, well, nothing has been done so far, has it?!

HEAD

I am afraid that we only received the phone call from Mrs. Hargreaves, yesterday, and I immediately re-arranged my timetable to be able to see Mrs. Hargreaves, today.

HELEN

Gary, please...thank you Mr. Davis. Is Fleur coming down to tell you about what has been happening?

HEAD

Yes, she should be in the outer office, by now.

Presses coms

HEAD (CONT'D)

Miss Henke, is Fleur Evans there now, please?

(Voice over coms) )

Yes, Mr. Davies: I'll send her through.

Knock on door

HEAD (CONT'D)

Come in

Door opens

Ah, Fleur. Thank you for coming down. As you see your Mother's here.....with a friend.

HELEN

Hello love.

(CONTINUED)



FLEUR

'Lo mum  
(Looks disconcertedly at  
Gary)

HEAD

Now, can you just tell us what has  
been the problem with your being  
bullied, here, please, Fleur. Who  
has bee...

GARY

Yeh, you tell them Fleur! This  
pathetic school has been happy so  
far to let you be abused  
daily.....they want to make some  
noises now that we've finally had  
to complain!

HELEN

Gary, I...

HEAD

Now there really isn't any reason  
to take that attitude, Mr...er,  
Gary! We're all here to hel...

FLEUR

...It's about Cara-Lou Boggins,  
Mr. Jones!  
(Breathlessly)  
She's been at me, since the day I  
arrived. She's always jeering and  
mocking me, with her friends and  
she sometimes follows me through  
the corridors shouting things...and  
they kick me and ....

HEAD

What sort of things does she  
shout, Fleur?

FLEUR

Oh, they're rude words, but I don't  
want to repeat them, please, Mr.  
Davis.

Her tic is starting

HEAD

Ah, oh, yes.

GARY

(getting up)  
Well, you would say  
(sarcastically)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

51

GARY (CONT'D)

"Ah, oh, yes", because that's what all kids who are being bullied ever get, isn't it?

HEAD

Will you sit down, Mr...

Gary sits

Fleur, what was it that happened to you in the afternoon, the day before yesterday? You were ill, weren't you?

GARY

Gets up again and leans over the head's desk  
No, she flaming well wasn't ill!  
She was bloody well poisoned, and  
at your school, too!

Head lays a placatory hand on Gary's arm. Gary shakes him off and takes a swing at the Head's face. The Head dodges, grabs Gary's arm and twists it up behind Gary's back

GARY (CONT'D)

Damn it! Geddf! What? More blasted bullying from the Head, now, is it?

Struggles furiously while the headmaster marches him to the door

HELEN

Following them

Gary! For God's sake, stop it!

HEAD

Thunders

I will not be attacked in my own office! You will both leave immediately, before I call the police!

Helen starts crying. Fleur stands near the open door and looks horrified.

The Headmaster walks past them, strong arming Gary and throws him out into the corridor. Helen follows, still crying. Head steps back into his room and Fleur jumps quickly out from the Head's room, into the corridor. As she stands there watching her Mother and Ralph, go down the corridor, she suddenly hears a voice and looks the other way. She sees Cara-Lou and her two cronies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

51

CARA-LOU  
 (Sneering mockingly)  
 Oooeerrr! What fun, egh? Fleur's  
 mum is a gozz 'ead!

CARA-LOU'S CRONIES (TOGETHER)  
 Alccy! Alccy! Fleur's mum's an  
 alccy!

FLEUR  
 Leave me alone!  
 (Louder)  
 Leave me alone!

She runs off blindly, and sobbing, past the bullies and in the opposite direction from her mother. Pursued by shrieks of mocking laughter from her bullies.

OUTSIDE- ON DESERTED ROADS

52

Fleur's is running up a small road crying and wiping her eyes. She turns off onto a small track and slows to a walk. It cuts to her walking up a lonely field looking determined. She reaches the top and seems to reach a little calm as she looks about her. She then heads off and we see how far away from houses she is. The camera cuts to her climbing up rocks in a familiar gully

INT. LOW HILL/KITCHEN - DAY

53

Grandad comes in and Helen is just putting the phone down and looks worried

HELEN  
 Oh, dad! Thank goodness! Have you  
 seen Fleur?

