

Mother Stands For Comfort

By Georgie Plant

STELLA'S room is cluttered, dirty clothes and rubbish litter the floor, half-empty glasses and cups cover every available surface. A shelf of five gymnastic trophies and medals rest on the wall above her desk. The curtains still drawn. STELLA lies in bed staring up at the ceiling where a Marlon Brando poster is stuck to it. The bottom of the poster reads: 'A Streetcar Named Desire'. STELLA reaches for her phone and sighs at the lack of notifications. She drops it next to her and resumes staring at the poster.

STELLA:

I always thought that the worst  
thing in my life was that no man  
has ever ran after me and screamed  
my name in a passionate and longing  
way...

STELLA blinks at the poster, fixating on Marlon Brando's eyes.

STELLA: (CONT)

Essentially I would like you to do  
that, because everyone else would  
be shit in comparison.

She rolls onto her side and checks the clock on her bedside table. It reads 2:05. She groans and gets out of bed, towards her laptop and she types into Spotify: 'Hounds Of Love' By Kate Bush. She waits until 'The Morning Fog' starts to play. She goes back to bed and buries her face in the pillow. There is a knock on her bedroom door.

STELLA: (CONT)

No!

STEPHEN: (O.S)

Stella? Can I come in?

STELLA:

You will anyway...

On cue, STEPHEN opens the door, wincing at the mess. He stands in the doorway awkwardly

STEPHEN:

How are you doing today?

STELLA keeps her head buried in the pillow.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:  
Dandy...

STEPHEN:  
It's just that, you haven't got out  
of bed yet.

STELLA:  
Have I not? I hadn't noticed.

STEPHEN clears his throat awkwardly holding onto the doorknob for support. He then smiles at the song playing.

STEPHEN:  
I- I was wondering if you'd like to  
come with me to visit your mum  
today?

STELLA slowly lifts her head off the pillow to glare at Stephen.

STELLA:  
And why would I want to do that?

STEPHEN:  
I just think it would be nice for  
us to do together...

STELLA:  
Yes, let's make my the anniversary  
of my Mother's death a 'nice'  
event.

STEPHEN:  
I meant in terms of support. It's a  
hard day for both of us.

STELLA:  
Doubt it...

STEPHEN sighs and pinches the bridge of his nose, before wading through the rubbish on STELLA'S floor to sit gingerly on the edge of her bed.

STELLA edges away from him in disgust.

STEPHEN:  
I would really appreciate it if you  
could put whatever feelings you  
have towards me today to one side.  
I really don't think you're Mother  
wo-

STELLA sits up in bed and glares at him menacingly.

STELLA:  
Oh because you know what she would want?

STEPHEN:  
Please just try to be reasonable...

STELLA:  
I'll go by myself...

STEPHEN:  
Do you not want a lift up there? I could wait in the car?

STELLA:  
Look, Stephen, I just... Can you leave me alone today? It's hard enough without you...

STELLA waves her hands around before resting them on her lap.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Hovering.

STEPHEN blinks and looks at his hands, sadly. He then nods and forces a smile.

STEPHEN:  
If that's what you want.

STELLA nods and then makes a shooing motion with her hands. STEPHEN gets up and exits the room, closing the door behind him. STELLA lies back in bed and stares at the poster again.

2 EXT. LOCAL PARK. 5PM.

2

STELLA sits on the grass by a flower bed filled with colourful and neatly organised flowers. There is a bench just behind her with a gold plaque on the top reading: 'In Loving Memory of Anne-Marie Donnelly'. STELLA reaches behind her and strokes the bench fondly.

STELLA:  
Stephen kept harassing me today, saying he wanted us to do this together. I can't move anywhere without him asking if I'm okay. It's suffocating!

STELLA sighs and blinks rapidly to fight back tears.

STELLA stares at a bunch of red roses with a tag reading: 'All my love: Stephen'. She scoffs and shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (CONT)  
You hate roses... such a stupid  
idiot, he should know what your  
favourite flower is...

STELLA hears a car pulling up and she looks behind to  
see STEPHEN'S car, she rolls her eyes and groans.

STELLA: (CONT)  
I swear to Christ he's like a bad  
smell. I better go before he comes  
over and starts being emotional. I  
love you. And I miss you so much.  
I'll be back soon, I promise. I  
hope you're okay up there...

STELLA kisses the top of the bench and gets up, trailing her  
hand over it as she walks away. She gets out a cigarette and  
lights it, taking a long drag. She saunters over to  
Stephen's car. He looks out at her and waves, rolling down  
the window as she gets closer.

STEPHEN:  
How you feeling?

STELLA:  
On top of the world... I thought I  
told you I was fine going on my  
own.

STEPHEN:  
I know, but I just don't think you  
should be alone, today.

STELLA:  
So you decide to hang around a park  
like a sex offender?

STEPHEN sighs and shakes his head. STELLA stares at him dead  
in the eye and takes another drag.

STEPHEN:  
Look, would you like a lift home?

STELLA:  
Depends, are you gonna follow me  
around if I say no?

STEPHEN:  
Well, it's kind of the same route  
home, so yes.

STELLA sighs in exasperation and flicks her cigarette away and goes to the passenger side of the car and gets in. She folds her arms tightly and stares directly ahead.

STELLA:

I don't want to hear any questions about how I'm feeling or if I want to talk. Because I don't want to, okay?

STEPHEN:

Completely fine. But please do know that I am here for you...

STELLA leans over and turns the radio on to full blast, turning to look out the window. STEPHEN sighs and starts the car.

3 INT. STELLA'S BEDROOM. 3AM. 3

STELLA'S room is in total darkness apart from a small light coming from underneath her duvet. STELLA is under the duvet completely, sobbing quietly, looking at pictures on her phone. She scrolls through a number of photos between her and her Mum. She sniffs and continues scrolling.

4 INT. SPORTS HALL. A WEEK LATER. 4

STELLA is sat on the elevated benches over looking the sport hall, which is covered with gymnastic apparatus. She watches longingly at the young girls on the balance beams and the mats. She focuses on one girl practising rhythmic gymnastics, twirling around a ribbon in a sporadic way.

She watches the girl again she is now just playing with the ribbon. STELLA notices the girls mother, watching proudly from the side and shouting encouragement towards her. The girl reacts happily and grins at her mother and continues waving around her ribbon, attempting to do a cartwheel. Stella sighs and picks up her bag and edges her way out of the benches towards the exit.

5 INT. SPORTS HALL. MOMENTS LATER. 5

STELLA walks down the hallway, sniffing and wiping her nose. She stops by a trophy cabinet, containing numerous gymnastic trophies. She observes the trophies in awe, and focuses on one large one with her name engraved on the plaque. STELLA gives a small smile and touches the glass before walking away.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR OF STELLA'S HOUSE. A FEW DAYS  
LATER

STELLA is sat on the front step smoking, coat on and bag slung over her shoulder and keys in her free hand. She has her headphones in, swaying to 'The Big Sky' by Kate Bush She takes a deep inhale of her cigarette and then throws it on the ground, ignoring the ash tray next to her. She exhales and then gets up, placing the key in the lock. Her phone begins to ring and she sighs and fumbles in her pocket to retrieve it. Her friend: ELIZA is calling.

STELLA groans quietly and answers the call.

STELLA:

Hey.

ELIZA (O.S):

Hi Stranger! How you doing?

STELLA:

Oh y'know... normal?

ELIZA:

That's good! Listen, what are you up to tonight?

STELLA:

Not really sure, probably nothing.

STELLA continues to unlock the door and head inside. She drops her bag in the hallways and kicks the door closed with her foot.

ELIZA (O.S):

Good! Because we are all going to the pub tonight to celebrate handing in our disserations.

STELLA:

Yeah, that's not really something that concerns me anymore.

ELIZA (O.S):

But... it'll be all of us! Tom, Mandy, I think Kayleigh is making an appearance as well.

STELLA:

I don't know, El, I would just bring everyone down.

ELIZA sighs down the phone.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA (O.S):  
We miss you Stella. We all really  
want to see you.

STELLA:  
I miss you too, but I don't know if  
I'm ready.

ELIZA (O.S):  
One drink? if you hate it you can  
leave. But just come out for one!

STELLA doesn't reply, keeping the phone pressed against her  
ear.

ELIZA (O.S, CONT:)  
Please?

STELLA rolls her eyes and clicks her tongue in deliberation,  
she then catches sound of STEPHEN in the kitchen washing  
dishes.

STELLA:  
Okay, I'll come.

ELIZA (O.S):  
Yay! Amazing, wanna meet up in an  
hour?

STELLA:  
Sure... where?

7 INT. STUDENT UNION BAR, AN HOUR LATER.

7

STELLA is sat amongst ELIZA, TOM and MANDY. They are all sat  
in a booth, crammed closely together. The bar is full of  
other students who are laughing and talking loudly over the  
pounding music. Stella observes them all with disgust.

Stella leans over to Eliza.

STELLA:  
(Shouting)  
Why couldn't we have gone somewhere  
quieter?!

ELIZA:  
(Shouting)  
What?!

STELLA:  
(Shouting)  
It's a bit loud!

(CONTINUED)

KALYEIGH appears and places a tray of drinks down on the table, and then perches herself on the edge of the booth. The group all take their respective drinks.

MANDY:  
(Shouting)  
Is this the vodka and lemondade?!

KAYLEIGH squints at MANDY'S glass and then shrugs.

KAYLEIGH:  
(Shouting)  
Not sure!

STELLA takes her glass and sips it slowly, looking around the room again. She then taps ELIZA on the shoulder and makes a shooing motion.

STELLA:  
(Shouting)  
Can I get out please?!

ELZIA nods and shuffles across the booth to let STELLA out, she frowns at STELLA in confusion and STELLA pats her pocket where her cigarettes are. ELIZA nods and smiles sympathetically.

8

EXT. SMOKING AREA. MOMENTS LATER.

8

STELLA walks out into the dimly lit smoking area of the bar. She wraps her coat around her tightly and lights the cigarette she has in her mouth. She walks over to a bench and sits on the table.

TOM enters the smoking area, rolling a cigarette in his hands. He goes over to STELLA and sits by her. She hands him her lighter and he nods in appreciation, lighting it and taking a drag.

TOM:  
Moved to straights now I see?

STELLA:  
I felt fancy.

TOM:  
Risky game without a student loan anymore, baccy is just so much cheaper.

STELLA:  
Ah, gotta remember I have an inheritance now... which means I don't have to slum it.

(CONTINUED)

TOM:

Ahh you've finally become part of the bourgeoisie. What happened to our plan of burning the rich?

STELLA:

I had to put it on the back burner so my depression could thrive.

TOM falls silent and coughs awkwardly, taking another drag. STELLA flashes a fake smile towards him.

TOM:

It's good to see you, man... How is everything?

STELLA:

Fine.

TOM:

Have you done much gymnastics recently?

STELLA:

I don't really think I'm emotionally stable enough to be on a balance beam right now...

TOM:

Fair enough...Do you miss it?

STELLA:

Doesn't feel right without her...

TOM strokes STELLA'S back in comfort.

TOM:

You know we are all here for you right?

STELLA:

Yeah I know, but that will change soon. You've all nearly finished with uni and soon you'll be off in the big wide world. Congrats by the way.

TOM:

(Laughing)

I'm only moving to London.

STELLA:

London is far and you know it. As much as I would like you guys to put your whole lives on hold for me, I can't really do that.

TOM:

I suppose. But I don't want you to go through any of this on your own.

STELLA:

Yeah well...

STELLA stubs out her cigarette and jumps off the table, heading back inside, leaving TOM alone.

9

INT. STUDENT UNION BAR, MOMENTS LATER.

9

STELLA takes her seat back in the booth and ELIZA, clearly tipsy, puts her arm around her shoulder and rests her head on Stella's shoulder.

ELIZA:

It's just sooo good to see you again!

MANDY:

Yeah, we really have missed you Stel, So much has happened...

STELLA:

Like what?

MANDY:

Well... Kayleigh and I, Um, we have an announcement.

STELLA looks at MANDY and KAYLEIGH, who are sat together, holding hands.

STELLA looks at KAYLEIGH.

STELLA:

Did you knock her up?

The group laugh quietly and MANDY and KAYLEIGH look at each other and mouth something to each other.

MANDY:

No, I'm not pregnant, but we are gonna get married!

(CONTINUED)

STELLA'S face falls and then she frowns at the pair who are now smiling happily. She then looks around the other faces of the group who are each smiling at MANDY and KAYLEIGH.

STELLA then begins to laugh but quickly stops when she sees no-one else laughing with her.

STELLA:  
You are joking right? You're still children.

KAYLEIGH:  
I'm 22?

STELLA:  
Still too young to be thinking about marriage. You do realise this is a really horrible idea?

MANDY:  
Why is it? We love each other? And the government had proved they, in theory, love the gays!

STELLA scoffs and sits back, folding her arms.

STELLA:  
They don't love the gays enough to put Prep on the NHS though... You haven't even graduated yet, surely settling down is the worst thing you could do.

ELIZA:  
Oh come on Stella! It's fantastic news!

STELLA:  
You knew about this already?!

ELIZA:  
(Sheepishly)  
Umm, yes.

TOM enters back into the bar and sits down at the booth, STELLA points an accusing finger at him. Hold holds his hands up in confusion.

STELLA:  
Did you know?

TOM:  
About?

STELLA:  
The wedding!

TOM:  
Oh that? Yeah, we've known about it  
for months.

MANDY glares at TOM and ELIZA waves her hand across her neck, urging him to stop. TOM ignores this and frowns.

TOM: (CONT)  
You didn't know?

STELLA:  
No, no I didn't. Why didn't you  
guys tell me?

MANDY:  
Mainly because you'd react like  
this...

KAYLEIGH kicks MANDY underneath the table causing her to cry out in pain.

KAYLEIGH:  
We didn't even know if you wanted  
to talk to us. We didn't want to  
tell you and then-

STELLA:  
Make me sad by seeing how happy you  
guys are and make me realise how  
miserable and alone I actually am?

KAYLEIGH:  
No! I-

STELLA:  
Save it, clearly you guys have  
moved on and don't need me in your  
lives anymore.

TOM:  
Hang on Stella-

STELLA:  
Shut the fuck up! You're such a  
liar! You said that you were all  
here for me!

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA:

We are!

STELLA:

No, you just feel sorry for me and have been walking on eggshells for months. I can't remember the last time we had a full conversation.

MANDY:

It takes more than one person to communicate...

STELLA:

Oh I'm sorry, I didn't realise I had to put my grieving to one side to check how your bi-monthly water infection or how amazing your Sunday morning brunches are... which is probably why you only got a 2:2 because you were busy eating poached eggs instead of actually doing work.

MANDY looks at her lap, defeated, KAYLEIGH rubs her leg in sympathy.

ELIZA:

Stel, please don't be like this, we just didn't want you to get upset.

STELLA:

So you decide to not tell me anything? For God's sake I introduced the two of you! You know what? I'm done.

STELLA shuffles out of the booth, ignoring the protests from the rest of the group. She turns and glares at each of them in turn, her glare then focusing on MANDY and KAYLEIGH.

STELLA: (CONT)

I hope you're marriage is un-fulfilled and loveless by the time you reach 26.

STELLA storms out of the bar and leans against the wall, blinking rapidly to hold back her tears. She sniffs and walks to the edge of the pavement and hails a taxi.

STELLA is sat in the loft of her house, sifting through a cardboard box filled with photos and other memorabilia, labelled: UNIVERSITY.

