

FLORA & SON

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Likely Story LLC  
Treasure Entertainment Ltd.

1

INT. SHIFTERS NITECLUB

1

FLORA (30) and KATHY (30s) dance like crazy in a mob of dancers. Sweat, estrogen, and alcohol.

It's a terrible nightclub. For some of it, Flora and Kathy have their shoes off, and dance together barefoot. They are doing synchronized moves that they always do at Shifters. \* People watch on, clapping.

A MAN (35), with a mustache keeps dancing really close to her. At the start of the night, she keeps her distance, physically indicating she has no interest, looking out for something better.

But everyone's taken. We see her starting a conversation with a HANDSOME GUY (20). The conversation tails off as his PRETTY, YOUNG GIRLFRIEND (19), returns from the bathroom. Flora gives up and slouches off.

2

INT. SHIFTERS NITECLUB - LATER

2

The MUSTACHE man perseveres as shots are consumed, one after another. Insinuating himself into their vibe.

KEV  
(shouting)  
I'm Kev!

FLORA  
(shouting)  
Flora.

KEV  
(shouting)  
I'll be riding you later.

FLORA  
(shouting)  
No you wont.

By the end of the night, Flora is passively getting off with him.

SLOW DISSOLVE  
TO:

3

INT. FLORA'S TINY BEDROOM - MORNING

3

Flora wakes up in her bed, slowly coming around. She suddenly jerks a hand across the other side of the bed, feeling around. It's empty.

FLORA  
 (relieved)  
 Oh, good girl, Flora.

She yawns. She looks absolutely wrecked. Then Kev reenters from the bathroom, pulling up his shorts.

KEV  
 Mornin.

FLORA  
 Oh fuck!

4 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - LATER

4

Flora has given Kev breakfast. She sits across from him with a coffee and a cigarette. She checks her watch, kind of waiting for him to finish.

KEV  
 Why aren't you having a breakfast?

FLORA  
 I feel sick. That was too much last night.

KEV  
 Yeah. Good craic though. So do you go to Shifters a lot, love?

FLORA  
 Yeah. All me life. Great club.

KEV  
 Yeah! Do you have any toast?

FLORA  
 No.

KEV  
 You don't have any bread in the house?

FLORA  
 No. Me son eats it all.

KEV  
 There's a son??

FLORA  
 Yeah.

KEV

Where is he?

FLORA

I don't know. He's supposed to be in school. But he could be anywhere. I told you all about this last night in the taxi? You said you were cool with it

He hurries up eating.

KEV

Right. Yeah. A son. I'm cool with that.

FLORA

Right. Are you sure?

(beat)

So do you want to meet tonight?

KEV

(goes to shake his head)

Yes.

She is enjoying this.

FLORA

Brilliant. Cause I really like you. We had a really natural connection last night.

KEV

We defo did.

FLORA

And I think you're a very responsible sort of bloke.

KEV

Yeah.

This is brilliant. It's just what I needed in me life. A sense of direction. Or purpose. Do you know what I mean?

FLORA

Cool. So, I'll see you tonight then? Will you pick me up?

MAN

Yeah. Look, Flora, I'm just not sure that I'm the right guy for this.

(MORE)

MAN (CONT'D)

Maybe I wouldn't know where to begin looking after a kid. I'm basically a big kid meself. At work, they call me... Kev, the Kid.

FLORA

I'm pulling your fucking leg, you dope!

MAN

Oh. Thank God! Sorry.

FLORA

Gotcha!

They both laugh.

MAN

Phew! That was weird. I better get to work, I'm late.

FLORA

Fair enough.

MAN

Thanks for the breakfast. I wasn't expecting that.

He puts his stuff in the sink. And she opens the door. He passes her, putting on his coat.

He has to pass quite close in the doorway. It is a hellish moment of awkwardness. He kisses her on the cheek.

He exits hurriedly.

5

INT. FLORA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

5

Flora and MAX (13) sit on the couch. The Guard sits on an armchair across from them. He has a cup of tea and a plate of hobnobs on his knee, and Max's file in front of him. It's a bit of a balancing act. The TV is on directly behind him with the sound down. Max tries to watch the football on it without the guard noticing.

GUARD

Now. Have you committed any antisocial behavior in the last three months of your life?

MAX

No way Guard.

GUARD  
Have you received any stolen goods,  
to the best of your knowledge?

MAX  
Not I, Guard.

GUARD  
Have you stolen any goods.

MAX  
Not that I got caught with.

Flora punches his arm really hard.

MAX (CONT'D)  
Ow! Fuck!

FLORA  
Answer him properly, you fucking  
idiot.

GUARD  
How did you get the black eye?

MAX  
Her!

He gestures to Flora.

FLORA  
Fuck off!

MAX  
Nah. Just fighting.

The Guard and Flora exchange looks.

GUARD  
Did you think about joining the  
boxing club, Max?

MAX  
They only wanted me to clean up,  
and mop spit off the floor. I'm not  
doing that.

GUARD  
That's how Rocky started.

Max sighs.

GUARD (CONT'D)

What about football? Weren't you a mean little striker back in primary school?

MAX

No.

He looks to the mother.

FLORA

He wasn't.

GUARD

They have a cycling group, in Mount Vernon, taking trips out to the Dublin Mountains every weekend. Get you fit. See the countryside?

MAX

I don't have a bike.

FLORA

He sold it for a second hand laptop. So he could play video games.

MAX

That's not all I do on it. I watch blues on it too.

She sighs, biting her nails. The Guard is at a loss.

GUARD

The Juvenile liaison program is designed to keep young kids out of the court system Max, and so out of prison. Do you know what they do to pretty, young lads like you in prison?

They all know what he is suggesting. Need he go further?

GUARD (CONT'D)

They anally rape them, Max.

He gets up to go, gathering his files, and a few biscuits.  
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GUARD (CONT'D)

But I warn you now, you're headed  
in that direction. A string of  
offense the length of my arm.

6

INT. AISHLING'S LARGE HOUSE - MORNING

6

Flora sits at a grand piano in a lovely drawing room. She is bouncing a 17 month baby on her knee. She plinks a couple of keys, encouraging the baby to copy her. But the baby seems more interested to sit on the keys. Then climb on top of the piano and knock over photographs. And then get chocolate from her fingers on the keys.

Flora tries to distract the child by doing a "SHARK" noise on the bass keys, and a "MOUSE" noise on the plinky top keys.

It's a valiant effort. It's not working.

AISHLING, the baby's mother, bounces in. She is 40, wearing some high-end yoga gear, after a work-out. Flora happily hands the baby to her mother, who coos.

AISHLING

Yikes, look at you, big chocolate  
mouth.

FLORA

Oh, sorry. She found one in the  
kitchen.

AISHLING

No worries.

FLORA

How was your work out?

AISHLING

Amazing. How am I doing?

She pulls a profile, pats her abs.

FLORA

You look amazing.

AISLING

Yay! Okay Flora. You're free to go.  
Thanks.

Aishling hands her two fifty euro notes.



FLORA  
Thanks Aishling. See you Monday.  
See ya Sorcha.

AISHLING  
Could you get here on time? Just  
knocks her nap off, if I don't get  
her down.

FLORA  
Yeah. Of course. Sorry.

7 INT. AISHLING'S LARGE HOUSE. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 7

Flora puts her shoes and jacket on in the hallway, as Aishling and the baby play, off. As she does so, she notices Aishling's purse on the hall table. An envelope with numerous twenties. She tops her wages up with a twenty, and hurries off.

FLORA  
Bye now.

AISHLING  
(off)  
Thanks for everything.

FLORA  
Thank you!

8 EXT. AISHLING'S LARGE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 8

Flora walks down the steps of a big house, past a fleet of SUV's charging, and walks down the street.

9 EXT. A LEAFY STREET - LATER 9

A skip is parked outside a house, which has just been sold. Two burley workmen load it with it broken plaster, bags of old clothes and old suitcases. Protruding from the skip-full of bric-à-brac, the neck of a guitar case. Flora regards it as she passes. Then pauses. Circles back out of curiosity.

She hoists herself up onto the skip, brushing plaster and dust of her knees. She grips the neck of the case, and pulls it out in a cloud of plaster smoke and dust. She opens the old case. Inside, is a smaller than average, beginners guitar. It's scratched and has just one string, and missing frets.

She lets it drop back in, climbs down, and walks off.

Hold on the empty frame.

She returns and pulls it back out.

10

INT. A BUS - LATER

10

Flora sits on the bus listening to headphones. On the seat beside her, is the guitar. We hear the hard kick drum of repetitive dance music from her headphones.

The bus travels into a rougher suburb of Dublin. A THUG smokes under a no smoking sign, blowing smoke towards the open window.

Flora turns to him, as if to admonish him. He looks at her with dead eyes.

FLORA

Give us one of them, will ya?

THUG

No

She shrugs.

Flora gets off at her stop.

11

INT. A SMALL LOCAL MUSIC SHOP - AFTERNOON

11

Flora enters a tiny local music shop. Threadbare carpets, very little stock, bored youngster in his teens behind a counter reading texts.

FLORA

Hiya. How much is this family heirloom worth? I'm not sure I'm selling it- I just wanted to get it valueatded.

She puts the guitar on the counter. The teenager opens the bag. Looks at it. Looks at the label in the hole. Checks the neck like looking down a gun-sight, turns it over, sets it down.

TEENAGER

The bridge is cracked. The neck is warped. Two of the machine heads are broken. Half the frets are missing.

FLORA

Right, well, I'll give it to you  
for a hundred then.

TEENAGER

Yeah, no.

FLORA

It's probably vintage and you just  
can't see it with your untrained  
eye. It's your loss. There are  
loads of music shops in this  
neighborhood?

TEENAGER

No there aren't. There's literally  
one.

She is disappointed, but not surprised. She stands there  
thinking about what to do with it.

FLORA

Can I leave it here?

TEENAGER

You'd have to pay me to take it.  
You were technically better off  
before you robbed this guitar.

FLORA

(not really offended)  
How dare you.

She grabs it and goes to exit. Stops at the door. Circles  
back.

FLORA (CONT'D)

So how much to clean it up, fix the  
neck, and put strings on it?

TEENAGER

Why would you do that? That would  
be like putting Range Rover wheels  
on a Yaris.

FLORA

Who are you, fucking Jeremy  
Clarkson?

TEENAGER

I don't want to take your money.

FLORA

I have a son. And his da used to be  
in a band. Maybe it's in the blood.

TEENAGER

Right.

FLORA

Plus it's his birthday.

He looks at the guitar again.

TEENAGER

Let's see. Tighten the truss rod,  
set of strings, two new machine  
heads.

TEENAGER (CONT'D)

Sixty Euro?

FLORA

Fuck off.

TEENAGER

18 euro.

She checks her purse. Counts. Takes the note she stole  
earlier. Thinks.

FLORA

Do it.

12 EXT. FLORA'S HOUSING ESTATE - EVENING 12

Flora walks across the forecourt of a lively housing complex  
in a tough area. She is carrying the guitar. She has a couple  
of bags of shopping. It's a bit of a slog.

She heads up the steps towards her flat. She opens up and  
enters.

FLORA

Max?!

13 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - LATER 13

Flora is in a tiny kitchen. She takes the shopping out and  
stows it. Milk. Spaghetti. Washing up liquid. Baked beans.

She goes out and re-enters with the guitar. She takes it out  
of the case puts it on the kitchen table.

She takes a red bow off a box of chocolates with a bread knife. She eats the last chocolate.

She wraps the ribbon around the fret board of the guitar. Then she sits it up on a chair in the corner of the room. Strums it.

She sits down at the table. Lights a cigarette. Looks at the guitar again. Checks her watch. Smokes. Pours a glass of white wine.

14 INT. FLORA'S HALLWAY - LATER 14

The hall door opens and Max, enters. Throws his jacket on the banister.

15 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 15

Max looks into the kitchen, but not entering, more to see if his mum's home. He has a BLACK EYE.

FLORA  
(over her shoulder)  
Hiya.

He nods, is just about to exit when he sees the guitar.

MAX  
What's that.

FLORA  
It's a piano.

MAX  
Who's is it?

He steps in, hanging around.

FLORA  
Well let's see now. How many kids do I have? Wait now- one. It's yours! What happened your eye?

MAX  
I tried to rob something and got a beating.

FLORA  
Oh.

MAX  
Where did you get it?

FLORA  
What does that matter?

MAX  
Did you find it or something?

FLORA  
Who cares where it came from? It's a guitar. It makes music. Do you like it? You used to be dead into music. Happy birthday.

MAX  
(smiling)  
You fucking robbed it, didn't you? From one of the houses?

FLORA  
No I didn't rob it. Play it.

MAX  
I don't want to play it.

FLORA  
Why not?

MAX  
Since when am I a guitarist?

FLORA  
Since now. Believe in better. Impossible is nothing, or something.

MAX  
Jesus. You didn't even buy it for me.

FLORA  
How do you know? Maybe I did!

MAX  
Well did you?

FLORA  
No. But why does that even matter?

MAX  
You never get me anything. My whole life. And then you come home with this dusty piece of shit the DAY AFTER ME BIRTHDAY, and expect me to turn into Ed fucking Sheerin?

FLORA

Was yesterday your birthday?? It's a gift! Who cares.

MAX

I don't want it. It's a crock of fucking shit.

FLORA

You ungrateful prick.

MAX

And you are a daft slag who never gave anyone anything.

FLORA

Don't talk to me like that you little prick.

