

LOW SEASON
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Address
Phone Number

LOW SEASON

EXT. BEACH. MORNING

Sun bleached pebbles and shells surround a shallow rockpool. A trickle of blood seeps slowly through the stones into the water. Beadlet anemones wave their tentacles in the quickly reddening water.

TITLE CARD

TWO WEEKS EARLIER

INT. KITCHEN MORNING

A child's suitcase lies open on a floor, packed tidily with colorful summer clothes, t-shirts, a spotty swimsuit. It also contains two dolls, still packed in their original boxes.

A small hand places a large carving knife in the case.

Alice, 11, plump, borderline plain but with an engaging vulnerability, carefully packs an array of sharp kitchen implements beneath the clothes.

INT - BEDROOM - MORNING

A knock on the door. Alice opens the door to her mother's bedroom.

ALICE OSS

Mum?

Only one side of the empty double bed has been slept in.

Alice enters, hurries to the dressing table and scoops up what pills, nail files and scissors lie there.

She's about to leave when she sees a brown dressing gown on the floor. Picking it up she removes the cord.

INT. KITCHEN MORNING

It all goes into the suitcase.

INT - HALL - MORNING

Alice knocks on the bathroom door.

ALICE

Mum?

No answer. Alice frowns.

ALICE (CONT'D)

MUM?

Silence. She opens the door. Her face fills with horror.

Helen, 42, eyes closed, lies submerged in the bath.

ALICE (CONT'D)

(Screams)

MUM!!

Helen rears up, water splashing everywhere.

HELEN

WHAT?

Alice sags with relief. She smiles brightly, suddenly pretty.

ALICE

Breakfast is ready.

INT. KITCHEN MORNING

Alice packs the last of her haul. As the door bursts open, she slams the suitcase shut.

SIMONE (16) gorgeous, freshly bloomed curves barely covered in a tiny summer dress, bursts into the kitchen.

SIMONE

What's happened? What's wrong.

ALICE

Morning Simone. Nothing.
Everything's fine.

Simone looks at her narrowly. Alice smiles back brightly. Simone throws herself into a seat.

ALICE (CONT'D)

That's Mum's place.

Simone ignores her. She picks up the box of sugar-puffs and eyes the sugar content in disgust.

SIMONE

46% Yuck. Would Daddy ever hurry
up. Two whole weeks, joy!

Alice's face fills with concern beyond her years.

ALICE
Simone, do you think Mum'll be okay
on her own?

Simone pauses, then shrugs, indifferent.

Just then Helen, ruffled and weary looking, drifts into the kitchen. She holds the two sides of her brown dressing gown around her.

ALICE (CONT'D)
(Brightly)
Morning Mum!

Simone doesn't even look up. Helen absently ruffles Alice's hair.

She goes to a cupboard and opens it, she frowns.

HELEN
I could have sworn we had some
aspirin.

Alice says nothing. Helen goes and slumps in a seat.

ALICE
Doesn't Simone look pretty?

Helen's eyes flick over Simone's tiny dress. She goes to tug down the hem, but Simone slaps her hand away.

HELEN
So what time is your dad coming to
collect you?

SIMONE
(challengingly)
Why, can't wait to get rid of us?

HELEN
Oh give me a break Simone.

SIMONE
With pleasure, two whole weeks!

ALICE
Coffee?

Creating a distraction, Alice ostentatiously pours the coffee. It looks strong. Helen turns from Simone and smiles at her.

HELEN

Oh thanks love, what am I going to do without you?

Alice pauses, worry fleetingly across her face.

Then she starts to spoon sugar into her coffee, one heaped spoon, two ...

SIMONE

Jesus Alice, goes easy.

HELEN

Leave her Simone..

Alice takes a third.

SIMONE

She'll get fat!

Simone reaches across to grab the sugar bowl. Helen goes to stop her and between them they send both the sugar and Alice's coffee flying...

HELEN

SHIT!

Alice bites back a yelp of pain, coffee spills into her lap scalding her.

The coffee seeps into the spilt sugar. Alice, covering the fact she is hurt, grabs a tea towel.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Bloody Hell, Simone, why do you always have to stir things.

ALICE

It's fine, it's fine. I'll take care of it.

SIMONE

Well why hadn't you have gotten more milk? That's your job!

ALICE

Look it's fine. I'm fixing it!

HELEN

Christ where's your bloody father?

ALICE

Stop! STOP!

Alice throws the tea towel across the table at Simone and Helen. They pause briefly and look at her. Just then the door bell rings. Helen tenses.

Simone's face lights up.

SIMONE

DADDY!

She gets up and runs out, slamming the door behind her.

INT - HALL - MORNING

Alice knocks on a bedroom door.

ALICE

Simone? Simone, are you alright?

No answer, just the muffled sound of sobs. Sighing, Alice walks down the stairs and goes to listen outside the kitchen door.

HELEN OSS

You can't just change plans like this at the last moment.

JOE OSS

How many more times do I have to explain? A work thing has come up, I can't help it.

INT. KITCHEN MORNING

JOE, 45, tall, handsome, carefully turned out, eyes Helen's dishevelled state. She pulls the edges of her dressing gown together defensively.

HELEN

Now would that be like a work work thing or a Kate work thing, I seem to remember the distinction used to blur.

JOE

Oh Helen, please don't get upset. I hate it when you get upset.

HELEN

I'm not upset, I'm just saying you can't just walk in and change plans

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)
like this, it's not fair on me...or
the girls!

JOE
Ah don't start dragging the girls
into it, if you could just calm
down.

Helen's voice starts to rise.

HELEN
I am calm! And the girls ARE in it!
You're supposed to be taking them
for two weeks and you cancel at the
last moment, what about my plans.

JOE
What plans?

HELEN
... I could have plans!

Joe studies her carefully.

JOE
Maybe I take them, if you're should
going to be like this.

HELEN
Like what? What do you think I'm
going to do?

There's a pause between them.

HELEN (CONT'D)
For Christ's sake Joe, I'm well
able to look after my kids. Haven't
I being doing so for the last two
years.

Joe seizes on this.

JOE
Well okay, only if you're sure. But
let me pay for a holiday, It's the
least I could do. Just the three of
you, it could be fun.

Helen senses she's been played!

HELEN
...hold on..

INT. HALL MORNING.

Alice is sitting on the step. Joe walks out.

JOE
Look after your Mum kid.

Alice nods.

JOE (CONT'D)
(calling up the stairs)
Bye Simone!

No answer. He ruffles Alice's hair before walking out the door. She pats her hair back into place.

Alice looks into the kitchen, Helen is slumped at the table. Alice sighs. She gets up and walks into the kitchen to her mother.

EXT - SEASIDE - DAY

A slate grey sea swells and ebbs beneath a heavy sky. High waves crash and erupt against jagged rocks.

Despite a red flag buffeting in the wind, a lone surfer, risks the elements.

As Alice gazes out a car window, the reflections of the world going by fleet across her face.

PULL BACK to reveal an ancient Volvo driving through a seemingly deserted holiday village, past an empty fairground, shut for the day.

INT - CAR - DAY

Helen stares ahead as she drives. Simone, mascara stained tear tracks staining her face, slumps in the passenger seat.

IAN, 16, Simone's boyfriend, poised at that awkward moment between boy and manhood, buries his head in his phone.

Alice leans into the gap of the seats between Helen and Simone and smiles happily.

A roar of a horn as Helen almost runs them out under another car.

SIMONE
WATCH OUT!

Helen slams on the brakes. Alice, thrown forward between the two seats, instinctively, protectively grabs Helen's shoulder. It was a near miss

HELEN

SHIT!

She sits for a moment, shaken as Simone throws her eyes to Heaven.

SIMONE

Fucks sake!

ALICE

You okay Mum?

Furious with herself Helen nods. Ian pulls Alice back to sit down.

IAN

Put on your seat belt Alice.

Once she's fastened in, Alice starts to pick up her dolls, who, still boxed, have jolted to the floor. Ian picks one up and hands it to her.

IAN (CONT'D)

What's with the boxes?

Alice looks at him as if it's so obvious.

ALICE

To protect them.

EXT - HOLIDAY COTTAGE- DAY

Rain drizzles down. The Volvo pulls up outside a grim little holiday cottage.

Alice grimaces but quickly effects a bright smile. CUT TO

A flower pot is lifted. Insects scatter everywhere. With a look of disgust, Helen picks up a key attached to a heavy stone key ring.

INT - HOLIDAY COTTAGE

Inside isn't much better. The cramped little cottage exudes an air of cold and damp. Helen looks around dispiritedly. Alice seeing this, starts to rush about.

ALICE

I think it's really cute. I mean it's so close to the seaside. We can go swimming every day, we can even have picnics....

HELEN

If it ever stops raining.

ALICE

We..we can bring umbrellas!

At that moment Simone comes down the stairs.

SIMONE

Upstairs is even worse!

Helen sighs. Ian enters with the bags.

IAN

Thanks again for inviting me Helen.

HELEN

Are you being smart?

His face falls. No.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Oh I'm sorry Ian. Thank you for coming. Otherwise we'd have never got her ladyship to honour us with her presence.

SIMONE

Come on Ian, we'll grab the double.

HELEN

Oh for God's sake Simone..

SIMONE

What? It's hardly as if you need it.

HELEN

Please. Don't start.

SIMONE

Start what?

IAN

Look, I'm just going to put my stuff in the room in the back okay?

SIMONE

Oh you crawler! Whatever!

She storms up the stairs.

Ian escapes into the back room with his bags.

Alice strolls over to the window and looks out on the view. A shaft of sunlight has broken through the clouds, turning the sea from slate to silver.

The surfer is still out on the sea. Alice watches him. Just then, she notices a lone ant crawl up the frame of the window.

She studies it with avid concentration, as if trying to hear the tread of its tiny feet.

Helen is unloading bags of shopping out onto the kitchenette table. She takes out a jar of coffee but when she goes to open it, it slips, breaking all over the floor. The crash causes Alice to jump.

HELEN

Christ. What next?

Alice glances at the ant. Suddenly she crushes it beneath her hand and wipes it quickly away.

EXT - BEACH - DAY

Alice', breath held, wearing bright pink plastic goggles, has plunged her face into a rock pool. Her hair fans like a halo around her head as she studies the microcosm of the tiny pool.

The blood red tentacles of a beadlet anemone waving eerily; the thick clenching fingers of a stranded star fish.

Suddenly, with a gasp, she rears back out of the water, unable to hold her breath any longer.

CUT TO

A bright multi-colored beach ball spins in the sky. Alice flings it up to see how high she can throw it.

ALICE

Who's for a game?

Simone and Ian, laughing and messing, in their own little world of two, are sitting apart from Helen.

In a black one piece swimming togs and a long sleeved t shirt, Helen pretends to read but covertly watches them.

No one answers Alice.

Ian tries to slip his hand into Simone's bikini top. However she wriggles away.

Helen, far from looking outraged, looks wistful. Imitating Ian's gesture, she slips her own hand into her swimsuit top.

Just then Simone glances across. Helen makes as if to tug up her strap.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Mum? CATCH!

She goes to throw the ball.

HELEN

Not now love.

Just then they hear the sound of laughter from down the beach. A shapely girl in a miniscule bikini shouts encouragement at a surfer.

SALLY

Go Calum!

Catching a wave, he mounts the board and rides its crest. Dark, muscled, tanned, he seems part of the landscape. He exudes a sense of confidence and freedom.

Helen has returned her attention to her book.

ALICE

Watch this.

She takes the beach ball and, kicking it high into the air, manages to catch it on the way down. Helen doesn't notice.

Out on the waves the surfer who executes a particularly impressive move. The girl squeals.

Even Simone and Ian look up. She cocks an eyebrow at Ian.

SIMONE

Could you do that?

Ian shrugs, feigning indifference.

IAN

Surfing's for losers.

SIMONE

What are you? Forty?

Helen flinches.

ALICE

MUMMY! LOOK AT ME!

Alice kicks the ball up into the air, but her aim is off and it hurtles down the beach...towards the surfer who has just disembarked onto the strand.

The girl goes to run to him but he runs and catches the beach ball.

Seeing our group looking at him, he starts to mess, bouncing it on his head and on his feet like a foot ball.

The girl throws her eyes to Heaven. Ignoring her he dribbles the beach ball up to our group. He spots Helen, reading her book.

CALUM

Here. Catch!

But Helen hasn't even looked up. Calum raises an eyebrow, He's used to women looking at him.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Heh, you with the book....

Helen looks up in confusion and actually glances behind her to who he might be talking to.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Yeah you. Catch!

He throws the ball and it bounces off her. Simone sighs.

SIMONE

Lame.

Alice runs and gets it.

CALUM

Ah come on! You can do better than that.

Bewildered, Helen gets to her feet. Calum goes and grabs the ball from Alice. Flustered Helen stands poised, he throws, she catches it.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Nice one!

Calum strides up to her, takes the beach ball and tosses it in Alice's general direction and he puts out his hand to Helen.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Calum, one man welcome committee,
man about town and caretaker to the
cottages you're staying in.

Helen tentatively takes his hand. It engulfs hers.

ALICE

(suspicious)

How do you know where we're
staying?

He nods towards the distinctive key fob in Helen's basket.

SIMONE

So what's there to actually do in
this dump?

CALUM

Fuck all!

(he starts to sing)

This is the coastal town that they
forgot to close down...

Helen perks up in recognition.

CALUM/ HELEN

Armageddon- come Armageddon Come
Armageddon!

Calum grins in pleased surprise.

CALUM/HELEN

Every day is like Sunday Every day
is silent and grey.

Alice and Simone stare at Helen incredulously. Feeling foolish, she draws to a stop.

Calum continues to hold her mother's hand. She tries to pull it back but he holds it tight.

CALUM

So what do they call you?