GRANDAD  
 No, love. Why? Should I? Oh, you've  
 been at school, egh?... Oh, yes,  
 what happened, then?

HELEN  
 She ran off and I'm looking for  
 her.

GRANDAD  
 She ran off? What do you mean? Ran  
 off from the headmaster's office,  
 then?

HELEN  
 Looks a little shamefaced  
 Well, sort of, dad. Look, it  
 doesn't matter, now.  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

53

HELEN (CONT'D)

She hasn't come back! She wasn't on the bus and some of her classmates say that she ran out of school afterwards.

GRANDAD

"Afterwards"? What do you mean "afterwards"? After what? Did the Head shout at her, then? Didn't she come home with you?

HELEN

No, she was to have had another lesson, but apparently, she didn't turn up for it.

GRANDAD

Well, why did she run off, then?

HELEN

Oh, dad, it was just something that Gary did.

GRANDAD

What? To my granddaughter, then?!

HELEN

No...it was just...well, he took a swing at the headmaster an h...

GRANDAD

(Shouts) )  
He bloody what?

HELEN

He lost his temper a bit and there wa....

GRANDAD

(Still shouting)  
....Lost his bloody temper!? You mean he's been drinking, more like!

HELEN

Well, he just called around and I gave him some lunch, and then he came along to...

GRANDAD

(Shouting) )  
You took that creature you'd just met on that web thing to see the Headmaster? What's got into you? Are you a complete idiot?!.....And now poor Fleur has gone!?.....  
Well, it'll be your fault if anything goes wrong, then, won't it!!..... Phone the police, now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

53

HELEN

(Crying)

Yes, I will, dad.

Helen picks up the phone and is sniffing so badly that Grandad takes it from her

GRANDAD

Here, love.... (into phone) Yes! Is that the police?.....

EXT. LOW HILL FARM/OUTSIDE KITCHEN DOOR

Helen and Grandad leaving the house and going into the yard

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

I'll go round the farm (and mutters, more quietly) and then I'll go see the lake...

HELEN

Clutching at her father's arm  
Oh, dad! The lake!

GRANDAD

It's alright. Go on, love! You go down the village and see if she's there near the cafe with some of the girls, you know.

HELEN

OK, dad!..... (They go different ways).

EXT. RALPH'S FRONT TRACK - DAY

54

From a distance, we see Helen hailing Ralph in his farmyard as he is going out in his ute. We see her half crying and asking Ralph something, but we can't hear...[music]

Helen getting out of the car in the village and asking some teenaged girls something: they shake their heads.

Long shot from up a hill, seeing Helen's car far below, and Helen getting out and looking down the valley, she is hanging her head and crying

Grandad, down by the lake walking around the edge and peering in.

INT. RALPH'S FARM/KITCHEN - MORNING

55

Shirleen in her dressing gown, buttering toast at the table and Ralph is putting on his jacket, and gumboots by the door

RALPH

I've just remembered us telling little Fleur about that hidden stream at the top of Black Hill, last choir practise. I'm thinking that perhaps she went that way, Mam, for a bit of peace, like....

SHIRLEEN

Oh, anything you can think of, lovey! I think that I should perhaps be out looking, too and...

RALPH

(Firmly)

No, Mother: not with your legs. I'm not having you fall over on the hill, and having to be looking for you, as well. You stay here and man the phone. There's sure to be people ringing to find out what's happening. I can keep in touch with you using my mobile.

SHIRLEEN

At least that ruddy thing might come in useful for once.

RALPH

See you soon, Mam

Ralph goes out of the door.

SHIRLEEN

God Bless, son!

EXT. ON THE HILL/GULLY

56

We are following Ralph as he is scrambling up the more dangerous parts of the gully with climbing gear (ropes, bag of gear) thrown over his shoulder. He keeps looking around him. He reaches a rather large flat area of rock and we see that the floor drops away suddenly. He looks over the edge gingerly and sees Fleur curled up on a ledge just below him. He shouts her name and she looks up. He begins securing the rope on a large rock.

EXT. HILLSIDE WATERFALL - DAY

57

Cut to Ralph landing precariously on the ledge. Fleur's facial tic, is very bad. Ralph crouches and puts his arm around her.