The loft door lifts open and STEPHEN enters in his dressing gown with a sandwich and a glass of juice.

STEPHEN:  
Thought you might be hungry.

STELLA:  
You thought wrong.

STEPHEN:  
Well, I'll leave it here anyway.  
Did you have a nice time with your  
friends yesterday?

STELLA:  
My 'friends' are dicks.

STEPHEN:  
What happened?

STELLA:  
Doesn't matter.

Stephen nods sympathetically and places the plate down and glass down on the floor.

STEPHEN:  
What you up to?

STELLA:  
Looking at my Mum's uni stuff. All  
of these friends she had, not one  
of them has even called. Turns out  
it's not just my friends who forgot  
about me.

STEPHEN:  
This is what happens with life  
sometimes... people just drift  
apart. I mean I remember this  
friend I had in high school who had  
promised we would travel the world  
in a van. He then got a corporate  
job in London and I haven't heard  
from him in 20 years.

Stella sighs and widens her eyes with feigned enthusiasm.

STELLA:

Steve... I really hope you're not trying to exert some fatherly wisdom on me right now.

STEPHEN:

No, I just thought-

STELLA:

Good, because you're not my Dad. We just co-exist in the same house. A house that is technically mine which means you live by the grace of me.

STEPHEN sighs in exasperation and wipes his forehead nervously. He smiles at Stella, who just glares back at him. He slowly goes back down the ladder, leaving STELLA alone again.

STELLA goes back to looking at the photos she had in her hand. Smiling at the sight of her mother, young and carefree. She goes from photo to photo and finds one of a young man with dark hair, holding a cocktail in one hand and a cigarette in the other, pulling a face at the camera. She turns the photo around and reads the note on the back: *'Nicholas in The Cleveland Arms'*.

STELLA shrugs and puts the photo to one side and continues to dig in the box. She pulls out a collection of envelopes addressed to Nicholas, without stamps. STELLA opens one envelope and pulls out a handwritten letter, out falls a picture of a baby scan, labelled: 24 weeks.

STELLA'S eyes widen and carries on to read the letter.

ANNE-MARIE (NARRATION:)

Nicholas, please find enclosed a picture from the most recent baby scan. She's doing really well, strong heartbeat and the cutest little feet. Oh, and I was told it's a girl! Which I'm so happy about. I want you to be able to see the beautiful thing you helped create. All my love, Anne-Marie.

STELLA frowns at the letter and places it to the side and she delves into the box and retrieves more photos of ANNE-MARIE at university.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

The fuck?

Stella picks up the letter again and scans through it again, her face becoming more confused. She switches her attention to the baby scan, then back to the letter. STELLA's eyes widen and she crawls across the loft floor, holding both the photo and the letter between her teeth. She comes across another stack of cardboard boxes. She gets up onto her feet and starts lifting one box one by one. She tears open the lids and quickly sifts through them, picking up photos and then frowning at them, dropping them back in the box. Stella climbs over one box to find one labelled: 'Stella's baby photo's'.

STELLA: (CONT)

HAH!

STELLA punches the air, smiling and then tears off the lid of the box and delves her arms into it, frowning and biting her lip with concentration.

After a few more seconds of searching, STELLA sighs in frustration and picks the box up and tips it over the floor, hearing a crack. STELLA winces and throws the now empty cardboard box across the loft.

STEPHEN: (O.S)

Stella?! What was that bang? Are you alright?

STELLA:

Nothing!

Stella falls on her knees and starts wading through the photos and documents, she winces as she brushes her hand over some broken glass. She carefully picks up the shards and places them to her side, and picks up the photo frame which the shards belong to. It reveals a picture of ANNE-MARIE in a hospital bed, holding a new born STELLA. STELLA stares at the picture and strokes it carefully, blinking back tears. She wipes her eyes on the back of her sleeve. She exhales and places the picture down and continues to sift through the pictures on the floor.

STELLA finds another picture of ANNE-MARIE standing next to STELLA aged 5. She is dressed in a gymnastic leotard, with a medal around her neck. ANNE-MARIE is hugging STELLA.

STELLA drops the picture and puts her head in her hands, her breathing becoming unsteady. She rocks herself back and forth, moving her hands into her hair and pulling at it. She straightens up and observes the pile of pictures and then looks around the loft. She sighs and gets up to leave.

11 INT. KITCHEN. MOMENTS LATER.

11

STEPHEN is sat at the kitchen table, eating a bowl of cereal, reading the newspaper. He is quietly humming to himself. STELLA is heard running down the stairs. STEPHEN looks up at the sound and he frowns slightly, slowing his chewing down.

STELLA enters, clearly out of breath. STEPHEN looks her up and down. STELLA places her hands on the table and looks at him.

STELLA:  
Where did Mum keep my birth certificate?

STEPHEN:  
Umm, not really sure.

STELLA:  
Think!

STEPHEN swallows and takes off his glasses and sits back. STELLA watches him, wide-eyed, getting visibly more agitated.

STEPHEN:  
Have you tried the loft?

STELLA rolls her eyes.

STELLA:  
That's where I've just been! It took me to some very real places which I am not emotionally ready to deal with. But I need to find my birth certificate!

STEPHEN clears his throat and scratches his chin.

STEPHEN:  
Well, our marriage certificate is in the chest of drawers in the living room, maybe it's in-

STELLA runs out of the kitchen and bursts through the living room door. STEPHEN stares after her and then quickly finishes his bowl of cereal and follows after her.

12

INT. LIVING ROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

12

STELLA is bent over sifting through the contents of one of the drawers, causing papers to fall out. STEPHEN enters and stays near the door, cautiously observing her.

STEPHEN:

Why are you looking for your birth certificate? Is everything okay?

STELLA:

There's something I need to find out. Something about my Dad.

STELLA groans in frustration and pulls out the entirety of the drawer onto the floor, causing STEPHEN to jump back.

STEPHEN:

Wait, your dad?

STELLA:

Well, sort of, the man that donated sperm to my mum when she wanted to have me.

STEPHEN:

Has he gotten in contact?

STELLA:

Nope, I need to find who he is. I found something in the loft about him and I need to make sure it's him for sure.

STEPHEN:

What did you find?

STELLA is now on her hands and knees again, sifting through the documents on the floor.

STELLA:

A letter my mum sent to him when she was pregnant with me. She has told me stories, but she has never said his name. Or never said that she had contact with him. But she had! Kind of anyway. So I just need to make sure.

STELLA stops and looks up at STEPHEN sadly. He nods sympathetically and takes a few steps towards her cautiously.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (CONT)

That was the first time I've ever seen his face... she always spoke about him, but I never knew his name or what he looked like...

STEPHEN:

Must have been hard to see that.

STELLA just nods and looks at the pile of papers defeated.

STEPHEN:

Forgive me, your mother and I never really spoke about it, but why was it that she never told you much about him?

STELLA:

Oh she told me loads of stuff, but at the same time, nothing at all. Like he was just this superhero that gave her me. As a kid you eat that shit up and don't really ask any questions. I didn't realise I had any questions.

STEPHEN:

Would you like me to help you look? I don't have to, but two eyes are better than one.

STELLA stays silent, clicking her tongue in thought. STEPHEN edges closer to her, slowly kneeling down next to her.

STELLA:

I suppose...

STEPHEN:

What's the significance of finding the birth certificate? If you've already found letters and such.

STELLA:

I'm not really sure... to see if he's on there? If it's official? maybe I could track him down?

STEPHEN:

Is that something you would want? To find him?

STELLA shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

Maybe? I don't know. Now I know he's actually real. It might be good to meet him.

STEPHEN:

Well, let's find the certificate for you then.

STELLA smiles at STEPHEN and the pair continue to look through the pile of documents. STEPHEN opens up another drawer and searches through it. He retrieves a photo of him and STELLA at ANNE-MARIE'S and his wedding day. STEPHEN is has placed his top hat on STELLA'S head, who is scowling in a bridesmaids dress. STEPHEN has his arms wrapped around her fondly. STEPHEN laughs and shows it to STELLA. STELLA just raises her eyebrows and gives a small chuckle. STEPHEN goes back to searching through the drawers.

After a few moments, STEPHEN pulls out a plastic wallet containing STELLA'S birth certificate. He glances at it and his face falls. He clears his throat and passes it to STELLA. She frowns up at him and then jumps up in excitement. She snatches it off of him and examines it.

STEPHEN:

It doesn't seem like your mum included him...

STELLA:

I can see that...

STELLA hands him back the certificate in silence and leaves the room, running up the stairs and slamming her door. STEPHEN winces at the sound. He then bends down and begins picking up the papers on the floor.

13

INT. STELLA'S BEDROOM. AN HOUR LATER.

13

STELLA is lying on her bed, crying. She stares up at her poster of Marlon Brando.

STELLA:

What do I do? Like before today I didn't even know a thing about him. Only that he was this kind hearted man who was really close to my mum. I was fine with that! Now I've seen his face and these letters I don't know how to even feel.

STELLA sits up and wipes her face with her sleeve and then begins fiddling with her sock.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (CONT)

Like what if he had been trying to get into contact with my mum, or even me? Maybe he wanted to know me? Those letters weren't ever posted... UGH.

STELLA throws herself back down and throws a pillow over her face.

STELLA: (CONT)

This is such a mess...

STELLA'S phone begins to ring and she retrieves it out of her pocket and looks at it to see it's ELIZA. She rolls her eyes and throws it across her room.

14

INT. KITCHEN. THE NEXT DAY.

14

STEPHEN is placing dishes in the dishwasher. He is whistling as he goes.

STELLA enters, still in her pyjamas, eyes red from visibly crying, clearly having not slept. She doesn't acknowledge STEPHEN and goes straight to the fridge, pulling out a carton of milk. She opens it and begins to drink from it obnoxiously. STEPHEN looks over at her sympathetically. STELLA stares at him, still drinking from the carton.

STEPHEN:

Did you sleep okay?

STELLA stops drinking and places the now empty milk carton back in the fridge. She then gestures down to her tired appearance.

STELLA:

Clearly not.

STEPHEN nods awkwardly and closes the dishwasher. He grabs his cup of coffee and leans against the counter.

STEPHEN:

Well... have you got any plans for today?

STELLA:

Not really...

There is a knock on the door, STELLA ignores it and STEPHEN places his cup down and rushes through the kitchen to answer it, humming. STELLA sighs and opens a cupboard door retrieving a packet of biscuits. She pulls herself up to sit on the counter and she begins eating the biscuits.

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN enters back in the kitchen with ELIZA and TOM following. STELLA glares at them all angrily.

STEPHEN:

Looks like you've got plans for today!

ELIZA smiles cautiously at STELLA, and TOM waves brightly.

STEPHEN:

Anyway, I have to go to work...  
I'll see you later Stella? Try and have a good day.

STELLA:

I doubt that.

STEPHEN pats ELIZA on the shoulder supportively and nods at TOM. He picks up his coat and keys from the table. He waves at STELLA and then quickly runs out of the kitchen and out of the door. ELIZA clears her throat awkwardly and looks at TOM for guidance. TOM just shrugs.

STELLA continues eating biscuits, ignoring them both.

TOM:

How you doing?

STELLA looks over at the two and glares at them, chewing slowly.

ELIZA:

Oh come on... I get really nervous when you look at me like that.

STELLA scoffs and then look away. ELIZA elbows TOM and urges him to talk. TOM rolls his eyes and goes towards STELLA.

TOM:

Look, we are really sorry for not telling you about the engagement and stuff. We just didn't want to upset you.

STELLA:

It upset me more that I was never even told. It felt like you had forgotten me.

ELIZA:

No! Of course not... we just saw how sad you were and didn't want to rub things in your face. You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA: (cont'd)  
weren't really talking to us so we  
wanted to wait until you were  
ready.

TOM:  
Granted, that was a shitty thing of  
us to do. But we felt like it was  
the best thing at the time. We felt  
horrible.

STELLA:  
I feel horrible. Finding out that  
your best friends are keeping  
secrets from you isn't the best  
feeling y'know.

TOM and ELIZA look apologetic. ELIZA moves closer towards  
STELLA and reaches to stroke her hand. STELLA glares at it,  
but doesn't push her away.

ELIZA:  
We want to be here for you in any  
way we can. We are just sorry that  
we haven't been very good friends.

STELLA:  
I haven't been great either.

TOM:  
Understandable... You need your  
grieving time. Anything you want...  
we are here for you.

ELIZA nods in agreement and STELLA smiles softly at the two.  
She then holds out the packet of biscuits to them, and they  
each take a biscuit.

15 EXT. SHOPPING CENTRE. A FEW HOURS LATER.

15

ELIZA, STELLA and TOM are walking around a shopping centre,  
ELIZA walking ahead, swinging a shopping bag. STELLA is  
trailing behind, dressed still in her pyjamas and a long  
jumper, hiding them. TOM is next to her on his phone, not  
paying attention to where he is walking, bumping into a  
young woman with a lot of shopping.

TOM:  
Oh Christ! Sorry!

STELLA laughs and shakes her head. TOM puts his phone back  
in his pocket, guiltily.

(CONTINUED)

TOM: (CONT)  
So, explain to me the pj's...

STELLA:  
What? They're comfy.

TOM:  
They are also clothes you sleep in.  
Did you not want to get changed?

STELLA:  
Ugh! You sound just like Stephen...  
When are you going to shower? It'd  
be good for you! How about you  
brush your teeth? It's fucking  
annoying.

TOM:  
That's basic hygiene...

STELLA:  
You're basic hygiene.

TOM laughs and hold his hands up, then wraps an arm around  
STELLA, squeezing her close to him.

TOM:  
Don't be a grumpy bum! It's just  
weird not seeing you wear a  
clashing pattern or some hippie  
bollocks.

STELLA:  
Most of those clothes belonged to  
my Mum though... feels weird to be  
wearing them.

TOM:  
Okay, I'm all for vintage and  
that... but mate, you need to get  
some new clothes.

STELLA:  
No, i'm fine.

TOM releases his grip around her necks and grabs her wrist,  
pulling her along to catch up with ELIZA. STELLA sighs and  
tries to pull back, dragging her feet.

TOM:  
We need to get her some new  
clothes...

ELIZA:  
Oh thank fuck... the pyjamas  
were... a choice...

ELIZA links her arm around STELLA'S and she begins to drag her towards a clothes shop, STELLA still dragging her feet. TOM goes behind her and begins to push her as well.

16

EXT. CAR PARK. TWO HOURS LATER.

16

STELLA, ELIZA and TOM are sat in ELIZA'S car, in a near empty car park. The trio are eating fast food, TOM eating quickly, ELIZA daintily eating some fries. STELLA, however, leaves her food untouched and is fiddling with the paper bag, looking out the window.

TOM:  
So, you found your dad?

STELLA:  
Not quite... I found a picture and  
some letters my Mum wrote to him  
when she was pregnant.

ELIZA:  
Wow... that's heavy stuff.

STELLA:  
What's weird is that she never sent  
those letters, she wrote loads of  
them but just hid them. I don't get  
why?

TOM clears his throat and hold his fingers up, chewing rapidly and swallowing his food.

TOM:  
He was a sperm donor right?

STELLA nods.

TOM:  
Maybe they had the deal that she  
would just get the sperm and he  
wanted nothing actually to do with  
you or fatherhood. Maybe she wanted  
to include him, but didn't want to  
harass him or force him into  
anything.

STELLA frowns and then nods in understanding. She reaches into her bag of food and starts eating.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA:

Sounds like a good point, maybe she thought it was just best to keep it you and her.

STELLA:

His name wasn't on my birth certificate...