MAX

Cunt.

Suddenly, she boxes him in the face. Grabs him by the collar and slaps him twice.

FLORA

You came out of my cunt, you ungrateful little animal.

MAX

One day, I'm going to surprise you and smash into your fucking face.

FLORA

You'll be behind bars before that.

MAX

Good! Away from you!

FLORA

Go on, go back to your da. I can't wait for the weekend!

He slams door. She throws her glass at the door behind him. The front door slams.

She sits there, raging. Looks at the guitar. Then launches towards it, picking it up. Opens the window. Which is jammed. Wrestles it open. Goes to throw the guitar out. But it is too big to go through the tiny window. She starts screaming, forcing the thing out.

It won't go. She gives up. She throws it behind the armchair into the corner. Stands there, breathless.

Title card:

F L O R A   A N D   S O N

16

EXT. A HOUSING COMPLEX - DAY

16

Flora walks up a road in a run down housing complex. Max walks behind, small rucksack over shoulder, headphones on. She also has her headphones on. Flora turns into a block of small houses. She surreptitiously applies lipstick in the wing mirror of a parked car. Checks her look.

They turn into one house and ring the bell.

The door opens and IAN (35), stands there. Ian wears a few tattoos, a bathrobe and slippers. Very good looking. Conor McGregor beard.

IAN

Flora.

FLORA

Ian.

They both wait for Max to saunter past and into the house. Ian wraps a wiry bicep around his neck affectionately, but a little roughly.

MAX

Hi dad.

IAN

Hey little man. I'm in the Lamborghini.

Max enters the house, firing up the play station, off.

IAN (CONT'D)

I heard about the guitar episode.

Ian is smiling to himself. Kind of enjoying her failure.

IAN (CONT'D)

So you thought you had a little Harry Styles in the family, did you?

Laughs.



FLORA

God knows what he could be. I mean  
look at the genes. (meaning him)

IAN

It's not about genes. It's about  
dreams. I sacrificed all my music  
dreams for him. And you. You're  
welcome.

FLORA

Here we go.

IAN

You do know we were on the same  
bill as Snow Patrol the night I met  
you?

FLORA

Of course I did. It's why I fucked  
you.

IAN

God knows where I could be now if  
things hadda been different.

FLORA

Mountjoy. Portlaoise. Cloverhill.  
Pick a prison.

IAN

Okay. You'd better go- they'll  
clamp your broomstick. See you on  
Monday Flora. Can't wait.

He turns to go.

FLORA

Anyway, I might learn the guitar  
myself.

IAN

Okay.

FLORA

Yeah. I was thinking about it.

IAN

Were you drinking a lot of Vino-  
Rioja when you were thinking about  
it?

FLORA  
(mocking)  
Could be you're not the only genius  
in this family!

IAN  
Sorry, but YOU playing guitar is  
just too funny.

FLORA  
Why?

IAN  
Because it takes discipline, Flora.  
Years of practice and sweat and  
commitment. Not just some overnight  
transformation in some reality TV  
show. These callouses took twenty  
years to form.

FLORA  
Are you really going to talk to me  
about commitment??

He says nothing. Point taken.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
Where is she? At a nail bar getting  
a manicure? Or at the surgery  
getting a Brazilian arse lift?

IAN  
She doesn't need one.

Flora breathes fire.

FLORA  
You're disgusting.

She turns and goes, as if she's won this.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
And don't just sit on the couch  
smoking weed and playing video  
games. Do stuff with him. He's got  
loads of energy.

Ian goes to shut the door.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
And her arse isn't that amazing.  
Just FYI.

IAN  
Okay Flora.

He closes the door.

17 EXT. THE PATH - CONTINUOUS

17

Flora exits the gate as a white BMW coupe pulls up. JUANITA (28), gets out with some bags of shopping and zaps her alarm, crossing to the same house. She is dressed in a pink yoga outfit. Her breasts and buttocks appear to defy gravity.

Flora stares daggers. This is terrible timing.

JUANITA  
Oh hey... Flora.

FLORA  
Juanita.

JUANITA  
(Ala teenager)  
Awkward.

FLORA  
Not for me. I've been there. You're welcome to him.

JUANITA  
Thank you! Better go in. I need a shower after training. Hasta Luego.

Juanita heads in. As she walks, Flora checks out her arse. It is fairly amazing. Even she is amazed.

FLORA  
(Sotto voce)  
Fucking hell.

18 EXT. THE BOARDWALK - DAY

18

Flora is sitting on a bench on the boardwalk in the sun by the river Liffey. With her is Cathy.

SHANIA, (2) is playing between them. Or whatever the hell she decides to do on the day. They are both drinking take out teas. They are bored.

FLORA  
I can't go on like this.

CATHY  
Okay let's go?

FLORA  
No, I mean in life.

CATHY  
Oh.

FLORA  
I've nothing to look forward to.

CATHY  
Yeah you have!

FLORA  
Like what?

CATHY  
(thinks)  
The next season of Dahmer?

FLORA  
All I've got to keep me sane is the  
idea that that little prick will be  
18 one day, and move out. And then  
what?

CATHY  
Party central in your house!

FLORA  
I have to break out of this prison.  
I even have cash saved. Do you know  
that? Me escape money!

CATHY  
Where would you go, and can I come?

FLORA  
I don't fucking know. But in that  
river soon if I don't find a way  
out of this. I swear to God.

CATHY  
Please don't jump in the Liffey,  
babes. (beat) It stinks. At least  
go out to Dollymount and jump in  
the sea.

FLORA

This can't be my story. Growing old in that shoebox, with a kid who hates me, and his father who doesn't see me. It can't be my narrative.

CATHY

So what if he rejected your present? You didn't even buy it for him, in fairness. And you missed his birthday. But you're a great mother.

FLORA

Am I? Sometimes, I watch those news clips. Of kids gone missing. And police hunts. And I feel for those parents. But sometimes, I wouldn't mind that so much. I wouldn't want anything bad to happen him. But sometimes I'd love to come home, and he... just wasn't there.

CATHY

Okay, I take it back, You're a fucking psycho.

She gets up. She takes her baby stuffs it in the buggy.

CATHY (CONT'D)

You coming to Shifters later?

FLORA

Have I ever said no to that question.

CATHY

Whoopdeedo.

Cathy head off. We hold on Flora, looking into the depths of the Liffey!

19

INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - LATER

19

Flora has cleaned up and is sitting at the table smoking her cigarette. The place feels very empty. Checks her watch. Sits there some more.

A text message comes in.

KATHY. "Shifters?"

Flora types: "I can't. Seriously. Enjoy".

She sends it and chucks the phone away, sitting there. Bored.

Her eyes fall on the guitar neck, which is still lying strewn in the corner, behind a chair.

20 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER 20

Flora is sitting on the chair with the guitar. She hesitantly picks it. Then strums it. It's out of tune. Doesn't know where to begin. It sounds horrible.

21 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER 21

She is sitting at the kitchen table with an old laptop plugged in and open. She has typed "Tuning A Guitar" into Google. She finds an app.

She tunes the guitar up. Now it is in tune.

She strums it. Open. Tries to form a chord or two, but hasn't a clue. Googles.

"Learning guitar"

Quick cross section of very advanced guys all over the world soloing and playing complex chords and generally showing off. There's some really funny American and Russian dudes. Brash, male and noisy.

Flora re-types:

"Learning guitar for beginners".

That's better. A number of tiles of guys in their attics, basements, studios from all over the world, teaching the basics of guitar. She lands on a handsome man in his mid forties with a goatee beard, and a handsome face. He's holding a nice, used Martin guitar.

She presses play. The screen comes to life. The room is an airy and open plan, with a view of mountains through glass doors. Numerous guitars hang on walls. A collection of old records. He takes his time. There's no rush about this guy. When he speaks, he has a gravelly, but soothing voice.

MAN

Hello. Thanks for stopping by. So you've bought a guitar.

(MORE)

MAN (CONT'D)

Or someone's gone and bought you a guitar, or you've inherited a guitar, howandever you've ended up here on the internet, looking to learn how to operate it. Well, let me tell you, you are about to embark on a relationship that's going to last you a lifetime. One of joy, of calm, of peace.

FLORA

Bring it fucking on.

MAN

(beat)

A guitar is a little like a bicycle. You put very little in, and get a hell of a lot out. That thing sitting on your lap in silence, can make you laugh, make you smile, make you fall in love. Help you grieve. Hell, it can break your heart if you want to let it. Be careful.

(beat)

MAN (CONT'D)

So this is by way of an introduction to my course. Just let's sit here and think about that. About that potential that's already in the room with you. So, hit the button, and sign up. Bye.

FLORA

Relax, will ya.

She scrolls down the website and hovers over the ZOOM TUITION tile. Hour lessons cost twenty dollars.

She thinks about it. Doesn't commit.

22

EXT. FLORA'S HOUSING ESTATE - EVENING

22

Flora enters the complex. Various pockets of kids and teenagers hang around. Smaller kids play in a shitty playground.

Max sits on the outskirts of a group of older teenagers, all wearing designer gear. They are shooting a video on an iphone with a gimbal. Playback comes from a huge portable bluetooth speaker. KEITH (18), is mouthing into camera. He has a fake gun, and a balaclava.

He smokes weed, and then lets it bellow out through his balaclava. Points the gun at the camera etc. He is wearing a Gucci leather jacket and is bare-chested. White lounge pants and gold sneakers. Two young teenagers dressed like hookers, walk behind him mouthing a chorus. It's painfully generic.

KEITH

"Light up like candelabra. I got magic. Abra Da Cabra."

Etc.

Max is impressed. He is fixated on one of the girls, SAMANTHA (16). Utterly out of his league. Flora notices this.

FLORA

Come on. It's time.

Max saunters home after her. He waves goodbye to SAMANTHA, who clearly has no knowledge of his existence. She is obsessed with Keith. Not Max.

23

INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - LATER

23

Flora and Max eat pasta in silence at the small kitchen table. Max has his smart phone propped up against a glass, watching extreme sports clips on YouTube as he eats. A guy is in a Wingsuit flying.

Flora, who has finished, sort of watches too, as she nurses a glass of wine.

FLORA

What's that?

MAX

A wing suit.

FLORA

What is that?

MAX

What part of WING and SUIT don't you understand?

FLORA

Let's have a look.

She moves in a little closer. Max shuts it down and gets up.

MAX

I'm going out.



FLORA

Where? To that lot you were with today?

MAX

No. Over to Rhys's house. Then over to precinct for a bit.

She thinks.

FLORA

You're not going to do some base jumping off some buildings or something?

MAX

No. We don't have a GoPro anyway.

FLORA

Because the last thing I want is the police calling here to tell me you've fallen off a tower block or something. And you're dead. And gone.

He just looks at her.

MAX

You don't mean that, and we both know it. He turns to go.

FLORA

Be back at nine!

MAX

For what?

FLORA

Because I fucking say so.

MAX

I can't wait for the day I don't have to be here.

FLORA

The only reason you're here is because your da wants his days off for his projects. Otherwise, you'd be with him 24/7. Trust me.

MAX

Well if you don't want me here, why do I have to be back at 9?

FLORA  
 Don't play mind games with me. Get  
 out.

24 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - EVENING

24

Flora pours a glass of wine, gets her cigarettes, ashtray and guitar and places herself in front of the laptop. She looks at the kitchen clock. 2 minutes to ten.

On screen, the ZOOM app comes to life, as JEFF (40s) appears. He adjusts his screen. He is sitting in the same room, streaming with light. A California sun, and mountains. Pretty romantic. He's wearing a faded blue denim shirt. He looks good.

JEFF  
 Oh hey, Flora. Are you my 2  
 O'Clock?

FLORA  
 Yeah.

JEFF  
 How are you?

FLORA  
 I'm alright. How are you?

JEFF  
 Well, it's a beautiful morning here  
 in Los Angeles. Sun shining. The  
 smell of Eucalyptus on the breeze.  
 So I can't complain.

FLORA  
 Yeah. Lovely here in Cabra too.

JEFF  
 So it's evening there?

FLORA  
 No, it's just permanently this  
 grim.

He is surprised.

JEFF  
 So, you wanna learn the guitar.

FLORA  
 Is it easy?

JEFF

It depends on what you want to do with it. Is it to play for you own pleasure, or someone else? Is it to write songs on? Or to learn your favorite songs? What do you hope to get out of this?

She thinks really hard about this.

FLORA

I want to turn on my husband.

JEFF

Wow.

FLORA

I look at women playing the guitar, or the piano. And it's so sexy. Like, that raw talent. Being able to do something like that. Make music out of something. It's amazing. Like, Taylor Swift. Or Nora Jones. It's so... sexy.

JEFF

Wow. Well I've never heard someone be that upfront about it. But I guess it's why a lot of people take up an instrument.

FLORA

Is that why you took it up?

JEFF

Em, no.

FLORA

No, you look pretty good. I wouldn't say you'd need it.

JEFF

Okay.

This is not going well.

FLORA

So why did you start then?

JEFF

Well let's focus on you for now?

FLORA

Good plan.

JEFF

So go ahead and sit it up there.  
Let's learn a few root chords.

They both put their guitars on their knees. His balances there. Her's slips.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Let's have a look at G.

FLORA

Brilliant.

He plays it, letting the chord ring out.

FLORA (CONT'D)

That's beautiful. So how many  
chords do you need to know before  
you can write a song?

JEFF

It's not the number of chords you  
use. It's what you do with them.