FLEUR

Sorry, Ralph.....sorry you've had  
to come and find me, but  
(snorkle, sniff)  
.....Oh, I wish I was dead!

RALPH

(Shocked)  
Fleur!

FLEUR

Well, I do! Mum is making me  
miserable!.....she went to the  
Head ...and she had been drinking  
with that scumbag who was drunk..  
(snorkle, sniff)  
and, and he hit him!

RALPH

What the Headmaster hit Gary?

FLEUR

No!.... Gary tried to hit him, but  
he bent his arm!

RALPH

Is the Head's arm broken, then?

FLEUR

No....

Fleur is half sniffing and half laughing  
silly..... the Head bent Gary's  
arm behind his back

RALPH

Yo!

FLEUR

Sniffing and half smiling  
...you're not meant to say "Yo"!  
That's what black American rap  
singers say, not Kiwi farmers!

RALPH

Why can't I say it?! Gary getting  
his comeuppance.....yo!

He stands up and starts to bring Fleur to her feet

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

57

FLEUR

Yeh, but he boozes all the time and encourages mum to drink and then maybe mum will end up bad tempered all the time, like dad was, and where will I go then, because she will be terrible! Maybe I'll end up like dad, as well! Maybe there's drinking in the family and I'll inherit it!! Grandad's bad tempered after he's been drinking his beer, too!

RALPH

Ralph rummages in his bag for a harness

No, Fleur: you don't get "drinking in the family"...it's a habit, just like any other. I'm sure that your mum will have had enough of Gary, and I'm sure that she isn't an alcoholic, like your dad, so you needn't be afraid...and as for yourself, it's easy enough, you just decide not to start, love.

Wipes her eyes on his sleeve

Now, come on down with me.....Its just an 8 foot scramble. I'll tie you on and pull you up, but you've got to climb with your hands a feet too,ok? Step into this. Hold on to me.

Ralph starts to tie the rope onto Fleur's harness. 59

We pull back to see Fleur climbing back up the rock With Ralph pulling on the safety rope.

INT. LOW HILL FARMHOUSE/YARD - EVENING

58

Ralph helping Fleur out of his ute as Helen bolts out of the farm house crying and wraps herself around Fleur. Mother takes her back to the house with a bare thank-you to Ralph. Grandfather follows up and properly thanks Ralph shaking his hand. Ralph leaves in his ute and Grandfather goes back inside.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

59

There's a knock on the door. Helen answers it in her dressing gown

(CONTINUED)



HELEN

Oh, Ralph nice to see you. I must thank you agai....

RALPH

No, please, Helen. She's like one of ours. Of course we'd to find her...I've just come  
(looks embarrassed) )  
to have a word, if that's OK?.....

HELEN

Er, yes, yes...of course...um, come in

Helen brings him into the kitchen while moving around rapidly and swiping dirty clothes, pushing them in cupboards, etc

Do you want a drink, Ralph?...of,  
of tea, of course...

RALPH

Standing by the sink  
No, I'm not staying, er, thank you of course, but it's just.....

HELEN

Umm?....

RALPH

It's just that I thought I'd just better have a word, if you don't mind

HELEN

A word...?.

RALPH

About Fleur

HELEN

About Fleur?

RALPH

Yes, it's just that when I found her, she was crying...

HELEN

Oh, I know, I know, it was the headmaster, he was....

RALPH

No, it's not about him, it's about what Fleur was upset about...

CONTINUED: (2)

59

HELEN

Yes, the Head and Gary had a bit of a disagreement...

RALPH

From what I heard, Gary tried to thump him, but failed and got the worst of it...

HELEN

(a bit miffed)

Well, if you know what's happened, I don't know why you're coming to ask me...

RALPH

I'm not coming to find out details, Helen, I'm just popping round to tell you what Fleur was upset about...and it wasn't the Headmaster...

HELEN

Oh...

RALPH

She's upset by your drinking and afraid that you'll end up like her dad and then she will have to run away again and she doesn't know where she'll be able to run to...

HELEN

Run away!? From me!? Her mother?! Of course she didn't say that! You're just trying to make me feel bad.