HELEN

Helen.

At that moment the girl down the beach calls impatiently. Calum lets go of Helen's hand.

CALUM

Well Helen, if you need anything,
if the roof caves in, the floor
collapses, or (he sings) 'a strange
dust lands on your hands, or on
your face' or if you just get
bored, give us a shout.

HELEN

Thanks, but everything seems fine.

Calum grins, sensing a challenge. Just then the girl calls again, Calum winks at Helen, and runs off.

Helen turns to find Simone and Alice staring.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Morrissey! Before your time.

Simone rolls her eyes and turns away. Alice, trying to regain a bit of normality, picks up the beach ball.

ALICE

Here Mum, CATCH!

She throws the ball, but Helen has returned to her book. The ball rolls slowly away.

INT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Helen turns on the shower. The plumbing groans, objecting to the imposition.

Helen starts to strip off. Catching brief sight of herself in the full length mirror she automatically turns away. But there's another mirror on the next wall, they're everywhere! She can't get away from her reflection!

As she steps into the shower, she sees that the water is running a rusty brown.

She sighs heavily.

INT - SHOPPING CENTER - DAY

Helen and Alice are wheeling a shopping trolley around the local convenience store. A large sign lays claims to 'selling everything you need'.

As Helen throws in breakfast cereals, pizzas and frozen meals into the trolley, Alice sneaks in biscuits and jumbo packs of mini chocolate bars.

They wheel the trolley up to the counter where the shop assistant sits behind her copy of 'Heat' magazine.

It's the girl from the beach, SALLY, who was all over Calum. Her eyes narrow when she sees Helen.

HELEN
Just these please.

As Helen lays out the groceries Alice twists her head to read the headlines about B-list celeb boob jobs and cellulite.

Sally grudgingly lays down the magazine and starts to ring the groceries through.

Alice starts to pick up and study the various confectionery.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Oh, also could you tell me where
I'd get hold of Calum, the
caretaker?

Sally freezes. She glares at Helen.

SALLY
Why?

HELEN
The plumbing, in our cottage. It
needs sorting out.

SALLY
Huh, I'm sure it does.

HELEN
Excuse me?

Sally gives Helen a very definite look up and down. Helen flinches under the scrutiny.

SALLY
(grudgingly)
You'll probably find him at his
hut. You'll see it on the beach,
not far from the cottages.

HELEN
(bewildered)
Thanks.

She starts to bag the groceries. Sally turns back to her magazine.

Alice frowns. She doesn't understand the dynamic but doesn't like Sally's tone.

Defensively she slips a chocolate bar into her sleeve.

EXT- BEACH HUT-DAY

The Vovlo pulls up in front of a small house, more shack than cottage.

Any shortcomings of the beach hut are more than made up for by the magnificent view.

INT - CAR - DAY

Alice stares out the window at the sea in awe. Helen takes her bag.

HELEN

I'll just be a minute love.

She gets out. Alice slips the stolen chocolate bar from her sleeve and, unwrapping it, starts to eat.

EXT - BEACH HUT - DAY

Helen reaches the beach hut door. She knocks on the door. There's no answer. Alice, chewing, watches from the car.

HELEN

For fecks sake.

She takes a pen and paper from her bag and writes down her phone number and 'Please call me. Helen. Cottage 22'. She's just about to wedge it in the door when it opens, to reveal Calum, bare-chested, joint in hand, slim hips wrapped in a faded towel.

He takes the note from Helen's raised hands and looks at it and smiles his easy smile.

CALUM

Ah cool! And there was me, thinking you were immune to my charms.

HELEN

Excuse me?

CALUM

Coming all this way to give me your number. I'm touched.

Helen frowns, presuming he's pulling the piss.

HELEN

(coldly)

The plumbing, in the bathroom. It needs fixing. The water is brown.

CALUM

Did you leave it run a wee while?

HELEN

...no.

CALU

Well sure leave it run and then if it's still a problem, give us a shout then.

HELEN

Right. Thanks.

Brow furrowed, she turns to go. Calum frowns.

CALUM

Heh Helen...

He reaches forward and takes her by the arm. Helen starts, unused to being touched, she looks down at his hand on her skin.

HELEN

What?

Gently, he proffers the joint towards her.

CALUM

Here, have a drag. You look at if you could do with one.

HELEN

Excuse me but I do have my eleven year old daughter waiting for me in the car.

CALUM

And what? She'll ground you?

Despite herself, Helen laughs. We suddenly see a flash of how attractive she could be.

HELEN

No, but she'd definitely ban tv.

Calum grins in delight! Success.

CALUM

Finally! A smile! You actually have teeth! When I saw you on the beach, I says to myself, that one would be gorgeous if she only smiled.

HELEN

(flustered)

Would you go away out of that.

CALUM

And I bet myself I could make you smile before the week was out. So I win!

HELEN

Win what?

CALUM

Ah now, that would be telling.

Helen stares at him as it finally dawns on her. He's flirting! With her!

They stare at each other, a spark ignites.

Just then Alice beeps on the horn. Helen winces.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Duty calls!

She pauses a beat then suddenly she takes the joint from Calum's hand and takes a long drag. Calum raises an eyebrow in surprise.

Helen turns and hurries back to the car.

INT - CAR - DAY

Alice shoves the last of the chocolate into her mouth as Helen gets in. However Helen is too distracted by glancing in the mirror to see of Calum still looking after her. He is. Helen laughs in sheer surprise.

Alice, not used to Helen laughing, frowns, perplexed.

EXT - BEACH - EVENING

A pale orange sun is beginning to set over the horizon.

INT - GIRLS' BEDROOM - EVENING

The girls have made the room their own. Alice's side is neat, her dolls carefully lined up on her shelf.

Simone's is an explosion of clothes and underwear.

However, she has also already taped photographs of her younger self and her dad around the mirror. Standing in her bra and panties she studies herself critically.

Alice, lying on her bed, is absentmindedly wobbling what small tummy she has with her palms.

SIMONE

They've gotten bigger you know. I'm sure of it.

ALICE

What have?

SIMONE

My boobs.

ALICE

So? I don't see the big deal about boobs, I really don't.

SIMONE

(smirking)

You will. Anyway what you think doesn't matter. Ian thinks my boobs are fab! Guess what, Ian wants us to sleep together!

ALICE

But this is my room.

SIMONE

No you dummy. I mean have sex, shag, bonk, fuck!!

Alice makes an exaggerated face of disgust.

ALICE

SHUT UP!! Don't say that word!...are you going to?

Simone pauses a fraction of a beat, a quick flicker of apprehension crosses her face. Then she shrugs.

SIMONE

Sure. Why not? 'Bout time.

Alice pretending casualness, studies the bedspread.

ALICE
Simone? Do you think Mum has good
boobs?

SIMONE
What? Hardly!

ALICE
So you don't think anyone could
fancy her then?

SIMONE
(incredulous)
What? MUM?

She starts to laugh out of all proportion, Alice smiles,
reassured.

Calming down, Simone surveys herself critically in the
mirror.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
How do I look?

ALICE
(mischievous)
Like a big boobed blond bimbo.

Simone reaches over and wobbles Alice's stomach.

SIMONE
(careless)
Better a big boobed bimbo than a
fatty roly poly!

Alice's face drops. But Simone, already out the door, is
oblivious. Alice gets up and stares at herself in the mirror.

INT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Helen is standing gazing out the window as Alice runs down
the stairs, desperate for reassurance.

ALICE
Mum!

HELEN
What love?

ALICE
Simone says I'm a fatty-roly poly.

HELEN
(absently)
Don't mind Simone. It's only puppy
fat.

Alice stops short, as if struck.

She looks to see what Helen is gazing at.

Calum surfs the waves.

EXT - BEACH - MORNING

A weak sun has broken over the ocean.

Delicate yellow flowers grow amongst the long banks of sea
grass which frill the surrounds of the beach.

Humming happily, Alice gathers a large bunch.

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

The flowers sit in a jar in the middle of the table. Alice
has carefully laid four places for breakfast.

Raiding the cupboard for food, she emerges with arms full of
rice-puffs, crackers and instant coffee which she lays with
loving precision out on the table.

INT - HELEN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Alice sticks her head in Helen's bedroom door.

ALICE
Mum, breakfast is ready.

Helen is hidden amongst the heap of blankets on the bed.

INT - GIRLS' BEDROOM -MORNING

Simone is already up, already at the mirror layering on make
up. Alice comes in.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Simone, I've made breakfast.

SIMONE
What have you made?

ALICE
...Coco pops.

SIMONE
Empty carbs. No way.

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Alice is sitting in front of a huge bowl of Coco pops. She shovels a heaped spoonful into her mouth, then pauses.

She picks up the cereal contents and peers at the calorie content. It's high. Leaning forward she opens her mouth and the Coco pops fall back into the bowl.

At that moment Ian walks into the kitchen.

IAN
Morning. Is Simone up?

ALICE
Yeah, do you want some coco pops?

IAN
Oh! Cheers.

He grabs a handful of cereal from the packet and walks out. Alice's face falls.

CUT TO

Alice, head on the table, traces the patterns on the linoleum table cloth. Helen walks in, still crumpled from sleep.

Eagerly Alice leaps to her feet. She starts pouring cereal into a fresh bowl.

ALICE
Morning Mum. Do you want some cereal? Or I can make toast..

She pours milk into the bowl. Helen goes and flicks on the kettle.

HELEN
Don't bother sweetheart, I'm just going to make a cup of coffee and go back to bed.

Alice suddenly lets go of the bowl of cereal. It crashes to the ground. Milk and cereal splatter all over the floor. Helen looks at Alice, taken aback.

Alice immediately contrite, gets to her knees and starts to gather up the broken ceramic.

ALICE

I'm sorry, I'm sorry! I didn't mean it. It was an accident! Ow!

Alice holds up her finger, blood seeps out of a cut.

EXT - CANDY FLOSS STAND - EVENING

A tornado of pink spins into a large sugar cloud. Alice's face lights up in guilty delight as the stall holder hands her big candy floss on a stick.

She pauses a moment but temptation overcomes her and she tears off a large swath and shoves into her mouth.

Alice, Simone, Ian and Helen are at the local fun fair. It's small, hick and, with its kitsch stalls and handful of ancient rides, it totters the fine line between festive and depressing, depending on one's mood.

Alice finds it enchanting. The others obviously err on the other side of the divide.

SIMONE

Jesus. Tell me again why we all had to come just because Alice cut her finger?

HELEN

Because Alice wanted to spend time with all of us together.

Helen is looking around the crowd.

SIMONE

And of course what Alice wants, Alice gets!

HELEN

(snapping)

Look Simone if you want to go home, fine, no one is forcing you to stay.

Simone and Alice look at her, taken aback.

IAN

Come on Simone, lighten up, it's not like there's much else to do.

SIMONE

Okay okay, I'll stay.

HELEN
(under her breath)
Oh lucky us.

Hurt flashes across Simone's face. Alice quickly grabs hers and Ian's hands.

ALICE
Come on, it'll be fun.

She drags them off. Helen left alone sighs.

Suddenly, someone grabs her from behind. She screams.

HELEN
JESUS!

She swings around.

CALUM
Better! Me!

HELEN
Bloody hell, you scared the life
out of me! What do you want?

CALUM
Christ Helen, you're pure charm
do you know that? As one Smiths fan
to another I had a once in a
lifetime offer for you, but I don't
think you deserve it now.

He goes to walk off. Almost despite herself, Helen grabs him by the arm.

HELEN
NO WAIT! What? Tell me.

CALUM
Ok, I'm manning the dodgem cars for
my mate for half an hour, if you're
nice to me I'll let you and the
kids on free.

HELEN
Oh I don't know where they've gone.

CALUM
Well what about you then?

HELEN
What? Don't be daft, I can't go on
my own. I'd look like a muppet.

CALUM
 (shrugging)
 Suit yourself. It's only a bit of
 fun. All the best.

He turns and melts back into the crowd. Helen looks after
 him, annoyed with herself.

EXT - TARGET STAND - NIGHT

A row of glass-eyed dolls in boxes, sit staring. Alice holds
 her breath as Ian tries his best to hit the target range with
 colored plastic balls.

Helen hurries up to them.

HELEN
 Hi guys, do any of you want a go on
 the dodgems?

ALICE
 No thanks Mum, Ian is trying to win
 Simone a doll.

Simone doesn't acknowledge her.

SIMONE
 (To Ian)
 Why don't you just buy me the
 stupid doll? It would be cheaper!

IAN
 That's not the point.

He throws again and misses. Frustrated he takes out another
 2 euro and hands it over the bemused carney.

HELEN
 Okay well, I'm just going
 to...go...

No-one is paying any attention to her so she leaves.

SIMONE
 This is so childish, I'm going to
 see is there anything less lame to
 do.

IAN
 Why don't you do that? Alice, come
 here. Have a go, you can't do any
 worse than me.

Delighted Alice takes a ball. She throws it. It hits a bull's-eye.

IAN (CONT'D)

Shit!

EXT - DODGEMS - NIGHT

Colored lights, red, green, purple, flash across Helen's face as she stands watching the dodgems. Calum swings easily from moving car to moving car.

As if sensing her, he looks up. He smiles and waves. Self conscious, she waves back. Calum jumps off the dodgem, throws his money belt to a mate and exits the ring, to join her but just then, Sally emerging from the crowd, walks up to Calum.

She follows his gaze and sees Helen. Deliberately she kisses Calum in a proprietorial manner, distracting him.

She whispers something obviously lascivious into his ear and very deliberately flicks her hand across his crotch.

Helen turn and walks, cursing her stupidity under her breath.

CUT TO

Simone is wandering around the stalls, bored.

She pauses in front of the carousel. A young father is standing protectively holding a little girl perched nervously on one of the plaster horses.