He thinks of an example. He now plays the first verse of "You've Got A Friend". But he plays it straight up. And he sings the first verse. But it is stripped bare. Like a bad country singer in a bar. It sounds naive.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Now. What did you think of that?

FLORA

Whatever. Sounds like a boring  
country and western style song.

JEFF

Right! Because I played it straight  
up, like you'd get it out of a song  
book. Same song.

He now plays the exact same verse. But this time with all the nuanced fingering, and slight coloring that James Taylor gives it. It's still simple, but it is like a different song.

We hold on her. He is good.

JEFF (CONT'D)

(singing)

If the Sky above you should turn  
dark and full of clouds. And that  
old north wind should begin to  
blow.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

Keep your head together and call my name out loud. Soon I'll be knocking upon your door..."

He holds that last chord. Flora is speechless. It's a different song. And he's a really good player and singer.

FLORA

Jesus.

JEFF

The first version uses the same paints and brushes and canvas. But the second one has 20 years of life and heartache on display. You can see all the brushstrokes. All the personality in those same three chords. You could know a thousand chords, and never write anything so beautiful.

FLORA

Is that your problem?

JEFF

I didn't know I had a problem.

FLORA

You're teaching guitar online, love.

JEFF

(beat)

Oh. Yes. I forgot: you're Irish.

FLORA

Do you know a thousand chords?

He thinks.

JEFF

We all know the same number of words, but we don't write a Shakespeare sonnet.

FLORA

I get it. So what am I doing here then?

JEFF

That's what I'm trying to get you to ask yourself.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

It's not about how much you know,  
but how much of yourself you're  
willing to put into it. Music is  
bottomless. It'll take all you got.

FLORA

I'm confused.

JEFF

Good.

FLORA

I could know three chords or a  
thousand chords, I'd still need..  
What?

JEFF

What are your goals. (Apart from  
being sexy).

FLORA

Impress people.

JEFF

Who?

FLORA

Men.

JEFF

Why?

FLORA

Sex and company.

JEFF

Okay. What else?

FLORA

To make them like me.

JEFF

Why don't they already like you?

FLORA

I don't know. I think I'm amazing.

JEFF

Maybe they can't see your  
brushstrokes.

This takes her off her guard, She is clearly not used to  
being flattered. It throws her.

FLORA  
Are you coming on to me?

JEFF  
What?

FLORA  
So you're a songwriter too?

JEFF  
How do you know?

FLORA  
It says it on your website.

JEFF  
Oh yeah. I should delete that. Let's  
talk about you.

FLORA  
Where do you live in LA?

He is getting a bit exasperated by her questions.

JEFF  
I live in Laurel Canyon.

FLORA  
Oh I've heard of that. I bet you  
drive a pick up? And worked with  
horses, or something.

JEFF  
I never worked with horses.

FLORA  
What's your star sign?

JEFF  
I don't know.

FLORA  
You don't know your birthday?

JEFF  
Let's get back to the lesson? So,  
would you say you were a big music  
person?

FLORA  
I was always very attracted to  
musicians. I married one. He was on  
the same bill as Snow-patrol once.  
But I'm more into club music.

Silence. Awkward. She puts the guitar away.

JEFF  
What are you doing?

FLORA  
Oh sorry, I thought that was it.

She picks it back up again.

JEFF  
What are you doing here, Flora? I mean, if music isn't really your... thing.

FLORA  
I don't know. Honestly?

JEFF  
Yeah?

FLORA  
I liked the look of you!

JEFF  
Okay.

FLORA  
And a lot of the other lads seemed real posers and wankers. Failed musicians. You seemed sorta... real?

JEFF  
I am real.

FLORA  
You sort of calmed me down. When I looked at you the first time. Your voice was all soothing. Like a bath.

JEFF  
Right.

Silence.

FLORA  
Can I ask you something?

JEFF  
Sure.



FLORA

You might find it a little bit weird. Could you play that same song again, but this time.... With your shirt off?

She blushes, not believing she said that. The wine is going to her head. He tries to smile. But it's thrown and offended him.

He leans in, and switches the connection off. Her screen goes black. "You have been disconnected from the meeting"

She sits there; a mixture of shame and giddiness.

Then her email beeps. She opens it up. New mail. Clicks it.

YOU HAVE BEEN REFUNDED 20 DOLLARS.

25 EXT. FLORA'S HOUSING ESTATE - MORNING 25

Another day. Flora sets off for work.

26 INT. A BUS - DAY 26

She sits on the bus listening to the same pumping music again.

27 EXT. A BIG HOUSE - DAY 27

Flora arrives at a big house. She knocks on the door. In a moment, the owner opens it. She is frazzled, with a screaming two year old on her hip. She passes the child to Flora immediately without as much as an hello, and reenters.

Flora looks at the baby. The baby looks back at her, pausing from crying.

FLORA

Hello, little dream wrecker.

28 INT. A LARGE HOUSE. BATHROOM - ANOTHER DAY 28

Flora is in a bathroom the size of her living room. A moment of peace. She sits on edge of the bath. Words an email on her phone.

FLORA

(wording/writing)

Dear Jeff.

(MORE)

## FLORA (CONT'D)

I am sorry about messing around on our last lesson. Suffice to say that wine had been taken. I do intend to learn the guitar and take it seriously. Why, I don't know. I was always the one in class making fun of the teacher. Because someone had to. But I won't, if you'll keep teaching me. Sorry I objectified you. I can send you a picture of my amazing tits to balance things out again, if you'd like? Flora.

She turns on the camera on her phone, and takes a selfie pretending to just about pull her top up. She makes a thumbs up gesture. It is very funny and wrong.

She attaches it, and presses send.

Then she can't believe she did but, but it's too late. Shrugs.

## FLORA (CONT'D)

Oh well.

She stands up and we see that she's waiting for a three year old who is sitting on the toilet.

## FLORA (CONT'D)

Right. Now let's get the shit off your arse.

The three year old laughs. She kneels down and pulls some toilet paper.

29 INT. A BUS - DAY

29

Flora sits on the same bus home. Headphones. Club music. Her phone beeps. She opens a new mail from Jeff. Excited to read.

You are nuts. But that made me laugh...

Next DM:

8 O'Clock. Tuesday. No wine.

She smiles, putting the phone away. Secretly happy.

30 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - NIGHT

30

Flora and Max eat at the kitchen table.

Max is doing something on Garage Band on his beat-up laptop. His headphones are plugged in. He's thumping one of the keys over and over, which is generating a wave file on the screen. Flora has no idea what he's doing, but the clicking is quite annoying.

FLORA  
What IS that?

MAX  
Shh.

FLORA  
What are you doing though? It's annoying.

MAX  
Shhh.

He continues. She half watches, then checks her watch. After a little of this, Max saves his file. Puts his laptop away.

He gets up and throws his plates in the sink.

MAX (CONT'D)  
Right. I'm going out.

FLORA  
(without thinking)  
Oh good.  
I mean where?

MAX  
Just around.

FLORA  
Are you going to be hanging with that girl I seen you with? The one dressed up like a prostitute in your man's video?

MAX  
Samantha? I don't know, She might be there.

FLORA  
What's she like?

MAX  
I wouldn't know. Back at 9.

FLORA  
Or ten. If you like.

Hew pauses, surprised at his mother's leniency.

31 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - LATER

31

Flora has changed into clothes that don't leave much to the imagination, and put on a lot of lipstick and eye shadow on. She pours, lights up, and waits by the computer. Checks watch. Then she suddenly remembers about the No Wine Rule, and moves the bottle and glass behind the well out of frame to the side of the screen.

She picks up her guitar and readies herself. Takes a swig.

She clicks on her email and opens a Zoom session. Jeff is waiting there.

FLORA

Hiya. I can't believe you got back to me.

JEFF

You're a challenge. I like challenges. Shall we begin?

FLORA

Let's rock!

She picks up her guitar.

JEFF

Let's find out who you are, Flora. What's your all time favorite song?

She thinks hard.

FLORA

I'm more into dance music. Oh, "You're Beautiful" by James Blunt.

Jeff's face falls.

JEFF

Okay, we may have a problem here.

FLORA

Why?

JEFF

That's not an acceptable song.

FLORA

It's catchy.

JEFF  
So was Cholera.

FLORA  
I don't know that one.

JEFF  
If you're going to learn how to  
play songs we'll have to raise the  
bar a little bit.

FLORA  
So what have you written then?

JEFF  
I'm a teacher.

FLORA  
Exactly. So shut up, criticizing  
Blunt. YOU do it.

JEFF  
Do what?

FLORA  
Write a song that reaches millions  
of people's hearts. And makes them  
weep.

JEFF  
Making people cry isn't an  
achievement. Bullies do it every  
day.

FLORA  
Let's hear one of your songs then.

JEFF  
We're here about you. Not me.

FLORA  
Jesus, it's a guitar lesson, not a  
therapy session.

JEFF  
Wrong. Lyrics have to be more than  
"You're beautiful". Or a series of  
platitudes to lonely women telling  
them how great they are. That's not  
a love song. It's a self help  
group.

FLORA

You don't know the first thing  
about women if you think that.

JEFF

I know that grown up women don't  
just want to hear how stunning they  
are, like some creep in a bar  
trying to pick them up.

FLORA

Jesus Christ, It's just a bloody..  
Song.

JEFF

No! It's never just "a song". It's  
a three and half minute pause in  
time, in which to do something  
wonderful. Something touched by  
God.

FLORA

Oh no. Are you some sort of  
Christian evangelist dude?

Suddenly, and frustrated, Jeff begins plucking a familiar  
song. "I hope that I don't fall in love with you" By Tom  
Waits.

He sings the first verse and chorus. He is a fantastic  
singer.

JEFF

"Well I hope that I don't fall in  
love with you. Cause falling in  
love just makes me blue. The music  
plays and you display your heart  
for me to see. I've had a beer and  
now I hear you calling out to me.  
And I hope that I don't fall in  
love with you".

The chord rings out. In song terms, this is a slam dunk. No  
question. Flora is blown away.

Also, we have travelled around him, and now, all screens are  
gone, and they are sitting fact to face across her kitchen  
table.

FLORA

Jesus Christ.

JEFF

Right?

FLORA  
That's unbelievable.

JEFF  
So simple. So direct. Nothing about  
beauty.

FLORA  
You are a genius. What are you  
doing hanging around the internet  
teaching muppets like me with a  
song like that?

He starts to realize she thinks he wrote that. He lets it go  
for a minute.

JEFF  
Do you really like it?

FLORA  
It's stunning.

JEFF  
It's never just "A song". It's  
three and half minutes in which  
time shuts down. It's all we've  
got.

She feels his passion for this.

FLORA  
You've got to get that out there  
into the world.

JEFF  
Do you think it would sell like  
"You're Beautiful"?

FLORA  
Maybe not as much as that. I still  
like the other song too. Is that  
allowed?

JEFF  
No! That's Stockholm syndrome.  
Don't worry- we'll de-brainwash  
you. By the time you've finished  
here you just won't have time for  
childish jingles and cliches.

FLORA  
I'm exhausted.

JEFF

We're only just beginning. Do you want to learn the root chords of that song? So you can play it?

FLORA

Okay.

He picks up his guitar. They begin.

JEFF

Starts in C.

He instructs her in holding down C. She is a good learner when she applies herself. She finally gets the basic fingering of "C"

FLORA

You have lovely long fingers. Mine are quite stubby.

JEFF

The size of your fingers don't matter. Django Reinhardt had two fingers missing.

FLORA

Oh wow. Because I love him.

He starts to instruct her more. She gets it, bang on. Strums it.

JEFF

You got it!

FLORA

(genuinely pleased))  
Woo hoo!

She goes to drink her wine, but then does it off screen.

JEFF

What was that?

FLORA

Nothing. I love this.

JEFF

See, you're a quick learner.

FLORA

I knew I'd be good at this! Let's move on, what else you got?



JEFF

You got G and F. But let's just think about C for a second.

FLORA

Okay, lets.

She lights up a cigarette.

JEFF

You now are the proud owner of "C". You own it. And you didn't, 5 minutes ago. You're rich. You own something that Elvis owned!

FLORA

I'd rather have his plane.

JEFF

(ignoring the interruption)

And it didn't cost you anything.

FLORA

Well, 20 dollars, for this class. But I do know what you mean. Go on.

JEFF

You own something new, You don't ever have to give it back. It's not a must-have object. It's not a phone. Or a car. Or a handbag. Did you ever see an ad for a guitar? Because it sells itself. You'll die with that gift. You can use it whenever you like. And in the right context, it can speak directly to your heart in a way that we don't even understand. More than words, or ideas, or thoughts. Just a chord, hanging in the air. C.

She is a little transfixed. We have traveled full circle, and they are back on their screens.

SLOW fade to black.

32

EXT. A STREET - EVENING

32

On her way home, Flora passes a pub. Outside in chalk, a board.

"Singer-Songwriter night. Every first Monday. Sign up! Have fun! Cash prize".

She pauses at the door. Looks in.

33

INT. THE PUB - EVENING

33

A crowd of thirty or forty locals. A small, threadbare stage with a few instruments in an annex room of a pub. Very low fi. A beautiful 19 year old girl is sitting on a barstool with a guitar singing a really shitty self-penned song on a ukulele. She is terrible.

Another few musicians wait around to go on.

Flora watches.

BARRY (40), exits for a fag. He is an ex-band type guy, still wearing sunglasses, gel in his dyed, thinning hair.

BARRY  
Howareya love.

He lights up.