RALPH

What would I do that for, Helen? The only reason that I'm saying this is for Fleur!

HELEN

You don't know what it's like trying to raise a child by yourself, Ralph! What makes you think that you can just come round here and tell me how to raise my own daughter?!

RALPH

I'm not telling you how t....

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Oh, yes, we'd all like to have a comfortable job and then just swan into an inheritance and feel that we can go round visiting the locals who are having a bit of trouble with their children and tell them what to do, all high and mighty like. It's easy to do it when you've none of your own!

RALPH

Yes, Helen. I've none of my own. ....I just thought that you ought to know what is going in Fleur's head, as it were. That's all.

HELEN

I know what is going through my own daughter's head, thank you, and I'll thank you, as well, for not interfering!

RALPH

Right..... Well..... I'll be seeing you around,..... Helen  
(looks disappointed and turns to go)

HELEN

(Starchily)

Thank you again for finding Fleur. We are very grateful to you. It could have been much worse without you.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

60

Helen and Fleur walking along

FLEUR

You know, mum, I am sorry about what I said about dad. It was him hitting us you .....

HELEN

It's OK, Fleur. It's a shame that you had to end my marriage this way, though. I suppose that I shouldn't have got us into it, though. I'm not very good at finding men, am I? Ummmmmm, I'm very sorry, as well, for what happened in the headmaster's office.

(CONTINUED)

FLEUR

Ummm...

HELEN

You know, Gary didn't really mean for things to get out of hand, love.

FLEUR

The only 'thing' who got out of hand was Gary, mum.

HELEN

Yes, well, I was mad at him for having a go at the Head, but his heart's in the right place...

FLEUR

What? Up his bum?!

HELEN

Fleur! Don't be so rude! What on earth do you mean?

FLEUR

Well, you seem to think that the sun shines out of it and I don't know why, 'cos he's always drinking and bragging.....just because he's got a flash car!

HELEN

That's not the reason why I love Gary!

FLEUR

Ugh! "Lerv" Gary?!

HELEN

Well, I'm 'fond of' him, anyway...

Fleur stops walking and bends down to pick up shells She is looking away, so Helen stops walking, as well.

FLEUR

It wouldn't have happened, anyway, if the two of you weren't ratted!

HELEN

What do you mean "ratted"?!

FLEUR

You know, mum, you'd been drinking too, as well as him. Why did he come along, anyway? He's not my dad?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

60

HELEN

I think that he wanted to show support for you and me, Fleur, and that's a nice thing. He didn't mean to get carried away...

FLEUR

I think "thrown away" would be more accurate? Anyway, I don't want him coming to the concert.

HELEN

What concert's that, darling?

FLEUR

We're having an end of year concert, at choir. Are you coming, mum?

HELEN

Of course I will, darling. I'd love to see you sing in a choir. I've never seen you sing before like that.

FLEUR

Well, actually, I might have a surprise for you, Mum.

HELEN

Oh, what's that?

FLEUR

Muum! It's a surprise!

HELEN

Ummmmmm!

They walk off along the beach and we see them from behind

INT. RALPH'S FARM/KITCHEN - DAY

61

Shirleen is washing up. Ralph pulls her out of the sink: takes her apron off and leads her into the sitting room. He sits her down and hands her a mug of tea. Ralph then returns to the kitchen and finishes the washing up.

EXT. LOW HILL/FIELD - DAY

62

Grandad is doing a task, and Helen walks up to him

HELEN

Dad?

GRANDAD

Yes, love?

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

I've been thinking about poor Fleur, you know.

GRANDAD

Oh, yes...

HELEN

You know I told you about what she said to Ralph.....?

GRANDAD

You mustn't take these things too seriously, you know, Helen. Teenage girls get upset easily, I suppose...

HELEN

No, I think that she's right, you know. I think that we do drink too much and it makes us tetchy, which upsets her.

GRANDAD

Me, tetchy?

HELEN

Yes, dad, you're like a bear with a sore head, when you want your beer, and then you're irritable afterwards, as well, especially when you haven't had any food.

GRANDAD

Finishes his task and straightens up, looking at Helen  
Oh, yes? And what about your drinking, egh? And coming home all times of the day and night with those buggers in flash cars who probably haven't got two pennies to rub together and are all smarm?