TOM:

Makes sense.

STELLA:

But, this guy is my dad! Like no two ways around it.

STELLA stops eating and reaches into her bag to retrieve her cigarettes. ELIZA rolls down her window and STELLA lights one up and leans her head slightly out of the window.

ELIZA:

Are you going to do anything about it?

STELLA:

I don't really know what to do.

TOM:

Could always track him down...

STELLA turns around and looks at TOM. ELIZA clears her throat and STELLA quickly turns back around and leans out the window again. taking a drag.

ELIZA:

Is that the best idea?

STELLA:

It could be... I mean I could actually get to meet my Dad!

TOM:

It might help you a bit. Like with your Mum and things.

STELLA:

Do you think?

TOM:

Can't hurt.

ELIZA:

I mean it might hurt... It could be quite emotionally damaging.

STELLA throws the cigarette away and sits back in the car, and rolls up the window She looks at ELIZA and gestures to herself.

STELLA:

Please, hun, look at me. I'm already very emotionally damaged. What's a little more?

ELIZA:

Fair enough. But I still am not crazy about the idea.

STELLA:

Because you don't want me to be happy?

ELIZA:

Not at all! It's just, he is a total stranger to you.

TOM:

Oh shit...

ELIZA and STELLA turn around and look at him, TOM is staring dead ahead, wide eyed.

STELLA:

What's with you?

TOM nods forwards and they all look out of the front window. Walking along the car park is SAM, STELLA'S ex-boyfriend. He is carrying multiple bags of shopping with his car keys in his mouth. STELLA scowls at him, and crumples the bag of food together in her hand. ELIZA looks at her nervously.

TOM:

Look at him, cocky twat.

ELIZA:

I thought he'd gone back home...

TOM:

Nah, he's got a job at a pub now and um, moved in with-

A girl with ginger hair, who looks very similar to STELLA catches up to SAM, clutching more bags. SAM smiles at her and she takes the keys from his mouth and strokes his face. They walk over to their car and put their shopping in the boot.

STELLA:  
He has a new girlfriend?!

ELIZA winces and TOM just nods.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Let me guess, you guys knew but didn't want to tell me?

TOM:  
Pretty much on the nose actually.

ELIZA:  
Yeah, considering how bad you react whenever someone mentions him...

STELLA:  
Completely justifiable.

ELIZA:  
Look, let's just go. You don't have to see this.

ELIZA hastily turns on the engine and begins to pull out of the car parking space. STELLA picks up her drink and casually rolls down her window. ELIZA indicates and begins turning out of the car park, passing by SAM'S car. STELLA undoes her seatbelt and leans out the window and throws her drink at SAM'S car, hitting the windshield. SAM looks towards the commotion and sees STELLA, still hanging out of the car, flipping him off.

STELLA drops back through the window calmly and re-does her seatbelt. ELIZA stares at her gobsmacked and TOM stifles laughter.

STELLA:  
Worth it.

17

INT. KITCHEN. THE NEXT MORNING.

17

STELLA is sat at the kitchen table, drinking a cup of tea. Not having slept the night before. Typing on her laptop, shaking her head and scoffing. She is looking at SAM'S new girlfriend's Facebook page, scrolling through her pictures. Her face becoming angrier by the second.

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN enters in his dressing gown and pyjama's, yawning. He smiles warmly at STELLA, but she ignores him. he sighs and goes over to the cupboard and begin fixing himself breakfast.

STEPHEN:  
(Brightly)  
You're up early!

STELLA:  
It's not early if you've never been  
asleep.

STEPHEN:  
Why haven't you been asleep?

STELLA:  
I've been clearing a few things  
out.

STEPHEN nods along obliviously and picks up the kettle and takes it over to the sink. He looks out of the window and notices a large pile of ash and burnt clothes and items on the grass.

STEPHEN: (CONT)  
Um, Stella... why is there a pile  
of burnt things on the lawn?

STELLA:  
I told you I was clearing... turns  
out I still had some of my ex's  
clothes and things. I'm a firm  
believer of removing toxic energy  
from your surroundings.

STEPHEN:  
Right... okay well, whatever you  
need to do to make yourself feel  
better.

STEPHEN fills up the kettle and places it back to boil. He looks over STELLA's shoulder and at her laptop. Still on SAM'S girlfriend's pictures.

STEPHEN: (CONT)  
Oh she looks nice! Friend of yours?

STELLA slams down her laptop and turns around to scowl at him. STEPHEN backs away in fear. STELLA picks up her laptop and stands up, downing her cup of tea before slamming it back on the table. She steps towards STEPHEN and raises her finger towards him. STEPHEN clutches the counter for support.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

She is not nice... she is a discount Stella. Nothing more, nothing less.

STEPHEN gulps and nods in agreement. STELLA straightens up and leaves the kitchen, running up the stairs and slamming her door. STEPHEN exhales in relief and continues making his breakfast.

18

EXT. STELLA'S MUM'S BENCH, LOCAL PARK. THE NEXT DAY.

18

STELLA is at on her Mum's bench, smoking a cigarette. She has replaced the old flower on the ground with brand new daffodils.

STELLA:

So yeah, she does all this artwork that focuses on the female form? Apparently it's supposed to celebrate it or something, however it honestly just looks like lumps of clay with nipples. It's stupid. Oh and did I say she looks exactly like me?! Same hair, same style in clothes. I mean so much for moving on.

STELLA stops talking and takes another drag of her cigarette. She looks at the flowers and her face suddenly drops. She throws the cigarette away and looks apologetic.

STELLA:(CONT)

Sorry, I know you don't like me smoking. It's just there's a lot going on in my head. Which is actually what I wanted to talk to you about.

STELLA exhales nervously and clears her throat.

STELLA: (CONT)

I found some letters you wrote to this guy, who I think is my Dad. Well the guy that donated sperm to make me. And I'm just a bit confused what I should do? Do I track him down? get into contact? I mean, you never know. After all these years he might have softened and want to know me. He's probably thinking about me all the time.

19

INT. LIVING ROOM. THE NEXT DAY. EARLY EVENING.

19

STELLA is laid on the floor of the living room, not paying attention to the TV. She is still in her pyjama's. On the floor next to her there is all the letters STELLA's Mum wrote to NICHOLAS. She is reading them over and over again, mouthing the words.

STEPHEN enters, returning from work. He stands over STELLA and observes the letters. STELLA looks up at him and raises her eyebrows.

STELLA:

Can I help you?

STEPHEN:

Doing some sleuthing I see?

STELLA:

Yeah... Just trying to find out more about him. So far I know that he moved away to run a restaurant. He's a real career man. Also his favourite drink is IPA.

STEPHEN:

That's it?

STELLA:

Yeah... Mum just talked about me and her pregnancy all the time. She stopped writing letters when I was...

STELLA looks over one of the letters and runs her finger along the lines.

STELLA:

5. No more letters after that.

STEPHEN:

And she didn't send any of them?

STELLA shakes her head solemnly. She throws the letter to one side, rolling over to lie on her back. STEPHEN bends down and picks up one of the letters, he takes his reading glasses off of his head and places them on and squints, reading it.

STEPHEN: (CONT)

This ones got an address on?

(CONTINUED)

STELLA sits up abruptly and holds out her hand and snaps her fingers, STEPHEN hands it back to her and STELLA snatches it and reads it.

STELLA:

I never noticed that before! How could I have missed that?

STEPHEN just shrugs and takes his glasses off again.

STELLA: (CONT)

Do you reckon he's still there? I could easily find this! He might still be there! I could find my Dad!

STEPHEN:

Slow down a bit Stella...

STELLA looks up at him in confusion.

STELLA:

Why? This is great news! I actually have a lead in finding him!

STEPHEN:

Why all of a sudden do you even want to meet him? He's had no contact, no idea how you are. He didn't even get in touch when your mother died.

STELLA folds her arsm and looks at her feet at the mention of her mother. She sniffs and avoids eye contact with Stephen.

STELLA:

He might not even know... He might have wanted to get into contact. You don't know!

STEPHEN:

Neither do you! He's a stranger to you!

STELLA:

But he's my dad! He's not really a stranger.

STEPHEN:

He doesn't even know your name!

STELLA:

Fuck you! Why are you being like this?!

STEPHEN:

Because I think you are making a mistake. This won't end well. If he wanted to be involved in your life, he would have been. All he is a donor.

STELLA:

You don't get a say in what I do with my life! You're even less than a donor! At least he has biological ties to me! You just live with me and suffocate me every day.

STEPHEN takes a sharp intake of breath and looks hurt. STELLA places her hands on her hips taking one step forward towards him.

STELLA: (CONT)

You have never had the power to tell me what to do. You will never be my Dad so stop trying to pretend you care. I'm going to go find my Dad and he's going to be so happy I did. We might even partake in father-daughter activities like tandem bike rides or trips to B&Q.

STEPHEN:

I just think you should approach this with caution. You're acting so hastily. This isn't healthy for you.

STELLA:

You should have approached that outfit and hairstyle with caution. You're pathetic.

STELLA looks STEPHEN up and down and scoffs at him, smiling wickedly but then glaring at him.

STELLA: (CONT)

It baffles me how my Mum could have been so stupid to marry you. Or even look twice at you.

STEPHEN blinks in shock and opens his mouth to retort. But instead gives a small nod to STELLA and walks out of the room. STELLA folds her arms again and looks at her feet, kicking some of the letters lightly with her foot.

20

INT. SPORTS HALL. TWO DAYS LATER.

20

STELLA is standing by the fire exit of the sport hall, again, overlooking the young gymnastics students. She looks longingly at the apparatus and then changes her attention to a student practising her rhythmic gymnastic routine. The girl attempts to do a backflip landing in the splits and executes it perfectly. STELLA nods in admiration.

DAVID, her old coach notices STELLA and waves brightly to her. STELLA waves back shyly. DAVID makes his way over to her and extends his arms out to STELLA. She watches him and doesn't respond, DAVID clears his throat and drops his arms to his waist.

DAVID:

Well there is a sight for sore eyes! How are you doing?

STELLA shrugs and folds her arms, wrapping her jacket tighter around her.

STELLA:

I want to say good? But I'd be lying to myself. I've been shit.

DAVID:

Well, I'm glad you're doing shit.

STELLA frowns at him in confusion and DAVID pats her shoulder reassuringly. STELLA flinches a little but then relaxes.

STELLA:

How are they all doing?

STELLA nods towards the young girls, who are now doing a playful dance routine, holding each others hands.

DAVID:

Fair amount of talent in this group. Reminds me of when you started.

STELLA:

That good? I'd like to see them try and get as many medals as me.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID:

Give them time... I mean you could always come back and win some more, show them really how it's done.

STELLA:

I don't know... I reckon I'm past it.

DAVID:

You're 21...

STELLA shrugs in ignorance.

STELLA:

My heart just isn't in it anymore okay? I don't know what else to tell you...

DAVID shakes his head and pats STELLA on the head patronisingly. She shakes him off, this time scowling at him. DAVID puts his hands in his pockets and looks at STELLA.

DAVID:

If you're heart isn't in anymore... how come you still come here every Saturday? I see you... watching everyone. So there's no need to lie to me and tell me that this still isn't your life.

STELLA looks at the floor and folds her arms, she shuffles her feet. DAVID just laughs.

DAVID: (CONT)

I know I'm right. You miss it. There's nothing stopping you coming back. Just yourself.

STELLA doesn't reply. Defeated, DAVID sighs and walks away, blowing his whistle to get the attention of the other girls. They all run and crowd around him as he begins running them through the details of an upcoming competition. STELLA looks over at them and blinks back tears. She hastily exits the sports hall without looking back.

21 INT. STELLA'S BATHROOM. EARLY EVENING.

21

STELLA is in the bath, filled the to the brim with bubbles, the room is only lit by candles perched on every available surface. STELLA is wearing a floral shower cap and is humming along to 'Running Up That Hill' by Kate Bush. She reaches over the side of the bath and retrieves a cigarette and lights it on one of the candles. She then picks up one of the letters her mother wrote to Nicholas. She sighs and pushes the letter into the bath water letting it soak and dissolve.

There is a knock on the bathroom door and STELLA ignores it.

STEPHEN: (O.S)

Stella?! Are you smoking in there?

STELLA gulps and wafts away some of the smoke. STEPHEN knocks again more insistently. STELLA rolls her eyes.

STELLA:

It's just the candles! Calm down...

STEPHEN can be heard sighing in frustration from the other end of the door. STELLA takes another drag of the cigarette and turns the music up louder and she waits until STEPHEN can be heard retreating down the stairs. STELLA exhales in relief and sinks further into the bath and stubs out her cigarette.

22 INT. STUDENT UNION BAR. TWO DAYS LATER.

22

STELLA is sat by the bar, sipping on her pint, looking around her. ELIZA enters and STELLA waves at her grabbing her attention. ELIZA smiles and skips over to her and puts her arms around her. STELLA chokes a little and ELIZA releases her and sits down on the stool next to her. The bartender greets her and she smiles warmly at her.

ELIZA:

Hey! Can I get a vodka, lime and soda please?

The bartender nods and proceeds making the drink. ELIZA fumbles around her bag to find her purse. STELLA puts her hand on ELIZA'S bag and shakes her head.

STELLA:

I'll grab this one!

STELLA puts her credit card on the machine as the bartender places the drink down next to ELIZA.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA:  
Cheers hun!

STELLA:  
No worries... where's Tom?

ELIZA:  
He just bumped into one of his  
lecturers, he said he'd be here in  
a sec.

STELLA nods and takes another sip of her drink, looking  
slightly more anxious.

ELIZA: (CONT)  
So, come on then... why did you  
want to meet us? Here of all  
places...

STELLA:  
Let's just say I have a proposition  
for you... and I chose the SU  
because cheap drinks and they play  
decent music...

ELIZA raises one eyebrow in suspicion.

STELLA:  
Okay... so maybe I wanted to  
pretend I was still a student for a  
little bit?

ELIZA smiles smugly at her. TOM enters and squeezes STELLA  
on the shoulders.

TOM:  
Are you suddenly nostalgic about  
Uni, Stel? Is it because your  
finest moments as a student were in  
this very bar?

STELLA:  
Just a little. And I will never  
forget the look on James Howard's  
face when I did that backflip off  
the bar. Two tequila's down might I  
add.

ELIZA:  
Yeah, we were both there... I'm  
surprised you didn't get kicked out  
for that.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:  
I would've loved to have seen them  
try.

TOM:  
Anyway, what do you want?

STELLA:  
Charming... Look, I want to  
assemble as task force of the  
elitest minds.

ELIZA and TOM exchange worrying looks as STELLA swivels on  
her stool.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Well, I more need moral support. I  
want to go find my Dad. For real. I  
want to meet him.

TOM:  
Have you found out where he is?

STELLA:  
Not quite... But I'm sure it'll be  
easy.

ELIZA:  
Doesn't sound like you've not  
thought this through.

STELLA:  
Believe me, it's all I've been  
thinking about. I know I can find  
him, and once I do... then  
everything will fall into place. I  
can be happy.

TOM:  
This is truly what will make you  
happy? Finding some stranger?

STELLA:  
Why does everyone think he's a  
stranger?! He's my Dad for Christ  
sake!

ELIZA:  
Who you've never met.

STELLA:  
Well this is the whole point. I  
want to meet him, I want him to  
meet me...

(CONTINUED)

TOM:

I don't know Stella. It's a bit risky.

STELLA sighs and begins packing her purse away in her bag, downing the rest of her drink. She gets up and begins to leave. ELIZA grabs her arm and pulls her back down.