FLORA  
Can anyone sign up?

BARRY  
Oh yeah. That's the idea. Keep music local.

FLORA  
What's the cash prize?

BARRY  
80 percent of the door. There's usually about 50 punters.

FLORA  
At how much a head?

BARRY  
Fiver.

FLORA  
Jesus. That's pricy enough. Are they all that shit?

BARRY

It's not about that. It's about keeping music alive in the neighborhood. That's what I'm all about.

FLORA

So who decides who wins?

BARRY

I do. I'm Barry Byrne. Events promotor.

FLORA

I know who you are, Barry.

He goes to shake hands, putting the sunglasses on his head.

BARRY

Oh yeah. Jaysis. How are you...don't tell me.... Fiona!

FLORA

Flora.

BARRY

Ah! I knew you were in the F's.

The song ends. People clap unenthusiastically. Barry claps.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I'd better head in. Good to see you again! In the daylight!

FLORA

I bet she wins.

Flora smiles, Barry pretends to be shocked.

34

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - DAY

34

Close on a laptop screen. A rock video for Ian's band, INDIGO VOID. A younger Ian is singing an okay song called "Long Way from Crumlin to LA". It's about a guy left behind in Dublin after his girlfriend goes to America. It cross cuts between 20 year old Ian, singing in various landmarks around Dublin, and working on a building site, and a pretty young girl working and living in New York. All her shots were clearly shot in Dublin for NY. There's a NY cop conspicuously placed in every shot of her, and lots of America Flags, and various staples of Americana. And red and blue lights outside windows etc.

Ian is talking Max through it. Max is a captive audience to Ian's failed hopes and dreams.

The doorbell rings, and Max jumps up, glad to be going.

MAX

See ya da.

35

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

35

Ian opens the door to his house. Flora has the guitar in a case casually slung over her shoulder, like she's done this her whole life. Max exits, waiting on the footpath.

IAN

What's that?

FLORA

What? Oh, just... me guitar?

He smiles.

FLORA (CONT'D)

I have a lesson later. I thought I'd do it in the park.

IAN

What is this about?

FLORA

What's what about?

IAN

This whole music thing? Anytime I tried to introduce you to new music you tuned out.

FLORA

My tutor tells me I have "genuine appreciation of melody". Now.

IAN

What do you like, then? Apart from club music. Gimmie five bands.

FLORA

Well I like his songs, anyway.

IAN

Oh. He's a songwriter too, is he?

FLORA

Yeah. He is. He's brilliant actually.

IAN

What's his name?

FLORA

Jeff... The guitar guy.

IAN

He sounds like some fucking clown who never made it, teaching lessons online. The ultimate graveyard for failed musicians.

FLORA

Are you a little bit... jealous?

She smiles. This is what she basically wants.

IAN

No, love. Just... concerned.

Her smiles falls.

FLORA

How's Juanita?

IAN

She's grand.

FLORA

You do know that she's not Spanish, right?

IAN

She's half Spanish.

FLORA

Which half? Her Da is from Tallaght and her ma is from Blancherdstown!

IAN

Her nana's people were from Spain.

FLORA

My people were from Norway that doesn't make me a fucking viking! He laughs.

FLORA (CONT'D)

Does she blow you like I did?

IAN  
What?? Shut up.

She smiles. Widens her eyes for a moment. She moves in towards him a little.

FLORA  
I'm serious. Does she?

IAN  
You're nuts.

FLORA  
She doesn't blow you, does she?

IAN  
Yeah, she... has.

FLORA  
She doesn't. I knew it. Her mouth's too small. Is she out? Will I come up for a few minutes?

Ian is dumbstruck. But suddenly, out from all the anger and hostility, Flora is sexually charged in a way we haven't seen.

IAN  
Don't be mad.

FLORA  
I bet she doesn't let you come all down her neck, and tits, the way I did. Ian is gobsmacked. This is so wrong, and so in-broad-daylight.

IAN  
(smiling)  
Would you fuck off.

FLORA  
I'm serious. I'm over the hurt. But if you ever want the best blow job of your life, you know where I am. Come on Max!

Max snaps out from looking at his phone. We hold on Ian as they walk off down the street. He is aroused, and you can see it in his tracksuit.

36

EXT. A STREET - LATER

36

Flora and Max walk down a street in silence. They cross in the way of a CYCLIST, who steers to narrowly avoid them, dropping his bag and lock.

CYCLIST

Wake up, will you!

FLORA

Fuck off.

CYCLIST

You stepped right in front of me!  
Watch where you're going.

FLORA

You watch where you're going or  
I'll wrap that fucking lock around  
your neck!

She means business. The cyclist gathers his stuff and hurries off, shaking his head. Max looks up at his very angry mother. He notices the guitar.

MAX

Are you getting rid of that?

FLORA

This? No, why?

MAX

Oh, what are you doing with it  
then?

FLORA

It was just sitting there. Why do  
you want it now? You can have it?

MAX

No. I don't. I don't like acoustic  
guitar music anyway. It's gay.

FLORA

How do you mean?

MAX

Just... all those feelings... about  
angels with wings, and blokes  
writing sappy love songs for girls.

FLORA

How is that "Gay"? I would have thought was straight?

MAX

Whatever. It's stupid.

FLORA

What are you into then?

MAX

Ambient. And Electronic.

FLORA

Oh. Yeah. I always loved dance music.

MAX

Like what?

FLORA

I Love Container. Sophie is amazing. Orbital, back in the day.

MAX

Who the fuck are they?

FLORA

Dance music. So who are you into then?

MAX

Marconi Union. Do you know them?

FLORA

No.

MAX

They're from Manchester I think. Real trance music. It sounds like a computer made it. It's deadly.

As they arrive back at the flats, Flora checks her watch.

MAX (CONT'D)

I have some Marconi Union on me phone if you want to hear it? They're brilliant.

FLORA

Right, you've got your key. There's waffles in the fridge. I'm heading out.



MAX

Bye.

FLORA

Ok. Back in an hour and a half.

She hurries off, missing this cue to listen to music with her boy. Max climbs the steps to his flat, spitting over the balcony at pigeons below. Bored as hell.

37

EXT. A CRUMMY PARK - LATER

37

Flora is sitting in a threadbare public park on her laptop with her guitar. She's sitting on her coat.

Jeff is on the screen. They both have their guitars. They are both strumming E, A and D together, slowly. It's pretty basic stuff, like a church choir, But it's progress.

FLORA

Am I ready?

JEFF

For what?

FLORA

To write a female empowerment ballad and get me husband back?

JEFF

Why did he leave?

FLORA

(thinks)  
Anger?

JEFF

Why is he angry?

FLORA

No me. I'm angry. I almost killed a cyclist today with his own lock.

JEFF

What are you angry about?

FLORA

I don't know. I wake up angry. And I'm angry at my son all the time. I thought this guitar playing lark might calm me down a little.

JEFF

Wait a second, you have a son??

FLORA

I had him very young. I was 17.  
Maybe he's the reason I thought I'd  
learn the guitar.

JEFF

How do you mean?

FLORA

That he'd think I was cool.

JEFF

Trying to look cool to your kids is  
the least cool thing you can do.  
Their "cool radar" resets every 20  
seconds. You can't keep up.

FLORA

Do you have kids?

JEFF

Yeah. But they're grown up now.  
They think I'm cool. Because they  
don't have to deal with me. I read a  
book last year about child rearing.  
Would you say you're a gardener or  
a carpenter, Flora?

FLORA

Wha?

JEFF

Did you plant your kid and just let  
him grow, or do you try mold him  
into a "shape" in your head, like a  
carpenter?

She thinks about this.

FLORA

Carpenter or Gardener? I think I'm  
a wrecking ball.

JEFF

Don't say that.

FLORA

Play me your song again.

JEFF

Oh yeah. I meant to mention that.  
That's not my song.

FLORA

What? Who's is it?

JEFF

Tom Waits.

FLORA

Who the fuck is he?

JEFF

He's sort of an... American Tramp.  
He's also a genius. I was surprised  
you didn't know him.

FLORA

Why did you tell me it was your  
song?

JEFF

I didn't. You presumed it, and  
I...Sort of allowed you to.

FLORA

Why?

JEFF

I guess I wanted to see what it  
felt like.

FLORA

To what?

JEFF

To have written a song like that,  
in someone's eyes. It was stupid.  
So let's get back to the lesson.

FLORA

Why, what normally happens?

JEFF

You wanna hear one of my songs?

FLORA

Yeah.

He starts a song. Lovely chord progression. Really nice intro. When he sings, he's got a strong, beautiful voice. The first verse is nice. Smart lyrics. But then, the chorus comes, and it just doesn't lift. It's... fine.

But it ain't Tom Waits.

Again, as we circle him, he is now sitting across from her in the park, in Dublin. After the chorus, he strums it out, and stops.

She smiles. An awkward silence.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
I see what you mean.

JEFF  
What?

FLORA  
It's lovely. You're really good at songs.

JEFF  
Go on?

FLORA  
Just... would I want to hear it again?

JEFF  
Right.

FLORA  
Ever.

Jeff is crushed. But he's used to this. He puts his guitar down.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
Sorry.

JEFF  
No, it's great. If folks out here were as honest, I wouldn't have wasted a decade and a half. Let's get back to the lesson.

Checks watch.

FLORA  
Don't feel sorry for yourself.

JEFF  
I'm not. It's the most humbling realization ever. To start a song for someone. They're totally receptive to you. Ready. And then, to see their eyes glaze over.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

And it's harder for them than you.  
The smile is still in the mouth,  
but not in the eyes. And you know.  
Flora watches him closely.

FLORA

You know what?

JEFF

That they've done their best to be  
changed by you. But they're still  
the same.

He takes up his guitar, and they continue with the lesson. As we circle them, they are back on screens.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Oh, I'll send you some homework  
tonight. A link to a John Martyn  
song. Apropos of being angry.

FLORA

Who's he?

JEFF

Beautiful songwriter. Angriest man  
on the planet. A bully. Hassled his  
wife. Paranoid. Drank his head off.  
Okay. G. A/ and F sharp.

They continue with the lesson.

38

INT. FLORA'S FLAT - LATER

38

That evening, Flora pours wine, smokes a joint. She gets a ping. Jeff: Watch. This. Now.

She opens the link to a Youtube clip on her laptop, of John Martyn playing "Couldn't Love You More".

It's a clip from a gig in London from 1978. John Martyn is sitting on a stool with his guitar, twitchy, and buzzed on alcohol. His segue patter is awkward and male and a tad incoherent, and he comes off more like a pub entertainer in an knees-up.

And then he starts singing.

The music calms his whole body. It starts to pour into the room like a gentle wave. And into Flora's room too. The transformation is remarkable. It is like the music of angels. He sings with his entire body.

Each note more guttural, seemingly wrenched up from his body like diamonds from the ground.

Flora is drawn to the table from cleaning the kitchen. She drops the plates, glass of water, etc, and they hang in the air, suspended. She pulls into the table to listen closer.

By its end, Flora is in floods. Her tears are on the keyboard.

She DM's Jeff: "Oh My GOD. What just happened?"

In a moment he responds: "It's okay to be angry."

39

EXT. A SHOPPING CENTRE - DAY

39

Flora and Cathy walk through a mall. They stop and have waffles with ice-cream at an indoor cafe.

FLORA

He calms me down. Me anxiety just disappears. He's like a Xanax, in a denim shirt.

KATHY

Can I meet him? I mean, see him.

FLORA

No.

KATHY

Please? I could just stand in the corner of the room.

FLORA

That'd be very weird.

KATHY

Is he good looking? Do you have a screen grab?

FLORA

It's not about that.

KATHY

So he's not good looking then.

FLORA

He's like a drug. He never says what you expect him to say. And he's sensitive. You can see in his eyes he's been hurt.

KATHY

You're mad. Trust you to fall for someone who lives three thousand miles sway.

FLORA

Six. It's the west coast.

KATHY

It's a screen, you can't fall in love with a man on a screen, babes. You'll just frustrate yourself.

FLORA

My ma was in love with Harrison Ford for 20 years.

They continue.

40 EXT. ST STEPHEN'S GREEN - DAY 40

Flora is walking through the park listening to Something with a particularly good chorus. She sits on a bench and listens closely. Rewinds. She is having a realization as she listens.

41 INT. FLORA'S TINY BEDROOM - ANOTHER DAY 41

Over the same song, Flora is practicing guitar, and writing a lyric.

42 INT. FLORA'S FLAT. MAX'S BEDROOM - ANOTHER DAY 50 42

Flora lets herself in, surprised to hear some heavy sounds coming from Max's bedroom.

FLORA

Fucking hell.

She sets her keys down and enters his room. Inside, Max has his laptop hooked up to a set of small but powerful studio speakers. The music is pumping. He is sitting at a tiny desk covered in socks and underpants. On screen, a GarageBand file.

FLORA (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Jesus Christ, it's like a club in here! Turn it down a second!

Max sees her, and quickly presses the spacebar, pausing the music.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
Jesus, that's loud.

MAX  
Yeah, Keith lent them to me. Really powerful. I have to give them back tomorrow.

FLORA  
The neighbors will be complaining.

MAX  
They're junkies, they'll be asking to turn it up.

FLORA  
Who's Keith?

MAX  
He's a mate. A rapper. He lent them to me for the night.

FLORA  
For what?

MAX  
So I could mix this track.

FLORA  
Was that yours??

He shrugs.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
You're joking me?? How the fuck did you make that, it sounded epic.