Simone smiles wistfully. Just then she notices two boys, one with glasses, one with acne scars, watching her from behind one of the stalls.

They laugh between themselves. Disconcerted Simone moves off.

EXT - TARGET STAND - NIGHT

Alice holds her breath as Ian takes aim.

IAN

Fingers crossed?

Alice holds her crossed fingers aloft. Ian throws. A hit! They both scream in triumph. The Carney smiles and hands over a doll, still in its box, to Ian.

CARNEY

'Bout time, I was starting to feel bad taking your money.

IAN

Heh, this is priceless. Alice, hold out your arms.

He proffers the doll to Alice with a flourish. She takes it, eyes wide with delight.

ALICE

WOW! Thanks Ian.

IAN

Heh You brought me luck.

He smiles at her and suddenly something shifts in Alice's stomach. Her whole world seems to go into slow motion as Ian leans forward and kisses her on the forehead. In that moment, Alice's first crush bursts into flower.

She clutches at the doll in bewilderment.

IAN (CONT'D)

What are you going to call it?

Alice looks up at him, suddenly deeply confused and embarrassed.

ALICE

Ian!

IAN

(laughing)

You can't call it Ian. Or ah sure, why not.

Affectionately he ruffles her hair. Her face burns.

CUT TO

Simone is wandering around the stalls. To her dismay she sees that the POKED MARKED BOY and GLASSES BOY are still following her.

Self-consciously she adjusts her dress. She takes out her phone in an attempt to look occupied. She brings up a number. DAD. She rings it and holds it to her ear.

ANSWER PHONE

Hello, this is Joe. Either leave a message or try again later....

SIMONE

(pretending)

Hiya Daddy. How are you? I know
you've been calling and calling....
I've just been so busy...of course
I really want to see you too...

Just then, encouraged by his mate, the pockmarked guy walks
up to her. Simone tenses nervously.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Daddy, I'll have to call you back.
Bye...love you too.

She hangs up. She goes to move past the youth but he steps in
her way.

POCK MARKED YOUTH

Excuse me Miss. Could me and my
mate ask you a favor?

SIMONE

(suspicious)

What?

Warily she looks to see if the other one is laughing. He's
not. He is watching expectantly.

POCK MARKED YOUTH

W..we've a wee tradition here. If
the prettiest girl at the fair
blows on your money, it'll bring
you good luck.

His acne scars burn red as he holds out a fist of coins.
Suddenly Simone realizes that he is nervous approaching her.

Filled with a sudden sense of power, Simone smiles at the
pock marked youth and pursing her lips she blows on his
coins.

CUT TO

Helen wanders through the fair. It seems to be full of
youngsters and couples. All around everyone is laughing and
screaming and having a great time. Everyone except her.

CUT

Ian searches the crowd for Simone. Finally he spots her at
the 'Magic Hand' machine with the two boys.

Pock marked boy, obviously thrilled, has his arm around her,
helping her to steer the claw towards a blue teddy bear.

She squeals with delight at the claw closes around its head.

IAN
Simone?

Startled, she drops the bear.

SIMONE
IAN!

Ian glares at pock marked boy. He takes his arm from around Simone. Somewhat for show, she flounces up to Ian and gives him a flirty smack on the arm.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
I almost had it and you made me
drop it!

Her eyes gleam in triumph. Ian frowns.

CUT TO:

Alice, clutching her boxed doll, is wandering through the crowds looking for her family.

ALICE
MUM! SIMONE!

No sign, her brow furrows anxiously.

CUT TO

Helen stands staring up at the 'Senses Sensation, one of those rides that hurtles around in wide arches and circles. It looks precarious, risky, dangerous.

Suddenly, in a moment of sheer recklessness, Helen strides over to where a TEENAGE CARNEY is chatting and messing with his MATE.

She thrusts out two quid.

HELEN
One please.

The teenage Carney doesn't even try to hide his surprise.

TEENAGE CARNEY
For yourself Missus?

HELEN
Yes.

TEENAGE CARNEY
On your own like?

HELEN
(snapping)
Yeah! Is that a problem? I mean I
don't see any sign saying that it's
forbidden to have a ride alone..

The teenage carney and his mate look at each other and burst out laughing. Helen winces, feeling stupid.

TEENAGE CARNEY
M'only asking Love. Don't get your
knickers in a twist.

The Teenage Carney hands her a ticket and leads her to her rickety looking cage.

TEENAGE CARNEY (CONT'D)
Okay Missus, hold on tight.

Helen is already beginning to regret this, but as the metal bar clangs shut, it's too late.

EXT - STALLS EVENING

Alice, getting increasingly anxious, is searching the peripheries of the crowd.

ALICE
Mummy? Where are you?

Just then she hears a noise from behind the vans. Moving out of the range of the fairground lights, she follows the sound and rounding the corner she's suddenly confronted by the sight of two people fucking!

Alice's eyes widen as she is assailed by images.

Legs pulled apart, breasts exposed, hands grabbing at hair, tongues dueling. Bestial, violent, nothing gentle or loving about it.

The man looks up and stares straight at her. It's Calum. Dropping her doll, Alice turns and runs.

INT - SENSES SENSATION CARRIAGE - EVENING

Helen, trapped in the cage, is being thrown this way and that. Her knuckles, clenching the bar, are pure white.

Down below the Teenage Carney and his mate, double up in laughter, pushing the throttle to the max.

Horrendous metal creaking and blasting music battle against her sobs.

CUT TO

As Calen zips himself up, he catches sight of Alice's doll staring blindly at him through her cellophane cell.

CUT TO

Alice searches desperately through the fairground for Helen.

ALICE

MUM?

Just then she hears a scream. It's her mother.

Up in the Senses Sensation, Helen is a blur, caught helplessly in the metal cage.

Alice runs to the Teenage Carney and his mate.

ALICE (CONT'D)

STOP IT! STOP IT NOW! LET HER OFF!

But this only makes them laugh all the harder.

Alice, red with fury, goes to beat on them, but just then she is pulled back.

Calum reefs the Teenage Carney out of the way and, thrusting Alice's doll into her hands, grabs the controls.

Carefully he eases the ride down to a reasonable rate. He turns to the Teenage Carney.

CALUM

Take it straight down Hughie or
I'll kick five colors of shite out
of you.

The teenage Carney, cowed, quickly moves forward and takes the controls.

INT -SENSES SENSATION CAGE- EVENING

Even as the cage slows and lowers, Helen continues to sob.

Alice sags with relief as the cage containing Helen lowers to the docking area.

The Teenage Carney scurries to undo the bar, Helen, knees weak, staggers from the cage.

She sees Calum and Alice ahead of her. She pauses, for a mili-second of a beat.

Alice, putting down her doll, moves towards her, arms outstretched.

Helen stumbles forward but towards Calum. Into his arms. Surprised, he catches her.

Alice, frozen, shocked, stares at her mother, wrapped in Calum's embrace!

Just then Ian and Simone arrive. They see Calum and Helen, Calum is doing his best to comfort her as, clinging to him, she continues to cry.

SIMONE

What the hell is going on?

Alice shakes her head wordlessly. She has no idea.

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Alice, walking into the kitchen, stops in her tracks. Helen, dressed and showered, is already up and making breakfast.

She's even humming happily. Simone and Ian are already sitting at the table watching her as if she is some strange new creature. In a way, she is.

HELEN

(brightly)

Morning love.

ALICE

Morning.

She looks inquiringly to Simone who shrugs and diverts her attention to cinema listings in the newspaper.

Bemused, Alice spots the doll Ian won for her. She picks it up and carefully starts wiping the dirt off the box from where it dropped the night before.

Helen sets a plate of heavily buttered jam and toast before Alice.

HELEN

Here you are love. Get that into you.

Alice stares at the food, utterly confused. What the hell has gotten into Helen?

She then spots the way Ian casually plays with Simone's hair. It makes her feel funny.

SIMONE

All these films are crap, surprise surprise..

Ian looks up, he catches Alice looking at him. He smiles.

IAN

Why don't you just take her out of the box and throw it away?

ALICE

(mumbles shyly)
She might get damaged.

Simone, impatiently, takes Ian's face and turns it back to look at her.

SIMONE

Ian! Concentrate! What about this one?

IAN

Total chick flick! No way.

Checking no one is watching, Alice transfers the toast from her plate into a napkin on her lap. Helen adopts a casual tone.

HELEN

Well whatever you're going to see, it has to be suitable for Alice too.

Alice and Simone look up.

SIMONE

No way, this is a date! You do remember what a date is don't you.

Helen smiles bashfully.

HELEN

Yes Simone, I do. In fact I have one tonight.

Alice drops the napkin. Food spills out. Simone's face suddenly drops.

SIMONE
Oh no! Don't tell me...

ALICE
Calum!

SIMONE
(like a child)
But he's like my age!

ALICE
He's none of your ages!

IAN
Guys come on! Lighten up.

HELEN
It's just a ...date. No, it's not
even a date, it's just a night out.

SIMONE
WHY? Why would he ask you out. Is
it some kind of sick joke or
something, or..or a bet?

Helen's face falls, this hadn't occurred to her.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
What ever it is, it's sick!

Flinging down the newspaper, she storms out. Ian pauses a
beat then gets up and follows Simone. Helen and Alice are
left alone.

HELEN
What? What's the big deal? It's
just one bloody night out. I
deserve a night out.

Almost defensively Helen starts to clear the table. Alice
starts to shovel toast into her mouth.

EXT - COTTAGE- MORNING

Simone, sitting on a wall overlooking the sea, is on her
phone. She brings up 'Dad' and rings. It goes straight to his
answer machine.

JOE'S ANSWER MACHINE
Hello, this is Joe. I can't take
your call but leave your number and
I'll get back to you.

SIMONE
Daddy, it's me...Simone. Please
pick up, I need...

Just then she sees Ian approach. She snaps shut her phone. He
sits down beside her.

IAN
You okay?

SIMONE
Fine!

IAN
Right yeah. Look I know it must be
weird to see your Mum going on a
date.

SIMONE
It's bloody sick, that's what it
is.

IAN
Ah come on Simone. There's no
reason to be such a bitch.

SIMONE
Oh yeah, yeah there is! If I wasn't
the bitch, Mum wouldn't know what
to do with me.

IAN
Well maybe if you just tried being
a bit nicer to her...

SIMONE
Look, if you're that concerned
about her why don't you just fuck
her instead Ian?

IAN
Jesus Simone...

SIMONE
Well it just bugs the way everyone
is always so scared about upsetting
her. I mean she didn't care about
upsetting us when she..you know..

IAN
That must have been awful, finding
her..

Simone shrugs it off.

SIMONE

I'm just pissed off she's ruined
our night out.

A thought occurs to Ian, he starts to beam.

IAN

Maybe not. If she's out, well then
we have the place to ourselves...

Simone catches his drift.

SIMONE

What about Alice?

IAN

Alice will be fine.

Simone's expression is hard to read.

EXT - BEACH - MORNING

Alice, concealed in the sea grass, digs a hole with furious
concentration. Beside her are small mounds of toast already
dotted with ants.

She loads in the food, ants and all, and covers over the hole
with sand.

EXT - BEACH HUT - DAY

Alice steels herself and knocks on Calum's door.

CALUM

HOLD ON!

He opens the door. His face fills with amused dismay to find
Alice. She has to resist the urge to bolt.

.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Oh man, it's you darlin, what's
up..?

ALICE

You asked my Mum out!

CALUM

Cut the chase why don't ya! Yay,
what of it?

ALICE
You can't ask her out! You have a
girlfriend!

CALUM
Who, Sally? She's not my
girlfriend.

ALICE
But you....!

She can't bring herself to continue.

CALUM
Listen kid, me and Sally, that's
just..anyway. Why shouldn't I ask
your Mum out?

ALICE
Because... because she's my mother!

CALUM
(getting impatient)
Well your mother is a very sexy
lady.

As Alice's face falls, Calum realizes he's made things worse.

CALUM (CONT'D)
Look kid, Simone isn't it?

ALICE
Alice!

CALUM
Sorry, Alice, we're just going out
for a drink, a chat, a bit of a
laugh, what's the harm?

She stares at him in helpless frustration. Despondently she
turns and walks away.

INT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Simone, Ian and Alice are sitting in front of the tv.

Simone and Ian have a rug thrown over them, under which it is
pretty obvious Ian is fondling Simone.

Mortified and jealous, Alice concentrates furiously on the
screen.

Helen enters, looking anxious. However She's obviously made a big effort with her appearance and it's paid off.

Ian and Simone shift quickly apart. Ian looks up.

IAN
(whistles)
Looking good Helen!

HELEN
Oh, thanks Ian.

Simone looks up, her face falls. Indeed, Helen looks five years younger. Alice frowns.

Helen looks to the girls but there's no compliments forthcoming.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Okay guys. Are you sure now you don't want to go to the pictures? I'll sub you.

SIMONE
Naw, there's nothing on.

IAN
Thanks Helen, but you go out and enjoy yourself.

SIMONE
Yeah Mum, have some fun.

Alice snaps around to stare at Simone. It suddenly strikes her like a blow what they have planned for the night.

HELEN
(surprised)
What? Really?

SIMONE
Of course I am. Stay out as late as you like. We'll be grand.

Alice acts quickly.

ALICE
Mummy, please don't go.

Simone and Ian start in horror and Helen's face falls. Behind Helen's back Simone shakes her head furiously at Alice.

SIMONE
What? Of course she has to go out.

Shut up Alice.

ALICE
(desperately)
I don't feel well.

HELEN
What? Are you serious?

She puts her hand on Alice's forehead.

HELEN (CONT'D)
But you don't have a temperature.

ALICE
I have a sore tummy.

SIMONE
You're such a liar. Don't mind her
Mum, she just doesn't want anyone
else to have a life.