ELIZA:

Hold your horses... where do you think you're going.

STELLA:

On my way to find more supportive friends.

TOM:

Bloody hell, calm it with the dramatics. I think we have established that me and El are supporting you. We just think you need to be careful.

STELLA:

Ugh, you sound just like Stephen, again! Have you been hanging out with him and exchanging really bad parenting tips?

TOM reaches over and lightly slaps STELLA around the head. She hits back harder.

ELIZA:

I have to agree with Tom on this one... maybe do a bit more thinking on this one.

STELLA rolls her eyes and grabs her cigarettes and stands up. ELIZA shoots her a warning look, but STELLA taps her on the nose.

STELLA:

I'll be right back. I'm going to 'think'.

23

EXT. SMOKING SHELTER OF STUDENT UNION BAR. MOMENTS LATER. 23

STELLA lights a cigarette and leans against the wall, observing all the students sat in the sun. Amongst them, she sees KAYLEIGH and MANDY sat on a bench with the same ginger-haired girl that she saw with SAM: DISCOUNT STELLA. STELLA's mouth drops open and stares wildly at them. The three are all laughing hysterically, KAYLEIGH and MANDY are hanging off every word DISCOUNT STELLA says.

(CONTINUED)

SAM exits the bar, carefully carrying four drinks between his hands. KAYLEIGH, MANDY and DISCOUNT STELLA all cheer as he makes his way forwards to the girls, smiling smugly. He places the glasses on the table and catches STELLA's eye, who is staring, dumbstruck. SAM raises his eyebrow and leans down to kiss DISCOUNT STELLA on the lips. STELLA curls her hand into a fist and she angrily stubs out the cigarette against the wall and she throws it on the ground and begins to storm over to their table.

KAYLEIGH and MANDY see STELLA and they blink sheepishly. STELLA stops at the table and folds her arms staring them down, ignoring both SAM and DISCOUNT STELLA.

KAYLEIGH:

Hey! Haven't seen you in a while.

MANDY:

Yeah... how have you been?

STELLA:

Peachy... I mean I was until you started going back on your words.

KAYLEIGH:

What do-

STELLA:

(Mimicking Kayleigh)

Don't worry Stell, we hate Sam, he's a dick... we will never hang out with him over you!

SAM frowns at KAYLEIGH and MANDY and then at STELLA.

MANDY:

That was a while ago Stella... I mean if you hung out with him, you'd see how different he is.

STELLA tilts her head to the side and narrows her eyes.

STELLA:

Of course, how silly of me to hang out with my ex-boyfriend who was a psycho and emotionally manipulated me to the point where I struggled to leave the house. Yeah you're right, that sort of stuff just washes off a person.

SAM:  
Right, hang on...

STELLA holds her hand up, silencing him.

STELLA: (CONT)  
You guys are meant to be my friends. And now what? Is he more interesting? Does he go to cooler gigs than I? You guys know more than anyone how much he hurt me, and now you look at him like the sun shines out of his arse.

KAYLEIGH:  
At least he was supportive of the wedding...

STELLA:  
Oh, so this is your way of getting back at me.

MANDY:  
He's been a good friend to us, which is more than I can say for you. You're being childish.

STELLA opens her mouth to reply but struggles to find words. SAM clears his throat and stands up and put his hand on STELLA's shoulder. MANDY nervously drinks her drink but KAYLIEGH just scowls.

ELIZA exits the bar in search for STELLA and sees the confrontation. She gulps and runs back inside to fetch TOM.

SAM:  
I think... you should go. You're embarrassing yourself. People can have more than one friend. Oh and I've heard the stuff you've said about me. I wont say any names-

STELLA briefly shoots daggers at KAYLEIGH and MANDY, who pretend to look at something else.

SAM (CONT):  
But, it's pretty harsh, we broke up a while ago. You should get over it, everyone else has.

STELLA blinks back tears, and clears her throat. TOM and ELIZA run out into the smoking shelter towards them.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

Well, I'm happy you've been able to move on. No matter how funny it is that the person you've chosen to bare a striking resemblance to me. But, you can take my friends, you can spend you're life letting people think you're this amazing person just to let them down. I wish you all the best.

SAM lets go of STELLA and nods, starting to smile. ELIZA and TOM exchange worrying looks. STELLA begins to smile, wickedly.

STELLA: (CONT)

I just want you to know one thing... when I was with you...

STELLA swiftly knees SAM in the crotch, causing him to double over with pain. Everyone around gasps audibly, TOM winches and looks away. STELLA doesn't react, she just leans down to SAM'S level and smiles sweetly.

STELLA: (CONT)

I faked it every time.

STELLA straightens up to wink and Eliza, who is stifling laughter. She then looks over at DISCOUNT STELLA and looks sympathetic.

STELLA:

Have fun! He has a tiny ego and horrible performance issues. Oh that's even before his addiction to Valium.

STELLA sniffs at KAYLEIGH and MANDY, who just stare at her in awe, shaking their heads. STELLA turns on her heel and walks away, ELIZA and TOM quickly running after her.

TOM:

That was incredible. I felt that.

SAM:

It's what he deserves.

ELIZA:

I just want to say I had no idea those two were hanging out with him that much.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

That's okay...I think it's time to  
move on from them... everyone else  
has.

STELLA lights a cigarette and turns around to face ELIZA and  
TOM, stopping them in their tracks.

STELLA: (CONT)

You're still with me right?

ELIZA:

Of course... In every way.

24

INT. STELLA'S KITCHEN. THE NEXT EVENING.

24

STELLA is sat at the kitchen table on her laptop, various  
maps and the letters her mother had written scattered around  
her. STELLA is searching around various restaurants in  
Brighton, looking back at the envelope with the address of  
her father on. She clicks on a link and it brings up a  
sea-front restaurant, highly upper class. STELLA nods in  
approval and looks through the gallery of pictures.

STELLA then clicks on another page on the website, revealing  
a picture of NICHOLAS, an older version of the picture in  
ANNE-MARIE'S possessions. STELLA zooms in on the picture, he  
is wearing a smart shirt and a tie, smiling warmly at the  
camera. STELLA strokes the laptop screen where the picture  
is, twirling her finger around the his greying hair. She  
sighs and smiles.

STEPHEN enters through the front door, having returned from  
work. STELLA slams the laptop lid down as he comes into the  
kitchen, exhausted. He drops his bag down on the table,  
slightly covering one of the letters. STELLA moves the  
letter, annoyed and clutches it close to her chest.

STEPHEN:

You had a good day?

STELLA:

So, so. You?

STEPHEN:

Busy... Would you like a cup of  
tea.

STELLA shakes her head and STEPHEN goes over to the kettles  
and puts it on to boil. STELLA re-opens her laptop and looks  
back at the picture. STEPHEN looks over her shoulder at the  
screen. He swallows nervously.

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN: (CONT)  
Is that...him?

STELLA:  
Yeah...

STEPHEN:  
Wow... that's pretty big stuff.

STELLA just nods. STEPHEN goes back to making a cup of tea, he looks back at STELLA as if to say something, but then goes back to his task. STELLA rolls her eyes and turns around to look at him.

STELLA:  
What? what judgemental thing are you going to say now?

STEPHEN:  
Nothing! I'm just curious on what you're next step would be...

STELLA:  
I don't really now... I don't know where to go from here.

STEPHEN:  
Maybe that's wise. Give you time to think things over instead of being irrational.

STELLA scowls and gets up off the chair and into the hallway, STEPHEN looks after her and frowns when she returns with the house phone in her hand.

STEPHEN: (CONT)  
What are you doing?

STELLA goes over to the laptop and clicks on the contact page of Nicholas's website and recites the number to herself as she types it into the phone. STELLA holds the phone to her ear and stares at STEPHEN, who is now leaning against the counter, folding his arms.

STELLA:  
Doing what I do best, being irrational, oh and also making sure you're phone bill is high. Just because.

STEPHEN:  
Right, Stella, this really isn't a good idea, have you even planned on what to say to him?

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

It'll come to me in the moment.

STELLA listens to the dial tone, tapping her foot on the floor. STEPHEN sighs and shakes his head, pinching the bridge of his nose.

NICHOLAS: (O.S)

Good evening, Aphrodite's' This is  
Nicholas speaking.

STELLA freezes and doesn't reply. Her breathing becomes rapid and all of a sudden, she throws the phone across the kitchen, smashing it against the wall. STEPHEN jumps and clutches his chest.

STEPHEN:

Well, that was unnecessary, what  
did you do that for?!

STELLA:

I heard his voice... for the first  
time ever.

STEPHEN:

This just proves that you're not  
ready for this, look at how you've  
reacted after just hearing his  
voice.

STELLA sits down on a chair, clutching it for support.

STELLA:

I just got caught off-guard...

STEPHEN:

What did you expect to happen?

STELLA:

I don't know...

STEPHEN sits down opposite to Stella and looks at her sternly, STELLA avoids his gaze by looking at her feet.

STEPHEN:

I know you've been struggling, but  
your behaviour has been ridiculous.

STELLA:

In what way is me trying to find my  
father ridiculous?

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN:

Because like I've said countless times before, this man is a stranger to you. He has no knowledge of you, nor has he ever tried. This mission you're on is only going to end up getting hurt more than you are now.

STELLA:

Nothing worth having is going to come easy. This is my only chance to feel some sort of happiness, some sort of stability.

STEPHEN:

And what about your life here?

STELLA scoffs and leans her elbows on the table and narrows her eyes at Stephen.

STELLA:

You honestly think that my life here is happy? I'm miserable, I'm just existing, stuck with-

STEPHEN:

Me? Oh I'm sorry I'm such a disappointment, you know I never asked for a daughter, but I accepted you into my life with no questions asked, I was willing to make it work. But you have met me with nothing but disrespect and frankly you have been horrible. I stuck by you because I care about you, but you-

STELLA:

You don't care! Otherwise you'd support me in this. You don't see me as a daughter then fine, let me go and find the person who does!

STEPHEN:

I never said that... and how can you possibly know he is going to welcome you with open arms.

STELLA gets up from the table and stands assertively.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

Because as soon as he sees me, he will know, he will know what he's missed out on all these years, he will want to make things right, get to know me.

STEPHEN sighs in frustration and places his head into his hands briefly.

STEPHEN:

You can't know that for sure. You're just using this as an excuse to run away from your feelings.

STELLA:

If your life was so terrible wouldn't you. At least I remember Mum actually died!

STEPHEN:

You don't think I think about it every single day? I lost my Wife! Not everything is about you!

STELLA:

Why are you being like this? Is your grief more important than mine? Or are you finally trying to assert some authority which we both know you're too weak to carry out.

STEPHEN:

(Quietly)  
I've tried my best...

STELLA:

Not well enough... Look, for so long now, my life has been falling apart, I've lost my Mum, my ex-boyfriend who was a psycho still haunts my life, I have no uni, no job nothing.

STEPHEN:

You decided to give all of that up, no-one forced you.

STELLA steps back, STEPHEN stands up and takes a step towards her and places his hands on his hips. STELLA hugs her arms close to her chest in way of protecting herself.

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN: (CONT)

I've tried my hardest to look after you and make sure you're safe. But you have been so self destructive I can't even get through. I can't spend anymore running after. You're a lost cause. So, if you want to go on this wild goose chase, then suit yourself. Go.

STEPHEN looks away from STELLA and exits the kitchen, slowly tramping up the stairs to his bedroom and closing his door. STELLA blinks back tears and stands alone in the kitchen. She goes over to the counter where STEPHEN'S untouched cup of tea sat. She pours it down the sink and then begins to gather her laptop and the papers together. However she stops and drops everything back on the table and sits down, placing her head in her hands.

25

INT. STELLA'S BEDROOM. 6AM.

25

STELLA is sat on her unmade bed, having not slept. She is clutching a photo frame of her and her mother at a gymnastics competition five years ago. STELLA sniffs and wipes away tears from her eyes. She sighs and kisses the picture of ANNE-MARIE and then places it in her backpack, which has already been filled with clothes and toiletries. She gets off the bed and goes over to her laptop, she is still on the website for 'Aprhordiate's' and she begins to print out the page stating where to find the restaurant. She then prints off several maps. She then prints out several map STELLA then jumps back on her bed and reaches up to stroke her Marlon Brando poster.

STELLA:

I'm going on an adventure. I'm finally going to put my life back on track. I wish I could take you with me, but I feel like it's bordering on a bit sad taking a poster for moral support.

STELLA jumps off the bed and zips up her bag and places it over her shoulder. She then grabs the papers that have just printed. She folds them up carefully and places them in the front pocket of her bag.

STELLA goes to leave her room and turns around to observe everything, focusing on the mess on the floor, and then at all of the pictures stuck to her wall of her times at university. She sighs and bustles out of the room shutting the door. STELLA creeps quietly down the stairs and grabs her keys from the tray by the door and takes a deep breath before exiting.

26

EXT. TRAIN STATION. 7AM

26

STELLA is sat on a bench outside the train station with her bag at her feet. She yawns and checks her phone for the time.

TOM walks over to her, carrying coffee in his hand. He sits down next to STELLA and hands her the coffee. She smiles gratefully and takes it from him, shivering.

STELLA:

Thank you! Ugh this is so needed.

TOM:

Yeah, you look like shit.

STELLA:

Yeah... I didn't really sleep.  
Where's Eliza?

TOM:

She's at the car, triple-checking she has everything, literally the whole way over she's been stressing that she has left her towel, and her clothes, and shoes.

STELLA and TOM laugh together and TOM picks up STELLA'S bag and pats her on the knee, urging her to stand up.

TOM: (CONT)

Come on, we have a road trip ahead of us. Did you say goodbye to your Mum?

STELLA stands up and nods, clutching her coffee. The pair walk towards Eliza's car, where she is leaning in her boot, rooting around a large backpack.

STELLA:

Morning gorgeous... got everything?

ELIZA straightens up and wipes her brow.

ELIZA:

I think so? I just always feel like I've forgotten something...

TOM:

I keep telling, you... you're fine.  
Now come on, lets go!

(CONTINUED)

TOM ruffles ELIZA'S hair out of place and she bats him away and pats down her hair. STELLA giggles and TOM puts STELLA'S bag into ELIZA'S boot. STELLA reaches up to shut it and TOM gets into the car.

ELIZA:  
You ready?

STELLA:  
Yeah! Of course! Look, are you sure you're okay to do this?

ELIZA:  
Yes, you idiot. I'm with you no matter what. It's about time I started living up to these promises. What better way than a road trip to get find your estranged father?

STELLA laughs and TOM honks the horn, making the pair jump. TOM leans his head out of the window and bangs the outside of the car.

TOM:  
We have plenty of time for sentiment once we've gotten through rush hour traffic.

ELIZA rolls her eyes and heads to the drivers seat, hitting TOM'S hand.

ELIZA:  
Watch my car!

STELLA gets into the passenger seat and TOM reaches over to give her a reassuring shoulder squeeze. She pats his hand and ELIZA starts the engine.

ELIZA: (CONT)  
Oh fuck! My toothbrush.

TOM and STELLA groan and laugh.

STELLA:  
We can buy one on the road, come on, I'm getting anxious.

ELIZA:  
Okay okay. My bluetooth is on if you wanna put some music on.

TOM:  
ROAD TRIP! ROAD TRIP! ROAD TRIP!

The three cheer in unison as ELIZA begins to pull out of the car park.