MAX  
GarageBand. It's simple.

She moves over towards him and hovers over his shoulder. On screen, six or seven tracks. Drum patters, keyboards, loops etc.

FLORA  
Explain.

MAX  
Anyone can do it. They're all different tracks. You pick your sounds from here. He illustrates, highlighting various tracks.



MAX (CONT'D)

And you can drag in loops here.

FLORA

What are loops?

MAX

Drum patterns. Or you can make up your own patterns. But you need a proper sequencer for that.

FLORA

And how do you control them? Like how did you get that mad piano sound?

MAX

You open "Keyboard typing" and use the laptop keys.

FLORA

No way!

He illustrates what he means. A loud, keyboard sound through the speakers, triggered by the letters.

FLORA (CONT'D)

Jesus, it sounds very professional.

MAX

It is. It's what loads of people start on. Except you need a synth. Doing like this is shit. And takes forever. A note at a time.

FLORA

Play it again.

MAX

Nah.

She presses space over his shoulder. The track comes to life. He turns it down a little.

They listen to a half-made piece of electronic pop. It's catchy, but un-formed. In the right hands, it could be a hooky piece of electro-pop. Right now, it is all over the place.

FLORA

What's it called?

MAX

Don't know.

FLORA  
 Fucking hell, son. Is this what  
 you've been doing on those  
 headphones?

He shrugs, a weird mixture of embarrassment and pride.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
 I fucking knew it.

She picks up her mobile and calls.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
 (into phone)  
 Come over here and hear what your  
 son made.

She hangs up and starts texting.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
 I'm texting Kathy too. And the  
 gals. She won't believe this.

43 INT. FLORA'S FLAT - LATER

43

An impromptu listening party in the tiny flat. Ian is drinking a can. Kathy and a couple of nightclub buddies are drinking and smoking and listening to Max's instrumental dance number. Flora is passing around home made cocktails. Max watches from the galley kitchen. A mixture of embarrassment and interest.

Later.

44 INT. FLORA'S HALLWAY - LATER

44

The next door neighbors have called to complain about the music. They are a strung-out couple. Flora is explaining.

NEIGHBOUR  
 It's fucking very loud, Flora.  
 We're trying to sleep.

FLORA  
 Sorry, I'm playing a song for me  
 mates. Something me son wrote. And  
 it's become a bit of a party.

NEIGHBOUR 2  
 I don't care. It's not acceptable.

NEIGHBOUR  
Not acceptable.

They all stand there.

45 INT. FLORA'S FLAT - LATER 45

The two neighbors have drinks and joints, and are dancing. Ian is on a bong. The music thumps. Max smokes and takes surreptitious swigs from various cans and drinks. He is having fun.

Flora turns it up as people dance.

FLORA  
My fucking son! Seriously!

Ian picks up Max proudly, and they play fight.

46 EXT - SHOPPING CENTRE - DAY 46

Max and Flora walk up the street. Max pauses to look at a Canada Goose Jacket in the window.

MAX  
Can I try that on?

47 INT. SHOP - SAME 47

Max is sporting a ridiculous Canada Goose. He is swamped in it.

MAX  
Can we get it?

She looks at the price tag. An ASSISTANT is standing by, smiling.

FLORA  
900 fucking Euro? What's it made of?

ASSISTANT  
It's full of feathers. Goose feathers.

FLORA  
From a golden goose? I wouldn't spend 900 euro on a jacket for me. Not to mind a 14 year old boy. Anyway, it's too big.

MAX  
That's the look.

FLORA  
For turtles! Come on, let's go.

He looks in the mirror, He does look a little like a turtle. He takes it off reluctantly. They pass a STAFF MEMBER (30), who is conspicuously watching them.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
What are you fucking looking at.

48

INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

48

Flora is mid lesson with Jeff. They take a break.

JEFF  
Well done. That's good. You're making progress. Your fingering on the left hand is getting stronger.

FLORA  
Thank you. So I was thinking about your song.

JEFF  
Ok?

FLORA  
I think it's salvageable.

JEFF  
Good to know.

FLORA  
The problem is, that you have a great first verse. But the chorus isn't a lot better. Now, in my research, I find that choruses used to be the big deal in a song. What everyone's waiting for. But nowadays, the choruses that like, Ed Sheerin does do, are we allowed mention Ed Sheerin?

JEFF  
Go on.

FLORA  
He plays the same chords over the chorus, but sings a different melody.

JEFF

Right.

FLORA

So it's not like... "Here comes the chorus everyone!!" Because unless you have a killer chorus, (which you don't), it's an anti climax.

JEFF

So you're saying my verse is too good?

FLORA

Wow. You are an optimistic guy. I guess that's one way of looking at it. Do you want to hear what I mean? You play the first verse, and sing it. Then play it again, same chords, and I'll hum what I mean. Ready?

JEFF

Oh. Now?

FLORA

Yeah.

JEFF

What about the lesson?

FLORA

I'm giving you the lesson. Go.

He reluctantly takes up his guitar. He does the first verse of the same song we heard. Sings it. Very nice. Now he's approaching the chorus. He plays the same chords, and Flora hums what she means. It totally works. She has a grand voice. They pause.

JEFF

That's really smart.

FLORA

And have a better lyric?

JEFF

(laughs)  
Right. On it.

FLORA

No, I have a better lyric...

She unfolds some paper from her pocket. She pitches him an improvement on some of his lyrics, and he likes it. He's not precious, and this emboldens Flora to go on.

JEFF

Send me them, will you?

FLORA

Sure. You can take them or leave them.

JEFF

Let me try and fold some of them in. It might not work though.

FLORA

Okay. Whatever. Can I get ten percent?

JEFF

You can have 100 percent. I've given up trying to make money out of my music long ago. I tired that it almost killed the thing I love.

FLORA

This is fun!

Jeff checks his watch.

JEFF

See you next week.

FLORA

Okay.

She smiles at him as he disappears offline. Flora closes her laptop and takes a breath.

KATHY

He's very cute!

Kathy is sitting on a stool, in the corner of the room.

FLORA

Right?

KATHY

Does he have a son our age?

49

EXT. FLORA'S HOUSING ESTATE - LATER

49

Flora and Max enter their complex. They are both carrying a bunch of shopping.

There's a gathering of kids making a video on an Iphone by the carpark. KEITH, is facing off the camera as he mimes to playback from a bluetooth speaker. He wears trainers and EXACTLY THE SAME Canada Goose as Max tried on, with the hood up.

The same two girls wear hot pants and shake their bottoms into camera. It's all very generic stuff, but has a slightly misogynistic vibe to it. The CAMERA MAN is too old to be doing this. He instructs Keith how to smack their bottoms in the video.

Keith now sits on the hood of a white Range Rover Sport, showing off watches, wads of cash and designer clobber. Flora sighs. Max is intrigued. They watch for a while.

SAMANTHA

Hi Max!

MAX

Whatever, yeah.

He doesn't look up, embarrassed to be with his mum. They watch her shaking her ass.

FLORA

Wow. She's really going full prostitute in this one. Why don't you just ask her out, for waffles?

MAX

No way.

Flora crosses over to her as Max legs it up the stairs.

FLORA

Hiya. You're Samantha? Cheryl's daughter?

SAMANTHA

Yeah. Hi Flora.

FLORA

Jesus, you've shot up!

SAMANTHA

I know. Taller than me mother now.

FLORA  
How's your ma?

SAMANTHA  
She's great. Talks about you all  
the time. The crack youse had!

FLORA  
Aw, don't talk to me! You fancy a  
bit of dinner in ours tonight?

SAMANTHA  
Nah. You're alright.

FLORA  
Go on! Me boy is mad about you.  
Just come for a little?

SAMANTHA  
No thanks.

FLORA  
Right. Okay. See ya.

She shrugs off.

50 INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - NIGHT

50

Flora sits on her own at the kitchen table. Max has gone to bed. She has a cigarette lit. And a glass of wine. It's quiet. She's restless and alone. Looks at her watch.

She thinks. Then opens the laptop. Opens her email.

Selects Jeff Guitar guy. Sends a DM.

"Heya. Don't suppose you're around for a lesson?"

She sends. Waits. Nothing.

Then she sends a text to Kathy: "Shifters"?? \*

Waits for response.

"Already there! Ya comin?"

She thinks about it. Checks watch etc. Pours another glass of wine. She's not bothered.

51 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

51

Max is in bed on his phone. Flora enters.



MAX

Em knock?

FLORA

Sorry. What are you doing right now?

52

INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - LATER

52

Max, in his pajamas, has set up his laptop and speakers and leads at the kitchen table. Flora is beside him with a pen and pad.

FLORA

Tell me what you feel about her.

MAX

Can't stop thinking of her.

FLORA

Good. Obsession. You're obsessed.

MAX

I suppose.

FLORA

I used to be obsessed. With your da.

MAX

I don't care.

FLORA

So go on.

MAX

She's totally out of me league.

FLORA

No she's not.

MAX

She gets off with Keith.

FLORA

She thinks Keith can offer her something. He's all glamorous and dangerous. With the thousand euro jackets. She has to know that when she's done with her gangster, you'll be there.

MAX

Yeah.

FLORA

You'll always be there, won't you?

MAX

Yes I will. I love her.

She is writing. Channeling his teenage obsession.

FLORA

Open your laptop.

53

INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - LATER

53

They both have headphones feeding into his laptop.

Max has built a track, with an I-rig. It's very basic. A loop, and a keyboard pad and bass. The mic is live. Flora is reading lines from her pad. He changes and adds.

MAX

That's you. The red.

He presses play on the track. We hear his song idea again, through her headphones.

MAX (CONT'D)

If we had an external microphone  
the quality would be much better.  
Do you want me to put reverb on it?

FLORA

Yeah! Can you?

He turns on "effects" and adds a little reverb, as Flora picks up her guitar and strums, finding the song's tempo and key.

She starts to add a very simple acoustic pattern. It's naive. But it's appropriate. Just a little loop.

MAX

That's cool. Do that again, and  
I'll loop it.

FLORA

Okay.

He starts the track again. She does it. He copies and pastes it over the song.

It works, giving his digital track a human, analogue touch. It's not bad. It's not great either. But it's totally fun.

MAX

Write these down: "And when you're done with your gangster. And when you're done with your fantasy. I'll be the one with the answer. I'll be the one, just wait and see. I'll be the one in your corner".

FLORA

Ohh like that boxing metaphor.

MAX

Yeah. What's a metaphor?

FLORA

It's when you say something different from what you want to say. Like, did they not teach you this in school?

MAX

No, I must have been out that day.

FLORA

Anyway, that's a good one. Let's put that down.

54

INT. FLORA'S TINY KITCHEN - MUCH LATER

54

Max has put down a pretty cool vocal. He's not a great singer. But his sharp Dublin accent suits the intense lyrics. They've written a kind of song. They can't believe it.

FLORA

Now send that to her.

MAX

What?

FLORA

That's the idea. She has to hear your passion. It'll knock her off her feet. Do you have her email?

MAX

Are you serious?

She is. He starts mixing down the track.

FLORA

In fact, why stop there?

55 INT. FLORA'S FLAT - LATER

55

Flora is pitching her idea for a video as the song plays. She is shouting over the music.

FLORA

You're standing against a white wall. And you're looking into the lens. Real intense. Like a boxer. In fact- maybe you're in a boxing ring. The camera is moving towards you. You're singing the words. Real intense.

MAX

Where will we get into a boxing ring?

FLORA

Your da trains in Sonic Gym. Stop interrupting me. I'm on a roll. And we intercut with a dog. He's lost. We follow him around town. He's looking for his owner. No one sees him. Just feet passing by. He's chased out of shops. It's raining now. His coat splashed with mud. You're still singing. Now the dog is shivering in a laneway. Now he's walking again. Faster. Maybe he's got a scent, because the rain has stopped. Someone tries to pat him. But he snarls. Scared. Now he's away from the city. Running along a path. Faster... and faster... towards the sea.... towards....

Flora is transfixed by what she's seeing in her head. Max is carried by it too.

MAX

Where the fuck do we get a dog?

56 INT. AN ANIMAL RESCUE SHELTER - DAY

56

Lots of yapping dogs in cages. Flora and Max are being led by a VET, (23), along a corridor of cages. Different dogs' faces looking out.

MAX

Where do they all come from??

VET

I know, right? The pandemic.  
Everyone bought puppies. Then after  
the lockdowns were lifted...

FLORA

Just fucked them out on the  
street??

The vet nods, sadly.

MAX

Humans.

Max strokes a paw of a cute dog through a cage. He is welling  
up. Filled with bitter, teen rage.

FLORA

Mind you- I kinda get it. You wanna  
go back to your life. And they're  
like (Dog voice): "no, you must take  
care of me for the rest of time".  
And you're like "no, I have a job,  
and I want to go on holidays.  
You've served your purpose". I do  
kinda get it.

VET

Right.

MAX

What about this guy?

Max has singled out a dog. A Staffy.

FLORA

He's beautiful. What's his name?

VET

He doesn't have a name. He was  
found drowning, in the canal.  
Abandoned. Plus he was born half  
blind.

FLORA

(an old joke)  
Let's call him "Lucky"

Max has fallen for the dog.

FLORA (CONT'D)

Can we borrow him?

VET

We don't really "lend" dogs out.

FLORA

It's for a video.

VET

No. You can't borrow him.

57 EXT. A STREET - DAY

57

They are walking with the dog. Flora is carrying a bunch of dog stuff. Max is walking the enthusiastic dog. The song plays on.