HELEN
Alice please, it's the first night
out I've had in ages. I mean it's
no big deal, It's not like I'm into
him or anything, that would be
ridiculous, but I really want to go
out.

ALICE
But what if it all goes wrong?

HELEN
Sure what can go wrong, we're only
going for a drink.

Alice does not look convinced. The door bell rings, Helen
jumps up.

She suddenly looks like a nervous teenager.

HELEN (CONT'D)
(to Alice)
Look if it's making you that upset
I can tell him I can't go.

Ian shoves Simone off and leaps to his feet.

IAN
Don't be silly Helen. You have to.

He rushes out to open the door. Helen pulls nervously at her
bracelets. Simone sits up and adjusts her top.

Alice sinks into her seat, as if trying to disappear. A moment later Ian ushers Calum in.

IAN (CONT'D)
Here she is. Ready and waiting.

Calum nods to Alice. She looks away.

CALUM
Heh lads. So what time do I have to have her home by?

His joke falls flat. Just then Alice catches sight of a flash of red beneath Helen's jacket.

ALICE
Is that Simone's top?

She leans forward and pulls down the zip. Helen freezes, it is. Simone pauses. Her face darkens. She takes a deep breath.

SIMONE
It looks good on you. Have a good night.

ALICE
WHAT?

Helen pauses and looks at Simone suspiciously.

HELEN
Simone, are you up to something?

SIMONE
What? I'm just trying to be nice!
Is that such a shocker?

It is but Calum starts to shift impatiently.

CALUM
You coming?

With a last guilty look at Alice, Helen leaves with Calum. As soon as they hear the door slam, Simone leaps to her feet, rushes over and grabs Alice.

SIMONE
What is with you Alice?

ALICE
I don't want her to get hurt!

SIM
I'll give you bloody hurt you
stupid cow!

She goes to thump her. Alice fights back.

INT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A red scarf is draped over a lamp. Simone's attempt make the room romantic. Alice sits on the bed watching.

ALICE
What if I get tired and want to go
to bed?

Simone reaches into her drawer and pulls forth a large cellophane bag packed with pic'n mix sweets.

SIMONE
Here, enough sugar here to keep you
awake for a week.

Alice pauses a beat then, disgusted by her weakness, stakes the bag and starts to eat.

ALICE
What if I..

SIMONE
What?

Alice gropes to think of something when Ian comes in. He's struck by the red glow.

IAN
God it looks like a brothel.

ALICE
(mouth full)
What's a brothel?

IAN
Oh! Hi Alice.

To cover his embarrassment he ruffles her hair again. Self consciously, she pulls away.

SIMONE
Yeah, cheers Ian. Do you have the
condoms?

Ian pulls a battered specimen out of his wallet and discreetly shows it to Simone. Alice looks away. Simone grabs it and checks the date.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
31/3/2022. Ian! We can't use this!
Everything's ruined!

IAN
Well I'll go to the shop then!

ALICE
(perking up)
It's closed ages. It closes at seven.

IAN
Oh don't worry, I'll cycle to the next town if I have to.

He exits. Alice stares after him. Simone takes a sweet from the bag and chews it dispiritedly.

INT - BAR - NIGHT

Helen is sitting at a table in the local bar. Calum, at the bar getting drinks, nods and chats to the other locals.

Helen curls into herself self-consciously. She sees Sally and her colourful flock of twenty something friends glaring cover. Helen downs her wine.

One of Sally's friends deliberately raises her voice, so Calum can hear.

SALLY'S FRIEND
Don't worry Sally, the cottages close up in a few weeks, same as every year.

Calum tenses. An older drink reddened local in a faded t shirt laughs and nudges Calum, causing some of the drink to spill.

DRUNK LOCAL
More power to you says I. Make the most of it while you can.

Calum winces. Across the bar, Helen doesn't hear the chat, only the laughter. Calum, moving towards her, smiles, ignoring the onlookers.

CALUM

Here, get that down you. They let you drink I hope?

HELEN

Just about. Oh God, everyone here is staring at us. They must be thinking 'what's he doing with that old one'? He must have his granny visiting'.

CALUM

No they're not.

HELEN

No?

CALUM

Nah. Everyone here knows my grannies are dead.

Helen's face falls momentarily, then she laughs. Again we see how attractive she can be. But Calum looks suddenly serious, angry.

CALUM (CONT'D)

It's true though, everyone knows fucking everything about everyone.

A trio of old men sit watching them from the bar.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Look at them, the living fucking dead, sitting rotting there for as long as I can remember.

He looks at Helen challengingly.

CALUM (CONT'D)

(sings)

Small-town walls have eyes and ears
Stories fly thick and fast round
here Truth and lies are all the
same. Whatever you do don't rock
the boat. You've got to play the
game, play the game

Helen look at him as if to say 'too easy.'

HELEN

(sings)

So they all protect the cage
they're in. Get drunk and stoned
and wrecked again.

(MORE)

HELEN (CONT'D)

No tears of rage, no cries of
pain Nothing ventured, nothing
gained in small-town England

They smile at each other in delight.

CALUM/ HELEN

Is it a crime to want something
else? Is it a crime to believe in
something different? Is it a crime
to want to make things happen? To
spit in the faces of the cynical
fools!

Impulsively Calum leans forward and kisses her.

CALUM

Might as well give them something
to talk about.

Helen smiles in delight, like a teenager.

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The tv, on silent, shows the coast of some country being torn
apart by tornados. Alice, staring sightlessly at the screen,
is wolfing back sweets with self-destructive appetite.

Ian comes in breathless and covered in sweat.

IAN

Hiya. Is Simone upstairs?

Alice nods. He's turns to go.

ALICE

Ian. Do you want a sweet?

IAN

What? No, no thanks.

ALICE

You want to watch a film?

IAN

Some other time.

He bounds out the door. Alice shoves a handful of sweets into
her mouth.

INT - CALUM'S SHACK- NIGHT

Helen and Calum sit on his threadbare sofa in his hut, a surfer's den, covered with posters of bands and seascapes.

Kurt Cobain and Jim Morrison stare sullenly down.

A guitar and bass are propped against the wall.

A vinyl copy of The Smiths plays on a record player. But Helen is on the phone. Calum looks bored.

HELEN

The girls are fine Joe, they're watching a film and Ian is with them.... One night out, one!....With...with Sinead, one of the mums from the other cottages...

Helen shrugs apologetically to Calum. Mischievously he starts to stroke her neck with his finger.

HELEN (CONT'D)

(slightly breathless)

Look Joe, I have to go. Another half hour, max...

Calum traces his fingers across her lips, then presses the off button of the phone.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Shit! What did you do that for? He'll be furious!

CALUM

Fuck him!

He reaches out and takes her hand. Reflexively she snatches it away. Calum draws back slightly.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Look, if you're not into it...

HELEN

No! I mean, I am. I am. Really. It's just...

CALUM

What?

HELEN

This isn't part of some sort bet you've got going is it?

CALUM

What? Shit no, you nut!

Challengingly, even roughly he leans in and kisses her.

For a brief moment she freezes, but very quickly, her body responds and she yields totally. He starts to fondle her breast slowly.

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eyes boring into the ceiling , Alice turns up the tv so that the sounds of natural disasters blare.

She shoves sweets into her mouth. Swallowing without chewing, let alone tasting.

INT - GIRLS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Against sounds of shouting from the tv, Ian gropes under the covers as he kisses Simone eagerly. With the other hand he reaches for the string of cheap Aldi condoms.

SIMONE

No! Not yet.

IAN

What? Okay.

He kisses her for another couple of seconds then reaches again for the condoms. Simone's eyes widen.

SIMONE

Not yet!

IAN

Simone, I can't hold on much longer.

SIMONE

But there must be more to it...

IAN

More how?

Simone stares into the dark.

INT - CALUM'S SHACK- NIGHT

Helen makes small moans of excitement and terror. Experiencing sensations she hasn't felt in years.

Encouraged, Calum unbuttons her jeans and starts to ease them down. He runs his hand up the soft inner side of her thigh. Self-consciousness assails her, she pulls his hand away.

CALUM

What?

HELEN

It's just I haven't been with anyone but Joe in a long time...and that was like, years ago! I might be shit.

CALUM

So you're like some sort of born again virgin...hot!

Helen's eyes widen, she hadn't thought of it like that.

INT - GIRL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ian is kissing Simone's breasts. She feigns a moaning sound.

IAN

What's wrong?

SIMONE

Nothing.

IAN

Look, can't we just do it?

Giving up, Simone just nods.

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Alice checks the end of the bag for sweets, it's empty. The she notices a couple of sweets that have dropped on the ground. She picks them up and eats them.

INT - CALUM'S SHACK- NIGHT

Helen gropes and turns off the light, Calum turns it back on again.

HELEN

Calum, please.

He lets her turn it off. Just then her phone starts to ring, the screen glowing green. It's Alice.

CALUM
Just leave it.

Helen tries to ignore it but it continues to ring.

HELEN
FUCK!

She picks it up. Calum frowns.

INT. GIRL'S BEDROOM NIGHT

Simone's face twists in pain.

SIMONE
Ow! You can't be doing it right.

IAN
(stressed)
It's not my fault, you're dry as a
bone. I'll have to push.

Simone tenses. There's a loud banging on the door. Without waiting for a reply Alice enters, swaying slightly.

ALICE
I don't feel so good. Really. Mum's
on her way home.

Suddenly she bends over and spews up multi-hued vomit, all over the bed.

CUT TO

Helen is sitting at the side of Alice's bed.

HELEN
Are you sure you're okay love?

Alice smiles.

ALICE
I am now.

HELEN
At least your sister was here to
look after you. Now go to sleep.

She kisses Alice's forehead. She gets up and goes over to Simone's bed. Simone pretends to be asleep. Helen tucks her blanket up around her shoulders and leaves.

ALICE
Simone?

No reply.

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Helen walks into the living room. Calum is standing there.

HELEN
(wryly)
The joys of motherhood.

Calum shrugs and picks up his coat.

CALUM
Right I better be off. Take care
Helen.

Helen's face falls.

HELEN
I had to come back you know. My kid
was sick.

CALUM
I know. You're a Mum, you have
responsibilities.

HELEN
Yeah, yeah, but...

CALUM
But what?

Helen can't think of what she wants to say..

CALUM (CONT'D)
See you around Helen.

He turns to walk out the door. Helen sees her chance to be a different person about to leave.

HELEN
Calum.. NO!!

He turns, Helen launches herself at him, knocking ornaments to the ground as she does. Caught off guard, he loses balance and falls to the floor.

CALUM
Chrissakes woman..

She kisses him, almost violently, to feel every moment, every sensation.

Calum is freaked but excited too. He starts to rip at her clothes...and she at his.

INT - GIRLS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alice and Simone sit bolt upright.

ALICE
(horrified)
He's hitting her!

She jumps out of her bed but Simone grabs her.

SIMONE
Wait!

INT - HALL - NIGHT

Armed with a lamp, Ian opens the door of the living room, to see Helen and Calum getting very quickly naked. He shuts the door quickly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Inhibition thrown to the wind, Helen and Calum have sex. One of Alice's sweeties, a gummybear, has stuck to Calum's back, Helen bites it off.

INT. IAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ian, with a mixture of shame and excitement, wanks beneath his bedsheet.

INT. GIRL'S BEDROOM NIGHT

Alice and Simone lie motionless in their beds, listening to the unfamiliar sound of their mother having sex floating up from downstairs.

Simone's face is filled with jealousy, attuned to every sound.

Alice, eyes squeezed shut, presses her hands tightly over her ears.

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Simone, Alice and Ian are in the kitchen. No one looks up when Helen, looking disheveled but radiant, enters sheepishly.

HELEN
Morning.

IAN
(mumbling)
Morning.

She moves immediately to the kettle.

HELEN
Coffee anyone?

No one answers. The tension is palpable. Helen takes a deep breath.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Listen, about last night..

SIMONE
Mum, don't worry about it. Chill out. It's no big deal.

Alice, Ian and Helen stare at her. Is Simone actually offering Helen support?

HELEN
(hopefully)
Really?

SIMONE
No, Dad has Kate at his place the whole time and they're always wrapped around each other. It's really romantic.

That's more like her. Helen deflates slightly.

HELEN
Oh! Well, there you go then.

ALICE
So that's it now Mummy, you had a night out and it's over now.

It's less a question than a statement.

HELEN
Well, I...I don't know...

Alice frowns.

INT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Alice is standing on the bathroom scales in her underwear. She removes her plastic bangles in an attempt to lower the needle.

Just then she catches sight of herself in the mirror, of the definite nascent swell of her breasts. Disgusted she folds her arms tightly over them and turns away.

EXT - BEACH - DAY

Deep holes pit the sand. Alice is digging a deep moat around a sand castle.

Helen, pretending to be reading her novel, covertly scans the beach for any sign of Calum.

Down at the water's edge Simone and Ian paddle, deep in conversation. Alice pauses to watch Ian go to put his arm around Simone. She shrugs it off.

Ian turns abruptly and strides up the beach. Simone lingers around the water's edge.

Spotting Alice watching him Ian forces a smile. She ducks her head.

He throws himself down beside her and grabs the shovel.

IAN

Heh! How about I bury you?

ALICE

What?

IAN

How about I bury you? When I was a kid, me and my brother used bury each other in the sand, up to our necks.

ALICE

(shy)

I...I don't think so.

IAN

Ah go on.

In an utterly fraternal sort of way, he prods her. Alice curls up with embarrassment.

HELEN
(absently)
Ah go on Alice. Let him.

Besieged Alice grabs the shovel.

ALICE
How about I bury you instead?

IAN
Okidoke. Work away.

Ian throws himself down on the sand. Painfully self-aware, Alice starts to scoop shovelfuls of sand over him.