27 EXT. MOTORWAY. A FEW HOURS LATER.

27

STELLA, ELIZA & TOM are still sat in the car, singing along to the radio: Boney M's 'Daddy Cool' STELLA is head-banging along to the beat, wearing a neck pillow, ELIZA is tapping her hands on the steering wheel, TOM is looking out the window but tapping the headrests of both ELIZA and STELLA.

TOM:  
Well this is a very apt song...

ELIZA:  
Destiny if you will...

STELLA:  
Man I wish I could be as happy as Boney M sometimes makes me... They have no problems.

STELLA: (CONT)  
I've missed you guys... I'm really happy you're coming with me.

TOM:  
No problem! Happy to! Besides I feel like a road trip to secure your destiny and find out who you are is perfect way to end Uni...

ELIZA:  
Yeah! Beats moving back home straight away to help babysit.

STELLA:  
If things go well, this could be the start of my new life.

ELIZA:  
Awww, I'm happy for you Stell, I haven't seen you smile this much in ages.

STELLA:  
I actually feel hopeful for the first time in ages.

(CONTINUED)

TOM:  
Service station! I need a wee.

ELIZA:  
Oooh good shout!

ELIZA slows down and indicates and begins to turn into the service station.

28 EXT. SERVICE STATION CAR PARK. HALF AN HOUR LATER. 28

STELLA and ELIZA are sat on the bonnet of ELIZA'S car, looking over the maps, ELIZA fiddling with her SAT-NAV.

STELLA:  
To be fair, we should be there within the next two hours?

ELIZA:  
Providing the traffic is okay, have you got any idea where we are going to stay?

STELLA:  
Well, the optimistic me is saying we won't need to and my Dad will just put us up. But I think we should just find a B&B, and move in slowly.

TOM comes over to the two, holding a carrier bag filled with snacks.

TOM:  
They had no toothbrush I'm sad to report, but I did manage to compromise with mints.

TOM retrieves several packets of mints from the carrier bag and passes them to ELIZA, who just looks at them sadly.

ELIZA:  
Thank you I guess?

TOM:  
My pleasure Princess, I couldn't find a car phone charger either.

STELLA:  
I think there's one in my bag actually.

TOM clicks his fingers and heads to the boot, opening it and rustling through STELLA'S bags. After a few moments he pulls out a pair of binoculars and frowns.

TOM:

Umm, since when did this trip turn into an espionage mission?

STELLA looks around and slides off the bonnet to retrieve them.

STELLA:

They are Stephen's bird watching binoculars, I just thought it'd be best to be prepared.

ELIZA:

He bird watches?

STELLA:

Yes, just when you thought he couldn't get any more pathetic, he exceeds every expectation.

TOM:

Does he know you're here?

STELLA:

Nope, and I don't intend to let him know, he will find out eventually.

29 INT. STELLA'S BEDROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

29

STEPHEN is sat on STELLA'S bed, sadly looking around the room. The wardrobe is missing large amounts of clothes and STELLA'S drawers have been pulled open to reveal some of them to be empty. He sighs and gets up, looking at her various medals and trophies, he strokes one of them and shakes his head.

He then goes over to her laptop and notices the website of 'Aphrodite's' Restaurant. He looks defeated and puts his hands on his hips and takes one final look at her room before exiting.

30 EXT. SERVICE STATION CAR PARK. MOMENTS LATER.

30

STELLA holds the binoculars in her hand and shrugs carelessly. She places them back into her bag and retrieves the charger, handing it to TOM.

STELLA:

Besides, he doesn't really have any right to say what I can or cannot do.

TOM:

I'm sure he wants what is best for you...

STELLA:

He hasn't the faintest idea what is best for me.

TOM:

And this Nicholas bloke does?

STELLA punches him swiftly on the shoulder, causing TOM to wince in pain.

STELLA:

No! I know what's best for me. You said you were with me!

TOM:

And I am! You gotta admit though, Stephen's trying.

STELLA:

To get on my last nerve. Now I don't want to hear any more about Stephen. I need to move forward, not look back.

STELLA shuts the boot and gets back into the car, TOM rolls his eyes at ELIZA and she just shakes her head. She slides off the bonnet and gets back into the car as well, TOM following. STELLA has placed her sunglasses and neck pillow on and has turned the car radio up loudly, folding her arms in a strop. TOM and ELIZA ignore her and ELIZA begins to set off.

31 EXT. BEACH FRONT. BRIGHTON. TWO HOURS LATER.

31

STELLA is sat on the beach, hugging her legs close to her chest, TOM is lying down, dozing off, and ELIZA is reading a book. She glances over to STELLA every now and again, concerned.

STELLA:

You're doing that thing El, what's wrong.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA:  
Nothing! Nothing at all. I'm  
just... taking in the gorgeous  
beach.

ELIZA gestures to the near empty beach, smiling widely.

TOM:  
It's not that great... I hate  
pebble beaches.

STELLA throws a pebble at TOM, but misses, she grabs a  
cigarette and light it, exhaling deeply. ELIZA wafts away  
some of the smoke and coughs quietly. STELLA rolls her eyes  
and swivels to look at her, taking off her sunglasses.

STELLA:  
What! What is wrong?

ELIZA:  
Nothing!

ELIZA looks off into the distance, biting her lip, avoided  
STELLA'S icy glare. She sighs and turns back around placing  
her book at her feet.

ELIZA: (CONT)  
It's just... we've been in Brighton  
for an hour now, and all we've done  
is sit on the beach... I think  
Tom's dead.

TOM:  
Only with boredom.

TOM sits up and squints in the brightness and then at  
STELLA.

TOM: (CONT)  
She's right, Stella. What are we  
doing?

STELLA:  
We are just sitting, resting after  
a long car ride. I wanted to get my  
bearings.

ELIZA:  
You can tell us you're scared you  
know. We'd get it.

STELLA:  
I'm not scared! I'm just...

TOM:  
Wasting time...

STELLA:  
Fuck off... I just need to adjust.

ELIZA:  
Well, it's going to get dark soon,  
can we at least adjust in a hotel?

STELLA:  
Fine...

TOM:  
Can we also get some food? I'm  
starving...

ELIZA:  
You ate like an hour ago...

TOM:  
Crisps! Look if we are going to be  
having this life altering meeting,  
I need to do it on a full stomach.

STELLA doesn't reply, and just looks straight off into the horizon. ELIZA sneakily pulls out the map to the restaurant out of STELLA'S bag. She observes it and waves it front of TOM'S face. He looks at it briefly and nods at ELIZA.

ELIZA:  
I'm pretty hungry too. How about  
Greek food?

STELLA'S eyes widen and she looks at ELIZA and TOM. She tries to grab to map from ELIZA'S hand but she holds it up high. STELLA leans over to try again but TOM grabs it and stands up, stuffing it down his trousers. STELLA groans in disgust.

TOM:  
It's not far from here you know? We  
could just grab a casual bite to  
eat.

STELLA:  
No!

ELIZA:  
Why not? Surely it's best to just  
bite the bullet?

STELLA:  
Something like this has to be  
handled delicately.

STELLA stands up and steps towards TOM, who steps back in fear.

STELLA: (CONT)  
I will go down there...

TOM:  
You have to admit, none of this so  
far has been done delicately. Why  
stop now? Unless... you're scared.

STELLA glares at TOM who just smiles at her, she looks back at ELIZA who just shrugs.

STELLA:  
I'm. Not. Scared. You should be.

TOM clears his throat and folds his arms, keeping his face blank.

STELLA: (CONT)  
It's been 23 years... what's a day  
or two more? Can't we just enjoy  
Brighton?

TOM looks back at ELIZA who just nods. TOM suddenly picks STELLA up and throws her over his shoulder. STELLA screams in shock and tries to fight back, but TOM'S grip is too strong. ELIZA jumps up and gathers everyone's things. TOM begins to walk off the beach, STELLA hitting him on the back repeatedly.

STELLA: (CONT)  
What are you doing you psycho?! Put  
me down.

TOM:  
Nope! we are helping you. now come  
on, 'Aphrodite's' awaits!

TOM continues to walk, ignoring STELLA'S protests. ELIZA skips behind them.

The restaurant is buzzing with life, every table is filled with couples, families and groups of friends. Traditional Greek music can be heard from the overhead speakers. Waiters dash around the tables carrying trays of food.

STELLA, ELIZA and TOM are sat in a booth close to the kitchen ELIZA is looking at the menu, TOM chewing on some bread, STELLA tapping her fingers on the table anxiously, looking around her.

ELIZA:

Should I go for the lamb? It sounds great!

TOM:

If you want... What are you having Stella?

STELLA:

Huh?

STELLA continues to look around the restaurant, TOM waves his hand in front of her face.

TOM:

Will you chill? We are here, just relax and have some food.

STELLA:

If you wanted me to relax, you wouldn't have carried me all the way down the promenade. You know how much I hate being upside down.

TOM:

It got you here didn't it?

STELLA:

I still think we should have waited....

ELIZA:

Surely the sooner to meet him, the sooner you get everything you wanted?

STELLA sigh and turns around to look at her menu.

STELLA:

Fine... Just know I am very close to shitting myself with nerves.

TOM:

Just what we want to hear before  
having Greek food.

A jolly WAITER comes over to their table with a notepad. He smiles at all of them, clicking his pen.

WAITER:

Are we ready to order?

ELIZA:

Yes of course! Ummm, I'm torn  
between the lamb, or the sea  
bass... what would you recommended?

WAITER:

Well, the lamb truly is exquisite,  
it's one of our most popular  
dishes.

ELIZA:

Sounds perfect, I'll have that.

The WAITER nods and scribbles the order down. He then looks at TOM.

TOM:

Uh, I'll try the sea bass, cheers.

WAITER:

Excellent... and for you?

STELLA looks up aimlessly at the WAITER. Who is looking at her eagerly. She exhales and quickly looks at the menu, flustered.

STELLA:

I'll have the vegetarian Moussaka  
please.

ELIZA and TOM frown at her as she smiles nervously at the WAITER. They all hand their menus over to the WAITER and he nods and walks away from their table.

ELIZA:

Really?

STELLA:

What?

TOM:

You're allergic to cinnamon *and*  
mushrooms. Which are both in the  
thing you just ordered.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:  
Oh... are they?

ELIZA:  
Yes... you're not trying too poison yourself so you can get rushed to hospital and avoid meeting him are you?

STELLA:  
No, but that does sound like a good idea.

TOM:  
I don't like nervous Stella... She scares me.

ELIZA:  
Maybe you should go for a cigarette? Calm your nerves before the food comes?

STELLA thinks this over and then smiles at ELIZA. She then puts her bag over her shoulder and shuffles out of the booth.

STELLA:  
Great idea...

TOM:  
Want us to come with you?

STELLA:  
Nah, I'm cool. Be back in a bit!

STELLA walks quickly out of the restaurant, narrowly avoiding another Waiter with a full tray. TOM and ELIZA are silent for a few moments and then TOM slams the table.

TOM:  
She's going to bolt. Go Go Go.

They both rush out of the booth, and follow STELLA.

33

EXT. OUTSIDE APHRODITE'S RESTAURANT. MOMENTS LATER.

33

STELLA exhales happily, swinging her arm, looking around her surroundings. She checks behind her to make sure the coast is clear. She then suddenly breaks into a run, heading around the back of the restaurant, she looks behind her again and suddenly run someone coming out of the kitchen side door. She squeals in shock.

(CONTINUED)

As she collects herself, STELLA looks up at the tall man. She opens her mouth to begin apologising but is left dumbstruck. The man is NICHOLAS. He frowns and looks STELLA up and down.

STELLA:  
I'm... really sorry.

NICHOLAS:  
It's fine. Don't worry about it.

STELLA:  
It's really you...

STELLA stares at NICHOLAS, taking in his stern-looking face, dark hair and his clothes, which are well-fitted and expensive. STELLA smiles in admiration. NICHOLAS clears his throat awkwardly, and reaches into his pocket to reach for his phone.

NICHOLAS:  
Right, well. Have a good evening then...

NICHOLAS goes to turn around but STELLA places her hand on his arm, stopping him. NICHOLAS pulls away and steps towards her.

STELLA:  
You can't go! I mean, not yet.

NICHOLAS:  
What are you talking about? Look, I'm quite busy at the moment, so if you'll excuse me.

Suddenly, TOM and ELIZA run around the corner. STELLA sighs and begins to open her mouth, but TOM rugby tackles her to the ground, causing NICHOLAS to jump back...

STELLA:  
What the fuck!?

TOM pins her down as she tries to break free.

TOM:  
Stopping you from running away! You are not chickening out again.

STELLA:  
Can you please let me go?!

ELIZA looks over at NICHOLAS and her mouth drops open, NICHOLAS is still observing the tussle going on at his feet. ELIZA kicks TOM swiftly, he groan and looks up at her. ELIZA nods towards NICHOLAS and TOM looks up at him. He gulps and immediately lets STELLA go, pulling her up with him. STELLA brushes herself down and smiles nervously at NICHOLAS.

NICHOLAS:

I'm sorry, what is going on here?  
Can I help any one of you kids?

ELIZA pokes STELLA in the back, urging her to speak, she looks over at TOM who nods, urging her to do the same. STELLA takes a deep breathe and folds her arms. NICHOLAS raises his eyebrows in expectation.

STELLA:

I came to find you actually...

NICHOLAS:

Oh... why?

STELLA:

I'm Anne-Marie's daughter.

NICHOLAS just frowns, STELLA's smile wavers but she composes herself. ELIZA reaches to hold her hand in support.

STELLA: (CONT)

This is going to sound really odd  
and out of nowhere. But I'm you're  
daughter. Stella.

NICHOLAS doesn't reply, instead just stares at STELLA who is smiling eagerly at him, shaking slightly. He then looks at TOM and ELIZA , who are waiting in suspense.

He then turns on his heel.

NICHOLAS:

Um, I'm sorry, I have no idea what  
you are talking about. You must  
have me mistaken for somebody  
else. Listen I have a call to make,  
so have a good night guys.

NICHOLAS heads back inside the restaurant, shutting the door behind him, Leaving STELLA, ELIZA, and TOM alone in the alley. TOM exhales and runs his hands through his hair. ELIZA tightens her grip on STELLA'S hand. STELLA just stares at the door in shock.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

Oh...

34 INT. OUTSIDE STELLA AND ELIZA'S B&B ROOM. THE NEXT DAY. 34

ELIZA and TOM are stood outside the door, ear pressed close to it. 'Babooshka' by Kate Bush is playing loudly from the other side of the door. STELLA is singing along with it.

TOM:

I think she's cracked.

ELIZA:

Yeah... she didn't say anything last night. Literally we just got in the room and she went straight to bed.

TOM:

(Saracstically)

What? Stella not talking about her feelings right away? Never.

ELIZA:

It can't have been easy for her though... he just acted like he didn't even know her.

TOM:

Well, when a girl ambushes you out of nowhere and says that she's your daughter...

ELIZA:

How many daughters must he have to not know immediately.

TOM nods in agreement and then frowns in thought.

TOM:

Saying that though, I didn't really gather much of a family resemblance.

ELIZA looks at him and TOM circles his hand around his face.

TOM: (CONT)

He's like, straight from 'My Big Fat Greek Wedding'.

ELIZA kicks him in the shin, causing him to bend down in agony. ELIZA holds her finger up to her lips, silencing him.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA:

It was in a dark alley, I'm sure if we see him in the full light of day I'm sure there's some similitrity's. Besides, some genes are more dominant. Biology is a mystery.

STELLA: (O.S)

I can hear you guys.

ELIZA and TOM straighten up and look sheepish. TOM nods towards the door and ELIZA sighs and opens the door so they can both enter.