58 EXT. A STREET - DAY

58

A grizzled, but once handsome homeless man (40) lights up a cigarette. He is sitting on a box in a doorway. He hands the pack of cigarettes back to Flora, who is standing over him with Max in the background, pitching to him. They have the dog with them too.

The man shakes Flora's hand. She gives him two plastic bags with food, soft drinks, a Swiss roll etc.

Video Shoot:

A number of exteriors. Flora and the dog and Max are filming all around Dublin. They are shooting shots of the dog as per Flora's pitch. We cross cut between them making the video and the actual video itself.

Flora is a good camera operator and gets good, low angles with the Iphone.

We see them blagging into shops with the dog for the shot etc. Recruiting strangers to try pat the dog etc. (Flora coaxes the dog into various action with a bag of treats.)

Now they're in a boxing ring. She is moving in to Max, who lip-syncs. He is dressed in a pair of silky shorts. Skinny and pale. With boxing gloves on. Playback comes for a small bluetooth speaker. She shouts directions to him, as other boxers train in the background.

Now they are running after the dog in Irishtown Nature Reserve. On the beach, and over the headland.

Flora is out of breath but gets some great shots. They run through rain. The dog is a good collaborator!

Now they are having lunch of sandwiches and take out teas, huddled under a tree. They are having a laugh. The dog has his lunch too, a tin of Pedigree Chum.

Now back to the video itself. The song plays as Max sings into camera, his head eventually filling the screen. He is intense and slightly scary, looking right down the lens. The dog runs and runs. He's running towards a tent. The tent is in a ditch at the end of the reserve. There are a few other tents around too. An improvised homeless camp.

The homeless man appears at the zip, and the dog jumps on him, almost knocking him over. Michael kisses the dog, who licks his face and circles him like crazy, wagging his tail. Michael cries, reunited with his lost dog. Sometimes he looks into the camera lens. Which makes it more uplifting. We see them running the beach together etc. Eating together at the camp fire. The song ends with Max looking right down the lens.

"I'll Be The One"

59

INT. FLORA'S FLAT - EVENING

59

Max is sitting in the kitchen watching MMA on his laptop and eating cereal. Flora hurries in with her laptop.

FLORA

Can I have the room?

MAX

No.

FLORA

What are you doing?

MAX

Homework?

His schoolbag and copybooks are notionally on the table.

She looks at him doubtfully. He starts typing. They smile at each other.

She grabs her guitar.

60 EXT. FLORA'S HOUSING ESTATE. ROOFTOP - LATER

60

Flora is climbing up the ladder and hatch out onto the rooftop of the flats. High above the city. A few breeze blocks, and an old arm chair and various discarded cans suggest that this is a place people sneak up to for parties. She is trailing up a power extension, and carrying her laptop, and a cushion.

She has already brought up her guitar, cigarettes and bottle of wine.

She sets her work station up, using her personal hotspot for a connection.

61 EXT. FLORA'S HOUSING ESTATE. ROOFTOP - LATER

61

On screen, Jeff, with his guitar. As usual, it's sunny and beautiful.

JEFF

So I worked on your idea. Want to hear it?

FLORA

Yeah!

He plays the first verse and chorus of the same song. It works very well. She joins in (badly) for the chords of the second verse. The song has improved. They play out the second verse together. As the camera circles them, he is now on the rooftop with her again. Sitting across from her.

They play a little more and hold the last chord of the second chorus.

JEFF

Now it just needs a killer bridge.

FLORA

What's a bridge?

JEFF

A change for 8 bars after the second chorus.

FLORA

Okay. It sounds amazing!

JEFF

Better, right?



FLORA  
It actually works!

JEFF  
Yup. I've been struggling with that song. Thanks for your ideas.

FLORA  
It's very intimate, isn't it? Singing like that together. It's a bit like... we've just made love or something.

JEFF  
(laughing)  
No it isn't.

FLORA  
In a way though. I do feel a little bit naked right now. I think music is all about romance. Look at A Star is Born.

JEFF  
Not if I don't have to.

FLORA  
Don't tell me you don't love that movie??

JEFF  
It's a hollow lie. Anyway, music is about something much deeper than physical attraction. Or sex.

FLORA  
What's deeper than sex?

JEFF  
Why isn't the way things are, enough for you?

FLORA  
They never were. I was always pushing things. Finding ways of getting outside myself.

JEFF  
Like how?

FLORA  
I suppose, leaving school, before everyone else?

(MORE)

FLORA (CONT'D)

Then, getting pregnant, and not having an abortion when everyone was telling me to. I thought being pregnant might make me feel different. I thought giving birth, I'd be reborn. Then I was stoned during most of his childhood.

JEFF

I was drunk when my two kids were born.

She studies him. He is not proud of this.

FLORA

Like in a bar?

JEFF

No, like in the delivery room.

FLORA

Wow. That's hardcore. Bet your wife loved that.

JEFF

She was pushing a nine pound human through her vagina, and her husband was the one who was cracking up.

FLORA

Yous are a shit sex.

JEFF

You're the first person I've admitted that to. I drank through the whole first ten years of their lives.

FLORA

What got you clean?

He thinks.

JEFF

Kids made me start. AA kept me off. Music made it manageable.

They sit there.

FLORA

(smiling)

The holy trinity of recovery.

JEFF

Hey, is that the dawn behind you??

She looks over her shoulder. The first sign of dawn.

FLORA

Christ, it is. Is that the sunset behind you?

On his screen, it is darker than before.

FLORA (CONT'D)

We've stayed up all night.  
So this is like... pillow talk.

JEFF

You owe me for six hours.

FLORA

Are you serious?

JEFF

No. I enjoy talking to you, Flora.  
I don't know why because none of  
what you say makes any sense.

FLORA

Is that all?

JEFF

Nothing's enough for you.

FLORA

Are you saying you don't find me a  
teeny bit attractive when I'm  
singing that song with you?

JEFF

You're my student.

FLORA

So?

JEFF

It'd be inappropriate.

FLORA

Who's going to cancel you? You're  
already no-one.

JEFF

I'm not about to get into something  
with someone on the other side of  
the world through a screen.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

My heart can't handle it. I'm not  
19. Life is lonely enough as it is.

This blows her away.

FLORA

I could get a plane?

JEFF

So could I.

FLORA

Then we'd miss each other. You're  
not coming here. It'd be like  
walking into a live soap opera.  
Plus, I wanna see LA. This isn't  
all about you. (it is)

He smiles.

JEFF

We could play our song to a few  
friends in the business.

FLORA

Ha. 10 percent!

JEFF

I'd pick you up at the airport.

FLORA

You'd better.

They smile. It's nuts. Jeff is back on screen by now.

They just look at each other. Then she presses LEAVE. And he  
is gone from the rooftop. And she is alone.

62 INT. FLORA'S TINY BEDROOM - DAY 62

Flora is alone in the flat. She digs out her bathing suit.

63 INT. FLORA'S BATHROOM - LATER 63

Flora has put on the bathing suit and is standing regarding  
her body in the mirror. She turns around, looking over her  
shoulder. Then from the side. She sucks in her tummy. Stands  
on her toes, etc. Then just stands there and looks at herself  
straight on. She smiles at herself.

64 EXT. PUB. BEER GARDEN - DAY

64

Flora is sitting at a beer garden with a glass of wine. In a few moments, Ian saunters up.

Businesslike.

IAN

So what's so important that can't wait until we swap him over?

FLORA

Sit down. Relax.

He does.

FLORA (CONT'D)

Do you want a glass of wine?

IAN

Wine? At 10 O'Clock in the morning, Flora? No.

(beat)

I'll have a pint.

65 EXT. PUB. BEER GARDEN - LATER

65

We follow a pint of beer as a waitress brings it to their table. Flora pays for it.

They sip their drinks. He savors the taste.

IAN

Drinking during the day. This reminds me of old times.

FLORA

Getting pissed on white wine up on Howth Head.

IAN

Watching the sea.

FLORA

Listening to sounds from your car stereo. Smoking spliffs.

IAN

And then finding places to....

(winks)

Fuck, like.

He smiles. She smiles too, shushing him.

FLORA  
Seems like a different world.

IAN  
We had some good times alright. You  
and me.

FLORA  
We definitely did. I'll give us  
that. They sip. He looks at her.

IAN  
Do you want to... go up there  
today?

FLORA  
Where?

IAN  
Howth Head.

FLORA  
What? No!!

IAN  
Are you sure that's not what this  
is about?

FLORA  
Positive.

IAN  
Final answer? A tray of Dutch Gold,  
it's a sunny day. I could borrow  
Dave's Mazda. Have you back in an  
hour and a half.

FLORA  
I feel like Cinderella.

They drink.

IAN  
So what did you want?

FLORA  
How would you feel about looking  
after Max for a while. While I  
sorta, found meself?

IAN  
I didn't know you were lost.

FLORA

Yeah, I haven't stepped outside  
Dublin in 10 years.

IAN

Where were you thinking of going?  
Like, Cork, or Galway?

FLORA

Yeah, or LA.

IAN

Excuse me? Could you pick somewhere  
further away?

FLORA

That's sort of the idea.

IAN

Oh, now I see. This is to see this  
guitar teacher bloke? Tom Waits.

FLORA

What? No, Maybe he'd be around, but  
this is more about me. He shakes  
his head.

IAN

You have a man here!

FLORA

What are you talking about?

IAN

What if I left her?

FLORA

Who? Juanita? No. She's great for  
ya.

IAN

Don't. And we can both look after  
Max. Together. Like it was.

FLORA

You blew up "like it was".

IAN

I thought there was more, in life.

FLORA

Well, go fuck yourself then. I  
should have been enough!

IAN

You are. You're more than enough.  
That's part of the problem.

She is surprised by this moment of truth. They are both silent for a moment.

IAN (CONT'D)

I can't be looking after Max right now. You couldn't have picked a worse time.

FLORA

Why?

IAN

I'm thinking about forming a wedding band. With the lads outta Indigo Void.

FLORA

Wow.

IAN

That business is a goldmine. Imagine us all dressed up in Tuxes, with shades on. Sort of a Rat-Pack, Tarantino vibe.

FLORA

Have you talked to the lads about it?

IAN

I'm still at the dreaming stage. We already have all the instruments. We could use Brian's meat van as a bus.

FLORA

Wouldn't that be freezing?

IAN

No, you turn the freezers off if you're not carrying meat.  
Cheers.

He drinks. She sips her wine, her plan not working out.

Flora and Kathy walk around the park.



FLORA

The beach is down the road from his house. And it's constantly sunny. And he has a pool in his yard. That he put in himself. Imagine Ian doing that? He'd fucking drown. Do you know it's been 12 years since I had a bathing suit on!

KATHY

Oh you lucky bitch. Can I come?

FLORA

And if things don't work out, that's fine. I just come home. Right? But I get to say I did something brave. For once in my life. Something about ME.

Kathy thinks about this.

KATHY

(hesitantly)

Hasn't most of your life been a lil bit about you?

FLORA

What are you talking about?

KATHY

I mean, just... like... you have followed your own... thing. It's not like you made many sacrifices, like.

FLORA

What, like you?

KATHY

Don't get angry. I'm just saying. You live two minutes from where your mother and father lived. You signed on the dole for years. You've walked away from loads of jobs.

FLORA

Are you for me or against me?

KATHY

Look, I'm totally into you going to LA to fuck this guy, and maybe get a song heard by some friends of his, I'm totally into that story!

(MORE)

KATHY (CONT'D)

But last I time I checked, miners  
and frontline workers were brave.

FLORA

Okay, well speaking of brave, would  
you look after Max for a bit?

KATHY

Excuse me?

FLORA

You've known him his whole life. He  
trusts you. Plus you have a spare  
room since your brother moved out.  
It's just for a month. Or so.

KATHY

I can't!

FLORA

I wouldn't just ask anyone.

KATHY

Yeah you would!

FLORA

What do you mean by that?

KATHY

Look. I have a job. And I live with  
me mam. I can't be taking your  
nutter son in. Much and all as I  
care for ya.

FLORA

Why?

KATHY

Do you not get how weird a question  
that is?

FLORA

Actually, no. I've never asked you  
to do anything with Max. Have I?

KATHY

No, but I was there to, if you  
needed me.

FLORA

Not good enough! You never offered.  
Everyone says they care. Every  
bloke I've met is all "Ah, you have  
kid, deadly- let's give it a go.

(MORE)

FLORA (CONT'D)

I'll rise to the occasion." And then fucking disappear. And all me so-called mates are like "Aw you and Max are so cute". But then, they're all going to Spain on holidays, and "they don't take kids at this resort". Or ask them to fucking do something for you, and they're nowhere to be found. They never babysat, never picked him up from school. They never thought about what I might want. Or what my needs are. Since I was 17, with a screaming child doing me fucking head in, while yous were all living your fucking lives!

She is almost crying now.

FLORA (CONT'D)

Now I want to live my life!

KATHY

Well you should have thought about that 14 years ago.

FLORA

Do you think I wanted that child?

KATHY

Well we were all fucking like rabbits. So, I don't know. Maybe you did. You didn't want to get the boat to London. That's your call. But don't be asking people to pick up the pieces now.

FLORA

You're my best friend. And part of me loves you. But I never want to see you again, as long as I live. Do you understand?

KATHY

Whatever.

Flora turns and goes. Kathy stands there.

67

INT. MUSIC STORE. DUBLIN CITY CENTRE - DAY

67

Max is in the electronic section of Music Maker store.