At first her motions are abrupt but heaping the sand onto his skin, she becomes emboldened, smoothing thick layers of sand over the contours of his body.

Simone wanders up. Seeing them she throws her eyes to Heaven.

SIMONE
Kids.

But, engrossed, Alice doesn't hear. Her actions become unconsciously sensual. Hers and Ian's breathing quicken slightly, in tandem.

Alice takes a small handful of golden sand and smooths it across his chest, as softly as a whisper.

Suddenly, abruptly Ian sits up, the thick crust of sand cracks apart.

IAN
Okay, that's enough!

He turns abruptly on to his belly.

Alice, confused, blushes puce, embarrassed for a reason she can't explain.

Simone glares at Ian suspiciously.

SIMONE
What's with you?

IAN
Nothing! Look. There's Calum.

Helen, Alice and Simone look simultaneously. Calum is chatting to a couple of girls further down the beach.

Helen pretends to be engrossed in her book.

Simone looks slyly to Helen.

SIMONE

Mum, why don't you call him over?

HELEN

He'll come over if he wants to.

Simone pauses a beat then leaps to her feet.

SIMONE

Calum! OVER HERE!

HELEN

(angry and embarrassed)
Jesus Simone!

Calum and the girls turn. Seeing them he gives a quick wave over then turns back to the girls.

Helen's face falls in abject disappointment. Alice tenses.

SIMONE

Oh, can't have been that good, loud
and all as you were.

But just then Calum turns back. Grinning, he starts to jog quickly towards Helen. She glances quickly to see Simone's face drop.

Relaxing visibly, she gets up and waves back.

Water starts to leak up through the sand into Alice's sand castle.

CUT TO

Helen and Calum, sitting slightly apart from the others, chat and laugh. Helen is luminous. Alice watches, perplexed.

Calum puts his hand on the bare part of Helen's back.

CALUM

Here, you're burning.

Taking some suntan lotion he starts to rub it into Helen's skin with long slow strokes. She stretches luxuriously.

Simone, lying with her head resting on her arms, watches covertly.

Ian grabs the other bottle of lotion.

IAN
Simone, do you want some lotion?

He squeezes out a huge dollop. Simone pauses a beat before sitting up.

SIMONE
(thoughtfully)
No. No I don't. I want to go really brown.

Casually she sits up and slips down the straps of her bikini top.

Then, slowly and deliberately, she reaches back and undoes the clasp, leaving the scrap of fabric fall to the sand. Her full young breasts are pale against the rest of her skin. She gazes at Calum, who gazes back in amusement.

Ian looks between them, he flushes with anger and confusion.

IAN
For fucks sake!

HELEN
(angry)
Simone, cover yourself up.

SIMONE
What? I don't want tan lines.

CALUM
(laughing)
Just another day with the Waltons.

Blood starts to pump in Alice's ears.

HELEN
You're making a show of yourself.

SIMONE
What, by sunbathing? Really Mum, you're so old fashioned.

Suddenly Alice jumps up. She grabs the bikini top and flings it at Simone. The clasp catches her on the cheek.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
OW!

ALICE
 (fraught)
 Just put it on will you. Just Put
 the stupid thing back on!

^SIMONE
 Ok ok. Calm down! Jesus!

Indolently, she starts to replace the top.

Helen looks as if she wants to hit her. Instead she grabs Alice.

HELEN
 Come on love.

Taking Alice by the hand she pulls her away. Ian grabs the straps and yanks them closed. Simone smiles like a cat at Calum. He looks back, impassively.

INT -COTTAGE - MORNING

Helen holds Alice's hands. Alice exudes a heart rending mixture of child like vulnerability and worry beyond her years.

HELEN
 I know Simone can be a bitch Alice,
 but you shouldn't let her get to
 you, it's what she wants..

ALICE
 (avidly)
 It's not about Simone Mummy. She's
 just stirring but that's normal.

HELEN
 So what's wrong so?

ALICE
 I'm scared!

HELEN
 Scared about what? About Calum?
 There's no need to be.

Alice shakes her head in frustration.

ALICE
 No! About you! Of what might
 happen! Remember when Daddy left.

HELEN
(suddenly wary)
What do you mean?

Wordlessly Alice just looks at her.

HELEN (CONT'D)
That was different...

A long beat between them, then Helen sags visibly, her past suddenly weighting her down.

Alice puts her arms around her.

EXT - BEACH - NIGHT

A bonfires roars. The beach is crowded with locals and tourists and the summer's night pulsates with the sounds of music, laughter and the excitement of a rare fine Irish summer night.

Helen and Alice walk through the crowd. Alice clutches her mother's hand in hers.

Spotting a free space by the fire, Helen steers Alice towards it.

HELEN
Let's sit there. Because look..

Helen reaches into her bag and pulls out a packet of marshmallows. She's really making an effort. Unconsciously Alice pinches at the flesh on her hip.

ALICE
Nice one.

They sit themselves down. Simone and Ian are seated at the other side of the fire. Ian waves over, Simone pretends not to see them.

Helen opens the packet and taking out two forks, sticks them with marshmallows. She hands one to Alice.

They go to cook them, Alice gets a bit too close and almost burns herself.

ALICE (CONT'D)
OW!

Helen doesn't notice, having spotted Calum walking towards them. Shaking her head at him, she indicates Alice. Alice hides a quick smile of relief, even triumph.

Shooting Alice a look of annoyance Calum ostentatiously veers away. He joins a group having a singsong.

Absently Helen holds out her half cooked marshmallow to Alice. Alice pretends to chew it but seeing Helen is distracted, she spits it into her hand and shoves it under the sand.

CUT TO

Alice is chatting enthusiastically, trying to entertain Helen.

Calum is sitting amongst a group of slightly younger twenty some-things who are having a sing song. He doesn't take much urging to take the guitar.

He starts to sing EVERYDAY IS LIKE SUNDAY. A couple of the girls groan.

CALUM

'Trudging slowly over wet sand Back
to the bench where your clothes
were stolen. This is the coastal
town That they forgot to close down
Armageddon come Armageddon Come
Armageddon! Come Every day is like
Sunday Every day is silent and grey

GIRL

Ah Calum, something a bit cheerier.

Calum grimaces slightly, but obliges. He glances over to where Helen is sitting and catches her eye. He raises an ironic eyebrow and launches into AMERICAN PIE.

ALICE

This is like when I was little.
That time there was the electricity
cut. Daddy lit all the candles and
we had a bonfire..

HELEN

Emhmm.

Just then pretty young girl in her late teens snuggles up beside Calum. He lets her.

HELEN (CONT'D)

(abrupt)
Got to pee.

Abruptly Helen gets up and walks off. Immediately suspicious, Alice looks to see does Calum follow her. No.

She takes a pink marshmallow and throws it in the fire. After a second it starts to bubble, blacken then burns away into nothingness.

Suddenly, Simone throws herself down beside her. She seems on edge, slightly wired.

SIMONE
Yo Squidge. Mummy deserted you?

Ostentatiously she takes a bottle of vodka from her bag and takes a swig. Alice stares.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
Want some?

Alice gives her a look.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
Suit yourself.

Calum is playing a lively tune. People have gotten up to dance. Simone hands Alice the bottle of vodka, gets up and goes over and joins them.

Languorously she starts to dance.

INT - PUBLIC TOILET - NIGHT

Helen pushes past the queue of waiting women. The bare light bulb is cruel.

She rubs at her forehead in a futile attempt to ease a frown line. She then starts to touch up her make up in the cracked grimy mirror with a new compact.

Then, taking out a lipstick, she smears on a bright red layer.

Just then Sally appears out of one of the cubicles. Seeing Helen she looks at her almost pityingly.

SALLY
It'll take more than that...

Helen turns to reply but she's already gone.

EXT - BEACH - NIGHT

Alice watches as Simone dances in the firelight.

With vodka fueled confidence, she sways and writhes sensually to the music, smiling slightly to herself at the power she knows she wields.

Alice is burningly aware of a number of men and boys watching her sister.

Simone moves to in front of Calum. He starts to play another tune, even more languorous again.

Simone revels in the music, her youth and her gorgeousness.

Alice sees Ian standing on the peripheries of the crowd. The fire's shadows emphasize his expression of hurt and confusion.

Alice takes a drink of the vodka and winces.

Helen returns. She stops in her tracks to see Simone dancing.

Alice scans her face, desperate to read her inscrutable expression.

Simone, turning and seeing her, smiles slyly. Running her hands the length of her body she turns and approaches Calum. He watches her curiously.

Invitingly she motions him to dance with her.

Helen's eyes narrow.

Bemused he hands the guitar to the guy beside him and gets up and starts to dance. Simone starts to move her hands over his arms and chest.

Looking over to Helen he shrugs as if helpless. Helen spots the vodka.

HELEN

Whose is that?

Alice shrugs. Helen grabs it and takes a long drink.

Alice suddenly realizes what she's planning. She grabs the hem of her dress.

ALICE

Mum, don't!

But Helen, determined, yanks the dress from her hand. Then, to Alice's dismay, she joins the dancing crowd.

Through sheer force of will, Helen starts to move. Drawing on wells of sensuality she seems to become part of the music.

The shadows of the firelight seem to transform her into someone, something, Alice doesn't recognize.

Alice takes another drink, grimacing at the taste.

Simone, seeing she is losing Calum's attention, follows his gaze. Her face falls to see her mother dancing.

Desperately she presses against Calum, but he is watching Helen.

Aware she has their attention, Helen moves to Ian. Smiling, she takes his hand and pulls him to his feet.

Ian barely knows what to do. Awkwardly he joins Helen, who, revelling in her sensuality, puts his hands on her hips and starts to sway.

Ian, mortified, on the verge of tears, makes an attempt to dance with her, but he hasn't the heart for it.

Calum laughs delightedly. He pulls Simone's hands off him and, walking over to Helen, cuts in. He gazes down at her with bemused intrigue.

CALUM

Jesus wept Helen..

Throwing Simone a look of pure triumph, Helen puts her arms around Calum and they to move as one. In seconds they are kissing.

Simone stands for a moment looking bereft. Suddenly, frantically, she runs up to Ian. She grabs his arm.

SIMONE

Ian. Come on, now. Let's go and do it now!

But Ian, humiliated, furious, yanks his arm away.

IAN

Fuck off Simone.

Helen grins at Calum.

HELEN

Come on, let's get a drink.

She turns around. The bottle of vodka lies in the sand, but Alice is gone.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Alice? ALICE!!

Simone and Ian look up.

CUT TO

Alice stumbles along an empty dark stretch of beach. Her breathing is ragged, her eyes wild.

She lies down in the edge of the surf.

Her head pounds with images. Sally and Calum fucking, Simone's naked breasts, Ian's hand on her cheek, Helen dancing...

She starts to breath deeply as the shallow moonlit surf washes around her.

CUT TO

Helen, Calum ,Simone and Ian are searching frantically amongst the crowd of revelers.

HELEN (CONT'D)

ALICE!

Simone puts her hands to her mouth and screams.

SIMONE

ALICE!

CUT TO

Alice plunges her whole body into the sea.

As she hangs suspended in the water the images in her head recede as her awareness centers on every sensation, sound and feeling in that moment.

Her head fills with the muffled sound of her heart, the night and the sea.

She hears her name but as if from another dimension. Until suddenly she is reefed out of the water.

Calum drags her to her feet and shakes her.

CALUM

Jesus Alice! What are you at?

Alice turns on him, snapping back into a desperate focus.

ALICE

Do you love my Mum?

CALUM

What?

ALICE

Do you love my Mum? Tell me!

CALUM

Wise up kid! We're just having some fun..

ALICE

NO! NO! It's not just fun. This has to be serious!

Something very close to fear crosses Calum's face.

CALUM

What are you on about?

Just then Helen appears on the beach. Seeing Calum and Alice she starts to run towards them.

HELEN

ALICE!!

Suddenly Alice catches Calum's hand. Helen draws to a stop.

ALICE

(brightly)

Everything's fine Mummy. Calum found me. Everything is sorted.

Her nails dig into Calum's palm.

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Helen places plates heaped with grilled sausages, rashers and eggs in front of Alice and Simone.

HELEN

(abrupt)

I'm going to ask Calum to dinner tonight....

She pauses, waiting for objections. None are forthcoming so she ploughs on, determined to have her say.

HELEN (CONT'D)

I've decided I am going to keep seeing him. I know you might have your objections but that's my decision and it's final...

They continue to say nothing, concentrating on their food.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ, say something!

Simone just shrugs.

SIMONE
Whatever.

Helen looks to Alice who forces a smile.

ALICE
I think you should make your
spaghetti Bolognese!

HELEN
(taken aback)
Really? That's ..that's a great
idea. Thanks Alice.

Smiling thinly, Alice nods. Simone shoots her a dirty look.

EXT - BEACH - DAY

Alice's breakfast is laid out in front of her on a tissue. A one person picnic. She takes a big bite of sausage and chews deliberately. Then after a moment she spits it on to the sand. She smiles and takes another bite. A perfect solution.

INT - SHOP - DAY

Helen is shopping for groceries. She has already picked eggs, fresh pasta, coffee... At the fruit and veg counter she picks up some peppers and tomatoes, feeling them for firmness, smelling their scent.

Just then she hears laughter.

Looking through the shelves Helen sees Calum chatting and laughing with Sally.

Pinning on a breezy smile she emerges.

HELEN
Hiya.

Calum pauses a beat before smiling. We detect something slightly wary in his face.

CALUM
How's Helen?

Sally, seeing her, smirks. Helen places a proprietorial hand on Calum's back.

HELEN

Listen I never said thanks for finding Alice last night. I don't know what I'd have done without you.

CALUM

(shifting slightly)
Ah it was nothing.

Aware of Sally listening, Helen throws her basket up on the counter.