35 INT. STELLA AND ELIZA'S B&B ROOM. A FEW SECONDS LATER. 35

STELLA is lying on the bed, watching the TV, the sound drowned out by the sounds of Kate Bush: 'Jig Of Life'. As ELIZA and TOM enter, she looks over at them, turning the TV off.

ELIZA:

How are you holding up?

STELLA:

Fine? Why wouldn't I be?

TOM:

You're listening to Kate Bush... that's normally a tell-tale sign of you not being okay. Especially 'Hounds Of Love'

STELLA laughs and shakes her head. She sits up and raises her eyebrows at TOM.

STELLA:

You might think you know everything there is to know about me, but I just like Kate Bush, plus it was my Mum's favourite album of hers...

ELIZA:

But, what about the time you-

STELLA silences ELIZA by holding up her hand.

STELLA:

I just like Kate Bush.

ELIZA nods, humouring her. She sits down on the edge of the bed, urging TOM to shut the door.

(CONTINUED)

TOM:  
Are you feeling okay? About  
yesterday?

STELLA:  
Yeah?

TOM:  
But, Nicholas he-

STELLA:  
Was shocked, for sure. That's okay,  
I'd be shocked. If he's anything  
like me, he'll probably run away at  
first and then come back.

ELIZA and TOM exchange worried glances.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Look, it's okay. I just need to  
approach in a calmer, way. Sit down  
and talk with him. Once I explain  
everything it's bound to jog  
something in his memory.

TOM:  
About donating sperm?

STELLA:  
Guys, have a lot of it!

ELIZA:  
What's the plan then?

STELLA:  
I'm just going to go back to the  
restaurant.

TOM:  
Great, well we'll come with you.

STELLA:  
It's okay... being rugby tackled by  
an entourage isn't really in  
keeping with the calm approach I  
want. You guys go explore or  
something.

STELLA gets up off the bed and ties her hair up into a ponytail and begins putting on her shoes. ELIZA and TOM just watch her, confused.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA:  
Are you sure?

STELLA:  
Totally. Now, have fun today.

STELLA pats ELIZA on the head and grabs her backpack, before swiftly exiting the room. TOM looks over at ELIZA and reaches over to grab her hand, squeezing it in support.

TOM:  
Come on, wanna go spend the  
remainder of our student loan on  
the arcades?

ELIZA:  
Sure...

36

INT. APHRODITE'S GREEK RESTAURANT. AN HOUR LATER

36

STELLA is sat at the bar of the restaurant, not touching her drink, but looking around her, keeping an eye out for NICHOLAS. The BARTENDER observes her with caution, his uniform is untidy and creased, he has several piercings and half of his head is shaved, with the rest of his hair slicked back and tied in a ponytail. He goes over to STELLA and clears his throat.

BARTENDER:  
Can I help you with anything?

STELLA looks around and composes her self, pulling her drink closer to her, smiling sheepishly.

STELLA:  
No, no I'm good thanks.

THE BARTENDER nods and goes back to polishing glasses, STELLA looks at him, and takes a sip from her drink, smiling again. She clears her throat to get his attention again.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Actually... I was wondering if you  
knew Nicholas was going to be in at  
all today?

BARTENDER:  
Nicholas? Oh you mean the owner?

STELLA nods eagerly and THE BARTENDER puts the glasses he is polishing down and leans against the bar.

(CONTINUED)

BARTENDER: (CONT)

I'm sorry I'm don't think he's planning on coming down to work today. If he does it'll be a miracle.

STELLA:

What do you mean by that?

BARTENDER:

Nothing, just it's a surprise whenever he does. He more comes and goes when he pleases.

STELLA tries to hide her distaste for THE BARTENDER. She raises her eyebrows and swivels around in the stool.

STELLA:

Well, maybe unlike you, he has a career and that takes a lot of hard work behind the scenes. Whilst you half-arse your minimum wage job trying to fund your music career or your...English degree?

STELLA smiles sweetly at THE BARTENDER who looks at her in shock. He looks her up and down and then scoffs.

BARTENDER:

I'm sorry, but who the fuck are you?

STELLA:

I'm his daughter. So on the very smallest technicality, I am your boss. And I'm here to tell you that the Gin and Tonic you made me tastes like dishwater and that your hair is weird.

THE BARTENDER shakes his head and self-consciously pats his hair. He then laughs and opens his mouth to retaliate, but then looks over her shoulder and he sheepishly turns around and goes back to polishing glasses.

NICHOLAS enters behind STELLA and puts his hands on his hips, looking sternly at STELLA. STELLA frowns at THE BARTENDER and then senses someone behind her. She slowly swivels around and meets NICHOLAS'S eyes. She smiles, instantly happy to see him. NICHOLAS doesn't smile back, he just stares at her.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (CONT)

Hi! How are you?

NICHOLAS:

Been better... Can I ask why you're here, and abusing my staff members?

STELLA:

I mean, it's hardly abuse if it's fact. But I came to see you again. We didn't really get off on the right foot last night.

NICHOLAS:

Were we meant to? I'm sorry I'm still a bit confused as to who you actually are.

STELLA laughs, and she stands up, to which NICHOLAS steps away warily.

STELLA:

Do you not remember? I said I was your-

NICHOLAS:

Daughter, yeah I got that. That's the bit I'm confused on.

STELLA frowns and then straightens out her clothes, checking they are presentable. She exhales deeply, NICHOLAS watches her in confusion.

STELLA:

Look, would you want to go somewhere quiet and talk? What I've got to say is quite heavy.

NICHOLAS:

No, I don't really want to go anywhere with a stranger. What you have to say, you can say it here.

STELLA'S face becomes sheepish and she clear her throat again. She touches NICHOLAS on the arm, to which he tries and breaks free, but STELLA manages to drag him to the side, out of view from everyone.

STELLA:

Okay, look, 23 Years ago, you donated sperm to your friend: Anne-Marie, which was the best thing because it meant she could

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (cont'd)  
have a kid that she'd always  
wanted. anyway, that sperm turned  
into me, and my mum is now dead and  
I figured you might have spent all  
these years wondering how I'm  
doing? Well now you don't need to  
worry anymore because I'm here!

STELLA stops and pauses for breath, she then stares up at  
NICOLAS, who just watches her in awe, he looks around him to  
check if anyone is around, he then runs his hands through  
his hair and then puts his hands on his hips. STELLA waits  
for a response, folding her arms close to her chest.

There silence between the two for a long moment. STELLA  
coughs awakrdl, and NICHOLAS just remains staring at her,  
his face transitioning into shock.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Well? Are you that shocked to  
finally see me?

NICHOLAS:  
Shocked is a word, yeah. But  
Stella, look I haven't got any idea  
what you're talking about... You  
must have the wrong person, like I  
said last night.

STELLA:  
No... I don't. My Mum wrote you  
letters, you knew each other in  
University. You didn't want a  
family or kids or anything, but you  
wanted to help out your friend. And  
you did!

NICHOLAS:  
I never received any letters...

STELLA:  
Well, no, she never sent them, but  
she wrote them, I can only assume  
she didn't want to bother you  
whilst you were creating your  
business and things...

STELLA gestures at the restaurant around her. NICHOLAS  
furrows his brows in thought, he looks at STELLA every now  
and again , taking in her appearance. she catches him doing  
this and she messes with her hair self-consciously.

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLAS:

Look, I don't know how many times I have to tell you... I have no idea what you're talking about.

STELLA:

Well, if you'd listen to me...

NICHOLAS:

I've heard enough I think. I have to get to work, if you don't mind?

STELLA:

So that's it? Come on, you need to hear me out!

NICHOLAS sighs and places his bag down on the bar, STELLA watches it and then looks back at NICHOLAS, her eyes becoming pleading NICHOLAS doesn't react and begins to step away. He points at the BARTENDER, who had been eavesdropping. He becomes alert and sheepish.

NICHOLAS:

I'm going to talk to the chef, watch my bag...

NICHOLAS then turns to STELLA and his face becomes cold and dismissive, stepping further away, STELLA takes a step forward, but then stops.

NICHOLAS: (CONT)

You better be gone by the time I get back.

NICHOLAS walks over to the kitchen and enters. STELLA sighs and looks around her, she then looks at the bag left on the bar. She quickly checks if the coast is clear and then rushes to look inside the bag. THE BARTENDER tries to grab it defensively but STELLA bats his hand away.

STELLA:

Like you care enough about your job to do that.

THE BARTENDER scoffs, but then holds his hands up and goes back to polishing glasses. STELLA begins rooting inside of the bag, she pulls out a Filofax, stuffed with loose papers. She clutches it close to her chest. THE BARTENDER is still watching out of the corner of his eye. STELLA quickly puts the filofax in her bag and straightens her blouse. She taps her nose at THE BARTENDER who just rolls his eyes.

STELLA sighs and looks towards the kitchen and sees NICHOLAS chatting away to the chef. She smiles wickledly and turns to exits the restaurant.

37

EXT. BRIGHTON PIER. HALF AN HOUR LATER.

37

ELIZA and TOM are stood at the railngs of the end of the pier, eating candyfloss. ELIZA tilts her head towards the sun and smiles, sighing in content. TOM is stuffing his face full of candyfloss, messily chewing.

STELLA walks up behind them, with her own candyfloss. She stands next to TOM, not announcing her arrival. TOM looks at her in surprise, chewing rapidly and swallowing.

TOM:

Hey! How did it go?

STELLA sighs and pulls a large amount of candyfloss off the stick and stuffs it into her mouth.

STELLA:

He's stubborn, I'll give him that. Kind of nice though to see where I got it from. He's still convinced that he isn't my Dad. He's just confused.

TOM gives ELIZA a concerned glance, but she is already shooting him one... STELLA doesn't notice and continues eating.

ELIZA:

What's the plan then?

STELLA:

Well, if like me, he just needs a push in the direction of truth. He can't hide from it any longer.

STELLA delves inside her bag and pulls out NICHOLAS'S Filofax and waves it in front of TOM'S face.

STELLA: (CONT)

It has his address in it. Maybe taking a domestic approach might make him face the truth.

STELLA smiles smugly and finishes off her candyfloss.

ELIZA:

Is trespassing really the best way?

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:  
I'm afraid it's the only way. It  
will actually force him to listen.

TOM:  
Or get you arrested.

STELLA shrugs, still smiling.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Worth it!

ELIZA observes STELLA cautiously, STELLA oblivious.

ELIZA:  
Why are you so happy?

STELLA:  
It's exciting! I'm on this journey  
of self-discovery! I've found my  
father, I have you guys with me! I  
don't know, I guess dealing with  
thing beyond my maturity level is  
not actually hurting me anymore,  
more rewarding me.

ELIZA nods and shrugs. TOM yawns and puts his arsm around  
both ELIZA and STELLA, pulling them close to him.

TOM:  
So, can we eat before we trespass?  
Pysnce ourselves up a bit before  
some 'Jeremy Kyle' type family  
reunion.

ELIZA laughs but then her face changes to concerned again.

ELIZA:  
How many more times are you going  
to try to get through to him before  
you get hurt for real?

STELLA:  
He just needs time... So I'm  
willing to wait as long as it takes  
for him to open up to me. I'm not  
giving up now.

STELLA looks out onto the horizon and rests her head on TOM'  
shoulders, who hugs her tighter.

STELLA, ELIZA and TOM are sat in ELIZA'S car, watching the house. The house itself is large and old, surrounded by trees, three cars are also parked in front of the house, including a flashy sports car, convertible. The driveway is lined with lights.

STELLA exhales in shock and leans back in her seat. TOM is also looking at the house, mouth open.

TOM:

This is too nice, it belongs in a magazine.

STELLA:

Not going to lie, I feel intimidated by this house. It's gorgeous.

TOM just nods in reply. STELLA looks over at ELIZA, who is nervously gripping the steering wheel. STELLA nudges her, and ELIZA snaps out of her thought.

STELLA: (CONT)

What's eating you?

ELIZA:

Huh? Oh nothing, I'm just a bit nervous about going in there.

STELLA:

Why? Is he your Dad as well? Because I could've sworn your Dad was a balding Indian man called Paresh.

ELIZA:

No, look I just think you should be careful. I mean turning up at his work is one thing, but his house? Unannounced? Have you never heard the phrase: 'Don't poke the bear?'

STELLA:

Those who say that are just boring people afraid to take risks and get something out of their lives. Besides there is no right way to trace down your father and build a relationship with him. So I'm having to improvise, go balls to the wall.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA rolls her eyes and STELLA undoes her seatbelt and gets out of the car. TOM sighs and does the same, urging ELIZA to follow. Once they are all out the car, STELLA strides forward with confidence, clutching NICHOLAS'S filfoax before putting it in her bag. They reach the front door and STELLA reaches up towards the ornate doorbell. Her hand wavers and she bites her lip. TOM sigh and grabs her hand, pushing on the doorbell, making it ring.

STELLA: (CONT)

Thank you.

TOM pats her shoulder in support and they all wait anxiously as they hear footsteps approach the door.

A man in his dressing gown and pyjamas answers the door, he is holding a newspaper with his glasses balanced between his fingers. He frowns at them all, STELLA smiles in confusion and waves.

STELLA: (CONT)

Hey! Is Nicholas home?

NICHOLAS: (O.S)

Adam?! Who is it?

ADAM looks STELLA up and down and tilts his head to the side.

STELLA:

I'm his daughter...

ADAM widens his eyes and takes a step back, he then sighs and extends his arm towards the inside of the house.

ADAM:

Uhh, I suppose you should come in.

STELLA smiles and walks into the house. ELIZA and TOM are still standing in the doorway, nervously watching. STELLA turns back at them and ushers them in, to which they loyally follow. The hallway is luxuirous, with marbled floors and an ornate chandelier hanging down from the ceiling. The furnishing and art holds a lot of Greek influence. TOM whistles in awe, he leans close to ELIZA to whisper in her ear.

TOM:

(Whispering)

Very Greek...

ELIZA elbows him in the stomach subtly. STELLA looks around the hallway and smiles, ADAM observes her in confusion and

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLAS exits from the living room, dressed in a matching dressing gown to ADAM, but with the letter 'N' embroidered on the Lapel. He sees STELLA and sighs in frustration. He puts his hands on his hips and looks at her sternly. STELLA'S face lights up when she sees him.

ADAM:

Nic... would you like to explain what's going on here? This girl says she's your daughter.

NICHOLAS shakes his head and pinches the bridge of his nose, he then straightens up, shrugging.

NICHOLAS:

I wish I could tell you. But I have no idea. She's been harassing me for the past day or two, showing up at the restaurant.

STELLA laughs and folds her arms.

STELLA:

I feel like 'harrassing' is a strong word. Look, I came to return this...

STELLA reaches into her bag and pulls out NICHOLAS'S Filofax and passes it towards him. He snatches it from her angrily.

NICHOLAS:

Did you steal this from my bag?

STELLA:

Borrowed, see? I'm giving it back. It's just every time I got the chance to talk to you, you brushed me off and refused to talk.

NICHOLAS:

Because I have no reason to listen to a crazy person.

STELLA:

Always with the harshness... Look, I'm sorry to disturb your evening of newspaper reading and...embroidered dressing gowns. But I really would like it if you've heard me out? I've come all this way to find you, dragged my friends along...

STELLA gestures towards TOM and ELIZA, standing awkwardly in the doorway. They wave and smile.

STELLA: (CONT)

Please?

NICHOLAS looks at STELLA, bewildered and then looks over at ADAM who just shrugs in exasperation.

ADAM:

I'll-err, put the kettle on...