It's early morning, and the store is basically empty. Strong sunlight. Dust in the air.

Max is in his school uniform. His school bag slung on the floor beside him.

He is knocking out a drill-style beat on a synthesizer. It's pretty repetitive and annoying.

An assistant, with glasses and a beard, is losing patience as he tries to work.

ASSISTANT

Dude. Will you turn that shit down?

MAX

What do you care? There's no one here. And it's not shit. It's Drill.

ASSISTANT

Oh really.

MAX

Yeah. And me name's not Dude.

ASSISTANT

What's your name? Though you'd think I'd know by now.

MAX

Max.

ASSISTANT

I'm Brian.

Max just goes back to his playing. The assistant gives up. Goes back to his work.

68

INT. MUSIC STORE. DUBLIN CITY CENTRE - A BIT LATER

68

The assistant approaches him again.

ASSISTANT

Do us a favour? I'm dying for a shit, and my trainee hasn't showed up for work, as fucking usual. Will you just look after the shop for like, two, actually three minutes?

MAX

Yeah, no problem.

He goes back to his beats.

ASSISTANT

Thank you man. Just keep playing  
that shit and no one will come in  
anyway.

The assistant hurries to a bathroom door with his own roll of toilet paper, and locks it, leaving Max on his own with his music.

Max looks around. Is this a gift from God??

69 INT. MUSIC STORE. DUBLIN CITY CENTRE - MOMENTS LATER 69

Max has unhooked all the wires from the keyboard. He has it under his arm. He deftly grabs a couple of cables and headphones as he goes, basically whatever he can grab, and walks to the door of the toilet. Knocks.

MAX

Hello?

BRIAN

Yeah?

MAX

How are you going in there?

BRIAN

What do you want? I'll be finished  
in a minute? Did someone come in?

MAX

No. Have you wiped your arse yet?

BRIAN

What?

MAX

Don't call me music shit. See you,  
you fucking muppet.

He turns and exits very quickly.

70 EXT. THE STREET - CONTINUOUS 70

Max runs down the street, looking over his shoulder. Finally, Brian storms out of the store, looking up and down, and then legging it after Max.

Max takes off.

71 EXT. STREETS

71

A quick chase through Dublin streets. Max is no match for Brian, who runs fast with a long length of toilet roll flapping out the top of his jeans behind him.

He finally catches Max up, grabbing him by the hair. Max gives up.

BRIAN

You little fucking prick.

He retrieves the synth, not letting go of his catch. They are both wrecked and out of breath.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Cops, or a slap?

72 INT. FLORA'S FLAT - LATER

72

Flora enters the living room and flops down on the armchair. Pissed. She sees the guitar across from her.

Moments later, she has the guitar case open, and she is putting the guitar into it. She puts various sheets in too. Slams it shut. She then puts the case up into the attic.

Sits down at the kitchen table. Lights up, taking a long drag.

Then her phone rings. She picks it up.

FLORA

Hello?

(beat)

Oh for fuck sake!

73 INT. A POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - LATER

73

Flora is sitting beside Max in a cramped interview room. Across from them, their JLO from earlier. Max looks a bit ruffed up.

JLO

Max, here, stole an expensive piece of studio equipment from a shop on Wicklow street. Causing the shop owner to give chase, and resulting in severe chest pains.

FLORA

Are you alright?

JLO  
No, the shop owner.

FLORA  
Oh. Sorry. How is he?

JLO  
He's being assessed.

MAX  
He's fine.

JLO  
He could have died! You little  
prick.

MAX  
It's good that he's getting a check  
up then.

Silence.

FLORA  
How expensive was it?

JLO  
That's not the point. He's way past  
the number of thefts where I can  
keep him out of court. And very  
likely a correctional facility.

FLORA  
You're kidding me?

JLO  
No. I've tried everything.  
Nothing's worked. So, for that  
reason, I'm out.

He gets up. Delivering his last line like he's on Dragon's  
Den.

FLORA  
Guard, there has to be some way to  
fix this? You're all he's got.

JLO  
No. I'm done with him. He's been  
robbing since he was in short  
trousers. He's a waste of space.  
There's a time where you run out of  
road, and it's that time. I've  
tried everything. And so have you,  
Flora.

He exits.

74

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

74

Flora marches Max out of the police station and up the street.

FLORA

A fucking 900 euro synthesizer??

MAX

I told you I needed the right gear.

FLORA

For what?

MAX

To re-record that song. It sounds rubbish.

FLORA

Who are you? Fucking Drake? It's just a bleedin' song on your laptop. Did you not send it to her?

MAX

No. I'm not sending her shit. It has to sound right. And the video is all wrong. Standing in me shorts like a fucking weirdo. She doesn't want to see that.

FLORA

What does she want to see?

MAX

You wouldn't understand.

FLORA

I'm sure she'll give you loads of attention when you're behind bars!

MAX

Women love criminals!

FLORA

Oh for fuck sake! What movie are you in?

MAX

Anyway, what do you care- you'll be in LA with your boyfriend.



FLORA

He's not me boyfriend. How do you know about him?

MAX

Do you think I'm deaf? Just go. I don't need you. And you don't need me. I'll be grand with da. Get outta me way, woman!

FLORA

Gladly!

He heads off. We track into her, thinking. Maybe this is her green light to take off. She almost smiles as she considers this.

75

EXT. IAN'S HOUSE. BACK GARDEN - DAY

75

Flora and Ian sit in the back garden at Ian's house. It's a small yard. Some dumbbells. Training hoops. A pull up bar. An old BBQ. Some empty beer cans. Pizza boxes.

Flora is going through files from the courts. She has a handle on this.

FLORA

So his case comes up next Friday.  
10 O'clock. District court.

IAN

I'll be there.

FLORA

I'm meeting his free legal aid lawyer tomorrow at 12 in the district court offices if you wanna come?

IAN

Okay. Little fucker. He's been given so many chances.

FLORA

I know. Do you want to let on we're together, when we stand up in court? The judges like that. Give him a chance at a shorter sentence.

IAN

Okay.

FLORA  
And wear a suit.

IAN  
I don't have a suit.

FLORA  
You don't have one single suit?

IAN  
I have five tuxedos?

FLORA  
Why?

IAN  
I bought them for the wedding band.  
It's going to be a rat-pack vibe.  
Mixed with Tarantino.

FLORA  
So is that up and running, like?

IAN  
No.

FLORA  
And yet you bought five suits?

IAN  
(deflated)  
They were on offer.

FLORA  
I don't think you can wear a tuxedo  
in court, you fucking spanner!

They get up.

IAN  
Those places have a bad rep, Flora.  
But I've actually heard they're  
more like a school now than a  
detention centre. They have  
football fields. Crafts. WiFi. It's  
very progressive. I actually think  
this might do Max a lot of good.

FLORA  
What. Being around hardened  
criminals for months?

IAN

No. Having to man up. Look out for himself. Make friends. Negotiate. People skills. He's just hanging around doing nothing.

FLORA

That's true. I want to get him as little time in there as possible.

IAN

This'll give us that time you talked about. For you dreams. And my projects. We've been doing nothing but parenting the last 14 years. How can he respect us, if we're just hanging around, waiting on him, with no identities? He needs to know why we are. Maybe a little break will help him see us.

She doesn't disagree.

FLORA

See you in court.

They hug. For the first time.

76 EXT. A STREET - DAY

76

Flora and Max walk down the street towards the courthouse. She has put on a pants suit. Max is wearing an anorak and his school uniform.

77 INT. A COURTROOM - DAY

77

Flora sits on a bench in a busy courtroom. Beside her is Max, and beside him GEORGE ROONEY (32), an unimpressive legal aid \* lawyer in worn, comfortable shoes.

A number of other OFFENDERS and their BARRISTERS are scattered about, and a number of POLICE OFFICERS hover around the exits, as barristers and officers come and go. Some defendants are brought in in handcuffs. Others are petty criminals, and are represented by assigned lawyers, same as Max. The day is just starting. Flora brushes Max's hair with her hand. He tries to bat it away, She perseveres, trying to make him look as neat as possible.

REGISTRAR

All rise. Court is in session.  
Judge McGovern presiding.

JUDGE MC GOVERN(40s) enters the dock swiftly and sits down, taking a pile of paper work handed to her by the COURT SECRETARY.

The Registrar begins calling the first case. Flora checks her watch, then looks at the door.

GEORGE  
(whispering)  
Did you text him?

FLORA  
Yeah. Twice. I'll text him again.

She fires out a text.

Flora text again. Max looks younger than ever. The long list of cases starts to be heard.

78 INT. COURTROOM - LATER 78

Cases have come and gone. The room is a little emptier.

A YOUNG WOMAN complains about all her hardship to the judge. Her dole was cut off. She can't pay her rent. A series of grievances. The Judge imposes a fine on her, and a cop has to lead her out, shouting and cursing, and generally complaining about everything in Dublin.

Another case is called, not Max's. Flora steps out, grabbing her phone.

79 INT. A COURTROOM. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 79

Flora waits for a call to go through.

80 INT. IAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 80

Ian is wearing headphones and a wool beanie. He is singing into a Mic in an attic room, lost in a shit song that he is recording. His eyes closed. His phone rings on silent on the desk. He sort of knows it's ringing.

Back at the courthouse, Flora waits as it goes to message minder

IAN  
(message minder)  
You're through to Ian. You know what to do.

FLORA

Pick up your phone, you fucking ass hole. This is the one thing you need to be at, and you're sitting on your arse playing video games. I've been texting you all morning. You fucking ass hole. Get over here!

She hangs up.

81 INT. A COURTROOM CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

81

Flora approaches the door of her courtroom and pauses, looking in through the glass. She looks at Max through the window. He doesn't seem to get the gravity of his situation. He picks his nose and looks around to see if anyone noticed, like a little kid.

Flora looks around at other defendant's faces dotted about the courtroom. The backs and sides of their heads. All waiting. Some vicious, angry faces. Others, scared. Others, blank. Then back to Max. Just another face.

For a moment, she appears to be imperceptibly backing away from the window. Her face is inscrutable. But it looks as if she might turn and walk away. We PULL BACK from the window with her.

Then George turns to the door as he stands up. The REGISTRAR is mouthing a new case. George signals for Max to stand up. George makes a face at Flora through the window.

Flora snaps out of it. Enters.

82 INT. A COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

82

Flora moves into the bench beside Max.

A POLICE OFFICER (40), is taking the stand.

JUDGE

Many previous offenses?

POLICE OFFICER

6, Judge.

The judge raises an eyebrow and makes note of this. She looks to George. George stutters into action.

GEORGE

Max has been involved in a few smaller incidents. But he has worked with his JLO, and had been making progress with him over recent months.

JUDGE

Is his JLO here today to corroborate that?

GEORGE

No, Judge. He's on duty. But his reports can confirm that. I have them here.

JUDGE

I presume you're the defendant's mother?

FLORA

Yes Judge. His father is supposed to be here as well. But he couldn't get out of work.

JUDGE

He lives with both of you?

FLORA

Yes. We both live with him. In two houses. We both take care of him.

JUDGE

(impatient)

I asked where Max lived.

FLORA

Yes judge. He lives with both of us. But at two houses. Mine and me husband's.

She makes notes of this.

JUDGE

Carry on.

GEORGE

There's been drug use with both his parents. His father is a musician, but his band split up. He's struggled since then. His mother holds down various jobs as a mother's helper. Commutes an hour a day.

JUDGE

It seems to me a couple of months  
in a strict supervision environment  
might teach you to respect the  
efforts your parents have made.  
What do you think,

Max? Max shrugs. Tough man.

MAX

Yeah. Brilliant.

JUDGE

Teach you how things work.

MAX

Cools.

She reviews her notes.

JUDGE

I'll drop from 16 to an eight week  
sentence for you, Mr. Mulvey. In a  
Juvenile correctional facility.

And a year of probation. I hope you'll learn your lesson in  
there, and that I won't be seeing you again in my courtroom.

MAX

I don't care.

JUDGE

Good man.

That's fairly harsh. Max shrugs. Flora can't believe it. She  
sits there, mute. George whispers in her ear.

GEORGE

That's not bad. Could have been a  
lot worse.

COURT REGISTRAR

Does we have anything to add before  
we break? Officer?

The guard shakes his head. George also. A few people exit for  
lunch.

FLORA

I do. Can I ask you a question?

JUDGE

Go ahead.

FLORA  
Are you a mother?

JUDGE  
Completely irrelevant.

FLORA  
Right.

JUDGE  
But I believe if I weren't I'd  
impose a harsher sentence.

FLORA  
If the shop has the earrings back  
what's the point in sending him in  
there?

JUDGE  
Madam, your son was wielding a  
hammer and threatening a staff  
member with it.

FLORA  
He wasn't wielding it. It was in  
his pocket. He'd never use it. He's  
still a child. I was a child when I  
had him. And I know the difference.  
I'll do whatever it takes to figure  
this out.

JUDGE  
And what would that be?

FLORA  
I have five hundred Euros put away.  
I'll give it to the shop owner, and  
if he's satisfied with that, he  
might drop the charges. Then what's  
the point in sending him in there?  
And braking up me family. Without  
him, I have nothing.

JUDGE  
The owner isn't present. And this  
is a legal matter, not a financial  
one.

FLORA  
You tell me, as a woman, as a  
mother, or whatever, what you'd do  
in my situation? And I will do  
that.