HELEN

Could you ring those up please?

She pulls Calum off to the side.

HELEN (CONT'D)

So what are you doing tonight?

CALUM

(looking about him)
..I don't know, why?

HELEN

I was just going to make a bite to eat. Do you want to come over?

CALUM

You serious?

Behind the counter Sally snorts with laughter. Annoyed Helen pulls Calum into one of the aisles.

HELEN

Listen I just thought this might all be a bit easier on you and the girls if you knew each other a bit better.

CALUM

I know them well enough thanks very much.

HELEN

Heh!

Helen gives him a dig on the arm.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Oh come on, pasta, a few glasses of wine, no big deal.

Looking slightly hunted, Calum nods an unwilling okay.

CALUM

Go on so.

HELEN

Good. See you at eight.

She watches him leave. She goes back into collect her groceries. Sally whispers something under her breath. Helen looks directly at her.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Excuse me? Do you have a problem? I mean other than the fact that Calum is fucking me now.

Sally goes to retort but under Helen's glare, backs down.

SALLY

(mutters)

That'll be 34.70.

INT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sitting on the opposite sofas Simone and Alice are watching day time tv, something teenage like 'Gossip girl'. The door opens and Ian walks in. Simone sits up.

SIMONE

Hiya you! Where'd you get to?

She moves over on the sofa but Ian, ignoring her, goes over and sits beside Alice. Simone looks as if she has been slapped.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Ian!

IAN

Hi Alice, what you watching?

ALICE

Dunno, one of Simone's shows.

Ian picks up the remote control and starts to flick.

SIMONE

Heh!

IAN
(To Alice)
Oh that's that programme you like

Alice. Shall we watch that?

ALICE
(delighted)
Sure!

Hurt Simone gets to her feet.

SIMONE
I'll just leave shall I?

She pauses a beat. Ian simply leans back and stares at the television. Her face hardens.

SIMONE (CONT'D)
Whatever!

She walks out. Ian gives Alice a half-hearted smile. He nods to the tv.

IAN
So, tell me. What's going on here
anyway?

Emboldened Alice leans back on the sofa beside him.

EXT - FIELD - DAY

Simone is sitting alone on a wall. She takes out her mobile, rings a number and holds it to her ear. Her father picks up, her whole face lights up!

SIMONE
Daddy? It's Simone...No, nothing's
wrong. I was just ringing to say
hello... I know. I just wanted to
talk to you...no...But you always
say you'll ring back but you never
do! ... I'm sorry, I'm sorry daddy,
sure it can wait. Okay bye.

He hangs up before she does. Slowly she pulls the phone away from her ear.

She looks at it, then suddenly, she hits it repeatedly off her forehead.

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Red sauce bubbles on the cooker.

Calum, looking deeply uncomfortable, sits at the top of the table. The table is creaking with food. Helen has made an almighty effort but the atmosphere is already heavy. Alice chats to ease the tension.

ALICE

So Calum. Mum has been cooking all day. She's made her famous spaghetti Bolognese. Do you like spaghetti?

Calum eyes Alice warily.

CALUM

Yeah, I suppose so Alice.

HELEN

Well I tried to make everyone's favorite something. Alice, for you the spaghetti. Ian, for you we will have apple crumble. And Simone for you I have a big pine- nut salad.

SIMONE

I don't like pine-nuts.

Annoyance flickers across Helen's face.

HELEN

Since when?

SIMONE

Since forever.

Alice looks at her imploringly.

ALICE

Simone!

IAN

I saw you eating them only the other week Simone.

SIMONE

Oh shut up. Crawler.

HELEN

Guys! Guys! Please, a bit of hush. Calum, I wasn't sure what I should get you.

SIMONE
An STD test?

Calum barks with laughter. Simone glances at him in surprise. But Helen slams down the plates.

HELEN
Simone, you're being rude!

Simone glowers into her plate but watches Calum from under her lashes.

CUT TO

A heap of pine nuts ooze oil into the table cloth. Simone has picked each one deliberately out of her salad. She hasn't touched her spaghetti.

Meanwhile Alice is just pushing her food around her plate. Calum eats to cover the silence. He holds up his plate.

CALUM
Is there anymore of that going
Helen?

HELEN
Plenty.

IAN
(competitive)
For me too.

SIMONE
Here, take mine...

Leaning forward she lumps her spaghetti onto Calum's plate.

Tomato sauce and blobs of mince meat splatter on his t-shirt and jeans. His face blackens.

HELEN
Oh my god!

Calum wipes off the spilt sauce.

CALUM
It's fine, don't worry about it.

HELEN
Simone! What is with you? You are
being such a spoilt little bitch.

SIMONE

Well better than a bitch in heat
Mother.

Helen gasps.

Calum very deliberately takes a forkful of the spaghetti. He swallows and nods.

CALUM

Actually, you know Simone, that'll
do me. You can have the rest back.

He picks up his plate of spaghetti and dumps it onto Simone's lap, desecrating her white dress with its gore.

A beat then suddenly Helen explodes in a burst of nervous laughter. Alice and Ian scream in shocked mirth.

Simone stares at the hysterically laughing faces around her. She jumps to her feet, spaghetti falling from her, and runs from the room.

Calum, seeing her genuine upset, stares after her. He looks to the others.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Shit. I suppose someone should go
after her.

However neither Helen, Ian or Alice make a move.

Bemused Calum gets up.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Okay then, I'll go.

The laughter grinds to a halt.

Alice surreptitiously slips her spaghetti to the pile on the floor.

EXT - BEACH - NIGHT

Calum, walking down the beach, sees Simone sitting huddled on a rock in the distance.

He strides over to her.

CALUM

I'm not coming to say sorry, I'm
coming to say you fucking deserved
it and you know it.

(MORE)

CALUM (CONT'D)

Your Mum was only doing her best.
You were being a spoilt little cow.

Simone looks up. Her face, wet with tears, mask of make up obliterated, is filled with genuine anguish.

SIMONE

Spoilt? How am I spoilt? Tell me!
Who's spoiling me? Mum doesn't even
like me. And Dad? He's forgotten I
even exist!

CALUM

Oh Jesus!

SI

And Ian thinks I'm the anti-
Christ. Even Alice is turning
against me.

CALUM

No she's not...

SIMONE

She is and she's right to. It's
like you said, I am a bitch.

CALUM

Yeah but, I thought..aw God.

Her crying and upset is genuinely pitiful.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Come on Simone. Stop crying.

Calum goes over goes to put his arm around her. She hits out at him.

SIMONE

GET OFF!!

CALUM

For fucks sake..come here.

Despite her, he insists on hugging her. She stiffens and then, almost desperately she gives in, clinging to him like a child.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Ssshh. You're not a bitch!

Simone looks up at him with genuine need.

SIMONE
 (Desperate)
 No? So what am I?

CALUM
 I don't know. You're just...a
 friggin' whack job.

Despite herself, Simone giggles tearfully, snot flies out her nose.

CALUM (CONT'D)
 Ach Jesus, a snotty whack job at
 that. Do you even have a tissue?

She shakes her head. He tilts her head towards him and wipes her nose with his t-shirt sleeve.

CALUM (CONT'D)
 It needs washed anyway, remember..

Simone giggles again. She looks up, her face filled with vulnerability, longing for something.

Calum can see himself reflected in her eyes.

INT - KITCHEN- NIGHT

Helen Ian and Alice sit silently in the kitchen. An ornate apple pie sits in the middle of the table. They all focus on it.

HELEN
 (mutters)
 Maybe we should just start.

Just then the door sounds. Simone walks in. They all tense.

SIMONE
 (subdued)
 I'm sorry Mum. I shouldn't have
 ruined your lovely dinner party.

They stare at her incredulously.

HELEN
 (stunned)
 And I shouldn't have laughed. I'm
 sorry too. Come here to me.

Helen pulls her into an awkward hug. Simone's arms just hang at her sides.

Alice studies her sister suspiciously. Simone avoids her eye.

INT - GIRLS' BEDROOM - DAY

Alice is lying on her bed doing the pinch test on every area of her body. Her stomach rumbles. She smiles.

However, she is suddenly distracted by a line of five ants climbing up the wall.

ALICE

Oh no!

Quickly she leans over and looks under her bed. Some tissue wrapped food she'd stashed and forgotten is now crawling with ants.

She goes to take out the tissues but drops them with disgust as a couple of ants crawl onto her skin.

She knocks them to the floor then crushes them. At that moment Simone comes in.

SIMONE

What are you doing?

ALICE

Nothing.

Alice quickly throws the tissues back under and clambers back onto the bed. Simone starts to go through her wardrobe.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Simone?

SIMONE

What?

ALICE

What do you think of Calum?

SIMONE

Calum? I don't.

ALICE

Do you think it's serious between him and Mum? Remember what happened after Dad left?

Simone pauses a brief beat.

SIMONE

Course I remember, I fecking found her. Here, do you want these?

Simone holds up a few tops. Alice leaps off the bed grabs the tops. She runs up to the mirror and holds them up against herself. She sucks in her tummy.

ALICE

Nice one.

Simone pulls out another top and throws it to Alice.

SIMONE

Here, you can have this too.

ALICE

But Ian gave you that.

SIMONE

Yeah, well, I've outgrown him too. I've dumped him.

She throws the top at a dumbfounded Alice.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

You can have him too if you want!

Alice clutches the top to her chest.

CUT TO

Alone in the room, Alice closes the lid of her suitcase over her dolls. Then, taking off her own top, she pulls on the one Simone just gave her.

She looks at herself in the mirror. It's tight in all the wrong places.

EXT - BEACH - DAY

Alice is scouring the beach. Finally she spots Ian, sitting alone on a rock. He's obviously been crying and even now simmers with anger.

Alice scrambles up onto the rock beside him. He registers the top and winces.

ALICE

Simone is just a total stupid dumb ass.

IAN
Isn't she just.

ALICE
How can you just 'outgrow' someone?
You can outgrow toys or clothes,
but not people!

IAN
Is that what she said? Well maybe
she wants to try on someone else
for size.

ALICE
What do you mean?

IAN
...nothing.

ALICE
Well I think she's a dumb-ass. I..I
think you're great.

IAN
Huh. Why can't Simone be more like
you?

Alice fills with pride. Ian closes his eyes in an attempt to stop tears spilling out. Timidly she puts her arm around him.

Ian leans against her. His face inches from hers.

Alice's breathing slows to a whisper, He's so close, she can see the silk soft down above the bow of his upper lip.

Almost as if compelled to experience its softness, Alice leans forward and awkwardly kisses him. Her first kiss.

But shocked Ian starts away sending Alice sprawling onto the sand.

He swipes at his mouth in horror.

IAN (CONT'D)
Jesus ALICE! What the fuck..?

Alice, mortified, scrambles to her feet.

Stricken she bolts.

IAN (CONT'D)
Ah Alice! Stop! I'm sorry! I just
...Alice.

But she is running away, across the beach, as fast as she can.

INT -BATHROOM - DAY

Alice, standing on the bathroom scales, winds lengths and lengths of white bandage around her breasts in a bid to bind them down.

INT - GIRL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Helen is trying to talk to Simone. Simone seems intent on studying the bedspread.

HELEN

But I don't understand it Simone.
He's such a good guy, why would you
split up with him?

SIMONE

I've outgrown him.

HELEN

You couldn't have outgrown him
after the holiday no?

SIMONE

Oh I am sorry Mother. But I don't
remember you consulting my schedule
when you split up with Dad.

HELEN

Okay, okay. Point taken. Look, he's
insisting on leaving tonight, so
I'm going to have to take him.
You'll have to look after Alice
till I get back.

Simone just nods. Helen pauses. She takes a deep breath.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Simone?

Simone continues to study the bedspread. Helen takes her face and turns it to towards her. Simone looks at her in surprise, it's the first time in a long time she's touched her like this.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Sweetheart? I know you think I'm ancient and that I haven't a clue..and you must think I've gone off my rocker this summer and maybe I have, but if you want to talk, at anytime, I am here for you. I am your Mum after all.

For a long long beat Simone looks at her...then shakes her head. She turns her head away.

SIMONE

I'm fine. Really.

Helen, rebuffed, drops her hands.

HELEN

...Ok.

She gets up but as she leaves, Simone turns and watches after her.

EXT- BEACH - DAY

The life guard has raised the red flag and there is not a sinner on the beach.

INT - CALUM'S BEACH HUT -DAY

Calum, in bed, fiddles with the tuning of his guitar. Helen is putting on her dress.

CALUM

Are you sure it's okay to leave them on their own?

HELEN

Sure. After all Simone is 17 now, 'an adult' as she keeps reminding me. And as long as she can ring you if there's an emergency..

Calum looks slightly trapped.

CALUM

...I don't see why he can't get the bus home.

HELEN

Calum, he's just had his heart
trashed by his first love. You must
remember what that's like!

Calum pauses, expressionless. Possibly not.

Helen leans forward for a kiss but he doesn't look up from
the guitar.

Slightly perturbed, Helen kisses him on the cheek and leaves.

INT - BATHROOM - EVENING

Alice watches from behind the window blind as Ian puts his
bag into the car.

Simone, standing to the side, senses not to approach. Helen
starts up the engine.

Ian, looking up, catches sight of Alice at the window.

She snaps the blind shut, plunging the bathroom into
darkness.

After a moment she hears the car pull away.

INT - UPSTAIRS HALL - EVENING

Simone is knocking on the bathroom door.

SIMONE

Alice, come on. Come out...I have
chocolate. Ah come on Alice, you're
being a baby...Alice, come on!

INT - BATHROOM - EVENING

Alice, lying in the empty bathtub, ignores her.

INT - CAR - EVENING

Helen and Ian are driving along. Ian is staring out the
window into the dusk.