ADAM makes his way t the kitchen and STELLA smiles wildly at NICHOLAS, who exhales and points towards the living room.

39

INT. NICHOLAS'S LIVING ROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

39

STELLA perches herself on the edge of the sofa, ELIZA and TOM on either side of her. STELLA looks around the living room, taking in it's impressive décor. She notices a framed picture of NICHOLAS and ADAM on their wedding day, both smiling happily and looking at each other lovingly. STELLA smiles at the picture.

STELLA:

That's a cute pictue. How long have you two been married?

NICHOLAS:

3 years, together for 8.

STELLA:

Wow! That's impressive. Congraulations. I never would've thought you were Gay. I mean it's great! I mean kinda explains things a lot more.

ADAM walks into the room, carrying a tray with five mugs of tea. He places them down on the coffee table which seperates STELLA from NICHOLAS. Everyone stares at the tea as ADAM sits on the arm of the chair NICHOLAS is sat. TOM reaches for a mug. NICHOLAS sighs and then leans forward, looking directly at STELLA.

NICHOLAS:

What do you mean?

STELLA:

Well, it makes sense that you wouldn't want to start a family with my Mum, in terms of the proper domestic sense...

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLAS:  
For good reason-

ELIZA:  
Please hear her out!

STELLA smiles at ELIZA who gives her a nod. STELLA looks back at NICHOLAS, taking a deep breath.

STELLA:  
I'm really sorry for coming to your house. But I'm running out of ways to talk to you. Now, you knew my Mum in University, and you were really good friends. Also, she really wanted to have a baby, and you offered to donate some sperm so she could have that baby. I know I'm grown up now, but better late than never I guess. I just really wanted you to meet me and me to meet you. I grew up on so many wonderful stories about how generous you were to my Mum, and how happy you made her. Were you ever curious on how I was? Or how I turned out?

NICHOLAS stares at STELLA cluelessly, as does ADAM. STELLA continues to look at NICHOLAS.

STELLA: (CONT)  
I know you wanted to focus on your business and I know being a Father wasn't on your to-do list or anything. But I'm on my own now. My Mum died, and I've felt so lost. I just wanted to meet my Dad, so I didn't feel so lost anymore.

NICHOLAS'S face turns sympathetic, but then flickers to frustration He sighs deeply and puts his head in his hands. He then laughs quietly to himself and then looks at STELLA again.

NICHOLAS:  
Anne-Marie?

STELLA nods eagerly.

STELLA:  
Yeah! 5'1, From Galway,  
Ireland, loved woolly jumpers...  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (cont'd)  
ran away from home at the age of 18  
because her family were a bunch of  
uptight Catholics?

NICHOLAS: (CONT)  
I did know her, yes. But barely. We  
were in the Labour society, we  
spoke from time to time when we had  
society meetings but that's it. I  
wouldn't say we were ever friends.

STELLA:  
But I have pictures of you at Uni?  
The Cleaveland Arms? You Like IPA.

STELLA reaches into her bag and pulls out the picture of  
NICHOLAS in 'The Cleaveland Arms' and passes it too him.  
NICHOLAS examines the picture, ADAM looks over his shoulder  
to see the picture.

NICHOLAS:  
It's where the society met every  
Thursday. She was quite the  
photographer if I remember. But  
Stella, look. Your Mother never  
asked me to donate sperm, she  
struggled to say more than three  
sentences to me, she was so shy.  
Een if she did, I wuldve said no.  
You're right, being a father wasn't  
something I wanted when I was in my  
twenties. I mean the guy in the  
background has the same  
probability of being your Father.  
At least he's ginger.

NICHOLAS points out a man in the background of the picture,  
midway through downing a pint.

STELLA:  
(Quietly)  
But she wrote you letters.

NICHOLAS:  
I never got any of them, like I  
said before. I'm sorry, but your  
Mother must have lied to you.

STELLA blinks and then shakes her head.

STELLA:

No, no she didn't lie, she would never lie to me.

NICHOLAS:

Maybe you didn't know her as well as you thought you did. I'm deeply sorry about her passing, I can never imagine the pain you're in. But I think you need to move on from this delusion. I am not your Father Stella.

STELLA squeezes her hands together, gripping them until they are white. She exhales deeply and smiles.

STELLA:

Are you really in that much denial? Did you hit your head recently?

ADAM:

Okay, I think Nicholas has said more than enough, He's made it very clear he has nothing to do with you.

STELLA:

Alright mate, calm down, You literally have nothing to do with this, you might be married to him, but this is honestly between me and my Dad.

NICHOLAS:

Which I'm not.

STELLA:

Okay, this is getting really old now. Why are you pushing me away?

NICHOLAS:

You do realise how crazy you sound? Saying I'm your Dad? I'm 2nd Generation Greek. Those are pretty dominant genes. You look like you've just walked off the boat from Dublin.

STELLA digs her nails into her hands harder, her eye begins to twitch. ELIZA takes a sharp intake of breath and grips onto STELLA'S arm. TOM just sinks further back into the sofa, cringing.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:  
My Mum wouldn't lie to me.

NICHOLAS:  
I hate to break it to you  
sweetheart, but she has, for as  
long as you've been alive. Chances  
are, your 'Dad' is some random man  
looking to make a bit of money by  
masturbation. Your Mum was  
probably embarrassed by that fact  
and wanted to delude herself to hide  
the shame.

STELLA blinks rapidly to stop her tears from falling down her  
face, but they stream down her face, she wipes them away  
quickly.

ELIZA stands up and clears her throat, pulling STELLA up to  
her feet.

ELIZA:  
Okay, I think it's time to go.

STELLA:  
What? No I still have more to  
say...

NICHOLAS:  
I think your friend is right...  
We're done here.

NICHOLAS stands up and extends his hand towards the door and  
ELIZA begins to push STELLA towards it, TOM rising to help.  
They both manage to usher STELLA towards the door, STELLA  
looking longingly and confused at NICHOLAS, He avoids  
looking at her. TOM pulls on STELLA'S arms until they are  
out of the front door. ELIZA pops her head back in.

ELIZA:  
I'm sorry that we wasted your time.

ELIZA shuts the front door and STELLA just stands there,  
looking at her in disgust.

STELLA:  
What the fuck was that?

ELIZA:  
You were like 60 seconds away from  
exploding, he was being horrible to  
you...

TOM:  
Yeah, you didn't need to hear him  
talk like that.

STELLA:  
But I wasn't done yet...

TOM:  
I know... but things were getting  
too intense in there, I think you  
both need to cool off.

STELLA:  
No we don't! I need to go back in  
there!

ELIZA:  
Stella, if you go back in there,  
he's just gonna get nastier, and  
meaner. I'm sure he needs some time  
to fully process what you said.

STELLA groans and stamps her feet in a strop

TOM:  
You aren't going to get the  
resolution you want tonight. Face  
it.

STELLA:  
I'm pretty sure I would've if you  
guys hadn't ushered me out of  
there!

ELIZA:  
Stella, please, we are doing this  
for your own good. We know you  
better than you think we do. It's  
never easy hearing someone you  
idolise being that horrible.

STELLA:  
I can take it, I'm sure he has some  
unresolved feelings, surely it's  
best to let them all out.

TOM sighs and steers STELLA away from the house and towards  
the car.

TOM:  
Let's just leave and go to bed and  
come up with a plan of action  
tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:  
You guys are the worst.

ELIZA:  
We know.

40 EXT. NORTH LANES IN BRIGHTON, KENSINGTON GARDENS. THE NEXT DAY. 40

STELLA is walking along the lanes, with her arms folded and a miserable expression on her face. She is dragging her feet, looking the floor, whistles TOM and ELIZA are taking in the sights and all the different cafes surrounding them.

ELIZA:  
Aww, this place is so cute! I  
bloody love Brighton.

STELLA doesn't reply and continues to drag her feet. ELIZA hooks her arms around STELLA'S.

ELIZA: (CONT)  
Are you being a grumpy bum?

STELLA:  
Yes! I can't believe I let you guys  
drag me away last night. I was on a  
roll!

TOM:  
If we had stayed there, it could  
have gone one of two ways, you  
hysterically crying or you punching  
him. Do you feel like doing that  
now?

STELLA:  
I feel very strongly about hitting  
you...

TOM:  
But not him! So that's good! We are  
making progress.

STELLA rolls her eyes but then stops dead in the lanes, as she sees NICHOLAS and ADAM wander into a café down the street, holding hands. ELIZA grips onto STELLA'S arm tightly and looks at her warily.

STELLA:  
Maybe life is finally on my side!  
This is the perfect place to speak  
to him, it's calm and casual...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (cont'd)  
nobody's going to be getting  
hot-heading in a café.

TOM:  
I don't know, this doesn't feel  
like a great idea.

STELLA:  
Honestly, your guy's wavering  
support is giving me a migraine.  
You guys are hear to support me, so  
you either do that, or fuck off.

STELLA breaks free of ELIZA and marches towards the café  
NICHOLAS and ADAM just entered. ELIZA sighs in exasperation  
and then her and TOM being to follow.

STELLA enters the café, and narrows her eyes to locate them,  
they are sat at a table with a woman wearing a brightly  
coloured cardigan, pulling documents out of a folder.  
NICHOLAS and ADAM are still holding hands, looking at the  
woman brightly. STELLA approaches their table. ADAM looks up  
and nudges NICHOLAS, who then looks up at STELLA and sighs,  
briefly putting his head in his hands.

NICHOLAS:  
Stella, you can't be here right  
now... I'm in a very important  
meeting.

STELLA:  
I'm sure this lovely lady won't  
mind me taking up a bit of your  
time...

STELLA pulls out the spare chair at the table and sits down,  
holding her hand out to the woman.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Hi! I'm Stella Donnelly, I'm  
Nicholas's daughter.

The Woman looks at STELLA in confusion and shakes her hand,  
she then looks at NICHOLAS.

WOMAN:  
I'm sorry, I thought you said you  
didn't have any other children?

NICHOLAS:  
I don't... Look, Stella-

STELLA:

C'mon Dad... Don't be like that!  
Now, what's this meeting about  
then? Are you changing your will to  
include me?

NICHOLAS:

Are you being serious? No!

ADAM:

This is Amanda, she's from an  
Adoption agency...

STELLA smiles warmly and clutches her hands to her heart.

STELLA:

That's amazing! Adam, I know we  
don't know each other very well,  
but I'm so honoured you want to  
adopt me...

NICHOLAS begins to laugh, whilst both AMANDA and ADAM look  
at STELLA in bemusement.

AMANDA:

Umm, actually no. We were here  
going through forms about their  
current adoption...

STELLA'S face falls and she looks at AMANDA, her smiles  
becoming strained.

STELLA:

Excuse me what?

NICHOLAS:

Me and Adam are adopting a child...

STELLA:

Why? You don't need to, you already  
have one.

STELLA points to herself.

NICHOLAS: (CONT)

Listen, really listen. I never  
pictured myself as a Dad.  
Especially being a Gay man  
excommunicated from his family. A  
baby would just cause more scandal  
than necessary. Times have changed  
now, people are more tolerable,  
I've met a man I love. I've made a  
pretty good life for myself.

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLAS reaches over to hold ADAM'S hand. STELLA sniffs and frowns in bewilderment.

STELLA:  
But, adopting a child?

NICHOLAS:  
Yes. I'm not your Dad, But I'm going to be someone elses.

STELLA:  
Are you fucking kidding me?! You are willing to be a Dad to some stranger and then outcast your flesh and blood? Is it because I'm not a cute baby anymore? Because if that's your issue maybe you should have made more of an effort when I was one!

NICHOLAS shakes his head and flashes an apologetic looks over to AMANDA. She stares at him, red-faced and wide-eyed.

STELLA:  
Why won't you just let me in? You don't need to adopt, you already have a daughter, ready-made, who's gone through puberty and only has a slightly unhined mental state. AM I really that unlovable?

NICHOLAS:  
That's enough. You are not my daughter and no amount of stalking will change that. I don't know how many times I need to say this. You can't walk into someones life and expect them to love you and accept you with open arms. I'm sorry you grew up being fed with these lies, but maybe it's a good thing now. Your Mum is dead and is not around to fill you with this posion.-

STELLA stands up and swiftly punches NICHOLAS in the face, pushing him off his chair. ADAM catches him, flustered. People in the café gasp and all turn to look at them. STELLA stands there, clutching her hand in pain, breathing heavily. NICHOLAS holds his face and stares at STELLA in disbelief. ELIZA and TOM run over, holding STELLA.

STELLA:

Don't talk about my Mum like that.  
How could she ever see you as this  
hero? How could I? You're horrible.

NICHOLAS laughs and stands up, shakily, ADAM holding onto his hand.

NICHOLAS:

You're still on this? Stella, wake up! What do I have to do? Get a D.N.A Test? Pay you off? What do I need to do for you to leave me and my family alone? I refuse to be your comfort blanket because you are on your own.

STELLA:

I don't want your money! I want you to face up to the responsibility of that decision you made 23 years ago! I want you to stop lying and face the truth. What are you afraid of? That it'll cause too much of a scandal? Are you embarrassed because it'll disturb your perfect life?

ELIZA:

Stella-

STELLA raises her hand to silence ELIZA, who just steps back, defeated.

NICHOLAS:

I've heard enough.. you need to leave now All three of you. Now! Before I call the police.

STELLA takes a step back, opening her mouth to retaliate, but TOM and ELIZA stand up and grab her by the shoulder and begin turning her away towards the door. STELLA digs her heels into the floor so they have to drag her.

TOM:

We are so sorry for disturbing your meeting. Look please don't call the police She's upset and grieving, you have to understand?

STELLA:

Why are you taking his side? He's being unreasonable.

(CONTINUED)

TOM:

Enough Stella. We need to leave. I didn't come here to bail you out of custody.

STELLA:

It won't come to that! Why does no-one understand displays of passion anymore?!

STELLA turns around and points at AMANDA.

STELLA: (CONT)

YOUR CARDIGAN IS UGLY!

TOM rolls his eyes and pushes STELLA with force out of the cafe, ELIZA holds her hands up in apology and helps TOM push STELLA out of the door, leaving NICHOLAS, ADAM and AMANDA alone.

41 EXT. OUTSIDE THE CAFE. MOMENTS LATER.

41

STELLA breaks free from TOM and ELIZA'S grip. She stroms down the way, pulling out a cigarette from her bag and lighting it angrily. '

STELLA:

He has such a fucking nerve. How could he act like that to his own daughter?!

TOM sighs and puts his hands behind his head in anguish. ELIZA just puts her hands on her hips and shakes her head.

TOM:

For the love of Christ Stella... give it up!

STELLA:

Excuse me?

ELIZA:

I think Nicholas has made his point. He can't be your Dad. No-one is that stubborn.

STELLA scoffs and gestures to herself, taking a long drag of her cigarette.

TOM:

Think about it, His story adds up, he looks nothing like you, and maybe your Mum did lie...

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

Shut up! She wouldn't!

TOM:

Not in a nasty way, but to protect you! It's never easy growing up without a parent, so maybe she wanted to soften the blow?

STELLA:

You don't know what you're talking about... I'm gonna do a DNA test and settle this once and for all.

ELIZA:

Oh my god, wake up Stella! This guy isn't your Father! You need to accept that! I wanted you this would end in tears and if you don't take a step back right now you will give me a heart attack! I am tired, Stell-. This journey for your self-discovery is unhealthy. You don't need to do any of this, your life is fine!