JUDGE

I've raised my own children. And it was hard for me too. She tears up. Max looks down to the ground. George doesn't know what's going on.

FLORA

I didn't know how hard being a mother was. I thought something would take over. In my body. Like a switch. And it did when I had him. For a few weeks, I was smitten. I loved you son. But day by day I just started returning to the same old me. Every minute felt like an hour as a mother. The novelty of a new baby wore off so lightening quick I couldn't believe it. It was like a plane going down. I hated that I wasn't like me mother, who doted on us. She was so simple, so instinctive. I didn't know how to play with him. Or sooth him. And I'm not blaming my age, either. I think if I had one now I'd be the same. I just don't think I have it in me. But I have this in me.

The cop on the stand looks at the Judge makes a "Seen it all before" face. We hold on the judge.

83

EXT. A STREET - MOMENTS LATER

83

Flora and Max walk down the street.

FLORA

Fucking bitch.

MAX

It's the system.

FLORA

Fuck the system!

MAX

Where was da?

FLORA

He would have got you a fucking year.

MAX

I can't believe he didn't show up.  
It's like he wanted me to go down.  
I'm going to batter him when I see  
him.

FLORA

After me.  
(beat)  
Don't blame him.

MAX

It's not like he has a job. You  
think he'd fucking show up for his  
own son.

FLORA

He's never really been here for  
you, has he?

MAX

Don't know.

She stops him.

FLORA

Being a father... it's just a word.  
He provides a seed. And then he  
becomes a father or not. It's  
something you do. Or don't do.  
Being a mother... is just a  
fucking... fact. I've been trying  
to get away from that all me life.  
But I just can't do it. And the  
more of a pain in my hole you are,  
the more I realize it's true. You  
little fucking prick. Oh my God.

He studies her, not quite knowing where she's going with  
this, but kind of getting it.

MAX

You got me sentence down to four  
weeks. I'll be fine in there.

FLORA

No you won't.

He stops her.

MAX

I will now.

She pauses. She understands what he means. Suddenly, she grabs him, and hugs him close. He reciprocates, as best as he can. And we see a tear in his eye over her shoulder.

MAX (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Thanks ma.

FLORA

You're okay son.

MAX

Thank you.

FLORA

Shhh.

The traffic speeds by. The city goes on as normal.

Fade to black.

84

EXT. THE PARK - DAY

84

Flora is in the park with Jeff on screen. Music over.

FLORA

When he gets out, I might come. But I'd have to bring him. How would you be about that? In real life?

JEFF

I got a spare room.

FLORA

Do you actually mean that?

Jeff thinks.

JEFF

How annoying is he?

FLORA

Very annoying.

They both smile.

JEFF

Shit, now I won't be able to play you my song.

FLORA

Which song?

JEFF

The song I wrote about you.

FLORA

You wrote a song about me?

JEFF

Yeah. It's about your soul. And the time we've spent. And who you are.

FLORA

What's it called?

JEFF

Crazy Irish Bitch.

She laughs.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I think it's rather good. And I haven't written a song in a long time. Because, since my kids grew up, I haven't had much to write about in life. So thank you. Seriously.

FLORA

You're welcome? So I'm your muse?

JEFF

Yeah. Though you should be offended by that these days, right?

FLORA

Fuck that. Feels great. I want to hear it!

JEFF

I'll record it and send it to you. I'm not playing it to you now. The whole idea was that I'd do it live. For the first time.

FLORA

Okay.

They look at each other closely.

FLORA (CONT'D)

Can we keep talking though?

JEFF

I think we're kinda done.

FLORA  
Don't say that.

JEFF  
You know the basics now. I'm not  
much better than you. Just got you  
started.

FLORA  
Don't. Say. That.

She leans in, close to the screen. Her eyes are teary.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
Don't be a stranger.

Then she quickly presses LEAVE, because if she didn't, she'd  
be a sobbing wreck.

85 EXT. COURTHOUSE. CARPARK - DAY

85

Flora hangs around the carpark at the back of the courthouse.  
In a moment, the JUDGE exits after a long day. Flora  
approaches.

JUDGE  
Hello?

FLORA  
Hi Judge. Do you have a second? I'm  
the mad one from court the other  
week.

JUDGE  
I know who you are. What's this  
about?

FLORA  
Do you have one second. I have a  
favor to ask.

JUDGE  
I've been very clear, and this is  
inappropriate.

FLORA  
You have, and I respect that. Would  
you just make one small change to  
your sentence. It's just a detail.  
But you could help make it happen.

JUDGE  
What is it?

FLORA

Would you let him take his music stuff with him? The info pack says there's no personal items. But he has headphones. And a little I-rig I just got him, so he can control his music on his laptop. And a microphone. I think it would be very good for him if he was to continue with his music. Especially with all this time on his hands.

JUDGE

I don't see why I couldn't look into that.

FLORA

For real? That would be amazing. I don't want to take up your time, but I just don't want him to get out of the habit of his music.

JUDGE

I understand that. Let me do some research, and hopefully I can make that recommendation.

FLORA

You're a star. Thank you. Sorry I went on in court the other day.

JUDGE

The fact that you're here makes me think that Max is going to be okay. I wouldn't worry about him. As long as you're worrying about him.

She shrugs, getting into her car. Flora head off, up the quays.

86 INT / EXT - MUSIC MAKER - DAY

86

Flora enters the store.

87 INT. SAME - LATER

87

Flora is paying over the money from her escape envelope of cash. She has bought a microphone, keyboard and some headphones.

Brian, the same guy as before, is selling her equipment.

Ad-lib dialogue.

As she hands over the cash, she starts to realize that she's in the place Max robbed the gear from.

FLORA  
How's the ticker?

BRIAN  
Wha?

FLORA  
Nothing.

88

INT. A LARGE CAFE - DAY

88

Flora is grabbing a tea at a cafe. She logs on and checks her mail. One from Jeff. She smiles, opening it. Downloads it.

It's an audio file.

She hooks up her headphones and presses play. It's called "Talking To You".

She gets through the first verse with a smile, but then it starts to kill her. She knows that whatever it was, it's over. And this is a sort of goodbye.

She hides her tears from the few people sitting around chatting and reading and looking at their phones. No one notices her. As the middle 8th starts we shift, and see that Jeff is sitting right next to her. She doesn't refer to him. He is singing close to her, smiling. She balls, the tears pooling on her keyboard.

JEFF  
(singing)  
"So if God take me and he leaves  
you here. I want no black  
limousines and no sad tears. Cause  
I'll still be hanging round the  
atmosphere, talking to you."

The song reaches it's end, and she is sitting alone. She gets her shit together, and closes the laptop. Takes her tea. And exits, shaken.

-----

Over music, we see the following:

Max being dropped into OBERSTOWN. It's a big compound in the middle of the countryside.

Flora playing the guitar at home.

Max in a small, cell-like room. He is on his laptop with headphones. His mother is sending him files. He is working on them and sending them back.

Flora and Jeff on screen, continuing their lessons.

Flora calling around to Ian. Flora starts asking him something.

Flora working as a waitress in a small local cafe.

Flora smoking a cigarette in her apron outside in the sun on her break.

Max sitting outside in the yard. He is working away on loops on Garage-band. Other rougher kids mill around. He seems to be keeping his head down in here.

Flora receiving an email from Max. It's a large file. She imports it into her computer and opens it up.

She forwards this to Jeff.

Jeff opens the file on his computer and imports the files into his PRO TOOLS sessions. A number of tracks open.

Jeff puts down a guitar track and starts to write lyrics in his notebook.

Max opens a file from Flora and Jeff. Listens. Smiles.

Max in a therapy session in the facility. A bunch of tough kids in a circle around a THERAPIST (50). The music plays over. This is part of this montage.

KID 1

The best day of me life? The day I  
burnt down the factory.

THERAPIST

You're telling me the day you did  
the very thing that got you locked  
up for, was the best day of your  
life?

KID 1

Hands down. I felt like I was on  
fire meself. I felt alive that day.

THERAPIST

Okay. Next?



KID 2

The best day of me life is the day  
I get out of this kip.

THERAPIST

That's a day in the future. I'm  
talking about up to know.

KID 2

I haven't had a good day.

The Therapist is moved. He nods to Max to go.

MAX

Best day, was... the day I made a  
video with me ma.

THERAPIST

You made a video with your mother?  
Can we see it?

MAX

No.

THERAPIST

But that's your day?

MAX

That was a good day.

The therapist nods and they continue.

Dissolve to

89 EXT. OBERSTOWN - DAY

89

Flora is waiting outside with a few other mothers (and a couple of fathers), as a few KIDS are released. The DOG is with her.

Max appears, carrying his bags. She hugs him. He allows himself to be hugged, but doesn't really reciprocate. But we can see on his face that he's happy and relieved to see her. He gets down and lets the dog lick his face.

They walk off together towards a bus stop.

90 INT. A BUS - DAY

90

Max and Flora chat as music plays over. He laughs.

91 EXT. FLORA'S HOUSING ESTATE - LATER

91

Flora walks across the carpark of the flats. Max is sitting on a wall chatting with Samantha, the girl from the video. A few shady looking teens hang around, including Keith, the "singer" from the video. Keith distributes nags of coke, and addresses with a few YOUNG KIDS on electric scooters. They speed off to do deliver. Others return with cash, and hand it over to Keith.

Flora takes all this in. Though she's seen everything in this neighborhood.

92 EXT. THE PUB - NIGHT

92

A few smokers have gathered at the back door to the pub. Bad singer-songwriter music emanates from inside. Ian has double-parked his small hatchback, and he and Flora and Max are unloading their gear. Flora has her guitar case, Max his various keyboards, laptop, cables etc.

IAN

I'll park this properly and see you inside. Good luck.

He goes to get in.

FLORA

Get up with us?

IAN

Nah. I'll be at the bar. I'll see you after.

MAX

Come on. It'll be a bit of crack.

FLORA

(smiling)

Come on!

IAN

No thanks. I'm a professional bass player. I'm not playing at some random amateur night.

MAX

I want you to get up with me. You weren't there in court. I want you to do this with us.

He sees that Max means business. He's standing up to his da. He knows he owes this to them.

IAN  
I don't have me bass anyway.

MAX  
I packed it.

IAN  
Wha?

MAX  
It's in the boot.

Silence. He can't get out of this one.

IAN  
Fuck sake.

93

INT. THE PUB - LATER

93

We're in the small room for the singer songwriter night. A good crowd has assembled.

A gorgeous GIRL (23) is finishing her song. It's not good. But BARRY. The organizer, claps conspicuously loudly.

BARRY  
Give it up for "Heart"

The audience claps. Barry smiles at "Heart" and gives her a thumbs up. She's going to win.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
She's amazing. Long career ahead of her. Next up, is Flora, (reading) and her son.

Flora and her gang take to stage, plugging in cables, and pulling up chairs. Barry helps.

Ian is on bass. Max sets up his laptop, with his I-Rig and another small synth.

Flora unzips her acoustic and opens her laptop. She sits this laptop on a high stool and goes online, opening up Zoom. She and Barry plug the laptop into the desk, as a SOUND MAN works the desk. It takes comically long, as the audience gets pints in.

On screen, is Jeff. He has an electric guitar. Behind him is a drummer. They do a rough levels check, and Flora talks into the mic. Flora & Son - Blue Revisions 01/08/22 99.

FLORA  
 Sorry about that. This is Jeff.  
 He's in LA. Say hello,

The crowd like this. They wave, trying to figure this out.

JEFF  
 Hello Dublin!

CROWD  
 Hello!

JEFF  
 I've always wanted to say that.

Gets a laugh. Flora spreads her lyrics page on a stool in front of her.

FLORA  
 This is Ian, on bass. And Max, my  
 son, on keyboards. He wrote this  
 while he was in jail.

MAX  
 (off mic)  
 Shut up ma.

FLORA  
 Okay. We wrote this song together.  
 Jeff helped. And Ian. In a way.  
 It's early days, but we thought  
 we'd try it live. Is that okay?

The audience cheers.

FLORA (CONT'D)  
 I've never done this before. I've  
 had diarrhea all week leading up to  
 this. But here goes. Ready lads?

JEFF  
 Don't be nervous.

FLORA  
 Easy for you to say. You're six  
 thousand miles away. This is a  
 Dublin audience. They'll savage me  
 if I fuck it up!

Laughter.

Ian starts a count in.

Flora starts playing the acoustic. It's simple. A few chords. She sings. It's nice. Her voice is brittle, but builds a little in confidence as the song picks up.

The band joins in. The sound mixer works the levels. It starts to sound OK. And the song is straight from the heart. A ballad, that picks up in tempo and becomes a lively feel-good number.

The lyrics take their cue from the Icarus and Daedalus story. And is about how she had Max when she was still a child herself. And was flying too close to the sun, with drugs and drink. Now, she is realizing that her sun is, in fact, her son.

Max is comically frozen on stage, but plays his parts well. Jeff is a natural. Ian takes his place in the background.

In the audience, the small Dublin crowd are well into it. They are won over by the effort and the fun of it all. Kids drink soft drinks. Babies are lifted up. Dave is flirting outrageously with HEART, and telling her how great she is. Kathy is in the front row. The barman pulls a pint, then just drinks it himself.

The song swells towards it's climax. Flora smiles over at her son. He manages a quick smile back. Then she smiles at Jeff.

The song soars and ends as we hold on Flora's face. The audience clap, delighted. Flora and the others are surprised at how much fun that was.

We don't know if they win or not.

And it doesn't really matter.

The end.