HELEN

Ian, I know you don't really need
to hear this now, but it does get
easier. With time. Take it from one
who knows.

Ian continues to stare out the window.

HELEN (CONT'D)
And you know what else? It mightn't
even be about you.

Ian turns and looks at her.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Sometimes it's just all to do with
the other person, all about their
shit, their bloody mid-life crisis.
You just get caught in the
crossfire, like some hostage at a
bank robbery. Your life, your
emotions get shot to pieces and
then, once they've killed who you
were and only a ghost remains,
they stroll off....

Ian stares at Helen in bewilderment. Embarrassed, she forces
a smile.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Sorry Ian, I doubt that's helping.
But trust me about it getting
easier.

IAN
(mutters)
I know it wasn't about me, it
wasn't even about her.

HELEN
What do you mean?

IAN
It's about who she wants to be.
ANYONE but Simone! You know what I
mean?

Helen shakes her head. He glares at her accusingly.

IAN (CONT'D)
Yeah you do.

Disconcerted Helen turns her attention back to the road. They
drive in silence.

INT - HALL - NIGHT

Alice comes out of the bathroom. She sees a bar of chocolate
left on the floor and, in a fit of anger, stamps on it.

She pauses. The house resonates with the sound of silence.

ALICE

Simone?

She realizes she's on her own.

She picks up the broken bar of chocolate, unwraps it and starts to eat.

EXT - HOUSE - NIGHT

The moon glows weakly from behind dark clouds.

Tentatively Alice walks out of the house and looks around.

ALICE

(calling)

SIMONE? SIMONE?

There is no answer, save the crash of the waves and the call of a lone gull.

Alice walks down onto the beach.

It's empty and seems to stretch out wide and dark before her. She looks very small, very alone.

ALICE (CONT'D)

SIMONE. WHERE ARE YOU?

Up ahead a light glows weakly from Calum's cottage. Like a moth, Alice is drawn towards it.

INT - CAR- NIGHT

Ian gets out of the car outside his parent's suburban house.

HELEN

Listen, we'll be in touch.

He nods. He looks at Helen directly.

IAN

Take care Helen.

He then turns and walks away. Helen sits, disconcerted for a moment before starting up the car.

EXT - BEACH - NIGHT

Alice walks slowly along the beach towards Calum's cottage. One window, blind half drawn, glows with candle light.

ALICE
(whispers)
Simone?

Very deliberately, Alice walks up to the window. Taking a deep breath she pulls herself up and looks in.

To reveal, like an assault on her senses, Calum and Simone. Naked.

Him astride her, thrusting, rutting.

His hands digging into the skin of her thighs, hers clenched in fists on his back.

Her face white, biting her lip to quell her mew of pain at the first penetration.

Alice, at the window, heaves.

EXT - BEACH - NIGHT

Alice runs from the cottage to the edge of the water. She doubles over and retches, vomiting spit, bile and lumps of chocolate.

The whole sky seems to spin, the moon and stars reel in the sky.

Alice falls to her knees and plunges her face into the cold sea. Blood pounds in her ears, her breath sticks in her throat, but the world mercifully seems to pause.

After a long moment, Alice rears back out of the water, back to reality.

Looking around, she sees a large stone.

Without a moments hesitation she picks it up and hurls it through the window.

INT CALUM'S COTTAGE- NIGHT

The window shatters into a million pieces. Simone screams. Calum leaps straight out of the bed.

Naked, he runs to the door.

EXT - COTTAGE - NIGHT

CALUM
(shouting)
Who the fuck's there?

There is no one to be seen.

Alice crouches in a small ball behind a rock.

INT - COTTAGE - NIGHT

Frightened Simone huddles against the corner of the bed, the sheet pulled tight around her.

SIMONE
Who was it?

CALUM
Nobody there.

At that moment his mobile phone beeps. They both look at it. He picks it up.

CALUM (CONT'D)
Your ma!

SIMONE
What does she say?

Apprehensively Calum opens the text.

CALUM
'Missing you'.

At that moment he notices a patch of blood on the bed.

CALUM (CONT'D)
Fuck Simone, did some of the glass
cut you?

Wordlessly, Simone shakes her head.

CALUM (CONT'D)
(realization dawning)
...oh shit!

At that moment Simone's phone rings. She retrieves it from the heap of her clothes. Helen again.

SIMONE
What do I do?

CALUM

Answer.

She looks at him imploringly.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Go on!

SIMONE

(answering)

Hi Mum. Yeah we're fine...she's in bed. She's asleep. I said we're fine. Okay. See you then.

She hangs up.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

She'll be back tonight.

Calum gets up and begins to carefully pick up the glass. Suddenly conscious of her nakedness, Simone starts to get dressed, concealing as much as she can behind the sheet.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

I supposed I better get back and check on Alice.

She stands there expectantly. To get rid of her, Calum gets to his feet and kisses her.

Reassured she leaves.

As soon as she's gone, Calum collapses heavily on the bed.

He picks up the phone. He reads Helen's message again then starts to text.

INT - CAR - NIGHT

Helen draws to a stop at the traffic lights, rain drops flare red on the windscreen.

Her phone, on the dash board, beeps. She sees Calum's name in the backwards reflection of the windscreen. She smiles.

INT - COTTAGE - NIGHT

Simone walks into the house.

SIMONE

Alice? ALICE!

No answer. Simone runs up the stairs.

INT- HALL - NIGHT

She throws open the bedroom door. Alice's bed is empty.

Simone runs to the bathroom, there's no one there. Simone is starting to get worried.

SIMONE

ALICE!!

Just then there's a sound from Helen's room.

Tentatively she opens up the door. Alice, sitting in the dark, is wrapped in one of Helen's old jumpers.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Alice? What the hell are you doing
in Mum's bed?

ALICE

What the hell are you doing fucking
Mum's boyfriend?

Simone freezes in shock.

SIMONE

Wha..what are you talking about?

She slaps on the light. Alice glares at her in fury.

ALICE

I saw you Simone. Him on top of
you. All that grunting and
and...you were like animals, it was
disgusting.

Simone looks as if she is going to get sick.

SIMONE

Jesus Christ. That was you! That
was you with the rock! You psycho!

ALICE

You're the psycho, fucking Mummy's
boyfriend.

SIMONE

Alice! Stop saying that. Please!

ALICE

What? Fucking? Why? That's what you're doing. Fucking fucking fucking! I'm going to tell her.

SIMONE

No!

She rushes forward and grabs her by the arms.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

You can't Alice, you can't.

ALICE

Why shouldn't I.

SIMONE

It would kill her, it would be worse than after Daddy left. She'd be devastated. She...she might try to kill herself again!

Alice glares at Simone with something akin to hatred. With a burst of strength she wrenches out of Simone's grasp.

ALICE

You don't care about that! You don't care about Mum. You just care that you don't get caught.

SIMONE

Are you going to tell?

Alice pauses, then slumps slightly. She shakes her head.

INT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Alice has fallen asleep on the sofa.

As she awakes she seems new, childlike, until last night's memories start to flood back. She appears to age visibly.

ALICE

Mum?

INT - UPSTAIRS HALL - MORNING

The house is very quiet as she makes her way along the hall to Helen's bedroom. She opens the door. The bed has not been slept in. Nervously she opens the door to the bathroom. It's empty.

INT - GIRL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Alice goes into the bedroom. Simone is fast asleep. Alice goes over and roughly shakes her awake.

SIMONE

Ow! What?

ALICE

Mum isn't in her bed.

SIMONE

Well check downstairs then.

ALICE

She's not there either. She hasn't come home.

Simone sits up. She pauses. Music drifts up from outside.

EXT - HOUSE - MORNING

Helen's car sits outside the house. THE SMITHS ASK blare from the car. Helen, motionless, is slumped back against her seat.

THE SMITHS

*Because if it's not Love Then it's
the bomb, the bomb, the bomb, the
bomb, the bomb, the bomb, the bomb.
That will bring us together.*

ALICE

MUM?

SIMONE

(hanging back) Oh shit.

Alice runs frantically to the car. She hammers on the window.

ALICE

Mum.

Helen starts up. Alice sags with relief.

HELEN

What?

ALICE

Mum? Are you okay Mum? Are you okay?

Helen turns. She seems to look right through Alice. No. Alice checks the door, it's unlocked. She opens it.

She reaches in and takes Helen's arm to guide her out. Helen gets out. Helen seems to move on autopilot.

Simone goes to take the other but Alice shoots her a look which makes her recoil.

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Helen slumps on a chair.

ALICE
(almost screaming)
Mummy! What's the matter, what's
happened?

Simone hangs back, scared. Slowly Helen takes out her phone. She brings up a message and hands it to Alice.

ALICE (CONT'D)
'This is getting too complicated'.
I think we should end it. C'.

Horrified she glares at Simone who looks away.

HELEN
By text!! He's dumped me by fucking
text! Tell me, is this the new
thing? At least your dad did it
over dinner!

She starts laughing hysterically then just as abruptly stops. The girls look genuinely frightened.

HELEN (CONT'D)
I'm going to go and talk to him.

She gets up and starts to walk towards the door.

ALICE/SIMONE
No!

HELEN
Why not?

Alice looks to Simone.

SIMONE

Because, because.. Mum you don't want to let him know he got to you, you know?

HELEN

Really?

Helen slumps back into her seat.

HELEN (CONT'D)

How do you know that and I don't? I mean you're 16 and I'm in my forties and I haven't a bloody clue!

She buries her face in her hands.

Simone and Alice sit motionless watching their mother cry.

Eventually Alice stirs.

ALICE

Mum, perhaps you should get some rest. Maybe you should go to bed.

Helen seems to be in a bit of a trance. She lets Alice help her to her feet.

INT - HELEN'S BEDROOM-MORNING

Helen is lying in bed. Alice tucks her blankets up around her.

ALICE

Go to sleep Mum, it'll all be okay. I'll look after you.

Helen doesn't answer. Alice kisses her on the top of the head.

INT- UPSTAIRS HALL - MORNING.

Alice sits on the ground outside Helen's bedroom, on watch.

Simone, stands in the doorway of her bedroom. She looks genuinely guilty and concerned.

SIMONE

Alice? Can I help?

Alice looks up in surprise, but then shakes her head angrily.

ALICE
It's too late.

INT - PUB - EVENING

Helen, Simone and Alice are in the pub having a pub dinner.

Helen, dressed in black, looks subdued, while Simone seems on edge. Alice is desperately trying to lighten the mood.

ALICE
Maybe we could do something
tonight, like go to the cinema, or
back to the fair, that was fun
wasn't it?

Alice glares at Simone for support.

SIMONE
Sure, why not?

ALICE
Mum?

HELEN
I don't want to.

ALICE
Oh.

HELEN
You guys go to the fair if you want
but I might just head back after
this.

Alice is immediately on guard.

ALICE
No! No, sure we'll all go together,
there might be something good on
tv.

SIMONE
Yeah sure, that sounds good.

ALICE
And anyway, we're going home soon
and then everything will be back to
normal, like we were never away.

Helen winces.

Then she notices Alice's dinner, she's barely touched it.

HELEN

(dully)

Alice, are you eating that or
playing with it? You've just been
pushing it around your plate...

Suddenly Simone gasps. Helen and Alice look up. Calum has just walked through the door. Alice tenses.

He hasn't seen them, but Sally, who'd been sitting across the bar has. Smiling from ear to ear, she goes up and kisses him blatantly. He kisses her back. Helen looks sick.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Of all the pubs in all the..

But she's stopped short by the sound of a rasping sob. She turns. Simone is staring at Calum, shock and hurt carved on her face.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Simone, what's wrong?

Confused she turns to look at Alice. Alice is staring back at her, a mixture of knowledge and fear in her eyes, another shred of her innocence ripping away.

The blood drains from Helen's face. She closes her eyes as realization dawns.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Oh GOD!

Suddenly she struggles to her feet, knocking their table over. Food, plates, glasses go smashing to the ground. Everyone turns to look, Calum's face drops.

MUM!

She reaches to her but Helen slaps away her hand away. She looks between Calum and Simone. It's so bloody obvious!

HELEN

YOU BASTARD!

Then suddenly with a massive fury she launches herself at Calum

INT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Simone and Alice are sitting in the living room, listening to Helen talking on the phone.

HELEN

OSS Could you not just come tonight
Joe? ... Okay okay, it's all my
fault..I'm a bad mother, happy?
Surely then you'd want to take her
away as soon as humanly
possible....

Simone winces as she hears the phone being smashed back into its cradle. Alice notes but she takes no pleasure in her sister's misery. Helen walks in.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Your father will be come for you
tomorrow Simone. I'll pack up your
stuff at home at send it after you.

She doesn't even look at her.

SIMONE

Mum, I'm so sorry....

HELEN

(bursting out)

Oh Simone, don't even bother.
You've wanted to hurt me and live
with your father ever since we
broke up. Well you've achieved a
double whammy now so you should be
absolutely over the bloody moon.

But Simone looks far from happy, rather gutted, confused and very young.

SIMONE

I..I know but...

HELEN

You better go pack.

Simone looks to Alice, who can only shrug. Bursting into tears, Simone leaves the room.

Spent, Helen sinks onto a seat. Alice gropes about for some way to help.

ALICE

Mum, do you want a cup of tea?

Helen shakes her head.

HELEN
No thanks love, I just want to be
by myself for a while.

Alice's face fills with apprehension.

ALICE
But...

HELEN
(sharply)
Please Alice, just leave me alone.

Her tone brokers no argument. At a total loss of what to do,
Alice slowly walks out the door.

EXT - BEACH - EVENING

Alice's image is distorted, as seen through from the bottom
of the rock pool.

She gazes sightlessly into the distance. She looks exhausted,
weariad.

On her lap she holds Ian the doll, still cased in its box.

Unconsciously she tears at the corner.