STELLA narrows her eyes and throws the cigarette on the floor. ELIZA gulps in fear at her sudden outburst and nervously tucks a piece of hair behind her ear. STELLA takes a step towards ELIZA, TOM stands in the middle of them.

STELLA:

I'm sorry, I didn't realise there was a time limit on grief? I didn't realise that my life was full of sunshine and rainbows. My Mother is dead, I have no-one! That doesn't equate to a good life!

ELIZA:

I'm not saying you should be done with grieving, but you need to harness it in positive ways! Not this! You're hurting other people now! You need to grow up and get some help!

TOM:

Okay, I think we should all calm down... take a few deep breaths.

TOM mimics taking deep breaths, urging STELLA and ELIZA to copy, they just stare at him.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

Is this how you've felt all along?  
I thought you supported me?

ELIZA:

I do! I want to be supportive, but  
not when you're on the path to  
self-destruct. You've not even  
asked about how we are feeling  
about Graduation, or our lives. You  
don't even care!

STELLA:

Oh because that's the most  
important thing in the world, how  
terrible of me.

ELIZA:

The only thing terrible is you  
fixating on this stupid obsession  
with finding your biological Dad!  
That means nothing unless he is  
willing to stand up for you and  
never cared about him before, but  
now you make us drop everything to  
follow you! It's insane!

STELLA:

Fine, then don't see it then! Go  
home, Live your perfect life with  
your two parents and your degree. I  
knew you were going to leave me  
behind eventually. Sorry my  
grieving and depression made you  
too uncomfortable to be around.

STELLA turns on her heel and wraps her arms around herself  
as she begins to walk down the driveway. ELIZA sighs sadly,  
and TOM tries to follow STELLA.

TOM:

Come on! Where are you going? We  
are ages away from the B&B. Let us  
take you home.

STELLA:

Fuck off, I can walk.

STELLA speeds up disappearing into the crowds of people. TOM  
groans, squinting to see if he can still see her.

(CONTINUED)

TOM:  
STELLA! STELLLAAAA!

STELLA runs back towards TOM angrily, she knees him in the crotch, making him fall to the floor. STELLA leans down and hits him around the head.

STELLA:  
No! You do not get to take my  
Streetcar Named Desire moment from  
me. You are not Marlon Brando and  
you never will be!

STELLA straightens up without looking at ELIZA, she turns away and begins running off into the distance. ELIZA goes over to TOM to help him stand up. They look into the distance in the direction STELLA ran. ELIZA drags TOM towards the near by car park, reaching for her phone, quickly dialling a number.

TOM:  
Who are you ringing? Stella?

ELIZA unlocks the car door and gets in, TOM following. ELIZA presses the phone to her ear as she switches on the ignition.

ELIZA:  
Nope, the big guns, She's gonna  
hate me for this... Keep an eye out  
for her though...

TOM nods and puts his seatbelt on as ELIZA reverses out of the driveway.

42

EXT. ROADSIDE BY THE PROMENADE 15 MINUTES LATER.

42

STELLA is walking on the path at the side of the promenade, arms wrapped around herself shivering as she observes all the people around her. A car horn beeps and STELLA jumps in fear, she looks behind her to realise it's ELIZA'S car. She rolls her eyes and continues to walk away from the car. ELIZA slows down the car until it matches the speed of STELLA'S pace. TOM leans his head out the window and whistles at her. STELLA ignores him.

TOM:  
Oi! Blanche DuBois! Quit playing  
silly beggars and get in the car.

STELLA:  
It's like you're poking the bear!  
I'm am not Blanche... Don't taint  
me with that brush.

(CONTINUED)

TOM:

Got you talking though didn't it?  
Look, You don't have to talk to  
us... You can brood in the car and  
shoot us as many evils as you like.

STELLA stops, biting her lip in thought. ELIZA stops the car, and both her and TOM smile pleadingly at STELLA. STELLA gronas and opens up the car door and gets in, slamming it for dramatic effect. She raises her eyebrows at TOM and ELIZA and they both nod. ELIZA beigns driving again.

43 INT. STELLA'S AND ELIZA'S B&B ROOM. THE MORNING AFTER. 43

ELIZA sturs and wakes up to STELLA singing Kate Bush loudly from the bathroom. ELIZA groans sleepily and sits up, rubbing her eyes. STELLA exits the bathroom, fully clothed, her face made-up, concealing her tired, puffy eyes. ELIZA smiles at her, and STELLA just raises her eyebrows at her.

ELIZA:

How are you feeling?

STELLA:

(Flatly)

Fine.

ELIZA:

You were singing Kate...

STELLA:

So I'm sad. That's nothing new. I'm  
gonna go for a walk.

ELIZA:

Do you want company?

STELLA:

No thanks. See you later.

STELLA grabs her bag and exits the room, slamming the door. ELIZA sighs and reaches for her phone and begins texting.

44 EXT. BEACH FRONT. BRIGHTON. AN HOUR LATER. 44

STELLA is sat on the beach, with her knees hugged against her chest, headphones in, listening to 'A Mother Stands For Comfort' By Kate Bush. She is looking at one of her Mother's letters, reading it over and over again. She sighs and places it back in her bag., looking at the sea, focusing on a young child paddling, holding a bucket and spade. The child laughs and squeals as her Father comes along and picks her up, throwing her over his shoulder. STELLA rolls her

(CONTINUED)

eyes and then lies down, shielding her eyes from the sun. A shadow appears over her, STELLA frowns and opens her eyes to see STEPHEN standing over her, smiling.

STELLA groans and sits up, pulling out her headphones.

STELLA:  
Why are you here?

STEPHEN:  
Eliza phoned me last night.

STELLA looks up at him, her face turning to a scowl. STEPHEN holds his hands up and gingerly sits down on the sand next to her. STELLA shuffles away slightly.

STEPHEN: (CONT)  
Don't be mad at her, she was looking out for you.

STELLA:  
Clearly, why else would she send you.

STEPHEN:  
How is everything going down here?

STELLA:  
Shit... He's not a very nice man.

STEPHEN:  
Who? Your Dad?

STELLA:  
Yeah... well I'm not so sure about that last part. Either he is as stubborn as I am... Or he's actually not my Dad. I think Mum lied. I'm actually 50% random.

STEPHEN chuckles and then sees STELLA'S sad face, and his own turns sympathetic.

STELLA: (CONT)  
I don't get it... why would she lie? Why would she make me believe that I had a Father out there?

STEPHEN:  
I mean I can't vouch for her, but I can imagine the pressure of being a single Mum, facing this whole new world alone. It can be

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN: (cont'd)  
intimidating, if she's anything  
like you, she would probably try  
and hold onto some sense of  
normalcy.

STELLA:  
There's escapism, and then there's  
this.

STEPHEN:  
People do strange things for love.  
Much like you running away in the  
middle of the night to track down a  
mysterious father figure.

STELLA:  
Look how well that's gone I also  
got in a huge fight with Eliza and  
Tom. I feel terrible, and stupid. I  
really thought this trip would  
finally be an end to this  
gut-wrenching pain I've felt ever  
since she died.

STEPHEN:  
Grief will do that...

STELLA:  
I just got it in my head that if I  
found my Father, it would fix  
everything. I could feel somewhat  
whole again. Someone would be there  
to love me and support me, and be  
there for me.

STEPHEN:  
Stella, there are lots of people  
out there who are doing just that.  
Eliza and Tom packed up and  
followed you with no question, and  
I-

STEPHEN trails off and looks at the ground, STELLA raises  
her eyebrows and smiles briefly.

STEPHEN: (CONT)  
I understand the need to find where  
you come from. It is a comfort more  
than anything. But sometimes,  
family can let you down, and you  
have to make do.

STELLA nods in agreement.

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN: (CONT)

When your Mum died, it broke me. The only thing that kept me going was that there was a piece of her still alive and well. If a little mouthier, stroppier and chain-smokes. That's you. I never planned to have kids, but I met your Mum and everything changed, I was so happy to welcome you in my life. Despite whatever differences we may have had in the past. I love your Mother, and you as if you were my own. I don't need to share DNA with you to feel that.

STELLA smiles, her eyes filling up with tears, STEPHEN puts his arm around her and pulls her in closer. Instead of pulling away, STELLA nestles into him, sniffing loudly.

STELLA:

(Muffled)

I'm sorry for being a bitch...

STEPHEN laughs and strokes her hair fondly, STELLA lifts her head up and STEPHEN WIPES AWAY HER TEARS.

STEPHEN:

It's okay... I'm sorry I wasn't more supportive of your decision to come down here.

STELLA:

I wish you would've strapped me down or locked me in my room. This was such a mistake.

STEPHEN:

I couldn't have stopped you even if I tried. But you needed this, you needed to have a clear head about who you are.

STELLA:

I still have no clue...

STEPHEN:

But you've started to pave the way. You've been so lost for so long It broke my heart. You dropped out of uni, gave up gymnastics. Everything you held dear. Maybe this is the thing you needed to give you some clarity.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA nods in thought.

STELLA:  
Very Profound... thank you.

STEPHEN:  
No worries.

STELLA:  
No, Stephen, thank you for being  
there for me, and not giving up on  
me. I'll try and be better.

STEPHEN smiles warmly, and STELLA stands up, brushing the sand off her legs. She pulls out the letters her Mother wrote and she laughs, letting them go and fly away in the breeze. She sighs with contentedness. STEPHEN stares at her in confusion. STELLA reaches her arms in the air, happily.

STELLA: (CONT)  
That was oddly therapeutic... Now I  
have to go do something. Would you  
mind coming with me?

STEPHEN smiles and nods, standing up and squeezing her shoulders.

STEPHEN:  
Whatever you need. My cars over  
there.

STELLA and STEPHEN walk across the beach towards the car, STELLA looks back to see the letters floating around in the breeze. She smiles and mouths: 'Bye'

45

EXT. NICHOLAS'S FRONT DOOR. HALF AN HOUR LATER.

45

STELLA and STEPHEN stand outside the front door, STELLA nervously pressing the doorbell and takes a deep breath, biting her lip. STEPHEN nudges her and gives her a nod of encouragement.

Footsteps can be heard from the other side of the door and muffled voices, NICHOLAS opens the door and his face instantly falls.

STELLA smiles brightly at him, NICHOLAS goes to slam the door, but STELLA places her foot in the way.

STELLA:  
I come in peace! I swear this won't  
take long.

NICHOLAS sighs impatiently and nods.

(CONTINUED)

STELLA: (CONT)

I just want to say I'm sorry. I'm sorry for barging into your life and demanding you to be a part of mine. I'm hurting a lot, and I need to find a healthier way of dealing with that. I thought meeting you would be perfect. But It wasn't I acted to quickly without thought. I was just desperate to feel like I had a family again. But I have that anyway. Biology isn't important, shared DNA doesn't mean shit if they don't even care. I should've known you weren't my Dad when you didn't step up and claim it. You seem like you'd do that if it were true.

NICHOLAS nods along, blinking trying to follow her words. STELLA pauses for breath.

STELLA: (CONT)

I grew up hearing fairy stories about you, you were my invisible hero... But at the end of the day, they were just stories, which I should've grown out of a long time ago. I have a great family, I should've realised that sooner.

STELLA smiles at STEPHEN who looks at her proudly. NICHOLAS smiles and releases the door, relaxing.

STELLA: (CONT)

Despite the harshness, You seem like a good guy. You've made a great life for yourself, have a great husband, and you're gonna be a great Dad! I'd love to get know you, but I understand I robably haven't given the best impression. But I wish you all the best.

NICHOLAS:

Thank you Stella. I really appreciate that. I'm glad we can put this all behind us.

STELLA:

That sounds like the best thing right now... It's been a very emotional rollercoaster these past few days.

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLAS nods in agreement.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Ooh before I go...

STELLA pulls out the photo of NICHOLAS she found in her loft: 'Nicholas at the Cleaveland Arms'. She hands it to NICHOLAS who chuckles at it.

STELLA: (CONT)  
Keep it, show it to your kids, tell them all about you, the real stuff. Don't leave them questioning who they are for one second...

NICHOLAS:  
I will. Thank you.

STELLA:  
I just want to let you know as well, my Mum might have made all of this up, but she was an incredible woman... she was loving and caring, she would do anything to protect me and to help me. So even though my conception was questionable, I still feel like she did it for the right reasons. I'm just sorry you got dragged into all of this.

NICHOLAS nods again, looks over at STEPHEN and extends his hand towards him. STEPHEN shakes it warmly.

NICHOLAS: (CONT)  
And you are?

STELLA:  
This is Stephen, he's a really good man. He likes gardening and Formula 1. He's also been the best father-figure to me, I've only just realised this now. But yeah. We'll leave you alone now.

NICHOLAS:  
It's been, evenutful, Stella. See you around.

STELLA:  
Bye..

STELLA waves at him and he smiles, closing the door. STELLA exhales and turns away from the door, walking away. STEPHEN catches up with her .

STEPHEN:

That was very big of you, well done.

STELLA:

Look at me being all grown-up. I feel so, enlightened.

STEPHEN:

You should... Now how about something to eat? Find Eliza and Tom.

STELLA:

Yeah, I should probably apologise for being a dick... If they let me.

STEPHEN:

Don't doubt it for a second.

They reach STEPHEN'S car and get in. STELLA pauses before she does her seatbelt.

STELLA:

Things are going to be okay, right?

STEPHEN sighs and turns on the car, looking over his shoulder. He then looks at her and smiles earnestly.

STEPHEN:

Everything will be fine. It will take some time, but I promise, things will get easier.

STELLA smiles and STEPHEN begins to reverse out of the driveway.

46

EXT. BATH CATHEDRAL. THREE MONTHS LATER.

46

STELLA is taking pictures of ELIZA and TOM in their Graduation gowns, surrounded by other students also in gowns. ELIZA poses and TOM gives a thumbs up, adjusting his cap. STELLA laughs and goes over to them, showing them the pictures.

ELIZA:

Gross, Delete it, I look awful.

STELLA:

Shut up! You look gorgeous!

STELLA takes a step back and looks at TOM and ELIZA smiling

(CONTINUED)

STELLA:

I'm so proud of you guys... You've done something I never could.

TOM:

Yeah, all that stress, drinking and existential crises leads down to this... spending hundreds of pounds on a gown to receive a bit of paper..

ELIZA elbows him in the stomach.

TOM: (CONT)

You can still go back and finish Uni you know, there's nothing stopping you.

STELLA:

Nah, I think I need to leave Uni behind me, Fresh starts are needed.

ELIZA:

Well, what do you plan to do then?

STELLA:

I've been chatting to my old Gymnastics coach, I'm gonna take a job at the gym, become a coach/mentor/lifesaver, all of the above.

TOM:

That's awesome! You're Mum would be really happy about that.

STELLA:

That's sort of the idea. She may have lied to me all my life, but Gymnastics was the thing that kept us close, so I can still stay close to her without all the drama and emotional turmoil.

ELIZA:

Clealry you haven't seen yourself compete then...

STELLA winks at them both and checks her watch.

STELLA:

Shit! Got to go, Meet you at the pub later?

TOM:  
Where are you going?

STELLA:  
Gonna go meet Stephen and we are  
going to see Mum.

TOM and ELIZA nod and go in to hug STELLA, squeezing her tight. They release her and STELLA waves, beginning to walk away.

TOM & ELIZA:  
(Shouting)  
STELLAAAAA

STELLA turns around and TOM and ELIZA are waving manically at her.

ELIZA:  
We love you!

STELLA laughs and blows a kiss towards them, TOM jumps up to catch it, STELLA Shakes her head and looks at them, beaming and smiling widely.

END