HELEN

What's that got to do with things, dad?

GRANDAD

Well, they've got you drinking more than you did. I don't remember you knocking it back like this....unless you've caught the habit from your 'ex'.

HELEN

I didn't know that I was that different, dad.....Anyway,.....  
I've decided to only drink at the weekends and then only with meals.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

62

HELEN (CONT'D)

This is for myself, as well as Fleur. I'd like to reach a sufficiently ripe old age to see my grandchildren. What about you, dad?

GRANDAD

What about me?

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

Will you just keep your beer to weekends? Then you're not a bear with a sore head...?

GRANDAD (CONT'D)

Ohhh!..... Owhhhhhhh.....Go on.....  
I'll give it a go...but you'll have to have lots of very strong tea on the hob, instead, you know, love.

HELEN

Thanks, dad.

EXT. GATEWAY OF FARM - DAY

63

Helen comes out and drives down the lane. Ralph waves, a little coolly and Helen waves a little and is cool, back.

INT. CONCERT HALL/AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

64

The front row of the auditorium where Helen, Grandad and Ralph and are sitting (Grandad is in the middle chair)..

HELEN

(turning to Grandad)

I wonder what the "surprise" was that Fleur told us about?

GRANDAD

I'm sure it'll be a nice surprise.

HELEN

(Smiles at him)

Umm.

Choir filing on-stage and starting the first piece. Their choral piece starts and shot changes to: a selection of shots over Kiwi landscapes of mountains, rivers, lakes, woodlands, sea, waterfall

Helen's face; she has been daydreaming and is suddenly brought down to earth by the

ANNOUNCER

"Now, Fleur Evans and Rachel Smith are going to sing to sing a duet which is called '.....' ".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

64

Back on stage; Fleur and Rachel emerge from the choir to stand in front of them

Helen's and Grandad's faces light up in delight

Facing stage; Fleur and Rachel sing a duet, with piano. Fleur sings without a single tic attack. Thunderous applause.

INT. CONCERT HALL/INTERIOR - NIGHT

65

Down on the hall floor; people talking in little knots, and getting their belongings together and leaving. This is at the end of the concert, and, in a long shot, we see Fleur coming up to her mother and grandad and being kissed and congratulated. Camera zooms in on their little group

GRANDAD

...and you never told us you were singing a duet, you little monkey!

FLEUR

I wanted to give you a surprise, grandad...

HELEN.....

....and what a lovely surprise it was, darling! Well done! I never thought that I'd see you up on a stage, Fleur!

GRANDAD

Our Fleur must be getting braver!..... and it were such a lovely song, too, darling. Oh, it was lovely!

Rachel comes up to the group and Fleur, seeing her, puts her arm in Rachel's

FLEUR

Mum, this is my new friend: Rachel. She said that she would sing with me, 'cos Colin wanted me to sing by myself and I was a bit afraid by myself. Rachel is Abby's sister, you know.

RACHEL

Hello Fleur's mum.

HELEN

Oh, Helen! Do call me Helen. How kind of you to sing with Fleur!

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

65

RACHEL

Oh, it's me as gets the pleasure. Fleur's got an incredibly high soprano range. Me, I'm more of a mezzo, so we go well together for a piece like that.

GRANDAD

Well. Thank you, love, for encouraging Fleur. She's never had an older sister, you see.

FLEUR

Yes, well, Rachel said that she going to be my older sister, as well as Abby's!

CONDUCTOR COMING INTO THE GROUP

CONDUCTOR/COLIN

Fleur's family! Delighted to meet you. I'm Colin, the choir's conductor.

HELEN

Oh, thank you, Colin, for the beautiful music and for training Fleur.

COLIN

Oh, it was my pleasure! Indeed, it was! And I so enjoyed working with Fleur, and with Rachel that I have recommended them to the top vocal coach, in the area. He came in to hear them practise and was so impressed with their abilities that he has offered to coach them gratis. If they show promise, he will enter them for scholarships to train as opera singers with NZ Opera..... if you are interested, ladies?

HELEN

Interested?! Fleur, darling, are you?

FLEUR

Oh, yes, mum! Yes, please, Colin! That'd be great!