The paper falls, littering the water.

Alice realizes what she's done.

ALICE
STUPID STUPID STUPID

She studies the box, it's ruined. Then a thought occurs to
her. She looks through the cellophane at the doll. She opens
the top of the box. Carefully she pulls it out.

She touches its face, its golden curls, its eyes that open
and shut.

Alice smiles wonderingly, like the child she is.

She holds the doll close and starts to rock back and forth.

The dolls eyes open and shut.

VOICE OOS
Alice!

Alice starts and the doll falls from her grasp into the rock pool causing a crack to run across its porcelain face.

ALICE

___NO!

For a brief moment it hangs suspended in the water, its golden hair spread about its head like a halo, till it sinks to the bottom of the shallow pool.

Calum quickly moves across the rocks. Reaching in he pulls out the soaking doll. Water runs from its eye sockets.

CALUM

Here, it's fine. A wee bit of glue
is all you need, it'll be grand.

Alice strikes it from his hands back into the rock pool.

ALICE

No, it's ruined.

Calum takes a step back.

CALUM

Ok ok, what ever you say!

Alice, devastated, stares at the doll. Calum looks at her.

CALUM (CONT'D)

Alice, it was you wasn't it, that
chucked the stone? Me and Simone.
It shouldn't have happened. It was
fucked up.

ALICE

(vehement)

SHUT UP!! SHUT UP. I don't want to
even think about it.

She turns away. Calum stands uncertainly, even desperately.

CALUM

Alice..how's your Mummy?

ALICE

What do you care!

CALUM

I care!

ALICE

She's fine, I'm looking after her.

CALUM
I never meant to hurt her Alice,
really, I swear...

ALICE
Well you did.

CALUM
And I'm going to say sorry!

Alice rounds on him.

ALICE
What?

CALUM
I want to go to her. I want to
explain everything that happened.

ALICE
You can't! You have to leave her
alone! You'll only make things even
worse.

CALUM
Look I know she'll probably tell me
to fuck off, I'll deserve it, but I
have to.

ALICE
But what about Simone?

CALUM
I have to say sorry to her too

ALICE
No you don't! It's all sorted.

CALUM
Alice, it's far from fucking
sorted, it's all a huge friggin
mess.

ALICE
No. I don't want you to!

CALUM
Well it's not up to you Alice.

He turns and starts to walk away through the bank of sea
grass. Alice's face reddens with fury and fear.

ALICE
NO!

She reaches down and picks up a rock.

ALICE (CONT'D)
CALUM NO! I WON'T LET YOU!

Calum turns, just as with furious desperate strength, Alice hurls the rock. It catches Calum hard on the side of his temple.

Alice's face falls in shock.

CALUM
Jesus!

Calum puts his hand to his head. When he takes it away it's stained with blood.

CALUM (CONT'D)
I..I want to make things right.

He looks at Alice.

CALUM (CONT'D)
...make things right....

His eyes seem to lose focus, to glaze slightly. Slowly he turns and starts to walk from her...

He stops. Quietly, even gracefully, he falls slowly to his knees.

Alice watches in horror as, as if in slow motion Calum sinks, face forward into the long sea grass. Alice stands frozen.

As the doll stares on glassily from the depths of the rock pool, Alice shakes Calum frantically.

ALICE
Calum! Please. Wake up! I didn't mean it. I didn't mean it.

To no avail. His eyes are as glassy as the doll's. He's dead.

Desperately, futilely she starts trying to bury the body with fistfuls of sand. Already ants have to started to crawl around the bloodied wound.

INT - BATHROOM - EVENING

Water fills the bath.

Expressionlessly, Helen opens the mirrored cabinet. Lying inside is a packet of sleeping pills. She stares at them then picks them up.

But just then the sound of sobbing permeates the wall. She puts the pills down.

INT - HALL - EVENING

Dismayed, Helen stands listening to Simone's heart wrenching sobs.

She is deliberating whether to knock when she hears the front door open.

ALICE OOS

Mum?

Helen looks down the stairs.

Alice stands there. Eyes wide, face white. Her hands are covered in blood. A terrified child from a nightmare.

ALICE

Mummy!

EXT - BEACH - NIGHT

Calum staring sightlessly at the stars, seems to smile. Helen and Simone stand over him, staring in horror.

ALICE

(desperate)

It was an accident Mummy, it was an accident. He wanted to go to you. To say sorry. I had to stop him, stop you getting hurt.

Simone starts to become hysterical.

SIMONE

This is all my fault, all my fault.

Helen tries frantically to make sense of it all.

HELEN

Oh Christ, Jesus Christ!

Helen reels, only just catching herself from falling.

Alice runs to Calum. She starts to dig up more fistfulls of sand in a frantic attempt to cover him.

ALICE

Don't worry. I'll fix it. I'll make it right. I'll sort it out.

Simone runs to stop her.

SIMONE

No, stop! We can hide him, we can drag him into the sea, make it look like an accident.

Simone starts to unbutton his shirt.

Helen stares at her two frantic daughters, trying to sort it all themselves, as if she isn't even there.

She buries her face in her hands for a long, long moment and forces herself to take long shuddering breaths.

Finally steadying, she takes her hands away. Her face is filled with a determined resolve we haven't seen before.

HELEN

Alice. Simone, Stop!

Simone pauses but Alice continues to cover the body.

ALICE

No, It will be okay. I'll fix it.

HELEN

I said stop!

She goes over and pulls Alice away from the body.

HELEN (CONT'D)

This is my job.

She looks down at Calum, her face unreadable. He gazes back.

She reaches down and closes his eyes.

Alice, suddenly exhausted, sinks to her knees onto the sand.

CUT TO

Sun rise is break over the sea. A couple of police mill about as Calum's body is being strapped into a body bag.

INT - POLICE STATION OFFICE ONE - MORNING

Helen is being interviewed by a DETECTIVE, with a habitually dubious expression. Helen's voice is surprisingly firm.

HELEN

He dumped me, I was furious. Ask anybody from the pub, they saw me go for him earlier when I saw him with Sally. I was angry and I picked up a rock and I threw it, I didn't mean to kill him, I was ... I was fond of him.

DETECTIVE 1

Let me go get this straight. You attacked him in the pub. You went home and then you went and sought him out to confront him then again.

HELEN

Yes.

POLICE WOMAN

And where were the girls at this time?

HELEN

Back at the house. They didn't even know I was going out.

HELEN (CONT'D)

They had nothing do with this, nothing whatsoever. It was just me.

The detective eyes her suspiciously.

CUT TO

The detective frowns as Simone avidly trying to convince her that she killed Calum.

SIMONE

I shouldn't have slept with him, I knew full well it would hurt Mum, it's just that... well he was kind to me. But then when I saw him back with Sally, when I saw just how badly Mum took it, well I felt like shit.

DETECTIVE

So you tracked him down to kill him?

SIMONE

No! Just to talk to him, to get him to say sorry, to me and to Mum.

(MORE)

SIMONE (CONT'D)

But I lost my temper, I saw red,
that's when I threw the rock.

DETECTIVE

What made you see red?

SIMONE

The fact he hurt me! He hurt my
Mum.

POLICE WOMAN

But what exactly did he do to make
you throw the rock as that
particular point. Take me through
the whole conversation Simone.

Simone's eyes dart about. She hasn't quite thought this
through.

INT- WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Alice is being looked after by a concerned looking social
worker.

SOCIAL WORKER

Your Mum should be out soon love.

ALICE

But why is it taking so long, is
she okay? I should be with her.

SOCIAL WORKER

(soothingly)

She's fine. She'll be out soon and
in the meantime your Dad is on his
way to look after you.

ALICE

I don't want looking after. I don't
want my Dad, I want my Mum.

SOCIAL WORKER

Your Mum just has to answer a few
more questions about what happened.

ALICE

But she doesn't know what happened.
She wasn't there. I was! I threw
the rock! I killed him. Me! Why
won't anyone listen to me?

The social worker looks about for someone to call.

INT - ROOM - MORNING

The detective sits opposite Helen, who is studiously staring at her hands.

DETECTIVE

You know that Simone is saying that she killed him.

Helen, taken aback, looks up.

HELEN

What?

DETECTIVE

She said that she was angry with Calum, that he messed you both about.

HELEN

She's lying.

DETECTIVE

Why would she do that?

HELEN

I don't know. Maybe she feels guilty, but it's not true. I did it.

DETECTIVE

Hmm, you must be a very close family, the way you're all trying to protect each other, because young Alice, she also claims she killed him.

HELEN

What? I thought you couldn't interview her without me! She's only a child!

DETECTIVE

We can't shut her up! She keeps insisting she did it and that you're lying. And for a child she's put together a pretty good story, better than yours in fact. In her version it was clearly an awful bloody accident and no court would touch her.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
In fact if anything, they'll throw
the resources of the state at her
to make sure she comes away from
this as unscathed as possible...

Helen pauses, is this a trap?

HELEN
(cautiously)
But she's making it up. She's just
trying to protect me.

DETECTIVE
Protect you?

Helen's mask drops as her face fills with something like
shame.

HELEN
Alice is always trying to protect
me, look after me, It's like I'm
the child, it's not right.

DETECTIVE
Well you're not protecting her by
taking the blame for something you
didn't do. If you go down then
she'll be without her mother, how
would she be then?

Helen makes a noise as if to say 'better off'!

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
(scathing)
Helen, grow up. If that kid ever
needed you, it's now.

INT - WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Alice and Simone are sitting in tense silence.

Joe comes rushing in. Simone jumps eagerly to her feet.

SIMONE
Daddy!

Joe gives her a look of such withering disgust she reels back
from its force. Alice winces on her behalf. Joe looks to
Alice.

JOE
Where's your mother?

ALICE

In talking to the detective

SIMONE

Jesus Christ I knew it was a mistake sending you off with her. But not even I could imagine she'd screw it up so bloody dramatically.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

So why did you then?

Joe stares at her, taken aback.

JOE

Simone, I can't believe you have the nerve to talk back at me after all you've done.

Helen walks out with the policewoman. She sees and the girls arguing.

SIMONE

But this is all your fault. None of this would have happened if you had taken us on holidays like you promised.

Joe rounds on her.

JOE

What it's my fault your mother was whoring around with the town gigolo?

ALICE

It wasn't like that.

SIMONE

She wasn't whoring about. She really liked him.

But Joe is on a rant. None of them notice Helen entering with the detective.

JOE

And it's my fault you screwed him too? Like mother like bloody daughter. I suppose I should just be grateful Alice didn't get up to anything, or so I'm bloody presuming, Christ know what you've been getting up to!

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)
Well there'll be none of that shit
under my roof...

Simone looks as if she's been hit. Tears start to run down her face. Alice sinks into herself. Helen visibly swells with anger. She strides over to Joe.

For a moment she looks as if she is going to hit him.

But then, with a huge effort, she controls her rage, she turns to Simone,

HELEN
Simone..

Simone tenses. Seeing this, Helen takes her hands.

HELEN (CONT'D)
(gentle)
Love, don't you mind him.

She leans into her.

HELEN (CONT'D)
(whispers)
For all his faults, Calum was a
good guy.

Simone is utterly taken aback, then, years' worth of defensiveness melting away, she throws herself into Helen's arms and sobs. Alice straightens up in amazement.

SIMONE
Mum, I really don't live with Dad.
I want to stay with you and Alice.

Joe splutters in disbelief. Helen strokes Simone's hair.

HELEN
I want you to stay with us too
love.

JOE
Where? In bloody Portlaoise? Fucks
sake Helen, are you off your
fecking game!

Helen turns to him, utterly composed.

HELEN
Shhh Joe, you're getting upset. I
hate it when you get upset.

Joe pauses, gobsmacked.

Just then Helen spots a detective walking in. He has the broken remains of Alice's doll in a clear plastic forensics bag. Gently letting go of Simone, Helen walks over to Alice.

She kneels down before her.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Alice sweetheart. It's time for you
to let me look after you now, okay
love?

Alice looks into Helen's face. Suddenly her face fill with relief. She looks very very young. She nods.

Helen holds out her arms, Alice climbs into them and Helen carries her into the detective's office.

EXT - BEACH - DAY

The spot where Calum fell is heaped with flowers and tributes.

A large portrait of him surfing immortalizes him in his prime.

Alice, Helen and Simone, standing apart from the crowd, stand watching. All three hold hands.

A large crowd has gathered and it seems like the whole village has turned out to see Calum's ashes about to be scattered out into the ocean. He'd have loved it. There is more then a few women and girls in floods of tears.

As his ashes catch the wind and are carried out to sea, a song, The Waterboys 'This is the Sea' blasts forth as if from another dimension.

THE WATERBOYS

(This is the Sea)

These things you keep You'd better
throw them away You wanna turn your
back On your soulless days. Once
you were tethered And now you are
free Once you were tethered Well
now you are free That was the river
This is the sea!...

Alice looks at Helen. Eyes filled with tears, she's mouthing the words. They turn to leave.

INT - CAR - DAY

As Simone and Helen get in the front of the car, Alice gets into the back seat. Helen looks at her in the mirror.

HELEN

Put on your seat belt love.

Alice smiles. Things are going to be okay.

EXT - BEACH - DAY

As they drive off, pan to see Calum's surf board being carried out to towards the horizon. The music engulfs the scene.

THE WATERBOYS

Now I can see you wavering As you
try to decide You've got a war in
your head And it's tearing you up
inside You're trying to make sense
Of something that you just can't
see. Trying to make sense now And
you know you once held the key But
that was the river And this is the
sea! Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah
yeah!

Now I hear there's a train It's
coming on down the line It's yours
if you hurry You've got still
enough time And you don't need no
ticket And you don't pay no fee No
you don't need no ticket You don't
pay no fee Because that was the
river And this is the sea!
Behold the sea!

THE END