COLIN

Good! I'll be contacting your and Rachel's mothers with further details. Well done, dears.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

65

COLIN (CONT'D)

And now, if you'll excuse me,  
people, I must mingle, mingle!

Colin waves his fingers while drifting off

RACHEL

(Walking away)

Got to be off, Fleur. See you at  
school, then!

FLEUR

Bye, Rachel! See you then!

Turning to her mother

Oh, Mum! And I did it and without  
my stupid tic, too!

HELEN

Of course you did, darling. It's  
wearing off now: it was only the  
worry, before.

FLEUR

Grandad

turns to grandad

did you see the lady who...

Helen's face; Fleur's voice fades into the crowd noises and  
music fades in.

Helen looking across the hall, to near the doorway, where  
Ralph is being kissed by a young woman, who then smiles at  
him, takes his arm and they leave

Helen's face which becomes disappointed and saddened, and  
then she turns away.

EXT. GATEWAY OF LOW HILL FARM - DAY

66

Helen driving out

Helen drives down the lane. She looks into Ralph's  
field.....and he is not there. She hurriedly twists her head  
and looks around the field, and drives away, disappointedly.

EXT. A HILLSIDE - DAY

67

Helen is doing some unaccustomed hill walking.....and in  
appropriate clothes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

67

FLASHBACKS WHERE SHE COMPARES HER DIFFERENT SUITORS WITH RALPH.

Her husband yelling at her as she sat slumped exhausted in a chair with a baby.

Nigel at dinner talking at her not even really seeing her waving his arms around. Gary laughing about his speed punching the headmaster, and winking and younger girls in a pub.

We see emotions pass across her face sad and annoyed. She stops and for a second we see Ralph outlined on the hill, with his dog doing farm business. He is too far away to see properly. Helen smiles, but he is gone.

INT. A PUB - NIGHT

68

Gary returning from the bar, with a couple of glasses of wine and approaching Helen's table

GARY

I got the tickets, then, darling.

HELEN

What, for that booze cruise?

GARY

Uh, huh.

HELEN

So, do we just sit on the boat all day, sail round Waiheke, and then come back?

GARY

Uh, huh.

HELEN

Is there anything happening, on the ship?

GARY

What do you mean? Entertainment?

HELEN

You know, acts, singing, or some games for us, or maybe a performance by a band, or something...?

GARY

What on earth for, doll?

HELEN

Well, won't it be boring just sitting in a bar all day, drinking?

(CONTINUED)

GARY

What, with your hunky boyfriend?

HELEN

Well, much as I enjoy talking with you, I think that eight hours talking might get a little wearing...for both of us.

GARY

Ah, don't worry, darling, I'll be deep in my cups and some of the chaps are coming along, too, so we'll have some crac.

HELEN

Which chaps are these, Gary?

GARY

Oh, just some of the chaps from the Dirty Duck....

HELEN

...But what will I do, if you're talking with them?

GARY

Helen, don't go on, there's a dear. A booze cruise is a booze cruise! Haven't you been on one before?

HELEN

No. I thou...

GARY

Well, now your Gary-Wary is introducing you to the delights of one, huh? I just borrowed your card for the tickets, that's OK, isn't it?

HELEN

What do you mean 'my card'?

GARY

I used your credit card: you know, the one you lent me to get a round, the other day.

HELEN

Well, yes...I lent it to you for a round, not for the cruise. You said that YOU were going to take me as a treat...why am I paying for it ...and HOW much was it?

CONTINUED: (2)

68

GARY

Now, now: no reason to get narky!  
It was only a 'thou'.

HELEN

A thousand dollars! Good god! I  
thought that this was the Waiheke:  
not Rio! Why is it so much?!

GARY

Well, I had to book for the boys,  
at the same time..... Don't worry.....  
you can get it back from them, when  
they're captive, on the boat.

HELEN

What?! You've spent my money on a  
pile of your mates, without so much  
as a 'by your leave'?!

GARY

No, not on them! It's just a loan:  
don't get your knickers in a twist!

HELEN

You said that this was to be a  
surprise cruise: you didn't say  
that the surprise was that I was  
going to be paying for it! You're a  
shit, Gary!

GARY

Now don't you get lippy with me  
girl!

Gary glowers, stands up and leans over Helen, threateningly.  
Helen, stands up, too, and storms out of the pub leaving him  
behind.

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

69

SCENE OF HELEN AND FLEUR PICNICKING BY WATERFALL. LONG SHOT,  
AND THEN ZOOM IN ON THE PAIR

HELEN

....so, anyway, love, that's it.

FLEUR

What, you're not seeing him again?

HELEN

No, darling.

FLEUR

Oh, thank GOODNESS!

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

You didn't like Gary, then?

FLEUR

LIKE him? Ugh, I hate him! He's a swine!

HELEN

That's a bit strong, Fleur! Have you anything specific against him, too?

FLEUR

Well, apart from being an utter greasy slimey git,.... he groped me

looks down a bit embarrassedly

HELEN

Groped! Where?! How?

FLEUR

You know!..... He groped my bum!

HELEN

How?

FLEUR

Do I have to go into it, mum?! Most people grope with their hands, you know!

HELEN

No, I mean, where were you and what were you doing?

FLEUR

I was in the kitchen washing up and he came up behind me and ....you know

HELEN

The swine!! What did you do, Fleur?

FLEUR

I dunno..... I told him where to get off, and he said that if I told you, you would be angry that I was trying to take your boyfriend off you and that sort of stuff...and so I didn't say anything.

HELEN

Oh, my love, as if anything that utter swine did or said would come before my little girl! Oh, I'm so sorry that that happened to you, Fleur.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

69

HELEN (CONT'D)

It's all my fault for letting that "creature" into our home! I'm so sorry, love.

FLEUR

Don't bother, Mum. He only stroked my bum. If he'd done any more, I'd 've set Grandad on him. I didn't say anything to you, 'cos you seemed so mad on him and I didn't want to upset you.

HELEN

Fleur, if ANYTHING EVER upsets you again, whether it's one of my boyfriends, or not, you must promise me that you will tell me, love.....will you?

FLEUR

Yeh, OK, mum  
(shrugs and drinks her drink)  
.... Shall we go up to the crag?  
(Looks up)

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

70

Grandad, Fleur and Helen drinking tea.

HELEN

... And not even a flicker of your tic, my dear. You see? I always said that if you found something that interested you, sufficiently, that that tic would stop, love...

FLEUR

...I know! Not even a bit and I sang all the way through. it was Abby's sister, though, as well...

GRANDAD

You might even be one of them opera singers that sing around the world and make records...and then you'll forget your old grandad..

FLEUR

I will not! I should always come home to you two. My home's here, now, with you and the sheep

Fleur ruffles Grandad's hair and bites her cake.

The phone goes and Fleur answers it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

70

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Low Hi....oh, Hello, Megan, it...  
 What? .....What's  
 terrible?.....I know you've got  
 a dad!  
 .....What do you mean my dad?  
 What you talking  
 about?.....What do you mean?  
 You're my cousin: not my  
 sister!....What do you mean "all  
 along"

Helen, by now on her feet, now grabs the phone off Fleur

HELEN

Megan, put Laurie on, now,  
 please!.....What do you  
 mean, "gone out"? Don't try that  
 with me, young  
 lady!.....What do you mean  
 ..... Bill?..... is your  
 dad?!.....Don't you bloody  
 well say that to me, either,  
 I'll..... (She turns to  
 grandad) She's rung off!

GRANDAD

Coming up to Helen and putting his arm around her shoulders  
 Aye, well, I suppose she isn't too  
 happy about things...

HELEN

What do you mean "things"?

GRANDAD

Sit down, Helen. There's something  
 I've got to tell you about your  
 Bill and Laurie, from a long time  
 ago. Little Fleur was basically  
 right about Bill, you know.....

Helen looks shocked and Grandad leads her to the sofa.

INT. SCHOOL/CORRIDOR-DAY

Fleur walking along with her bag and Cara-Lou comes around  
 the corner. Fleur continues past her, but Cara-Lou grabs  
 Fleur's bag, thus stopping Fleur, abruptly. Fleur kicks Cara-  
 Lou hard on the leg, grabs her bag back and continues walking  
 towards the junction (T shaped corridor junction).

CARA-LOU

OWW!.....You Bleedin' bitch! I'm  
 gonna get you, you cow....just wait  
 till my mates..

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

70

Suddenly, CL's cronies appear around the corner, and see Cara-Lou hopping, rubbing her leg and bawling...

CRONY

(Smiling with cruel anticipation)  
 ....till her mates kick your head  
 in, bitch!

Abby and Rachel suddenly step around from the other leg of the corridor

RACHEL

(Loudly)  
 I don't think so, brats!

She grabs one crony's bag, swirls the attached girl around and then lets go, so the crony flies off and lands down the corridor. Rachel turns fiercely around, glaring at the other two.

CARA-LOU

Bleedin' 'ell!..... It's 'er!

She and her other crony turn and run off.

ABBY

(Turning to Fleur)  
 Did you by chaaaaance, actually  
 kick that cow, Fleur?

FLEUR

Yes, well I'm sick of her always  
 grabbing my bag, or my hair!

ABBY

Yeh!..... Rachel...this girl is  
 starting to stand up for  
 herself!...You must be rubbing off  
 on her!

RACHEL

Good on yer, girl! You don't take  
 no shit from predators like that!  
 You've more brains and talent in  
 yer bum than they have in their  
 heads! Give that cow worse than she  
 gives you and leave us to back you  
 up if she's so stupid as to play  
 'gangs'.

They all walk off down the corridor.

ABBY

(We hear this from the rear)  
 So how did you kick her, like? Was  
 it a kung fu side swipe?  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

70

ABBY (CONT'D)

(Demonstrates) Or did you go for the full frontal smash...or did you do a heel hack (demonstrates) and then there....

(FADE OUT)

INT. LOW HILL FARM/KITCHEN - DAY

71

HELEN LOOKING THROUGH WINDOW AND SEEING RALPH WALKING DOWN THE ROAD.

HELEN PRETTYING UP HER FACE AND HAIR, LETTING HERSELF OUT OF THE FRONT DOOR AND SETTING OFF DOWN THE TRACK

HELEN'S FACE IN WHICH SHE IS STEELING HERSELF FOR AN ENCOUNTER

HELEN 'ACCIDENTALLY ON PURPOSE' STROLLING PAST THE FIELD WHERE RALPH IS COUNTING SHEEP. SHE WAVES, NONCHALANTLY

HELEN

Hi, Ralph!

RALPH

Oh!

Ralph is coolly civil and nods his head  
Hello, Helen.

HELEN

Thanks for taking Fleur to the choir.

RALPH

Well...I do it every week, you know.

HELEN

Yes, I mean, for having the idea. It's really brought her out: you know, her duet, and now these lessons....

RALPH

Oh, I knew that Fleur had it in her. She's a good girl and will go places, Helen. She just needed a bit of encouragement. I did nothing: it was my mother.

(CONTINUED)

HELEN

Well, tell Shirleen thanks, as well, will you?

RALPH

Yes, I will.

HELEN

Ermmmm.....Was that girl, you know,..... at the concert..... Is she, I mean,... are you seeing....

RALPH

Do you mean 'is she my girlfriend?'

HELEN

Yes  
(embarrassed, but determined).

RALPH

No, she's my niece.

HELEN

No, well, I mean, I was just asking. So.... umm.....er, what are you doing?

RALPH

Er...counting the sheep, Helen  
(puzzled)

HELEN

Um...no, er...what are you doing on.... Sunday?

RALPH

Er...doing the sheep, Helen..

HELEN

Could you maybe get John in to do it instead?

RALPH

Why?

HELEN

(Looks 'sheepish')  
I just thought that you, Fleur and I could go see those gardens you mentioned before, you know.....?

BIG SMILE SLOWLY SPREADS ACROSS RALPH'S FACE

EXT. BOTANIC GARDENS - DAY

72

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

72

HELEN, FLEUR AND RALPH. MEDIUM SHOT FROM BEHIND AND THEN ZOOMING OUT TO ENCOMPASS A LOT OF THE GARDENS, WITH THE MUSIC OF THE FOLK SONG, SUNG BY FLEUR AND RACHEL AT THE CONCERT, HILLS OF IRELAND, IN THE BACKGROUND